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Brazil

Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) ***Luiz Falcão***

The Labor Reform and the Lie of Free Negotiations

In October, the Labor Reform approved in a forged manner by the Federal Senate and the Chamber of Deputies will come into force in Brazil. With this reform, the bosses, the capitalist class, will pay lower wages, will be able to impose the working day that they wish on the worker, in addition to implementing outsourcing in all sectors of the economy and even forcing pregnant and breast-feeding women to work in unhealthy conditions. This is the biggest setback to Brazilian workers' rights in the last 100 years.

One of the absurdities of this reform is to adopt the work day of indeterminate length in the 21st century. That is, instead of being hired for an eight-hour work day, as it is in the Constitution, the employer is free to exploit him as he wants. He can call him to work for just a few days a week without continuity, besides not having to make a deposit to the FGTS (Security Fund for Time of Service), Social Security or holiday pay. The worker is totally unprotected, without any rights, and will have enormous difficulties to prove the time he has worked in order to retire. This is one of the greatest crimes committed against the worker in our country.

Increased privileges for the employer

It will also no longer be necessary for resignations or layoffs to be approved by the unions, which means that employers can pressure or rob workers without any control. The reform still allows the employer to argue that the resignation was by mutual agreement and to pay only half of the compensation due. There is more: with the reform, the workers, even if they are poor, will have to pay more than two thirds of the cost of the proceedings in order to claim their rights in the Labor Court, although it was the employer who fired him and did not pay him what he was due. In

practice, with the reform, the Consolidation of Labor Laws (CLT) is thrown out.

Even the International Labor Organization (ILO) denounced this change in the labor legislation in Brazil, saying that it “does not comply with international conventions number 98 (collective bargaining), 151 (public officials) and conventions 154 and 155 (workers’ health and safety).” According to the ILO, member States have an obligation to comply with and guarantee the ratified agreements and not to disrespect them.

Actually, the Labor Reform was done exclusively to serve the interests of the bourgeoisie, the capitalist class. Proof of this is that 74% of the senators who voted in favor of the reform are business owners. Of the rest, another 13% have enterprises in the name of their relatives, although they do not declare it. By the way, the current President of the Senate Eunício Oliveira (from the State of Ceará) owns, among others, a cleaning, transportation and security company.

The lie of free negotiations

The business owners and their economists say that with the reform there will be free negotiations between the employer and employee.

It happens that in capitalist society the means of production, the factories, machines, lands and also the banks, stores and businesses in general, are owned by a very small class of people, the bourgeoisie. Thus, the workers, in order to work, are forced to sell their labor power to the owners of the businesses. Otherwise, they will not have a job; they will become beggars or will starve to death. We will see, then, what these “free negotiations” will be like:

The bosses will say to the worker: “Do you want to work? We have a job for you. Now, these are the conditions: an indeterminate work day, I will not sign your work contract; you will not be able to prove that you worked and you will only be paid for the hours that I need you.

“Oh, you’re a woman and you’re pregnant, so you’re going to work in unhealthy conditions. Well, we’re in a democracy; you have the right to say no. Tell me right away whether you accept the position or not. Remember, there are a lot of people in line.”

This is the modernization of labor relations imposed by the Temer Government, the Armed Forces and the National Congress, which was enthusiastically celebrated by *Rede Globo* [Brazilian television network – *translator's note*] and by all the major mass media of the bourgeoisie.

To take advantage of the new legislation, the bosses have already begun to lay off workers, shattering the lie that the labor reform would create more jobs. In fact, the only jobs that have increased in the country are in the informal sector (in which the worker does not have a job contract) and so-called self-employment, both in extremely precarious conditions. In just the last two years, 2.7 million jobs with a work contract have been eliminated in Brazil and several companies will no longer hire them under a contract when the new law comes into force. Companies in the so-called automotive sector, for example, have laid off more than 6,000 workers in recent months. Banks, supermarkets and several other companies are also refusing to hire contract workers based on the draconian labor reform, and the Federal Government wants to lay off 5,000 public employees.

All this is taking place when it is known that the country has almost 14 million unemployed workers (24 million if we include those doing occasional jobs and those who are tired of looking for a job and cannot find one) and 61 million people who are on the list of debtors because they do not have the money to pay their debts.

If this is not enough, according to the Abrinq Foundation, 23 million Brazilians up to 14 years old live in poverty, twice the population of Portugal. More: while they refuse to give a 4.6% increase to the Family Allowance [a social welfare program of the Brazilian government – *translator's note*], a cost estimated at 800 million Reales, the federal government spends 407 thousand million Reales in interest payments to further enrich the national and international bankers.

But the bosses and their government are mistaken in thinking that the workers will bow their heads to this attack on their rights. The number of strikes has grown and will increase even more after this attack of the employers. On April 29, 40 million workers stopped work, went into the streets and made clear the degree of their strength. A new general strike was scheduled for June 30,

but the union federations bribed by the capitalist class boycotted the strike.

However, that is not yet the greatest betrayal. The Labor Reform and the Social Security Reform are just two of the blows that the big national bourgeoisie has carried out against the working class and the poor in our country. This same bourgeoisie gave Olga Benario over to Hitler, turned over Brazil's wealth to foreign capital, allowed the multinationals and owners of latifundias to take possession of the lands of the indigenous people and the peasants, organized one of the most reactionary Armed Forces in Latin America, sponsored several military coups throughout our history, including that of 1964, which assassinated men and women of the stature of Manoel Lisboa, Carlos Marighella, Manoel Aleixo, Yara Yavelberg, Sonia Angel, Margarida Maria Alves, in addition to having supported regimes such as that of Pinochet in Chile and military dictatorships in Argentina and Uruguay.

Shamefully, several political organizations and parties that claim that they are left-wing defend the alliance with that national bourgeoisie as a solution to the country's problems. The president of the Chamber himself, Deputy Rodrigo Maia (Democrats Party, Rio de Janeiro), who pulled this labor reform out of his pocket in Congress, was elected with the support of the PCdoB [Communist Party of Brazil]. This is not something unusual. One of the leaders of that party, Aldo Rebelo, recently launched a manifesto defending the national unity with the bourgeoisie. Michel Temer himself became president by carrying out a coup, but also because he was vice president under Dilma and the PT [Workers' Party]. Also the current Secretary of Finance, the banker Henrique Meirelles, the intellectual author of the reforms, was president of the Central Bank during the two governments of Lula. The justification for that alliance with the big bourgeoisie is that it is necessary to guarantee governability. Now, they propagate that "Direct elections, Now!" is the solution to the crisis. We should remember: since 1989, we have had direct elections, but wage slavery and poverty did not end and the capitalist class increased its fortune even more.

Exploitation or liberation

There are also other organizations of the left that speak of socialism, but they defend the continuity of the capitalist system, arguing that a broad policy is necessary with the current relationship of forces. They forget that a change in the relationship between classes depends on hard work, a correct political line, which only Marxism-Leninism guarantees, and on never hiding the truth from the working class, the only truly revolutionary class, as Marx and Engels already warned in 1848: “The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims.”

In addition, the Labor Reform shows that the interests of the bourgeoisie are opposed to those of the workers. In fact, the boss is rich not because God wants it, but because he exploits the worker. The worker works for the boss in exchange for a small salary, but everything he produces with his labor, the car, the building, the shoe, etc., remains with the bourgeois, who sells the product and appropriates the profit. This is why the boss is rich but the worker remains poor. In fact, the capitalist regime is the worst system that exists in the world. Under it, while the bourgeois gets richer, the worker dies from work, several generations go by and his family continues to live in poverty. As we see with this reform, the much-publicized modernization of capitalism, instead of bringing progress to the worker increases his suffering, deprives him of his rights, destroys millions of families and throws thousands of children into poverty, forcing them to live by



begging in the streets.

Therefore, the workers cannot achieve a better life as long as capitalism, the exploitation of one human being by another, private ownership of the means of production, continues to exist. The conciliators, the defenders of harmony between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, want and expect that business owners have a more humane consciousness, that they be kind, but acting in this way will only prevent the advance of revolutionary consciousness in the popular masses. Undoubtedly, the only way for the worker to achieve his freedom is by joining with his comrades and fighting to do away with capitalist exploitation, to seize power and replace the capitalist system with the socialist one. In order to advance and change the current political situation in our country, we must strengthen the workers' movement against the movement of the bourgeoisie, to make the doctrine of the class struggle a principle and a guide for action, to defend scientific socialism and to fight for a new power and a new government without the participation of the class of exploiters.

August 2017

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Burkina Faso

Revolutionary Communist Party of Volta

The CFA Franc: Vestige of French Colonialism and Instrument of Exploitation and Oppression of the African Neocolonies by Imperialism, Mainly French Imperialism

The question of the CFA [Financial Community of Africa] Franc, a vestige of French colonialism, is currently the subject of intense contradictory debates in Africa and even the world. Various manifestations, declarations, lectures and writings have been carried out by different forces, from particular class positions and interests, which introduce great confusion into the debate that sometimes cover up what is essential. Based on the doctrine of Marxism-Leninism, the Revolutionary Communist Party of Volta (PCRv), analyzes the nature and true role of the CFA Franc, the Franc zone and its problems.

The present analysis deals with the following fundamental points:

- Currency in the world capitalist-imperialist system.
- The CFA Franc, an instrument of oppression and exploitation of the African countries of the Franc zone.
- The attitude of the working class and peoples towards the problem of the CFA Franc.

1. Currency in the world capitalist-imperialist system

1.1 The era of imperialism.

The imperialist system emerged around the years 1860-1870, that is, in the last third of the 19th century and first third of the 20th century.

In his work “Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism,” Lenin showed that “imperialism emerged as the development and direct continuation of the fundamental characteristics of capitalism in general.” He also pointed out that what essentially characterizes imperialism in that process “is the displacement of capital-

ist free competition by capitalist monopoly.” Free competition is the essential feature of capitalism and commodity production in general; monopoly is exactly the opposite of free competition. Monopoly emerged from the creation by capitalism of large-scale production, the elimination of small production, the concentration of capital and production to such an extent that the monopoly always emerges (cartels, syndicates, trusts, etc.). But monopolies do not eliminate free competition, but exist over it, above it or together with it; they engender particularly acute and violent contradictions and conflicts.

Imperialism, according to Lenin, is capitalism in a state of development in which the monopolies and financial capital dominate, where the export of capital acquires primary importance, where the division of the world among the international trusts has begun and where the division of the whole territory of the world among the great capitalist countries has come to an end and they are fighting for that redivision and conquest of spheres of influence.

According to Lenin, monopoly is against progress and develops tendencies toward stagnation and decay: blocking technical progress through buying patents that they hide away, the emergence of rentiers who live by “clipping coupons” and do not participate in any productive process. They live as parasites from the export of capital and other lucrative investments in the colonies and neocolonies. Thus rentier states have emerged, parasitic and rotten capitalist states whose main income comes from interests and dividends, commissions and speculation. This is the economic basis of the development of imperialism.

1.2 The formation of banking monopolies and finance capital

On the role of imperialism in history, Lenin shows that:

- Monopoly emerges from banks that were previously modest intermediaries, but today have the monopoly of capital. In all the advanced capitalist countries a few banks form a “personal union” between industrial capital and banking capital (forming financial capital). They concentrate thousands of millions in their hands, they represent most of the capital and monetary income of the whole country. A financial oligarchy (the power of a small group

of financiers) has been created and has under its sway all the economic and political institutions in society without exception.

- Monopoly emerges from colonial policy. What finance capital adds to the old colonial policy is the struggle for raw materials, for the export of capital, for spheres of influence (areas of advantageous treaties, concessions and the benefits of monopoly, etc.), in short, economic areas in general.

- Monopoly, oligarchy, the tendency towards domination over the tendency towards freedom, the exploitation of small or weak nations by rich and powerful countries, are the distinctive features of imperialism, features that characterize it as parasitic and decaying capitalism. The tendency of imperialism is also the creation of rentier and usurer states, in which the bourgeoisie lives off the export of capital. This tendency to decay does not exclude the rapid development of capitalism. Capitalism develops much more rapidly than before, but this development is generally uneven.

These features of imperialism have been reinforced today in the context of the current general crisis of the world capitalist-imperialist system. The crisis of 2008 has been aggravated by the bursting of the speculative bubble (the crisis of the “sub-primes” or the crisis of mortgage loans) in the U.S. This has had very serious and violent systemic effects; it shows the whole decay of the world capitalist-imperialist system. It confirms that it is not viable, that it is congenitally subjected to periodic convulsions that are increasingly violent and will last until its total disappearance.



1.3 The International Monetary System (IMS)

The crises inherent in the capitalist system have long disrupted trade between different countries. This has led the capitalist countries to fine-tune the international monetary system (IMS), which consists of a set of rules, mechanisms and institutions to organize currency exchanges that go hand in hand with the exchange of commodities. Three objectives were set for the IMS: to organize the exchanges of currencies, to secure the regulations of the international transactions through payments, and to allow adjustments in the balance of payments.

The main areas of activity of the IMS are: the system of exchange: fixed or flexible exchange, using as a standard: gold, a single currency, an artificial currency such as the Special Drawing Rights (SDR), or a set of currencies; international capital in gold or currencies. The world has so far known three IMSs. The latest is the Bretton Woods agreement, with the system of fixed exchanges. At the end of World War II, in 1944, international exchanges were completely disorganized, not only because of the conflict, but also because of the economic crisis. All the capitalist countries had devalued their currencies, thereby effectively abolishing the gold standard, and had established protectionist trade policies. Faced with the depleted situation of international trade and finance, of the extent and depth of the crisis, and to try to resolve the contradictions of the capitalist system that caused the crisis, the imperialist powers (the Allies), under the baton of the U.S. and England, decided to create a new IMS called the Bretton Woods System. Under this system, the gold standard remained, but the international currency was the dollar, replacing the British pound. These agreements, signed on July 22, 1944, established a fixed exchange rate, adjustable by plus or minus 1%, based on the U.S. dollar, which became the leading currency in the world economy, also linked to gold.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) was created in 1946 to deal with monetary problems, particularly to give loans to the member countries in order to maintain their balance of payments and ensure the stability of their currencies. With the 1980 debt crisis in the oppressed countries, the IMF, under the aegis of the U.S. Treasury, developed a policy of subjecting and transferring capital to the economies of those countries, allowing the expan-

sion of international capital. This policy, called the “Washington Consensus,” allowed the IMF to grant conditional loans, following the signing of the destructive Structural Adjustment Plan (SAP).

The World Bank, created in 1945 to help rebuild the capitalist countries of Europe and Japan that had been destroyed by the war, gradually became an agency for the export of capital to the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Since 1990, it has also been financing the countries of Eastern Europe. The World Bank is today a powerful banking monopoly controlled by the great capitalist powers. Through its diverse agencies, the World Bank has the means to quietly exploit and oppress the dominated countries. With this objective, the Bank introduced demagogic political conditions for its financing (good governance, human rights, etc.). U.S. imperialism, in addition to its preponderant influence over its international financial institutions, managed to impose its hegemonic position in the monetary field during the Bretton Woods negotiations, with the dollar as an international currency. But with its trade deficit, the U.S. gold reserves could not cover the dollars in circulation; moreover, the quantity of dollars needed to cope with the growth of international trade could not be maintained. In this situation, on August 17, 1971, the U.S. government put an end to the exchange of the dollar into gold, thus striking a mortal blow to the IMS of Bretton Woods. This system has not yet been replaced, but it has given way to a system of floating exchanges and regional groupings; for example, the dollar zone in which the national currency is dependent on the dollar (U.S., countries of South America, China, the oil producing countries).

In 1976, the Jamaica agreements decided to abandon the fixed exchange rate. The fluctuation of exchanges is today the world rule. The monetary authorities (except for the African countries in the Franc zone) can influence the value of their currency through the exchange market of their central banks. The current situation of the International Monetary System is that each country chooses its system of exchange (fixed or flexible exchange). The countries of the Franc zone have “chosen” to fix their currency to the French Franc and later to the euro, a currency that has a flexible exchange rate set by the European Central

Bank (ECB). The anchoring of the currency of a country to a standard currency means that the monetary authorities of the currency in question undertake to respect a fixed parity with the standard currency. The history of the International Monetary System shows the contradictions of the capitalist-imperialist system. This history shows the inconsistency of the principle of the management of the capitalist economy and of the currency in particular, only according to the law of the market. The example is the current account deficit of the U.S., which threatens major sectors of U.S. industry. This situation has led the monetary authorities of different countries, at the request of the U.S., to sign the agreements of the Plaza and those of the Louvre in 1987, to intervene in the exchange rates of the currencies. The central banks had to intervene in a massive and coordinated way in order to lower the value of the dollar and stabilize the exchange rates for buying dollars.

At present, one can see the existence of monetary cooperation and interventions of the central banks in order to control the evolution of the exchange rates.

II. The Franc Zone: Area for the Domination of French Imperialism

2.1 The history of the CFA Franc.

The history of the CFA Franc is linked to that of the French colonial empire in Africa.

The London conference of 1933, which brought together 66 countries to try to set in motion the world economy disturbed by the stock market crash of October 24, 1929, and the devaluation of the British pound in 1931, led to a great breakdown in exchange rates. This led to “competitive devaluations,” the collapse of the IMS based on the gold standard, and the emergence of monetary zones (sterling zone, dollar zone, Franc zone, etc.)

Faced with this situation, France decided to strengthen its authority over the overseas territories that it controlled. In a decree of August 8 and others of September 1 and 9, 1939, it established a control of exchange rates between France and the rest of the world. Thus was born the Franc zone. The non-convertibility of the metropolitan Franc and the establishment of a control of exchange rates set a geographical zone within which the currencies

could not be exchanged among themselves and they had common rules of protection towards the countries outside its zone.

The ratification by France of the Bretton Woods agreement on December 26, 1945, allowed for the creation of the FCFAs and the FCFPs and their first setting of a parity rate in the IMF. The definition of parity was established by geographical sectors: Franc of the French Colonies of the Pacific (FCFP 1: 2.40 FF); Franc of the French Colonies of Africa (FCFA 1: 1.70 FF); Franc of the metropolis valid for North Africa and the Antilles (FF). This is how the Franc zones were established. It was after the formal independence when these acronyms were defined: FCAF (“Franc of the African Financial Community “), BCEAO for the Central Bank of the West African States, and “Franc of Financial Cooperation in Central Africa for the countries of the BEAC (Bank of the Central African States).

Starting with their formal independence in the 1960s, some countries left the Franc zone: Morocco (1956), Guinea Conakry (1958), Tunisia (1958), Algeria (1961), Mauritania (1973), Madagascar (1973); the counties of former Indochina (Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam) had left in 1954. Mali left the zone in 1962 and rejoined it in 1984.



2.2 Principles of the CFA zone

Four fundamental principles or pillars govern the CFA zone:

- Fixed parity with the “anchor” currency: the parity of the FCFA with the French Franc (FF), later with the euro, is fixed and defined for each sub-zone. The currencies of the zones are convertible among themselves, at fixed parity, without limitation of the amount.

- Guarantee of unlimited convertibility by the French Treasury: the convertibility of the FCFA issued by the different agencies of the zone is guaranteed without limit by the French Treasury.

- Free transferability. In principle, transfers are free within the zone. In the sub-zones and in France, the transfer of capital is, in principle, free.

- Centralization of foreign exchange reserves: they are located at two levels. On the one hand the States centralize their exchange reserves in each of the central banks, and on the other hand there is the unlimited convertibility guaranteed by France. Thus the central banks are obliged to deposit in the French Treasury the amount of the open operations in the name of each of them, a fraction of their exchange reserves (50% for the net external assets of the BCEAO and 60% as of June 30, 2008, 55% up to of June 30, 2009, and from then on 50% for the BEAC.)

Since 1975, these assets have been guaranteed by the Special Drawing Rights. This set of rules has served the objective of deperdition by French imperialism and later by international imperialism. They have stolen and continue to steal the raw materials of the African countries of the Franc zone and fiercely exploit the working class and peoples.

The parity with the FF (French Franc) and later with the euro have facilitated the flood of French and European products into the countries of the Franc zone with all the vicissitudes of the FF and the euro, which prevent any autonomous monetary policy for development. Parity, moreover, is a barrier to the competitiveness of the economies of the African countries of the Franc zone (they make exports difficult when the euro is strong, the exports fluctuate with the fluctuation of the euro) and is an instrument of political control which undermines the country’s sovereignty. Moreover, this fixed parity with the euro does not reflect the economic

reality of the zone. The guarantee of convertibility by the French Treasury only applies to France, not to the zones. That explains the weakness of the exchanges among the African countries of the zone and their high level with France. This principle facilitates French investments in Africa and the repatriation of capital to France, the import of raw materials by France and the blocking of trade among the countries in the zone.

The centralization of exchange reserves is a real swindle. Under the pretext of confronting the danger of devaluation, France uses that money taken from the budgets of the African States for its own benefit (investments with interest in the central banks under the name of Public Development Assistance – APD). Thus in 2015, some 8,000 thousand million FCFA, that is 12 thousand million euros coming from the BCEAO or the BEAC, were piled up in the French Treasury as a forecast of the operation accounts, while those countries lived under a stringent budgetary control (a severe deficit) imposed by France as well as the retention of that amount.

2.3 Declared objectives

Historically the Franc zone was created to serve French colonial interests; the African currencies were eliminated and private banks were established belonging to French private individuals but controlled by France. Created in 1929 to protect its economy and foreign trade, the Franc zone was conceived as a “private preserve” of France. As a consequence of formal independence, and in the face of the rise of national liberation struggles in the



colonies, French imperialism was forced to replace the classical colonial system “characterized by war, extermination, robbery and the whip”, by neocolonialism, which is the continuation of the colonial order under a new form. Today the CFA Franc is the symbol, not only of usurped sovereignty, a legacy of colonialism, but it is also an obstacle to development. A characteristic feature of neocolonialism, the CFA Franc is one of the instruments of exploitation and oppression of the African countries in the zone of French imperialism.

2.4 The nefarious role of the central banks in the CFA zone

The present-day central banks are the continuation of the Bank of West Africa (BAO), created in June of 1901 and based in Paris. This bank was limited to activities related to discount and foreign exchange transactions. In 1955, in order to replace the BAO, the agency for issuing currency in AOF (French West Africa) was created in Togo under the control of private interests and the agency for issuing currency in AEF (French Equatorial Africa) was created in Cameroon. (In 1959, these institutes were renamed the Central Bank of the States of West Africa (BCEAO) and the Central Bank of the States of Equatorial and Central Africa (BCEAEC), which later became the Paris-based BEAC. Banknotes issued by each bank were not in circulation in the zone of issue. The convertibility of the FCFA was assured by the operation accounts with the French Treasury. Therefore, it was a colonial pact that dealt exclusively with the development of France. So the institutional measures used in the context of the Franc zone in the colonial period are more or less the same as today. These methods have strongly influenced the way the Franc zone operates today, which largely explains the economic weakness of the zone.

In sum, the bitter results of the colonial period and the important role played by the currency profoundly deepen the relations of domination between the metropolis and the colonies.

Thanks to the founding principles of the Franc zone, the colonial enterprises could freely export French manufactured goods to the markets of the colonies and could freely import the profitable goods to the market of the metropolis. At the same time, it made it difficult to industrialize the colonies in order to avoid

competition with the industries of the metropolis. In this way, the Franc zone facilitated the export of capital from the metropolis to the colonies and the transfer of profits of the colonial enterprises to the metropolis.

This logic of structural dominance continues in the neocolonial framework. We will give some illustrative figures. In 2013, trade within the UEMOA (West African Economic and Monetary Union) zone compared to total trade was weak: 13% of exports and 9.04% of imports. For the CEMAC (Economic and Monetary Commission of Central Africa), the figures were 1.93% of exports and 3.37% of imports. In fact, the Franc zone favors relations with France much more than among countries in the zone. For example, the trade of the African countries in the Franc zone with France and the euro zone accounted for 60% of total trade. In the Franc zone, the old division of labor continues to function, making the African countries sources of raw materials markets for the products of French and European companies. This explains the terrible economic and social stability of the African countries in the Franc zone. The fight against inflation is given priority through a restrictive monetary policy that causes a weak level of investment. These countries have not yet seen significant structural transformations. The attempts at industrialization have been blocked by the Structural Adjustment Plans of the IMF and the World Bank.

The essential features of the Franc zone are those of a growing economic weakness, a weak structural transformation, poverty and low employment, a weak economic integration of the countries, and weak financing of the economies by the banks.

The dominated economies of African countries are also evolving in the global and multi-polar economic situation under the control of the monopolies. The international financial institutions, such as the World Trade Organization, the IMF and the World Bank, impose neoliberalism on an international scale. French imperialism is undergoing a relative decline and must confront the penetration into its former “private preserves” of other imperialist powers (U.S., Germany, China, etc.) and of countries such as India, Brazil and Turkey. Since 2000, France has continued to lose market shares of its dominions in Africa, to the benefit of China, other emerging countries and other rival

powers. France is only the fifth exporter to Africa. Between 2000 and 2011, the share of French banks in the supply of credit in the UEMOA zone has fallen from 37% to 16%. The Franc zone is increasingly strengthening its integration into the world capitalist-imperialist system and is diversifying its economic relations. The plundering of resources is more intense, with no equivalent.

The African countries in the Franc zone have worsened their situation by signing the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA), which allow the EU countries to flood their markets with manufactured goods, thereby reducing their potential for industrialization. In the current context, in which the Public Development Assistance (ADP) is declining, the only way they have to finance their development is indebtedness and FDI (Foreign Direct Investment). However, indebtedness is limited by the UEMOA and the interest rates established by the financial market to the Franc zone countries are very high, higher than or equal to the rates of growth. As for the FDI, they are volatile and only concern the extraction sector (hydrocarbons and mines).

In short, if the CFA Franc persists despite its failure to achieve long-term development goals, it is because it is also a system of political repression. Facts show that all the heads of state who opposed the CFA Franc have either been assassinated or overthrown. For example, between 1960 and 2012, the Franc zone has been the scene of 78 coup attempts, of which 37 have led to changes of governments. All the countries of the Franc zone, without exception, have known coup attempts. Only in Senegal and Cameroon have these attempts been abortive. In the 15 African countries of the Franc zone, successful coups represent 38% of the attempts. In fact, the Franc zone and the CFA Franc are instruments of domination and oppression in the hands of international imperialism, French imperialism in particular. They have brought nothing good to the working class and peoples of the zone, nor can they do so.

Today, the peoples of the African neocolonies are rejecting the CFA Franc and colonial domination and oppression. To this must be added the pressures against the CFA franc applied by the rival imperialist powers that call into question the survival of the colonial monopoly. U.S., German and Chinese imperialism, including countries like Switzerland, which penetrate the markets

of the neocolonies in an increasingly important way, are putting into doubt the CFA Franc.

III. What attitude should we take to the problems of the Franc zone and the CFA Franc?

As an instrument of domination, oppression and exploitation of the working class and peoples, the correct attitude advocated by the Revolutionary Communist Party of Volta (PCRV) to the problem of the Franc zone and the CFA Franc is the revolution.

The PCRV presents an appropriate response to this problem in its “Political Platform for Action for Change in Favor of the People.” It states that “the only road to change in favor of the people is the insurrection of the people to carry out the National Democratic and People’s Revolution.”

On the currency, the platform says: “Establish monetary sovereignty and break the dependence on French imperialism, which uses the currency to exploit and oppress our country and our people; fight for the creation of an independent currency.”

The platform states that all measures that reinforce imperialist domination and restrict the development of the country must be abolished. These are the Structural Adjustment Plans and privatization, the neocolonial debts that undermine the independence and sovereignty of the country. The currency should be a tool to invest in infrastructure, aid the country to improve living conditions, create the bases for eliminating the backwardness of the countryside, modernize agriculture and reduce the difference between the city and the countryside. The currency should not be a tool in the hands of France and Europe to exploit and oppress the working class and peoples of the countries of the Franc zone.

With the implementation of the political platform of action, the CFA Franc system will be broken, the neocolonial power and the forces on which international imperialism, French imperialism in particular, bases itself to dominate and exploit our country will be eliminated. A modern Democratic Republic will be established with a secular, democratic and popular State.

September, 2017

Colombia

Communist Party of Colombia (ML) – PCC(ML)

Santos, His Demons and the Papal Visit

Since last year there have been rumors about a visit to Colombia by the Argentine pontiff living in Rome. Now it is no longer a speculation, it is the public commitment of the Vatican State for him to visit Cartagena, Medellin, Villavicencio and Bogota, places of great political, social and economic conflicts exemplifying different aspects of the country's sharp crisis. These cities are not far from where most of the fighting between government troops and insurgent forces is taking place. Here, urban events of military importance are being carried out, such as the recent blow dealt by the ELN to a squad of troops from the bloodthirsty and sinister anti-riot police squadron (ESMAD) located in Bogota.

“The Pope is not coming to support any position other than peace” and from that reference is made of the need to *“fight relentlessly against all forms of injustice, inequity, corruption and exclusion,”* to deal with evils that *“destroy the very life of society,”* as the letter from the Vatican Secretary of State announcing the visit stated.

It is also states that Pope Francis will especially emphasize the urgency of attacking some causes of the armed conflict in order to reach a *“stable and lasting”* peace. This approach is already sufficiently political so that only those who were negotiating the end of the war at the round table in Havana, Cuba, can capitalize on it. There will be a notable attempt to stick to the words about peace pronounced by the pope.

That is to say, in all this about the papal visit there is a deep spiritual flavor, but his visit is, in essence, a political event clearly marked by the purposes that have been expressed publicly, and the support that they seek to gain among the millions of Colombians that follow the dictates of the Catholic Church. One can only understand this within the difficult context that the implementation of the Havana accords at the Colon Theater, modified today to the liking of the Executive with the changes made by Congress in its *“Fast Track”* debates, is passing through.

It is said that Pope Francis will assign his bishops and priests the mandate to “*assume the risk of converting the whole Church, every parish and every institution, into a field hospital, into a safe place for those who suffered atrocities and those who acted from the side of violence.*”

Meanwhile, what everyone, from the top officials of the government of Colombia and the top ecclesiastical hierarchy allied to Santos, will look for at all costs **is to use the announced papal visit to improve the people’s expectation of the supposed benefits of the peace accords.**

They know well that the hope for a better life has vanished from the minds of the people, seeing that their social situation is deteriorating along with the economic, social and political decisions of the government. This has reached the point that already several sectors of the people are confirming the report that the withdrawal of the FARC from their territories has left national and foreign capital free to launch their injustices and abuses. These include the strengthening of the paramilitary forces that have already taken the lives of 150 social and political leaders who faithfully agreed to work for the accords for the “handing over of arms” by the FARC.

The Nobel Peace Prize did not serve for much...

The limitations of public relations to influence social psychology were evident when using this as a means to get the majority of the Colombian peoples to accept the “*peace accords,*” to impose the YES in the October 2016 plebiscite, since the talk has



become increasingly empty as there are no achievements that show a willingness to change by the regime and the government.

Indeed, after the honeyed public relations noises and the rumor about the signing of the second accords in Cartagena that put an end to the existence of the FARC as a guerrilla group (the first signing was in Havana, with international pomp), the Colombians will hardly forget the expensive public relations, hardly surpassed by that used to promote the endorsement of the failed plebiscite, organized to announce Santos' trip to Norway to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.

Nor do they forget the cost of advertising of the meeting – of little importance and short-term – held in the Coliseo de Ferias in Bogota, which led to selling the popular yearning for peace as one more commodity and not an event to use one's intelligence that would lead to a general political solution to a conflict that began in the second quarter of the 20th century. A few of those who had the honor to be in the Coliseo to deal with the question of peace these days were personalities who behaved and took political and military decisions against peace, such as former U.S. imperialist president Barak Obama.

Of course, Santos could not change his image with the Nobel Prize. He boasted so much about his decisions to use force against the people and not only against the guerrillas, to violate the national sovereignty of Ecuador with the bombardment of Angostura, that thanks to the mass media he could not appear as the "champion of Peace." He was, for many years, the militarist-bellicose Minister of Defense and the presidential heir and student of the "democratic security" of Uribe. The latter stepped up the holocaust against the Colombian people in their fight for the social and national liberation, fueling the class struggle by making clearer and more vivid the contradictions between wage labor and capital, between the people and the oligarchy, and between the nation and imperialism.

Will the Pope's Visit Serve Peace?

The papal visit is a catchword used **to air the issue of peace**; it is taking place just now when the FARC is surrendering its arms and the implementation of the accords is beginning which in many cases will just be "*another law*" which continues the usual

“Santanderism” [based on the positions of Santander, a general in the Latin American wars of impendence and later President of Colombia – *translator’s note*] that becomes **a means to control the population with its adoption of demagogic norms.**

This announcement of the pope’s visit also coincides with the time when the Havana accords are being questioned because they are not being fulfill, because of new changes in Congress and the deceptions that they entail, according to various important participants in the external and internal dynamic of the negotiating table in Cuba who are beginning to see the “*deception*” and “*fraud*” of the Government because it does not act when it is time to implement the accords, or seeks to distort their meaning.

The popular imagination is beginning to get the idea that “*they deceived the FARC,*” that is, they fell into a trap that serves the plans of surrender of Santos and the U.S. imperialists and the whole world, who rejoiced to see the right to rebellion trampled upon.

It is there that the real political conduct of the Vatican State will become more visible when it will be impossible to silence or to stop bringing to light the failures of the accord at the summit that took place at the Island of Marti [Cuba]. So, when the Pope arrives in October, they will have seen the outrages that have been coming with the legal implementation in Congress against the people’s political freedom, truth, justice, reparations for victims and guarantees of non-repetition [of violations] for the people. The economic measures against peace have increased rapidly with the agrarian law of the ZIDRES [Zones of Interest for Rural Economic and Social Development] in 2016, the minimum wage of 2017, the increase in outsourcing, the new wave of privatizations and the new tax reform in progress, with a New Police Code that further facilitates the criminalization of the popular struggle.

Pope Francis himself, dealing with “social justice,” in an interview with the Italian newspaper *Il Messaggero*, made a very significant statement: “*The communists have stolen the banner of the poor from us*” and he assured that “*the banner of the poor is Christian.*” So it remains to be seen whether the Vatican Chief of State will simply applaud the end of military clashes between the

FARC and the government and the termination of this guerrilla force or whether he will commit himself to fighting the causes of the conflict.

But from what one reads in various quotes on social participation by the highest leader of the Catholic Church, this can have full immediate application if the believers in that religion work in tune with the momentum for social participation and national dialogue for the solution of the conflict raised at the negotiating table in Quito. The Santos government rejected this in the Havana negotiations and again, contrary to what was agreed on with the ELN [Army of National Liberation], the chief negotiator described this as NOT binding the very day of the setting up of the negotiating table on February 7 in the outskirts of Quito. Thus it is assumed that this is an opportunity to apply what the prelate emphasized in his visit to Manila when he stated that “*it is a duty to listen to the voice of the poor.*”

Can Amnesty for the Insurgents Turn into a Pardon for the War Criminals?

In fact, amnesty, the legal security of not being imprisoned, constitutes one of the core issues of the negotiation with the FARC, since the new political movement that they are planning to launch in a few months starts with the affiliation of the current members of this guerrilla group, which is in the process of demobilization.

In fact, as we have already noted, the existence of a law is not always a solution to a problem; sometimes it even worsens it.



Law 1820 of 2016 on amnesty, pardon and special treatment, voted with the anti-democratic Fast Track mechanism, **ignores the essence of political crime**. Therefore, due to its entanglements, despite coming into force on December 30, 2016, there are still hundreds of former guerrillas who have not yet been given amnesty, since they are being pressured to comply with the deadlines to hand over their weapons, which is the main goal of the accord.

In the newspaper *El Espectador* of last January 17, journalist Carlos Martínez wrote: “*In March 1,200 military and police, involved in crimes related to the conflict, will be released.*”

The article further reads: “*The Minister of National Defense Luis Carlos Villegas announced that, in the first week of March of this year, 1,200 military personnel implicated in crimes related to the armed conflict will be released, once the Transitional Justice for members of the Armed Forces comes into force.*”

Villegas noted that, unlike the Transitional Justice for members of the FARC, which was agreed to in Havana, Justice for the military personnel was established unilaterally by the National Government, dealing with the men who were involved in these kinds of crimes.

“*He also clarified that the uniformed personnel who take recourse in this Special Justice under this Legislative Act will only serve a five-year sentence as a sign of forgiveness, forgetting and reparations.*”

“*He also stated that although he does not know the details of the case of General Jaime Uscátegui, condemned for the Mapiripán massacre, the minister said that he could also avail himself of the benefits that the Special Justice provides for military personnel.*”

On Monday, March 13, the legislative act that reformed the disjointed and broken Constitution of 1991, which established the content for the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP), was very rapidly approved. To this constitutional content are added the observations stated above by the Defense Minister, former negotiator in Havana and former ambassador to Washington, as well as the comments of the State Attorney General that favor impunity for the civilians who financed the paramilitaries and assassination operations to eliminate social and political leaders. He also

favors separating political crimes from common crimes in order to block a political solution to the armed conflict.

Under these conditions, all the governmental demagoguery about the victims, truth and non-repetition will remain mere words. Thus the efforts of the movement for the defense of human rights to prove for decades the existence of State Terrorism as a sponsor of the paramilitaries and the terror exercised by the armed forces are relegated to the cybernetic garbage can of justice. This is one of the methods of the process of fascist transformation of the political regime in Colombia.

Then, as the song of the group La Muralla says: What will the holy Pope say / who lives in Rome / while his pigeons are being beheaded...

The Crime of Drug Trafficking as the Sword of Damocles

What was approved by the JEP, which together with Law 30 of 1986 already constitutes a bulky, cumbersome legal document, will be connected another law to deal with the connection of political crime and the crime of drug trafficking. This is an obvious danger because it can be used at any time to prosecute the demobilized members of the FARC, or to deny them amnesty and pardon.

This includes the danger of extradition to the United States, which has requested the extradition of other members of the FARC to prosecute them for drug trafficking, a matter of serious consequence. This misleads the FARC, with the failure of Santos' promise to release Simon Trinidad, currently imprisoned in the United States. Thus, the leaders of the FARC, who insist on not serving a single day in jail, have reason fear this.

As was stated in the letter of confirmation of the visit of Pope Francis to Colombia, he is coming mainly to "personally support the peace process." Anyone who understands the crisis of the accords with the FARC will ask: Which process is the Vatican discussing? The struggle for peace or of an armistice to formalize the surrender (or defeat?) of the FARC?

But the Vatican speaks of the need to work for truth, justice and reparations for the victims. That is to say, he would have to modify this criterion or enter into the details of the Havana accords and analyze the activity tending to achieve the changes that

the negotiating table with the ELN in Quito are supposed to push forward. To limit oneself to phrases that talk about religion and try to transcend spirituality, the pope and his Vatican State would have to leave those statements to “divine justice,” leaving the members of his congregation in the hell on earth of “social injustice.”

The reality of the government’s schemes to achieve the demobilization of the FARC surpasses the imagination. Therefore the demons that Santos’ disastrous presidential administration unleashed, which already includes the blatant corruption within the Cabinet in the style of Uribe, are facts that have him trapped and the visit of a great religious hierarch cannot save him from them.

Communist Party of Colombia (Marxist-Leninist)
Central Executive Committee
March, 2017

Denmark

Workers' Communist Party of Denmark - AKP

The Importance of the October Revolution for Women's Liberation

Report to the ICMLPO Seminar on the significance of the October Revolution, Stuttgart, June 2017, delivered by Dorte Grenaa, Chair of the Workers' Communist Party of Denmark APK

The October Revolution of 1917 and the struggle to build a whole new society without exploitation remains a great source of experience and inspiration for the world's working class and working people. The October Revolution meant a fundamental change in women's lives and opportunities. The decisive factor for this was that state power was in the hands of the working class, leading directly to the abolition of the cause of the special oppression of women – the right of private property.

“Ever since private property in land and factories has been abolished and the power of the landowners and capitalists overthrown, the tasks of politics have become simple, clear and comprehensible to the working people as a whole, including working women. In capitalist society the woman's position is marked by such inequality that the extent of her participation in politics is only an insignificant fraction of that of the man.” (Lenin, *The Tasks of the Working Women's Movement in the Soviet Republic*, September 1919)

By organizing the whole society around the principle of abolishing the exploitation of people, the Soviet state under the dictatorship of the proletariat worked to abolish all forms of economic, social, cultural and political inequality, including the inequality between men and women that exists in any class society.

The tasks of the young workers' power, to build the new society after the October Revolution, were enormous. Until then, society had only been developed to serve a small, rich upper class under the czarist regime, the landlords and church.

Most of the population lived in the countryside, in a semi-feudal barbaric society. They lived in poverty, where hunger, sickness, ignorance, oppression and brutality prevailed, where relationships between people were marked by deeply ingrained feudal features. The woman was considered the slave and property of the family and the man. It was said that the peasant treated his animals better than his wife and daughters. In the Central Asian republics, polygamy and the sales of brides were quite normal.

Socialist social development took place at an unprecedented pace and scale, despite all attempts to destroy it both by internal reactionary forces and the surrounding imperialist world. The October Revolution was a tidal wave of revolutionary social power and energy. It set millions in motion to develop the productive forces to create a better material basis for a new society. At the same time, a dialectical process was set in motion to create the most important force – the new free human being.

For the Bolshevik party and the revolutionary movement, it was obvious that this should apply to both men and women.

The Soviet state was aware from the beginning that special efforts had to be made to create conditions to change the situation of women. The State not only put forward equal legal rights, but it created the social structures necessary for women to use these equal rights and practice real equality. Lenin described this both in principle in and concrete detail.

2. The principles of equality in the Constitution, the law and the family

A few months after the October Revolution, a completely new legal system was developed, the foundation of which was women’s full equality in society, work and family life.

A new marriage law was introduced in which the old concept of the “head of the family” was banned and all laws based on the slavery of woman were abolished. Marriage became a private matter between two persons. There was no legal distinction between married and unmarried, registered and unregistered marriages. Also, the hideous patriarchal term “illegitimate children” for children born out of marriage was abolished. All

children were given equal rights and considered equal. Men and women were equal in inheritance.

Both women and men were free to choose their life partner, their job and profession. Both parties could retain their original citizenship, their name and their right to self-determination in every detail. Women and men also had the same rights concerning divorce. Both parents were obligated to the care and education of their children regardless of marital status. The Soviet Constitution was the first state in the world to introduce the right to vote to all persons of both sexes over 18 years of age.

The introduction of the principles of equality in the constitution and legislation was a huge sign of a whole new view of the woman as an equal fellow human being and citizen.

3. Women's work changes character

The Soviet State introduced equal pay for equal work. What capitalism has not yet managed to do for more than a century since the demand was raised, the working-class state implemented in a few months. It gave women the opportunity to achieve economic independence, which they knew from bitter experience was so necessary for their independence.

Many labor rights in production were introduced. The working day was continuously reduced by several hours in the following years. At the same time, it was a working day that included time for vocational education. Social rights covering



sickness, unemployment, pregnancy, disability and family support in case of death as well as a national state pension were introduced.

Recognizing that women can also have children, special labor rights and social security were introduced for working women. Many considerations for occupational safety were taken already at the start of pregnancy. Maternity leave was introduced - two months for physical work, six weeks for intellectual work. When she went back to work, the mother had the right to have to breast-feed her baby. Mothers received full pay during maternity leave, as well as special support to cover additional expenses and childcare during the first nine months after the birth of her child.

A society that lacked almost everything, and at the same time reduced working time – something like that had never been seen before. A planned economy was introduced, free anarchistic capitalist over-production and over-use of resources. In the summer of 1930 it succeeded in eliminating unemployment. The former offices for the payment of unemployment benefit were transformed into centers for planned distribution of labor power.

The first five-year plan’s technological changes in industrial production created new and different jobs for women. Collectivization of agriculture liberated forces that created a new wave of revolutionary energy and mobilized women in the countryside. The cooperatives gave women completely new opportunities to use their abilities and labor.

Before 1917 under the czarist regime, women’s work during the day was characterized by slave-like work in agriculture and unskilled, low-paid women’s work in factories. After working hours women had to work a second, unpaid job at home and with the children.

The October Revolution changed the character of women’s work into organized collective and social work. The development was fastest in large-scale production and state-owned plants, in which the workplaces were tailored to both men’s and women’s needs. The work was combined with education, with the family and children, with residential areas and transport. This development was naturally slower in the countryside, in the cooperatives and in small-scale farming.

4. Access to education on a mass scale

In a society where the majority was illiterate, education had been a privilege for a very few and production had not been developed, education would be a key issue. It had to be developed on a mass scale and at a fast pace, especially for women who had previously been culturally and socially deprived.

All educational institutions were opened to women so that they could improve their practical, social and intellectual abilities. Special support was given to complete education in all sectors. The Soviet state began the construction of an entire polytechnic school system with associated educational institutions, from schools for children to technical schools and working-class universities. At the same time, workers and peasants organized libraries, reading rooms and education in reading and writing in co-operatives, in factories, in the public sector and in residential areas. The whole community was involved in this giant project. For example, children and young people taught grown-ups to read and write as part of the eradication of illiteracy.

For women in the countryside and the cities, participation in education was an opportunity to qualify for more jobs. But it was also a recognition of the fact that women have minds that want to learn, eyes that want to see, ears that want to hear and voices that want to be heard.

The church and religion, which under the czarist regime were an enormous power and a constant source of oppression and overshadowing of women, were now separated from the educational systems. Religion was considered a private matter.

5. Protection of children and mothers – Access to legal abortion

Before the October Revolution, the great majority women did not have the opportunity to give their children a secure upbringing, or to decide how many children they would have. Child mortality was sky-high, women died in childbirth and from having too many children. Women were ashamed and died from illegal abortions carried out in inhuman conditions by quacks.

In 1920 a law gave women access to abortion within the first three months of pregnancy. It had to be performed only by

doctors in hospitals and was free for women workers. It was granted for health or social reasons if it could put either the child or the mother in difficulty. The decision was made by a committee consisting of a doctor and two women workers. Such committees were established at every “Women’s Advisory Center”.

A decade after the legalization of abortion, the Institute for Maternal and Child Protection found that it had not yet been possible to eliminate all dangerous, illegal abortions. They pointed out two different reasons. First, in some places, there were still many culturally disadvantaged women who did not dare to seek access to legal abortion, especially in the countryside. Second, especially in the cities, there was not enough hospital space for everyone who wanted an abortion. Therefore, it was decided to reduce the number of illegal abortions and the mortality rate on a quite significant scale.

In the struggle to eradicate illegal abortions and prevent women from needing to have an abortion, the Soviet Union prioritized several elements. These were: to expand the health and hospital services, to ensure knowledge of and access to contraception and to develop a good social care system – and of course the goal-oriented work to provide all citizens with human conditions.

In 1918, the organization of an extensive Mother-Child Care Program began. For the Soviet Union, the health of the individual was a social concern. Systems and structures were created to ensure that the best health facilities and expertise were obtainable for everyone in society, especially for pregnant women, infants, children and other groups with special needs. Infant and maternity clinics, maternity homes for mothers with infants were created, courses in infant care and children’s clinics were established.

To ensure child care while the parents were at work, the building of nurseries and kindergartens was also considered a social task. They were developed at the factories, in the residential districts and in the villages. Similarly, schools, youth clubs and youth associations were organized.

All these actions were of major importance to women’s social participation and independence.

6. Socialization of house work and collective solutions

For women to participate on an equal footing with the men in the building and administration of the new Soviet state, it was necessary to address the thousand-year-old problem of the double work of a job and the everlasting repetitive housework. The tying of women to individual housework in each family had to be replaced by collective solutions through the socialization of housework.

Public kitchens as collective eating places, collective laundries and shops to repair clothes were created. In 1923, the Department of Public Nutrition, Narpit, was established. It was an initiative to improve the population's poor nutritional state and to assist in the development of public eating places.

This issue was also considered in the organization of new homes and cities. In 1917 the housing shortage was serious everywhere. In the old working-class areas in the cities neither gas, electric light, water nor sewers existed. People were crammed together in small, dark and humid homes. Now, new towns were being built, where the most advanced collective houses existed. These had common dining rooms, common libraries and reading rooms, common rooms for children where they could play and study. These were only a short distance from work, home, schools, institutions, shops and leisure sports and cultural houses, with light, air and green spaces between them.

The transition from individual, small farms to cooperative ones meant the abolition of centuries-old slavery for poor peasant women. Collective farm machinery replaced harsh-physical work for women. In the cooperatives, women worked on an equal footing in all kinds of work, such as driving tractors. The cooperatives created crèches, kindergartens and schools. Women gained access to knowledge and education.

In the Soviet Asian republics with deeply ingrained patriarchal feudal clan class societies, it was the youth and young women who took a leading role in the women's movement, often at great risks. In these republics, it was necessary to create special clubs, schools and reading rooms for women only.

A special form of information work among the nomads was called "the red tents". With a midwife, librarian and teacher, they went from place to place and taught women to read and write as

well as childcare and legal issues. They also organized a workers’ union for women carpet weavers in the existing home industry. In the mountains, similar “mountain cabins” were established.

The issue of women’s liberation and collective life are inextricably connected. Life in small, individual family groups is far more limiting for women than for men. For women, it is harder to overcome the concern for the small family in order to participate in public and social tasks because of her main responsibility for the family’s well-being.

Collective living with shared childcare, household and culture released an immense amount of energy and resources, when millions of women could be exempt from hours of individual work with home and children every day. The Bolshevik Party applied this viewpoint through the power of example and by creating the material conditions for this to be possible.

7. Women’s participation and organization in the revolution

Women workers played a major role in the revolutionary movement from the uprising of 1905. The Bolsheviks worked to organize the women into trade unions. They fought for women’s rights and for the unity in the working class against backward prejudices among many male workers. Mass strikes and demonstrations were organized among the women workers. Women’s demands for equal pay, maternity leave, kindergartens and protection against abuse and violence became an integral part of the Bolshevik Party’s political program.

In 1914, women accounted for 25% of the industrial workforce; in 1917 it grew to 40%. During the First World War, unskilled women were primarily drawn into the textile industry and the metallurgical war industry. In the October Revolution of 1917, the masses of poor women in the countryside joined the demands for peace, bread and land. The population in the countryside at the time represented 80% of the entire population.

Lenin’s and Stalin’s Bolshevik Party were fully aware that a revolution could not be carried out without women’s participation and support and that special systematic work among women was necessary to achieve this. Either the masses of women would be won for the revolution or lost to reaction.

The Bolshevik women participated in the illegal revolutionary work. Like the men, many of them were arrested and sent into exile in Siberia. During the October Revolution of 1917, Bolshevik women took part in the revolutionary activities. They participated in the armed struggles and fought and died side by side with the men in the Red Guard.

The Bolsheviks' line in the organization of women was to raise demands for equality and to fight against women's oppression; but at the same time to explain that the prerequisite for implementing this was a socialist revolution. The newspaper *Rabotnitsa*, with Krupskaya¹ and Kollontai² as editors, played a special role in training, raising and mobilizing women around this and their role in the revolution.

Even before the October Revolution, the Bolshevik Party had a relatively large proportion of women members, because the Communist Party paid attention to work among women and insured that their abilities and energy would be set free. Conferences were organized to discuss with women workers and peasants how best to carry out this work.

After the October Revolution, the center of special work among the masses of women under the leadership of the Party became the so-called "delegate assemblies of women workers and peasants". In each enterprise and everywhere, one delegate was elected for every ten women. The "delegate corps" was formed whose duties were: 1) to inform women about their rights and teach them how to use them, 2) to increase their political

¹ N. Krupskaya (1869-1939) was one of the leaders of the revolutionary Bolshevik movement. After the October Revolution, she played a key role in the development and construction of the new education system, and was Deputy People's Commissar for Education responsible for adult education and for the development of public libraries. Krupskaya was a member of the Supreme Soviet, of the CPSU(b) leadership and also Lenin's life partner.

² Alexandra Kollontai (1872-1952) was a Russian communist revolutionary and from 1915 a member of the Bolshevik Party. She became the world's first woman minister \ after the October Revolution. She was People's Commissar for Social Welfare and later ambassador to Norway, Mexico and Sweden.

understanding, and 3) to prepare them to participate in the work for the socialist society.

The prominent Bolshevik Nadezhda Krupskaya described how women and men changed with the development of the revolution and felt like “masters of production”. In a speech at the joint plenary session of the Communist Party in 1927, she emphasized the enormous and constant continuing development of consciousness that resulted from the October Revolution:

“If we compare a modern village with an old village, we will see that, maybe, in the sense of wealth it has not gained so much, but what do we see? We see the village busy with enormous organisational work. We see a lot of organisations there – village councils, committees of mutual assistance, the Komsomol, Women’s Section, etc. We see cooperation that holds a tremendous upheaval in the economy of the village. And so, when you see how the whole village is committed to the new principles of reorganising their lives, then one recalls the words of Vladimir Ilyich – the nail of building socialism is in organisation.”

The Bolshevik Party also made great special efforts to involve and secure women’s participation in the leading bodies of Soviet power at all levels, from top to bottom, and in all sectors to ensure the true democracy that the power of the working class – the dictatorship of the proletariat – created.

8. The importance of the October Revolution for the women of the whole world

The October Revolution changed the view of women and their view of themselves. A new image of women – as equal citizens and fellow-fighters – was created, and it reverberated among all the women of the world.

The official history of the European Union states that European women were given the right to vote because they showed themselves as equal partners during World War I. This is complete hypocrisy and deception. They were not given anything. It was not the least the pressure of the October Revolution and the new view of women that forced most capitalist governments to give in to the women’s long struggle for the right to vote.

Millions of women in the western world had been drawn into production as part of the working class during the First World War. However, without the October Revolution, this would have been regarded as a temporary historical phenomenon. Instead the October revolution meant a great inspiration for the struggle and social participation of women and the working class for their rights and for a revolutionary change.

Only two decades later, Soviet power succeeded in destroying fascism in the victory over Nazi Germany. One of the reasons for this was the changed situation of women under socialism. Women were trained and prepared not only to go into war production and fight behind the lines, but to carry out the same military and civilian tasks as men. The women were no longer a reserve that could be taken back. The Soviet people had doubled their strength by women advancing as equals.

With the revisionist seizure of power after Stalin’s death and the progressive restoration of capitalism, many of women’s great achievements were also reversed and replaced by setbacks. Today, women of the former Soviet republics face all the problems that women’s oppression under capitalism leads to. The previous great achievements of the October Revolution and the building of socialism are being kept hidden, in the capitalist as well as the former socialist camp.

The enormous progress achieved under socialism demanded an exertion of great dimensions that are hard to imagine today. The society lacked everything that could create the conditions for a better life – bricks to build kindergartens with, books and lights to learn to read, sufficient food for the children, water to wash,



machines to produce, raw materials, power plants, infrastructure – and not the least education of an entire population to build a whole new society.

In addition, the progress of women required a showdown with centuries of religious, patriarchal, feudal and male-chauvinist thinking, whose influence had spread into the ranks of the working class itself, and thus, also into the Bolshevik party’s own ranks. The struggle for women’s liberation was and had to be put forward as part of the continuing class struggle under socialism.

If one asks: Did women achieve full equality and liberation in the period of building socialism after the October Revolution, then the answer must be no. It was simply not possible in the historically short period and under such conditions to create and achieve the complete material, political, social and cultural conditions for full equality in all fields. But the fact is that they achieved more than anyone had done before or since.

The October Revolution fully confirmed the theses about the women’s struggle for liberation that the great German Communist leader, Clara Zetkin,³ has summarized. Some main conclusions are:

1) that the struggle for liberation of or women workers cannot be separated from the overall struggle of the working class and the revolutionary struggle for socialism; 2) that women’s final liberation can only be won through revolution and the building of socialism under the leadership of the communist party; 3) that women’s involvement and participation are crucial to the victory of the revolution and socialism and that special systematic work among women must be organized and implemented to ensure this.

This is still true in 2017. The ICMLPO’s platform for women’s struggles is based on the same basic theses.

³ Clara Zetkin (1857-1933) played a major role in the organization of German women workers, both as a theorist and leader of the international socialist women’s movement and in the German and international communist movement. In 1910, Clara Zetkin organized International Women’s Day on March 8.

For today's young women in the European countries, gender equality in legal terms seems to be a matter of course. They have not known anything else. But at the same time they see that the prerequisites for this equality in practice depends on the woman's class situation and that, as a human right, women's rights do not apply to all people.

Millions of working women in the European countries and the EU face mass unemployment, inequality, poverty, loss of social rights, the breakdown of the public health, education- and social systems that are being privatized only for those who can afford them. Women face violence, maltreatment and sexual molestation; they fear for the future of their children, the threat of war and environmental disasters.

The October Revolution confirms the complete superiority of socialism as a social system, as long as the working class has power. Although socialism does not exist as a system today, we still live in the era of imperialism and socialist revolution, where socialism is on the agenda.

Friedrich Engels, in his work, "The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State", from 1884, referred to the introduction of private property as the world historic defeat for women. The October Revolution, with abolition of private property, showed and shows the way to women's world-historic victory.

Dominican Republic

Communist Party of Labor – PCT

In Haiti: Condemn the UN Legacy and Support the People

(The Communist Party of Labor (PCT) of the Dominican Republic accompanies the Party of the People's Camp and the Popular Democratic Patriotic Movement (MPDP) of Haiti, in the popular struggles that strive to put an end to the domination of imperialism in our fraternal country and people. That is why we share this position with the ICMLPO.)

The United Nations Security Council has become more and more an open instrument at the service of the imperialist powers. This explains the repeated military interventions in various countries under the euphemism of “peacekeeping missions.” where those same imperialist powers created instability and promoted wars as part of the business of the large multinational corporations, the true masters of the UN and of the governments that represent their interests.

This framework explains the occupation of Haiti by UN troops as a link in the chain of torments that began in 1991 with the coup d'état perpetrated against the constitutional government headed by Jean Bertrand Aristide.

After the repeated failures of negotiations with the coup leaders headed by Raoul Cedras, in June 1994, when he was already tamed, he requested the United States to intervene militarily to return the country to constitutionality. The U.S. intervened on September 19 of that same year with more than 20 thousand soldiers and on October 15 Aristide returned to power in Haiti, two days after the departure of Cedras and other coup leaders to a golden “exile” financed by the coffers of the Haitian State.

As in the Dominican Republic in 1965, in Haiti the unilateral occupation of the United States, camouflaged as a “peacekeeping operation,” was transferred to the UN in March 1995. The transition to Preval, elected that same year and the return to power of Aristide in 2000 in a highly questioned election, led to another spectacle of so-called “instability” with the attempted coup led by

former police chief Guy Phillippe and the subsequent “insurrection” unleashed by the rebels of the so-called Resistance Front, both pawns of the United States and the oligarchy of the country.

Finally, on February 29, 2004, Aristide left power as part of negotiations together with foreign diplomats held the night before in the Government Palace. Due to the state of insecurity and anarchy in the country, it is symptomatic that this meeting was guarded by U.S. marines who had arrived in the country days before, supposedly “to secure their embassy.”

On April 30, 2004, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 1542, which established the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). This was the continuation of a series of measures with which the UN began its intervention in Haiti beginning in July of 1994, supposedly to “facilitate the prompt return of legitimate authority, maintain a secure and stable environment in the country and promote the rule of law.”

Regarding the “secure environment” among these objectives, it should be remembered that at that time thousands of “boat people,” people on rafts, arrived on the coast of Florida “fleeing disorder in Haiti.” This became a measure of pressure on the United States by Haitian national sectors who were fighting against the coup d’état sponsored by the U.S. government, against the government of Aristide.

This account is necessary for an objective balance on the completion of the MINUSTAH mission in Haiti after 13 years of imperialist intervention under that umbrella.

In fact, the legacy of the UN in these years of occupation has also been marked by the refusal to recognize the sovereignty of the Haitian people and nation and the systematic violation of human rights. According to several Nobel Peace Prize winners, this situation creates “a debt to the entire people, particularly the women and young people who were raped and sexually exploited by members of the Mission, families who suffered repression by the troops and police and the hundreds of thousands of families who suffered death or illness due to the introduction of cholera. The magnitude and impunity of these violations of human rights, and the fact that the UN denied any responsibility for the cholera for six long years, demand full reparations.” (From the statement

from Buenos Aires last June 17, addressed to the UN Security Council, signed by Adolfo Perez Esquivel, Jody Williams, Rigoberta Menchu, Shirim Ebadi and Betty Williams.)

The cholera alone led to more than 10 thousand dead and 800 thousand affected people who survived.

In what constitutes a new deception of the Haitian people and international opinion, the UN approved compensation for the victims of cholera and it requested a fund of \$400 million dollars for this, an amount equal to less than one year of the financing authorized during the 13 years of MINUSTAH operations, and only 2% of that amount had been collected as of last June.

That is the UN response to the pressures and demands of national sectors that are demanding a fair compensation. With this handout they are trying to wash their hands of the resounding discrediting of that institution, especially in the case of Haiti. Another deception that they are trying to carry out is to recycle MINUSTAH by replacing it with another agency that they call the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti MINUJUSTH.

The revolutionary, patriotic and democratic organizations in Haiti have denounced this as a new subterfuge in order to continue the occupation and control of the country and, as bitter experience has shown, it will not resolve any problems. This intervention is part of the strategy of domination by the multinationals,



and therefore it has only served to safeguard and expand the interests of the monopolies, especially the mining companies, the maquiladoras [assembly sweatshop – *translator's note*] and the big trading companies and the consolidation of the privatization of vital services, as has taken place over the last few years.

In the context of this situation, the popular and resistance movement in Haiti has not ceased to mobilize against the occupation and has therefore denounced and rejected the new post-MINUSTAH plans. As part of this process of resistance and mobilization, at present the Popular Democratic Patriotic Movement (MPDP) has announced the organization of a people's tribunal to carry out a symbolic trial to expose more than a century of occupation and domination of Haiti by the United States and other powers. One should remember that this long path of suffering in modern Haitian history began with the U.S. military occupation in started in 1915.

This popular initiative has already formed its team of judges to investigate the accusations. Departmental commissions are working in the different regions of the country to carry out field studies in order to document the human rights crimes and looting perpetrated over 102 years of occupation and domination. It is also working to identify victims and witnesses of repression and abuse.

The people's tribunal is an alternative court that has obtained its mandate from a number of activists within the social movements, in order to judge one of the main causes that have prevented the Haitian State from fulfilling its obligations towards its citizens. The trial is expected to conclude with the appropriate verdict at the end of this year.

On the occasion of the withdrawal of MINUSTAH, Haiti's democratic and popular sectors are demanding a fair compensation for the country for all the outrages and victims against its sovereignty, and at the same time they are rejecting any attempt to prolong the occupation through subterfuges that justify "jobs" with high salaries to foreign "technicians" while maintaining direct control of the country in the hands of agents of the imperialist powers.

Considering this resistance of the Haitian people as part of the struggle against the oligarchy and imperialism carried out by

all the peoples of the world for the sake of their independence, freedom and real democracy, from this side of the border we reiterate our solidarity with the Haitian people and demand:

Troops and Agents Out of Haiti, Out of the Island

August, 2017

Ecuador

Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Ecuador – PCMLE

Movement for the Revolutionization of the Party (extracts)

Starting from the historic accumulation of the experiences and achievements of the organization and struggle of the workers, in the building of the party; keeping in mind the blows suffered, the political defeats and the mood of the masses; the development of the political struggle and the relationship of forces; the ideological and political offensive of the class enemy, the present government and the action of the bourgeois opposition, the Central Committee, after an important process of consultation with the rank and file, of frank and fraternal discussion that is being developed, **proposes to organize within the Party and its forces an intense ideological and political mobilization:**

The central objectives of this mobilization are:

- to affirm the relevance of Marxism Leninism, the class nature of the Party and to raise to higher levels the great responsibility of organizing and making the revolution, the struggle for the seizure of power as the task of the present generations;

- to undertake a many-sided discussion of the policies of the party developed up to now and to raise them to new levels that will produce advances in the building of the revolutionary movement of the masses, the unity of the laboring classes, the youth and the advanced sectors of the indigenous and black movement, the role of the working class as the vanguard of the revolution;

- the use of all forms of struggle to clear the path for the political struggle in the present situation and the strategic course towards the goal of overthrowing the domination of imperialism and the capitalists and the establishment of people's power;

- to advance in the task of building a great party, guided by Marxism-Leninism, rooted in the working class, the other laboring classes of the city and countryside, the peoples and youth, a party of a new type, fearless and battle-hardened, with steel-like

unity around its principles, disciplined and bold, able to advance in the process of the accumulation of forces and to take up and lead the great battles for the revolution.

This ideological and political mobilization, the building of a great party has as protagonists all the members, from the members of the Central Committee to the new members who will be incorporated into its ranks, raises the slogan of THINKING, LIVING AND FIGHTING AS COMMUNISTS, and must concentrate on the creativity, initiative and boldness to promote the **Movement for the Revolutionization of the Party**.

I. The current situation and its prospects

After 10 years of existence of the “citizen’s revolution,” of its re-inauguration through electoral fraud, it is necessary to fully analyze its results and consequences.

The great struggles against neoliberalism carried out by the workers and peasants, the teachers and student youth and indigenous peoples; the combats against imperialist domination and for the non-payment of the external debt; the deep economic crisis, the bankruptcy of large banks and companies, the bank holiday and the growth of unemployment; and the political crisis, the political instability expressed in the succession of ten presidents in less than ten years, were the scenario that gave rise to the emergence of Correism.

The “citizen revolution” and “21st century socialism” emerged in this context, when the workers’ and people’s movement grew and demanded everything, social change and people’s power; when bourgeois institutions were muddied by corruption and discredited before the masses, when the crisis at the top sharpened; Correism appeared with a democratic, “leftist” discourse; it formed an alternative and raised expectations; in its first stage, when some of the measures were actually in favor of the people, it received the support of the workers, the peoples and the youth, of the left, of the party of the proletariat.

Soon President Correa and his cronies fully revealed themselves; they placed themselves at the service of the oligarchies and imperialism.

Behind the “revolutionary” discourse they developed a systematic offensive against the trade union movement of the work-

ers, against the peasant organizations, the teachers, the student youth and indigenous peoples; they proposed to corporatize the workers' and people's movements, to co-opt their leadership. Since that was not possible in all cases, they divided several of the trade union federations and formed others; they made the UNE [National Union of Educators] illegal, seized its property and created other teachers' organizations. They divided the FEUE [Federation of University Students of Ecuador] and dismantled the FESE [Federation of Secondary Students of Ecuador]. The left also suffered from these attacks, they made the MPD {Democratic Popular Movement} illegal, they co-opted to the socialist party. The policies and organization of the party were strongly affected by these attacks.

They always boasted of having returned the bourgeois institutions to political stability, of having eliminated the strike struggle, the mobilization of teachers and students, of having put an end to the social upheaval, of creating an ideal climate for the creation of wealth, in fact to make the rich richer.

Correism benefited greatly from the high oil prices and the revenues from indirect taxes. These funds were a source of corruption and the corrupt; a good part of them were used to build and rebuild the road network, highways, roads, ports and airports, visible works that could be shown as a sign of progress. At the same time it carried out an aggressive welfare policy in favor of the most impoverished sectors. The demagoguery and welfare policy, these ostentatious works were used to build a social base that supported, in the electoral field, the messianic figure of Correa.

In the decade they call the "glorious decade," the bankers and business owners gained more than at any other time in the country's history; and the workers and peoples continue to be chained to exploitation, oppression and discrimination. An important number of new rich people have emerged from the ranks of Correism. The proclamation of the "Ecuadorian miracle," of the "Latin American tiger," was always a mask to conceal its real purposes of accentuating dependence and enabling the development of capitalism through the modernization of the country.

In this period the party's policy has been significantly hard hit, mainly by ideological repression, by persecution, by criminal prosecution, threats blackmail and prisons.

The party and its policies were always in the political and social arena, in the strategic resistance and in concrete offensive actions, work stoppages and strikes of the teachers and the university students. Therefore they became the number one enemy of Correism; he concentrated against the party his entire ideological and political arsenal, the repression that tried to make it disappear. The party suffered the impact to its organization, functioning and membership; a good part of its ranks deserted, some went over to the enemy, more just went back to their daily life. There were signs of discouragement among members due to the defeats in the last political-electoral battles. These policies could not stop the Party and its forces; in spite of everything, the Party exists, it fights, it resists and it works to pass over to the offensive and win.

The government of Moreno was imposed by fraud; the majority of Ecuadorians voted against it; it was hampered by the authoritarianism of Correa and the increasingly heavy weight of the external debt, by the uncovering of the corruption that overwhelmed the government of the “citizen’s revolution,” by the deep economic crisis that still has not touched bottom. It needed to be legitimized and to “distinguish itself” from Correism. It preaches a new style, extending hands for a dialogue. The government and its Alianza País party are threatened by the existence of pro-Moreno and pro-Correa groups that are contending for hegemony and privileges.

The first acts of the government show a closer approach to private enterprise and the banks, to the international monopolies; the decision to go to the World Bank and IMF in search of credits. In the face of the workers’ and peoples’ movements, of the indigenous peoples, it proposes a dialogue, but so far it has not responded to the main demands, such as general amnesty for the persecuted social fighters and the repeal of Decree 016. Despite this, Moreno’s discourse is creating expectations and illusions in important social sectors, even among those who did not vote for him. We must take Moreno’s words and oppose them to his deeds.

The “citizen’s revolution,” “21st century socialism” and Correism failed in their desire to present themselves as a “new” road to liberation. They did not provide a solution of the urgent

problems of the masses, to the independence of the country. They were just words, a multi-million dollar propaganda campaign. They failed in their attempts to eliminate the mass movement, the left and the party of the proletariat.

The policy of the Party in this period will continue to be consistent with the interests of the workers and peoples; we will demand responses to their popular and patriotic aspirations; we will demand the fulfillment of the electoral promises: jobs, housing, free entry to the universities, the bonus for human development. The battles against domination and plunder by imperialism, for the country's full independence and development will continue. We will work for the revival of the popular movement, so that the working class will lead the struggle for change, to affirm unity and promote the struggle for their current aspirations and their ability to be protagonists of the new Ecuador.

The current international scenario expresses the sharpening of the inter-imperialist contradictions, the contention over markets and areas of influence. These differences first become intense, then appear as agreements and once again become points of high tension; in wars taking place in different regions of the planet. They use the desires for independence of the masses, the peoples and nationalities, the religious motivations in favor of the interests of the economic groups and of the different imperialist countries.

The international situation shows, to a large extent, the revival of the social movement of the working class, of the oppressed peoples and nationalities. Certainly, the general strikes and strikes at specific companies that follow one another, the great mobilizations of the working masses for freedom and democracy, the sudden mass struggles of the youth express basically social and political demands, they objectively oppose the designs of capital and imperialism but they are not yet on the path of revolution and socialism.

II. The Party, its responsibilities and tasks

The PCMLE was and is present in the life of the country, within the workers' and people's movement; it was always in tune with the situation, the desires and aspirations of the working class, the other laboring classes of the city and the countryside, of

the youth; it always supported the struggle of the indigenous peoples for their rights and for the establishment of the plurinational State; it was involved in the political struggle from its own positions; it resisted the ideological and political, punitive and repressive onslaught of the regime; a good part of the social fighters, the politically persecuted, the criminally prosecuted, of those sentenced to prison join ranks with the revolutionary forces, they are consistent comrades and supporters who, despite the repression, continue the struggle.

Fighting for the rights of the workers and peoples, resisting the repression and the ideological offensive that sought to isolate us from the masses, to defeat and eliminate us, the party and its forces were able to defend themselves. The government did not achieve its purposes, but it did have a significant impact, causing a weakening.

The influence of revolutionary policies among the masses, in the social organizations in which we have been working for years, was affected by diminishing the size of the social base of the party, causing divisions and the creation of parallel organizations. These problems were extended to the other trade union organizations, the indigenous peoples and the left-wing parties and organizations. Other left-wing political organizations were divided and broken up.

The political defeats suffered by the revolutionary forces, especially in the 2013 elections, are having some ideological and political effects that must be overcome. In these processes Correism was able to impose itself and appeared to be unbeatable. However, in 2014 it suffered a serious electoral defeat and in 2017 it had to resort to electoral fraud, in spite of which it won its electoral victory by very reduced margins.

The role of the Central Committee, of the provincial and local committees, of the party cell faces difficulties in taking up its full responsibilities, in applying the party's political line, in promoting its revolutionary political orientations. Although revolutionary propaganda was carried out it must be strengthened and cover new areas. The work of recruiting new members and their communist training faces challenges that demand a solution. The members are suffering the impact of the anti-communist ideological offensive and face difficulties in the proper fulfillment of

their role; the Leninist structure and functioning of the party suffer from limitations and problems.

The party, its leadership and membership have the responsibility of confronting these problems, of resolving them in theory and practice, of promoting the revival of the workers' and people's movement, of the youth movement; of moving from resistance to the strategic offensive; of working for the advancement of the unity of the workers, peoples and left-wing political organizations and parties; of gaining influence in the political struggle being waged in the country. The challenges are great, the roads are difficult but there are ways to deal with them, to advance the process of organizing and making the revolution.

III. Affirm the ideological conviction of the Party

The PCMLE is the political Party of the working class, it works constantly to organize and make the revolution. It is guided by the revolutionary principles of Marxism-Leninism, it works for its fusion with the workers' and people's movement, for the building of a powerful movement of the revolutionary masses, for the formation of the single revolutionary front whose fundamental base is the worker-peasant alliance. It actively participates in the social and political struggle, it strives to creatively apply all forms of struggle, it prepares for the organization of the revolutionary violence of the masses, for all the struggles to be directed towards



the seizure of power, towards the revolution and socialism.

The central task of the Party is the organization of the revolution, the seizure of people's power.

The members of the party, those who carry out their functions from the Central Committee to the communists who just became members, consciously take up Marxist-Leninist philosophy; they firmly adhere to its principles and strive to apply them in the course of the struggle of the workers and peoples.

These guidelines adopted since the founding of the Party have allowed it to face the most varied situations, the repression of the military dictatorships, the populist policies of several governments, social democracy, authoritarianism and, finally, the self-styled "citizen's revolution," "21st century socialism." The Party has fought in absolute clandestinity, in semi-clandestinity, in semi-legality; it has been the leader of the trade union struggle of the working class, of the struggle of the peasants for the land, of the great struggles of the youth for their rights, of the organization and mobilization of the teachers, the poor neighborhood residents and the self-employed, of the women; it has actively participated in the great popular uprisings that put an end to corrupt governments, it has to its merit made correct use of the elections in representative democracy.

To reaffirm our ideological convictions, to use our revolutionary reserves and, above all, to strengthen them, it is indispensable to restudy the Party's program, its strategic and tactical guidelines, to confront theory with social practice, with the incorporation into the struggle of the masses, with the fulfillment of the role of the membership in the cell, of the leader in the committee, of all the organs up to the Central Committee.

The personal responsibility of the members in the drawing up and fulfillment of the revolutionary directives must be taken up in an integral way; in this respect, first of all is the party member's conviction and decisiveness, but the control and evaluation by the collective is also necessary, the role of criticism and self-criticism, and of the ideological struggle.

The role of the collective and the member in a unity of wills is a function that must be implemented in the party committee, in the cell, in the nucleus of candidates and in the nuclei of the Revolutionary Youth. We must work to encourage and train the

members, to help them resolve their problems and difficulties; it is a matter of preserving the membership of the confused comrades or those who face ideological weaknesses that can be overcome. We must only proceed to separate ourselves from those who have lost their perspective, who cannot and do not want to be members. Of course, we must make the political decision to isolate or expel those who have consciously taken up the positions of the bourgeoisie. In this work it is necessary to evaluate of the members in regard to the policies of the party, to the role of the leadership at all levels.

This process must be promoted throughout the organization; its results will allow us to be clear on the size and quality of the Party.

IV. Raise the theoretical political level

To the ideological conviction, to the decision to be involved in the struggle of the working masses and the youth, to the consistency and courage of the members, there must correspond a greater theoretical political clarity on the problems of the revolution, on the course of the political struggle, on the roads of today and tomorrow, on taking advantage of the particular situation to advance toward the strategic objectives of the seizure of power.

The whole party, the leaders and members need to raise their theoretical political level. What until now has been the heritage of PCMLE is important but it needs to be further developed. Marxism-Leninism is a science and to master it and apply it one must study it, grasp it in order to use it as a guide for revolutionary action.

The teachings of the October Revolution, whose hundredth anniversary we commemorate this year all over the world, show the value of Marxism-Leninism, the ways in which the Bolshevik Party armed itself to promote the struggle of the working class and the peasantry, the youth and soldiers in order to lead them to victory. Without the guidance of Marxism, without the theoretical work of Lenin, Stalin and other comrades, without their decision to reaffirm and apply it in the struggle against Tsarist authoritarianism, the victory of the Revolution would not have been possible.

The socialist revolutions that took place in other countries were the result of the work of the party of the working class in studying Marxism-Leninism, in applying it to the concrete conditions. These same revolutions were the manifestation of the development of Marxism-Leninism.

No one has completed their ideological and political training.

The study of Marxism-Leninism must engage the entire Organization, its leaders and members, it must be carried out in a planned, monitored and evaluated manner.

In the PCMLE we must pay attention to the study and incorporation of the Political Line, the Declaration of Principles, the Program and Statutes of the Party, the resolutions of the Central Committee, the international journal *Unity and Struggle*, the newspaper *En Marcha*. It is also important for the membership to be informed of the social and political situation that is developing at one's front of struggle, in the region and on the national level.

The theoretical level of the Marxist-Leninists is tested every day, in the different periods of revolutionary activity, in the analysis of the multiple problems, in the preparation of the discourse and the explanation of it to the masses.

V. Improve the ability to shape policy

The central task of the party in this stage is the winning of people's power; we must direct all our resources and means to this task. The seizure of power demands the strengthening of the organization and struggle of the working class, of the other laboring classes of the city and countryside, of the youth, the indigenous peoples and nationalities, the black people. It demands the development of political consciousness of the masses, their understanding of their leading role in the struggle for change, their joining the fight for the revolution and socialism.

For the development of the revolutionary movement of the masses, it is necessary to formulate programmatic proposals, orientations and slogans that, with the guidance of Marxism-Leninism, start from the immediate and the strategic interests of the working class and the people. These should provide answers to the problems of the workers, the peoples and the country. They should be policies that capture the imagination of the masses, that

should be taken up by them and prepare them to struggle for their achievement.

This, which is the essence of revolutionary politics, is the responsibility of the Central Committee, of the Provincial and Local Committees, of the cell, of the core of the JRE (Revolutionary Youth of Ecuador). It is the result of collective discussion, of the personal contribution of the members and leaders. It is the directive that unifies the Party, which gives it a single will to act; it should express the analysis and interpretation of the concrete situation, the initiative and boldness, the ability to reshape the general orientations, for each time and place.

This is a concrete question that must be taken into account by the party of the proletariat.

The assertion that, fundamentally, the policy of the party is correct, timely and revolutionary does not mean that there are no mistakes, errors and failures that need to be rectified. One must remember that everything is in motion, in constant change, which demands accuracy and adjustments that must be made along the way in order to pursue a revolutionary policy in development, which becomes a material force in the struggle of the masses.

The existence in the country of the left-wing and democratic tendency for change is a reality in motion. The party, its forces and the political movement of the masses must strive to strengthen this tendency, in orienting it more closely to the struggle for change. The emergence in recent years of Popular Unity (UP) was welcomed and supported by the party; together with the comrades of the UP the members worked perseveringly for its registration as a legal party; this work must be advanced and perfected. The Popular Unity represents, today, a certain alternative for the political organization and struggle of the masses, to bring them into the streets, to the direct confrontation with the government, to debate ideas, to work persistently for the unity of the workers, the peoples, the youth, the left, the democrats and patriots, in order to fight for the leadership of the masses, to reinforce the Left-wing and Democratic Tendency for Change.

To do political work every day, to give it a revolutionary content and form, to work to spread it among the masses, will make it possible to advance in the process of the accumulation of revolutionary forces for the seizure of the power.

VI. Increase the revolutionary propaganda

Without revolutionary propaganda, the revolutionary struggle of the masses is not possible.

The propaganda work being developed by the PCMLE is mainly expressed in the regular publication and distribution of the weekly *En Marcha*, in the various publications of the trade unions, political organizations and associations that are under the responsibility of Party members, in the use of time on radio and very occasionally on TV; in the publication of manifestos and leaflets that despite all our efforts is still small, insufficient to reach the broad masses; also in the use of social networks.

The Party press is directed to the membership, through which it contributes to their political unification, their will to action; it extends its reach to the social fighters who have still not joined the party, to the natural leaders of the masses, with the aim of winning them to revolutionary politics. It must also be used for political propaganda and agitation among the social base of the party, among the workers of the city and the countryside, among the impoverished sectors of the population. In these areas it is necessary to take up again and strengthen the content of the newspaper.

The leadership of the Party is directly responsible for the weekly *En Marcha*; the whole party, the provincial and local committees, the cell, the comrades of the youth is responsible for the assimilation of its contents and its dissemination of its opinions. The membership and even the friends and sympathizers of the revolution and the party must contribute with their collaboration, with critical opinions, with writing reports and articles. They must study its materials, assimilate its line, and work so that it reaches its readers and grasp its values and make them central in



order to continue and develop the newspaper.

The initiative of the communists to increase the propaganda, to diversify it, to make it more accessible to the masses; it must be disseminated with boldness and determination.

A similar effort must be made with the other forms of revolutionary propaganda, with the main newspaper and local newspapers, with leaflets; it is important to organize the work on social networks.

An extraordinary element of revolutionary propaganda is the role of the Party Spokespersons, of the comrades assigned to this work. No important political event in the life of the people, of the ideological and political offensive of the bosses and the government must remain without a response of the Spokesperson.

It is necessary to understand that all the members have the duty to fulfill the dissemination of the politics of the Party; no one can pass up the opportunity to express their opinion in the name of the Party on the important events of the struggle of the masses; no member can be indifferent to the attacks and lies of the class enemy; they must go to the front lines to defend the present and future of the revolution, to clarify the truth to the masses.

VII. Strengthen the ties of the Party with the working masses and the youth

The strategic guidelines of the PCMLE emphasize the formation of a revolutionary movement of the masses as one of the pillars of the organization of the revolution.

The policy of the Party is directed to this end: propaganda work, the process of political education, the day-to-day work of the party organizations and the members in playing a prominent role in the trade union organizations and associations, to push forward the economic and political struggle, to build the political organization of the masses, to base the Party within the workers' and people's movement, to win the consistent social fighters who stand out in the organization and struggle of the workers and youth to membership in the communist party.

The working class, which has in deed been taking up the role of vanguard, the poor and middle peasantry, the semi-proletarians of the city and countryside, the self-employed workers, the urban poor, the working youth, the vast majority of the secondary and

university student youth, the advanced sectors of the indigenous movement, the working women, significant sectors of the democratic and progressive intelligentsia are the ones who will make the Ecuadorian revolution.

Since the beginning, but mainly since the last decade of the 20th century, an emancipatory project has been taking shape in the country as a unitary process that develops in zigzags, which brings together the subjects of the revolution: important sectors of the working class who fight under different trade union banners, a large part of the peasant organizations, the political organizations and parties of the left. This project is being incorporated into the struggle for social change, for the full independence of the country. A good part of its proposals and actions are directed to the seizure of popular power, they raise the tricolor flag, the Huipala, the banner of the indigenous movement, and the red flag of the workers; they fight for social and national liberation, and have been winning a significant influence in the social and political future.

The Movement for the Revolutionization of the Party aims at tackling and resolving the building of the revolutionary mass movement to new levels.

To achieve these objectives, the Party, all its organizations, its leaders and members must work, using all means and resources, to bring the political and strategic guidelines to the imagination, organization and consciousness of the masses.

The Party must take up the revolutionary policy and propaganda as part of an ideological offensive that promotes the revolutionary ideas and unmasks the scourges of capitalism, reaction and reformism, as well as the different forms of revisionism and opportunism.

It is necessary to promote the revolution and socialism, the need and possibility of making them a reality; this responsibility demands the spreading of the ideals of communism, of the revolution, the program of the party, the policies decided by the Central Committee, the proposals and slogans, the calls for the organization and struggle of the masses. This ideological political offensive demands the unmasking of “21st century socialism” and the “citizen’s revolution.” It must address itself to society, to the masses in general, but it must pay attention to those

sectors that make up the social base of the party, that is, the social organizations in which we have been working for some time, where, to some extent, there exist revolutionary ideas. Proceeding in this way it will be possible to rectify and improve the ideological struggle against capitalism, against demagoguery and lies, and mainly to reaffirm the path of the struggle for people's power, for the revolution and socialism.

It is essential to carry the policy of the party, the guidelines for the fight for rights and interests, the proposals and slogans for the particular situation and the perspective of revolution and socialism, to the masses. The Party counts on its revolutionary policies, which are basically correct and must be adapted to the specific situation in society, among the workers and youth, but above all among the social base of the Party. This work demands that the Party and principally the Central Committee and the other leading bodies work to develop these orientations, to place them in tune with reality, with the development of the policy in which society and the country are immersed.

It is essential to base the Party, its organizations and members among the masses. The ideological and political links with the masses can and must be reaffirmed with the building of the Party, with the recruitment of members and the formation of cells in the unions, in the associations, in peasant communes and associations, among the small tradespersons, poor neighborhood residents, in the university faculties and in the schools.

Through the organization and struggle of the working masses and the youth a good number of social fighters are developed who can see the Party as the organization for their affirmation and development, to become social and political leaders.

The Party, the cell, and the nucleus of the JRE must become organizers of the masses, leaders of their struggles, political educators; it must take up, in deed, the role of vanguard of the revolution.

VIII. Restore and strengthen the social base of the party

The current situation presents the Party with new challenges that it must face in an appropriate and with initiative. The policy of the party, the persistent work of its members among the masses, are based on the historical memory of the workers and peas-

ants, the teachers and students. This must aim at restoring its positions among the masses, involving them in the defense of their trade union and social organizations and bringing them into the political confrontation with the bosses and the government. This should lead to the strengthening of its organization, to the continuing development of its leadership.

The PCMLE counts on its historical correctness, on the most advanced and revolutionary ideology, on Marxism-Leninism, on the general and specific guidelines that must be developed incessantly, on a battle-hardened and consistent membership, on an important wealth of experiences. It will be able to face the new challenges, to fight, to win, to fail and return to the fight, to win large and small battles.

The Party must take on the tasks of bringing its lines of work up-to-date on all fronts, it must penetrate more deeply into the specific problems and draw up specific guidelines for the revival of the trade union organization, of the associations and committees, of the communes and other peasant organizations. It must, with the direct participation of the rank and file, draw up orientations, platforms and proposals. It must overcome divisive attitudes and work for unity, it must work for the building of the leaderships of the mass organizations at the local, provincial and national level and contribute to their functioning, the implementation of democracy, to the smooth relationship between the leadership and the rank and file.

IX. Improve the Leninist functioning of the Party

Revolutionary practice, the work of organizing and leading the social and political struggle of workers and peoples demands that the Party become a system of organizations, with a centralized leadership, a single policy and a single will to act; it must be endowed with a discipline that passes all tests, which guarantees the organized work of the committees, the cells and the members.

Reaction and the opportunists of all kinds try to belittle the proletarian Party as an organization of automatons who carry out orders, who have no right to speak, who cannot disagree with the leadership. These fallacies are exposed by the life and struggle of the communist party, by the self-denial and persistence of the comrades, by the courage and boldness that characterizes them.

These conditions can be implemented in the life of the Party with the full functioning of Democratic Centralism, with the practice of proletarian democracy, the ability and willingness to apply resolutions and decisions everywhere.

These circumstances, to a large degree, are a reality; but it is necessary to pay more attention to them, to overcome every doubt and vacillation, every transgression, however small it may seem, and above all, relying on the study and application of the Statutes, to root the Party among the masses, to improve it and to develop it to take up the great tasks of history.

X. Strengthen the leadership of the Party at all levels

The key to fulfilling the responsibility of the Communist Party to organize and make the revolution is the existence of an able leadership, a Central Committee that firmly adheres to Marxism-Leninism, that grasps the changing reality of society and is endowed with the ability to draw up orientations and policies that give timely and correct responses in order to push forward the economic and political struggle of the workers and peoples, that takes up the task of leading the Party directly, interacting with the rank and file, a Central Committee that gains and strengthens its authority.

To achieve these aims the party committee must carry out the ideological struggle, work to reaffirm the ideological and political conceptions of the proletariat, isolate and eliminate the alien ideas and practices and ensure unity. It must use the weapon of criticism and self-criticism to face and overcome errors and difficulties that hinder the process; it must develop a many-sided policy of self-sustainability.

The Party committee is the integration of the individual personalities into a leadership collective; its strength and development correspond with the role of each of its members, with the practice of collective leadership and individual responsibility. The member of the party committee received the trust of the rank and file when he was elected; he must reaffirm that confidence and increase his authority; he is a hard-working, simple comrade, without posture or petulance, fraternal and comradely, ready to listen to the members, to attend to their concerns and problems.

The Party commissions at the national and provincial level must improve their functioning, completely fulfill the role they were entrusted with; they must explain and apply the policy of the party in the specific area of their responsibilities. The Central Committee and the Provincial Committees must lead the commissions, be attentive and timely in resolving their problems in order to make the necessary modifications for the accomplishment of their work.

The current circumstances demand that the provincial committees raise the theoretical political level of their members, investigate and grasp the reality of their area, the changes in progress, the relationship of forces, the degree of organization and consciousness of the working masses in order to develop the Four-Year Plan, to develop the policies, organization and social struggle, to confront the political and organizational challenges posed by the development of the class struggle.

XI. The Party cell and the role of the communists

The cell is the basic organization of the Party; it is the nucleus made up of the most outstanding fighters for socialism, of the best sons and daughters of the working class, of the youths who embrace the ideal of communism. They voluntarily, consciously and fully take up the struggle for the Program, the Political Line and Statutes; they promise to dedicate their lives to the greatest task, to be protagonists of the emancipation of the workers and peoples, of humanity.

The cell operates in the factory, the mines, the workplaces of its members, in the poor neighborhoods of the cities, in the peasant communes and associations, in the schools and universities; all cells are responsible for one specific social base.

In the specific social and territorial area where the cell operates, it develops all the activities of the party, develops the guidelines for strengthening the union; it leads it into struggle, studies revolutionary theory, carries out propaganda and agitation, the political education of the masses; it contributes to the creation of the JRE, to the nucleus of the Political Movement of the Masses; it promotes the selection, organization and political training of the candidates for Party membership; it discusses, plans and

evaluates recruitment, creatively uses the weapon of criticism and self-criticism, it becomes the standard bearer of the ideological struggle among its members.

The work of fulfilling the tasks of the cell is the result of discussion, the making of decisions, the planning and disposition of its forces, of the direct and active participation in the social and political struggle; this is made possible because the cell is the sum of the decisions and will of its members to be involved in the revolutionary process. Each member is responsible and protagonist of the revolution, he does this in a planned and controlled manner.

The role of the communist militant

A member of the Party is the tireless fighter for the ideals of the revolution and socialism, a person, man or woman, who stands out among the others in understanding the nature of society, because he decides to participate in its transformation. To be a better communist every day, the member must study Marxism-Leninism, the theoretical materials of the Party; he must know the social and political reality of his social and political environment, of the region, the front of struggle, the province and the country. He must be concerned about international events; he must take an active part in the life of the cell, debate, in the decisions and carrying out of tasks; he must develop his qualities to take up the position of revolutionary leader of the masses.



In the work to build the social and political leadership of the working masses, the member must develop his abilities of communication; his knowledge of the revolutionary policy, the conviction of its correctness and timeliness is the basis for his enthusiasm in the social context. This must start from the motivation to gain the attention and acceptance of the masses; this must be explained in a simple way to pass from perception to the process of reflection and assimilation; it must be synthesized in a few slogans and become a call to action of the masses.

The quality of the communists is forged in the life of the party, in the dedication to the best of their abilities and efforts to push forward the engine of the revolution, in an organized membership, in the integral fulfillment of all their responsibilities. The Marxist-Leninist communist is a steeled fighter because he proudly possesses the guide of Marxism; he dedicates his life, his thought and action to the struggle for liberation, for the new society.

XII. The growth of the party and the training of new cadres

Since its foundation the PCMLE has been involved in the responsibility of organizing and making the revolution. In that process, it has made significant advances but also errors and mistakes; it has faced problems and difficulties to be overcome, it has the challenge of continuing the revolutionary struggle in complex and difficult conditions.

In order to fulfill these responsibilities, it has to its credit the knowledge and adherence to Marxism-Leninism, the Political Line and the Program; it is organized in all provinces and counts on its experience in the organization and struggle of the masses, in the building of the revolutionary united front. However, in relation to its tasks and responsibilities, to the present conditions of the development of the social and political movement of the workers, it is still a small party, few in number.

In order to fully revive its forces, to reaffirm and advance in the building of a powerful communist party, it must become more involved in the working class, in the other laboring classes of the city and the countryside, among the youth and women. It must advance in a sustained manner in the dissemination of its proposals among the masses; it must work to energize the process of

recruiting more and more new members, to work for their ideological and political training, to raise them to the status of revolutionary cadres, of leaders in the social and political struggle, of organizers and leaders of the revolutionary violence for the seizure of power.

Recruitment is a permanent task, involving all the organizations, from the cell to the Central Committee; it is the responsibility of each and every one of its members. No one is exempt from this duty.

The Movement for the Revolutionization of the Party also demands a bold policy of recruiting new communists, men and women, coming from the laboring classes, the youth and the progressive intelligentsia.

To achieve these aims the Party must promote among the masses the ideal of communism, the necessity and possibility of organizing the revolution and socialism, the general and specific policies of the Party; it must present itself under its own name; the communists must gain the confidence and affection of those social sectors where they are fighting; they must work to organize and lead the struggle of the workers and peoples, to politically educate the masses.

In this context it is possible to organize recruitment and achieve positive results.

Each Party cell, with the guidance of the Party Committee, must discuss this task, the way to fulfill it; it must develop a concrete plan, carry it out and monitor it; the members must render accounts of their results and the collective must evaluate and control them, make the necessary adjustments but never give up this responsibility. The Plan of the cell in the field of recruitment must establish the means, resources and goals.

The Party Committee at the local and provincial level must take seriously the task of recruitment, develop guidelines that allow it to be carried out, discuss them in the cell and involve itself both collectively and as individual leaders to fulfill it. The plan of the Party Committee must integrate the goals established in the cell and see to their successful fulfillment.

In recruitment, neither voluntarism nor pessimism is correct, much less negligence; however, on the contrary, if the planning is objective, if it takes into account the needs and conditions, we

will surely achieve positive results; the Party will grow in quality and quantity.

For new and numerous revolutionary cadres

The PCMLE is a party of cadres; all its members must develop their abilities in order to fulfill this condition in the different areas and levels.

The training of cadres is a task of the Party, but it cannot be carried out without the participation of each and every one of its members.

The Party has a policy of training of cadres that must be developed constantly in order to face the current needs and problems; it must incorporate all the organizations and leaders; it requires the will and determination of the members to take up increasingly significant responsibilities in the mass movement and in the building of the Party. The leadership, the CC and the Party Committees have to take up these tasks in a constant and responsible manner, to draw up plans of study of theory, to organize schools, seminars, workshops and courses; to propose, using facts as references, stimulating the desire of the comrades to advance; the leadership must always uphold the policy of promotion of cadres based on the political confidence and abilities of the communists.

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India

Revolutionary Democracy

Dr. Malem Ningthouja

The ‘Post-Truth’ of Globalisation: Finance Capitalism and the Naga Question¹

The Nagas, whose ‘aboriginal homeland’ is traced in the currently established administrative segments in North-East India and North-West Myanmar, are involved in a decades old movement to create a sovereign ‘nation state’, to be reportedly based primarily on the ideological framework of ‘Christian democracy’². This movement, which has been taking place in time and space can be located in the historical context of absolute domination by finance capitalism³ that keeps the Nagas at the bottom of ‘global’ hierarchy (or globalisation)⁴. This paper briefly highlights the colonial relation of production that underdeveloped the Nagas, the trend of co-option with the capitalist world order and the historical task to overcome it.

Historically, when the British capitalist rule, in the 19th century, began to exert domination through the monopoly use of violence, administrative arrangements and cultural diffusion⁵ in

¹Post-truth: Refers to the situation where deceitful emotive propaganda arouses and controls the public mind, which in turn is being used for the purpose of legitimising vested policies.

²A capitalist model of welfare society to be established based on spiritual appeal for peace and social order through reforms and adjustment without challenging the capitalist mode of production.

³Finance Capitalism: An advanced stage of capitalism or imperialism, in which financial institutions or financiers (merging of bank and industrial capitals) commanded over economic and political policies for extraction of super-profit.

⁴Globalisation: A deceptive terminology that covers up the exploitative character of finance capitalism. It is used here interchangeably with the term imperialism or finance capitalism.

⁵Missionary civilizing mission.

various forms and degrees, the Naga ‘village’ communities, depending on the proximity and access to market interactions with others, were found socially organised into varying degrees of primitive communism⁶ and corresponding stages of freedom. However, they could not remain isolated and insulated for long. They were gradually mapped and incorporated into the colonial capitalist grid. Subsequently, against the backdrop of changes superimposed by the British, many Nagas become co-opted with the British rule. Several Nagas took part in the imperialist wars. Their homelands became devastating battle fields of the Second World War. After 1945, during the ‘decolonisation’ era, the ‘movement’ towards Naga integration and sovereignty became a historical course.

The wheel of the history of co-option has been continued in various forms and perceptions. Co-option is manifested in the context of ‘underdevelopment’ and the role of subordinate partner in the larger framework of ‘global’ finance capitalism. The visible trend is being discussed as follows;

(1) Topographically, the Nagas inhabit geo-strategically an important buffer along the international border regions of India and Myanmar. This region – which is rich in labour, carbon reserves, precious minerals and stones, forest products, market potential, potential of military bastions and international inland transit route for flow of capital and commodity – became the target of occupation by the States that acted as facilitator of economic plunder by finance capital.

(2) Economically, the capitalism transplanted from above had outgrown Nagas’ primitive communism and the relative freedom⁷. It places the Nagas in a colonial relation of production, where the ‘external’ monopoly market forces retarded the development of the mode of production, which is the precondition of

⁶ Egalitarian society based on simple modes of production (means and relations of production).

⁷ The Nagas are economically an egalitarian society. Private property and commodity relation are predominant. Individual opportunism becomes the ideological thriving force of amassing wealth for individual growth and vested satisfaction.

building a economic self-reliant⁸ Naga economy. Underdevelopment and economic dependence on commodity import, therefore, renders the Nagas weak and vulnerable.

(3) The Naga political economy became infested with counter-productive (pre-capitalist form) of accumulation of wealth by the upper class⁹ who relied on the State and finance capital for economic and political powers. Instead of direct investment in constant capital (commodity production) for the extraction of surplus value, they serve as the agents who extract a portion out of the absolute surplus value of the capitalist plunder in Naga soil. This trend of *rentier bourgeoisie* – whose wealth is derived from the overall capitalist plunder, corruption, illicit trade, and usury capitalism – perpetuates the colonial situation.

(4) Capitalist rent (grant or fund for keeping Naga subsistence economy functional), particularly in the Indian segment of Naga homeland, had a trickle-down effect in descending manner at various levels among the middle and lower classes. While the Naga ‘national’ movement is yet to materialise a ‘sustainable development’¹⁰ agenda, people adopted an individual course to fulfilling economic demands. Competition for employment in ‘private’ and ‘public’ sectors and the culture of begging for funds from the State treasury and capitalist institutions became widespread. As land and productivity had not been improved, many became disoriented (alienated) from their land (or homeland) in search of other better means of earnings. Emigration for education and white collar jobs in the Indian metropolitan cities and elsewhere became rampant. They, thus, became the fodder feeder of the capitalist service sector and physically disoriented from the Naga ‘liberation’ movement.

⁸ A society that does not have a sound economic system can neither defend political freedom nor promote cultural identity.

⁹ Predominantly composed of contractors, political leaders, higher grade bureaucrats and officials.

¹⁰ Economic development that is conducted without depletion of natural resources; that meets the needs of the present, setting the limit of needs, and without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

(5) There is a bulk of co-opted reactionary political barons, counter-revolutionary Naga ‘intellectuals’ and opportunist NGO activists, who became influential in serving as the mouthpiece of bourgeois democracy and finance capitalism. On the other hand, the Naga ‘national’ leadership had not comprehensively addressed the structural constraints that are responsible for the material conditions of underdevelopment and the corresponding growth of individual opportunism and sectarian forces that keep the Nagas perpetually disunited. When the crucial ideological questions have not been raised and when the subversive roles of internal agencies have not been exposed, there is no effective check and balance against the tendency of ideological corruption and adventurist political demagogy, which often culminated in promoting counter-revolution and sectarianism amongst the Nagas. This makes the Nagas highly vulnerable to divisive forces. As a result, the subjective conscience to build a pan-Naga stable community could not be converted into an objective reality. This is the ‘unique’ characteristic feature of all underdeveloped colonial and semi-colonial societies where capitalist plunder takes place with the support of an extensive network of local agents who operate in the guise of development and globalisation.

(6) The ‘post-truth’ of globalisation (bourgeois propaganda) has blinded many. Many confuse capitalist growth of a few successful entrepreneurs and microscopic ‘parasites’¹¹ with the revolutionary path to liberty, equality and fraternity.¹² Many are being misinformed by the propaganda that progress and peace can be achieved only by the means of subservient roles under the command of the powerful States, which in reality functions as the instrument of oppression of the big capital. The truth has to be unveiled.

Today, India’s Act East Policy – which is predominantly manifested in deceptive forms of ‘aggressive’ dams, trans Asian highways, exploration of carbon reserves, extraction of mineral resources, construction of market complexes, recruitment in mili-

¹¹ Who live on the labour and resource of the exploited sections

¹² Development as welfare; i.e., all round improvement in the means of production, forces of production, relations of production and distribution of products.

tary and paramilitary forces, expansion of administrative buildings, military barracks and police posts, etc. – has found an inroad without any constructive debate on the fate of the ‘indigenous’ communities and ecology. This profit driven policy – which is being enforced from above by the combined forces of the Indian State and other South East Asian States, whose primary objective is to facilitate finance capitalism of advanced countries, so as to rapidly recover from the recession that began with the meltdown of the US dollar in 2008 and also to counter balance Chinese capitalism – had shown an enormous amount of forced displacement of indigenous peoples, land and resource alienation, destruction to cultural ecology and environment, long term negative repercussion on sustainable development, militarisation and violation of ‘human rights’, and increasing sectarianism amongst the parasitic classes whose diabolic individual opportunisms are camouflaged by emotive propaganda of tribal rights and community identity. The temporary boom at various levels – which are the immediate results of capitalist cosmetic funding in the name of ‘shared incentives’ under the concurrent list, infrastructural constructions, and job opportunity, which had created a face value of attraction to many, but legitimises massive misappropriation of wealth out of which a microscopic section of exploiters will accrue unequal share of trickled down benefit in descending order – will strengthen the grip of the market forces in the



long run. Will there be economic justice in the process? The apprehension is that the majority of the indigenous peoples (including the Nagas) will be subordinated, impoverished and become self-suicidal in the internal strives (internecine conflict) in the competition of extracting subsistence wealth from the capitalist booty.

The Nagas are not the exception when it comes to domination by the Capitalist State and finance capitalism. Their immediate neighbourhood communities live in similar conditions of underdevelopment, subjections, internal contradictions, and vulnerability. Collectively, they are being forcibly located at the underdeveloped bottom of the global economic and political hierarchy. Though there have been destructive tendencies of politically motivated conflicts amongst them, they are geo-demographically interconnected in such a manner that they can't remain isolated and insulated from one another. These communities will remain as proximate neighbours, no matter whether one likes it or not. The interconnection is so strong that that a particular historical event that would affect or effect a neighbour automatically would have similar repercussions on the immediate neighbours. Will they learn to convert these commonalities into mutually agreeable terms amongst the progressive forces, so as to carry out the significant historical task of building unity across boundaries to defending development, peace and unity vis-à-vis the plunder by the external forces?

At this crucial juncture of onslaught by finance capitalism, the Naga question needs to be seriously addressed by the progressive Nagas who wish to build a society that would be freed from all forms of subjugation, oppression and exploitation. Will the 'freedom loving' Nagas give a free pass to the international finance institutions and the capitalist States that facilitate the process of capitalist plunder? Will they defend their land, market, natural resources, cultural, development, peace and people's democracy? Will they overcome the problems of: (a) emigration of Nagas and corresponding drain of wealth and brain, and (b) the immigration of 'alien' skilled labour and monopoly traders and intrusion by big capital? In this regard, the stage of Naga revolutionary movements needs to be objectively studied by taking into account the following crucial points; (a) structural constraints and

dynamics within the Naga society; (b) the Nagas' relationship with their immediate neighbours, (c) the Nagas' relationship with the powerful capitalist States, market forces and finance capitalism.

The Nagas need to concentrate on finding the most effective course to defending and promoting 'sustainable development'. This will require efforts to improve the means of production and release of forces of production, so as to resist the colonial relations of production and capitalist plunder of Naga labour and resources. This effort, however, cannot be an isolated process restricted to the Nagas alone. None of the co-existing communities fulfils the objective criteria to survive in isolation and progress in a compartment of its own. On the one hand the walls of chauvinism, sectarianism and reaction, which have become endemic in all the communities, have to be broken down. On the other hand, 'sustainable development' agendas have to be carried out in cordial cooperation with the progressive forces amongst the immediate communities. The progressive Nagas must fulfil this primary historical task – an important historical leap that will not only expose the moribund system but also strengthen the ideals of people's democracy – to create a unique history of successful resistance to all forms of subjugation, exploitation and oppression.

Iran

Party of Labour (Toufan)

On the Occasion of the 100th anniversary of Great October Socialist Revolution: The Victory of Leninism and the Triumph of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in the Great October Socialist Revolution

Before the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia, social democracy of the Second International led by Karl Kautsky had intentionally ignored one of the central principles of Marxism. Kautsky's intention was to prevent the revolutionary social democrats from relying solely on the central principle of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" in their struggle.

Negation and opposition to the dictatorship of the proletariat was and still is today the demarcation line between a Marxist-Leninist and an enemy of the working class. One cannot simultaneously be both a communist and an opponent of the dictatorship of proletariat.

The enemies of communism try to make people afraid of the "dictatorship of proletariat" through generations of social propaganda to deceive the working class, to create fear amongst the petty bourgeoisie and other future allies of the proletariat, and to isolate the workers. They try to inculcate into the public consciousness the erroneous idea that the dictatorship of a social class is synonymous with that of a despotic individual or king. The enemies of communism talk about Hitler and Pinochet's dictatorships and pretend that they are the same as the dictatorship of proletariat. They stick rigidly to the word "dictatorship" in order to distort its scientific content and to insinuate an evil intent. Communists believe that all are based on a class dictatorship. There has never been a non-class dictatorship in history that defends all classes in society. In all class-based societies, the state, an uncontested product of class contradictions, attempts to preserve the status quo and the "balance" in society, always in favor of the rich and powerful. The state attempts to establish and preserve the desired order of this social class so that the plunder

and exploitation by the upper class is not interrupted. The essence and basic position of all states and governments is dictatorship.

Marx summarizes the content of his scientific views in three phrases in which the dictatorship of proletariat is at its center. Lenin reflects on these views in his book, *The State and Revolution*:

Now as for myself, I do not claim to have discovered either the existence of classes in modern society or the struggle between them. Long before me, bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this struggle between the classes, as had bourgeois economists their economic anatomy. My own contribution was

1. to show that the existence of classes is merely bound up with certain historical phases in the development of production;
2. that the class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat;
3. that this dictatorship itself constitutes no more than a transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society.

Where Marx talks about his new contribution, he has the dictatorship of the proletariat in mind. Marx shows that this class dictatorship is not a new phenomenon, that this dictatorship existed before him, and that it has been historically present in all modes of production. This dictatorship has been transformed from the class dictatorship of the slave-owners to the class dictatorship of feudal lords and capitalists, which, in turn, will be replaced by the class dictatorship of the proletariat in the future. Every dictatorship is a tool of suppression and is formed for this purpose, so that it defends the specific interests of a given group within the state.

One who denies the dictatorial nature of the state does not in fact believe in Marxist teachings or in the class essence of the state. The opponents of the dictatorship of the proletariat, in fact, believe in the same bourgeois theory of the state as an entity formed to serve the entire society and to defend the interest of all the country's people. Only through this unscientific concept can one explain and defend the parliamentary system that the bourgeoisie has established to deceive the people, claiming that its members are elected democratically and that they are true representatives of the masses.

The bourgeoisie which has surpassed all the previous exploiters in history, claims that “bourgeois parliamentarism” is an alternative to the dictatorship of the proletariat for the masses. The fact is that parliament is not the place where key decisions are made. Central, class-based decisions that secure the interests of the big capitalists and the exploiting class are made behind the scenes, and parliament must have a “popular” and “democratic” spin on it in order to survive. Communists gain their energy and support from the masses and cannot lie to their ranks. They explain with the utmost clarity the class nature of the state and the responsibilities of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Engels says that “the state is a special force for suppression”. This elegant definition is expressed here with maximum clarity. But this definition implies that the “special force for suppression” of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie, the suppression of millions of laborers by a small number of wealthy exploiters, must be replaced by a “special force of suppression” of the bourgeoisie by the proletariat (that is, the dictatorship of the proletariat). This encompasses the meaning of the “abolition of the state as state”. This also encompasses the meaning of “action” for the expropriation of the means of production in the name of the society. Such a substitution of one (bourgeois) “special force” by another (proletarian) “special force” cannot take place in the form of “withering away”. (*The State and Revolution*, in Selected Works of Lenin, Volume 2)



Of course, according to the principle of dialectical materialism, when we speak of opposites, we always speak of the unity of the opposites where the existence of one depends upon the existence of the other. Without “war”, “peace” is meaningless. Without “proletariat”, “capitalist” cannot exist; without “poor”, “wealthy” cannot exist. Only the existence of both sides of the contradiction, that is the unity of the opposites, make the existence of each side possible. This dialectical principle also applies to a dictatorship. The dictatorship is conceptualized when it is contrasted with democracy. Otherwise the existence of the phenomenon would have ended. With this scientific understanding, we will never find democracy or dictatorship by itself; instead, they go together. In a class society where different classes have antagonistic class interests, the state that advocates the interest of the minority and exploiting class uses its repressive force against the majority and exploited class. The state, while implementing democracy in the service of the exploiting ruling classes, shows its anti-democratic and dictatorial face to the exploited classes. In other words, every class-based state applies democracy and dictatorship simultaneously, democracy for its friends and dictatorship against its enemies and against those who oppose the status quo. This law, which has existed during the entire period in which the exploiting classes have ruled, will be valid during the period of socialism also. To secure democracy for the majority, the proletariat that has seized political power and that has established its state applies its “special force” against its enemies, who will inevitably and as a means of self-preservation try to reestablish their exploitative power. The proletariat simultaneously appeals to dictatorship and democracy. Communists will never deny this scientific reality. All of history is witness to it.

From the point of view of the communists, that is, from the point of view of Leninism, democracy and dictatorship have class natures. Pure democracy does not exist, nor does democracy that stands by itself without elements of dictatorship. Kautsky, whom Lenin described as a renegade to Marxism, revised this fundamental principle of Marxism, claiming that democracy has no class nature and that it, instead, stands by itself. Naturally, those who deny the class nature of the state and who elevate the state as an egalitarian, beneficent force, conclude that democracy is a

phenomenon that has no relation with dictatorship. In a similar way, they argue that the bourgeoisie has a democratic nature, and that the communists are dictators. Lenin never distorted the class nature of democracy. He wrote:

“And so in capitalist society we have a democracy that is curtailed, wretched, false, a democracy only for the rich, for the minority. The dictatorship of the proletariat, the period of transition to communism, will for the first time create democracy for the people, for the majority, along with the necessary suppression of the exploiters, of the minority. Communism alone is capable of providing really complete democracy, and the more complete it is, the sooner it will become unnecessary and withers away of its own accord”. (*The State and Revolution*, Lenin)

On the importance of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the struggle he waged, Lenin wrote:

“Bolshevism has popularized throughout the world the idea of the ‘dictatorship of the proletariat,’ has translated these words from the Latin, first into Russian, and then into all the languages of the world, and has shown by the example of Soviet government that the workers and poorest peasants, even of a backward country, even with the least experience, education and habits of organization, have been able for a whole year, amidst gigantic difficulties and amidst a struggle against the exploiters (who were supported by the bourgeoisie of the whole world) to maintain the power of the working people, to create a democracy that is immeasurably higher and broader than all previous democracies in the world, and to start the creative work of tens of millions of workers and peasants for the practical construction of socialism.” (*The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, in Selected Works of Lenin, Volume 3)

What the Bolsheviks did in defense of Marxism was to bring Leninism to victory in the Soviet Union. The Great October Socialist Revolution indicates the importance of the successful implementation of Marxist-Leninist principles. Those who oppose the dictatorship of the proletariat not only oppose Leninism but oppose the October Revolution, too. They do not believe in Marxism either. Their pretense of acceptance of Marxism is a clear deception that eventually leads to open denial of Marxist principles. The revisionist Tudeh Party of Iran has replaced the

well-established phrase “dictatorship of the proletariat” with Khrushchev’s “state of all the people” and “party of all the people” and has invented the “council state” as the substitute. This indicates that the revisionist party opposes the dictatorship of the proletariat and does not believe that states have class natures. The revisionists expose themselves while responding to the intensification of live social contradictions.

August, 2017

Italy

Communist Platform – for the Communist Party of the Proletariat of Italy

The Externalization¹ of Borders, a Criminal Policy of imperialism

In the last years the phenomenon of migration has acquired remarkable dimensions, involving practically every country of the world.

According to UN data, the total number of migrants in the world is rapidly increasing, going from 173 million in 2000 to 244 million in 2015. The migratory flow has been particularly towards the OECD countries and is increasing more and more.

The fundamental cause of the mass migrations

Which are the reasons for these massive migrations?

People are fleeing from underdevelopment, from misery, hunger, conditions of extreme poverty, from mass unemployment and work conditions with wages below the subsistence level.

People are fleeing from wars of plunder, from reactionary civil wars, from the destabilisation of the oppressed countries, attacked and looted by imperialism, especially in Africa and the Middle East.

People are fleeing from political and religious persecution, from the instability created by terrorist attacks and the violence of reactionary and obscurantist forces connected to the oligarchies, which have caused tens of thousands of victims.

People are fleeing from land grabbing, as a result of which millions of hectares of land have come under the control of the multinationals and the governments of the rich and powerful countries; they are fleeing from deforestation and the devastation of the environment, from the difficult access to water, heightened by drought and epidemics.

So there is not just a single factor explaining the process of migration that leads millions of men and women to risk their

¹ The subcontracting of border management to third countries.

lives, and often to lose them, in unsafe crossing of deserts and seas. However, all these factors have a fundamental cause: the capitalist-imperialist system, which has always caused great migrations, both within individual countries and on an international scale, in order to get labour-power to areas where it is needed to increase the production of surplus-value.

The migration of millions of human beings is increasing in direct proportion to the sharpening of the contradictions of imperialism, especially the contradiction between a handful of imperialist countries and the peoples of the dependent, semi-colonial and colonial countries, which are being attacked, looted and oppressed.

Imperialism is the major factor pushing more and more poor and weak peoples to migrate. At the same time, it is the principal factor pulling the migrants, leading to their employment in the imperialist metropolitan areas as a low wage labour-force subject to blackmail, in demanding, precarious and unskilled jobs, often turned down by native-born workers. The immigrants serve to raise the profits of the monopolies and other capitalist enterprises, to increase the competition among the workers, and to swell the States' coffers with contributions and taxes.

The subcontracting of borders: to select, exploit and enslave

Over the last ten years the migratory flow towards the European Union (EU) has grown enormously and in a many-sided way.

The volume of the flow, the different countries of origin of the migrants and the variation in the routes used to get to Europe, form a complex and changing situation affecting the Old Continent.

In this scenario, the imperialist and capitalist members States of the EU, in order to control the contradictions within the society caused by the mass migrations, have adopted some policies characterized by the containment, discrimination and turning back of the migrants, due to which the right of welcome and asylum is less and less guaranteed.

These policies meet the requirements of internal consent of the financial oligarchy and their governments (today racism is a "commodity" of high electoral value in countries full of

discontent due to the harsh conditions of work and life), as well as the necessity to select the labour-force of the migrants (dividing them into those “seeking political asylum” and “economic migrants”, collecting information about their level of training, skill, professional qualification, etc) who are incorporated into the productive branches of the imperialist countries, depending on their technical characteristics and level of development.

One of the key approaches that EU leaders have adopted to contain and control migration is the “externalization” of border management, that is to say the subcontracting of border management to third countries.

Therefore, we observe a shift of the borders and controls beyond the national confines of the imperialist countries of the EU, expressing the inevitable tendency of finance capital to widen its own territory with the most varied forms of economic, political and diplomatic subjugation of the countries of origin of the migrants.

This process incorporates the mechanisms of progressive delocalisation of control, surveillance and detention, which are entrusted to the police and the militias of the countries whose task is to prevent the migrants, including many women and children, from arriving in the EU and to concentrate them in a network of increasingly large concentration and sorting camps, often managed by traffickers in human beings.

The shifting of the borders goes hand in hand with the thwarting of the principles sanctified in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Geneva Convention, the latter created by the will of those EU countries that today do not hesitate to abandon it.

The Khartoum Process and the relations with despotic regimes

The process of externalisation of the borders and controls, begun in the name of a presumed “struggle against illegal immigration”, has gone through some definite stages, in which imperialist Italy has played a very active role, as a country affected by the migratory stream.

On 28 November 2014 in Rome, during the six months of the Italian presidency of the EU, there was a ministerial conference among the representatives of the members States of EU, the countries of the Horn of Africa (Eritrea, Somalia, Ethiopia and Djibouti) and of some of the countries of transit (South Sudan, Sudan, Tunisia, Kenya and Egypt).

The resulting agreement, named the “Khartoum Process”, aims – under the guise of “cooperation and dialogue” – at transferring the borders of the EU to Africa, the countries through which migrants pass, or directly to their countries of departure. The aim is to block not only the influx of the so-called “economic” migrants, but also of those seeking political asylum.

In conformity with this point of view, relations are developing with the reactionary regimes from which hundreds of thousands of people are fleeing. As part of the process of externalisation of the borders, “democratic and inclusive Europe” has no scruples about beginning talks with autocrats who are considered lawful actors of international policy and reliable and democratic partners.

For example, the UE and Italy (as well as Israel) have established good relations with the regime of Isaias Afwerki, who since 1993 has ruled Eritrea, the country from which come one of more numerous groups of people looking for protection, due to the absence of respect for human rights. The uninterrupted violations, the disastrous economic situation and the compulsory



military service for an indefinite time, have caused the migration of about 400,000 Eritreans up to 2015. The aim of the EU is to close the Eritrean borders, a policy which consists in “aid packages” of hundreds of millions of Euros.

The same discourse is valid for the Sudan, a country of origin, but above all of transit, of refugees from the Horn of Africa, which is at the centre of the European and Italian strategy of externalisation. Sudan is ruled by Omar al-Bashid, accused of war crimes and genocide during the conflict in Darfur: another “good friend” who safeguards the imperialist interests of the EU and Italy in exchange for millions in Euros and weapons.

To “co-operate” with and finance regimes such as those of Eritrea and Sudan, in order to control the migratory flow, means to support reactionary and despotic regimes which deny human and democratic rights.

The “Khartoum Process” emphasizes the control, the reinforcement of the borders and the national police forces, and the construction of “reception centres”, in order to choose the migrants under the pretext of starting the procedures for the recognition of the status of international refugee. The concrete risk is that the migrants, if they are intercepted south of the Sahara, will stay in these camps for an indeterminate time. Of course, the EU and Italy are washing their hands, externalizing their responsibility at the same time.

The Fund for blackmail and corruption

Another fundamental step in this cynical policy was taken on the occasion of the Summit between the European Union and the African Union about migration, held in November 2015 in Valletta (Malta). 25 members States of the EU, together with Norway and Switzerland, established a European Union Trust Fund (EUTF) for Africa.

This Trust Fund, which was allocated a sum of 1.8 billion Euros, has an infamous logic: to utilize the funds for cooperation and investment not only in order to export capital, but also to force the African States to cooperate in closing their borders and in readmitting their citizens that the EU members States consider undesirable.

The monetisation of the relations with the poor countries of Africa has opened the door to a system of pressures, to support for reactionary regimes and corruption, which trample underfoot the human rights and fate of thousands of people from the poorest continent, reinforcing local tyrants, mafias and paramilitary gangs.

Many projects that utilize the international cooperation funds are not destined for development projects, but for measures of control and repression at the border.

For example, the trust funds destined for Sudan serve to send material for identification and control of the borders, for the formation of border police and the construction of two camps, at Gedaref and Kassala.

These funds in the hands of the bourgeois government of the EU are real instruments of economic blackmail, threatening the States that refuse to close their borders, and reward those that repress their own citizens or refugees in transit through their territory, in the name of the collaboration with the European Union of the monopolies.

The policies established at the Summit constitute European interference in African affairs. The Trust Funds made official the idea of making the provision of the migration funds conditional, transforming them into “rewards” or “punishment” regarding the collaboration in the control of the migratory flow, in the procedures of expulsion and repatriation, inside an area – such as, for example, that of ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) – that would foresee the freedom of movement of people.

Another example of the process of the externalisation of the borders is the agreement between the EU and Turkey of March 2016 for the closure of the “Balkan route”. Under this agreement between the European leaders and Erdogan, the turning back to Turkey of those people who arrive “illegally” in Greece was imposed, thus delegating to the Turkish authorities the problem of control of the Balkan borders.

The agreement foresees many points of action, in exchange for 6 billion Euros: a substantial financial support to the reactionary regime of Erdogan, while poverty and unemployment

are growing, and the democratic rights of the peoples of Turkey and of the migrants are unceasingly trampled upon.

A model that repeats and extends itself

The Italian government, after having presented the Migration Compact in Brussels in 2016 – which foresees the replication of the EU-Turkey agreement with the principal countries of origin and transit of the Central Mediterranean route – has continued to work with the German government to arrive at the commitment of 10 billion Euros for international co-operation that could be invested in Tunisia, Senegal, Ghana, Niger, Egypt and the Ivory Coast. This is in exchange for a major undertaking in the control of their borders and for the readmission of their fellow-citizens and of people who have passed through their territory. The “progressive” Renzi and Gentiloni do not care at all if the migrants will be trapped in conditions of profound vulnerability towards their rights.

After having closed the Balkan route, the EU and chiefly Italy – always more hard pressed due to the migratory flow coming from South and the lack of solidarity of the North – have the objective of closing the route passing through Libya, through which pass 90% of the migrants who cross the central Mediterranean sea.

Thus an agreement has been signed (under UN auspices) with the puppet government of al Sarraj that foresees the appropriation of hundreds of millions of Euros, the formation and the strengthening of the Libyan Coast Guard, the delivery of 10 patrol-boats, the completion of the control system of the land borders of that North African country and the construction of refugees camps in Libya, a country in which the migrants suffer arbitrary detention, violence, torture, murder and sexual exploitation.

In May of 2017 a summit took place among the Interior Ministers of Italy, Libya, Chad and Niger to watch over and block Libya’s southern borders. The chiefs of the Tebu, Suleiman and Tuareg tribes of the Sahara are also involved in the project, whom Italy wants to utilize – also with the aid of drones, satellite images, weapons and funds – to seal the corridors through which the migrants are passing.

Neo-colonialism and the negation of national sovereignty

The element that emerges from the agreements reached by the EU regarding migration is the interest of the European imperialist and capitalist countries in blocking and selecting the flow of migrants as far away as possible from their own borders, entrusting the operations of security and control directly to the countries from which the migrants come or pass through.

While “Fortress EU” and its members States pretend to take up the cause of human rights, in practice they reach agreements with vassals and puppets of imperialism who do not respect either the fundamental rights of their populations or those of the migrants.

Thus the EU and Italy totally avoid their responsibility after having exercised colonial and imperialist rule in Africa and the Middle East for a long time, subjugating the peoples and looting their wealth in order to satisfy their own economic and strategic interests. Besides, they forget the mass migration of the last centuries, which is still continuing today and the increase in the number of young people without jobs (at present there are about 5.2 million Italians in foreign countries, while there are about 5 million foreign citizens in Italy).

The consequences of these agreements are the blocking of the routes utilized by the migrants to reach Europe that are thus becoming increasingly long and risky, and are a substantial negation of the right of asylum and humanitarian protection, which are being denied in the name of “protection” of the European borders.

With the externalisation of the borders and controls, a neo-colonial extension of the rule of the imperialist States and a complete negation of the sovereignty of the dependent and semi-colonial States are being established.

Nevertheless this policy – masked by a false humanitarianism – has not achieved all its goals. The migratory flow, fed by powerful causes, has not registered the decrease and control hoped for by the bourgeoisies.

Consequently direct military action is advancing: military ships, helicopters, reconnaissance aircraft, drones, military technologies and troops specialized in blocking the boats on which migrants embark, turning them back at sea and on land,

creation of “floating hotspots”², the imposition of codes of conduct on the ships of humanitarian organizations, completely ignoring humanitarian principles and the reasons for mass migrations.

The operations “Mare Sicuro” (Secure Sea) and “Sophia”, directed by imperialist Italy, are further steps toward the use of military force in the Mediterranean. These naval missions aim to abrogate the international right of the sea and to enter into the territorial waters and land of Libya to block the flow of migrants.

In addition to being acts of war against migrants, who will be driven into concentration camps in an insecure country with the danger of suffering brutal violence, the measures decided by the Italian government are the prelude to new disastrous military adventures in Libya, in order to divide up the North African “failed state” and its reserves of oil and natural gas.

At the same time, within the EU countries security policies are being implemented and a shameful ideological offensive is being developed that spreads racism and xenophobia, the policy of “national preference” is being fostered, supported by populist, chauvinist, extreme right-wing and fascist parties and movements in order to turn the discontent of the native-born workers against the migrants fleeing from war and hunger, in order to divide and subjugate them both.

For the rights of migrants, for solidarity between the exploited workers and the oppressed peoples

The migrants are completely right when they denounce the increasingly high walls being constructed to exclude them, the discriminatory policies of imperialism and its vassals, the murders and deportations of the State, the inhuman conditions existing in the “welcome” centres managed by the regimes and the mafias, the injustices and violence that they suffer, the xenophobia and racism spread by the ruling classes.

Our duty is to cooperate in the struggle and unity of the migrants, to aid the development of their class conscience, to support their fighting for integration with the organisations of the

² Centers of identification on the sea, to prevent migrants from escaping their control.

native-born workers, to promote the participation in the class struggle of all the exploited against the exploiters.

The workers of the European countries and the whole world must unite in order to put an end to the criminal and discriminatory policies of imperialism.

We demand a policy of dignified and respectful welcome of the migrants and their rights.

We demand the opening of safe channels of access for the migrants.

Abrogation of the racist laws and measures against the migrants.

NO to the centres of expulsion and “administrative” detention.

Residence permits for applicants and transit documents for migrants.

Political asylum for all victims of wars and fascist persecution.

Regularisation, equal wages and rights for immigrant workers.

No collaboration with reactionary and fascist regimes!

NO to the gendarmes of the EU and Italy on the European borders!

NO to the externalisation of the borders and to the turning away of immigrants!

NO to the military missions, imperialist wars and militarisation of our countries!

Let us develop international solidarity of the exploited workers and the oppressed peoples!

July 2017

Ivory Coast

Revolutionary Communist Party of the Ivory Coast – PCRCI

The Current Socio-Political Situation in the Ivory Coast and the Tasks of the Proletariat

From 2002 to 2011, the Ivory Coast experienced a reactionary civil war that opposed two rival factions of the upper bourgeoisie, both at the service of international imperialism, especially French imperialism. This war ended with the intervention of the French armed forces to impose one of the factions. Thus, the upper bourgeois organized in the “Patriotic Front” of Laurent Gbagbo lost power to the upper bourgeois organized in the “Union of Houphouetists for Democracy and Peace” (RHDP) of Alassane Ouattara. The alternation in power took place within the strict framework of the neocolonial system. Thus, the Ivory Coast remains an underdeveloped country, trapped in the shackles of the world imperialist capitalist system. The power in the hands of the upper bourgeois remains an anti-democratic power, which denies it liberties. Faced with this situation, what are the tasks of the proletariat and its vanguard?

A nation under the thumb of international imperialism

The Ivory Coast is one of the countries in Africa where international imperialism is all-powerful. It decides on the economic and social orientation, it chooses the clan of the upper bourgeois to run the country, etc.

All economic and social development plans and budgets are submitted for approval to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank (WB) and the agencies of development aid of the imperialist powers. Most of the capital invested in the modern sectors such as energy, mining, petroleum, the processing of agricultural products, big department stores, foreign trade, road, airport and port infrastructure, etc. are in the hands of French, U.S., Chinese and other companies.

At the political level, since the nominal independence granted by France in 1960, all changes at the top of the State, whether it be Henri Konan Bédié's accession to power in 1993 after the death of Houphouët-Boigny, the accession to power by a coup of Robert Guéi in 1999, the accession to power of Laurent Koudou Gbagbo by an insurrection in 2000, the imposition by force of Alassane Ouattara in 2011, all these changes have been carried out with a strong direct involvement of the French imperialist power. This situation is a reflection of the history of the Ivory Coast, France's back yard since the independence of the countries of West Africa.

France, the dominant imperialist power in the Ivory Coast

In order to preserve its colonial privileges, in 1961 France signed twelve agreements with the new republic of the Ivory Coast embracing all spheres of economic and political life. These agreements of "cooperation" form the legal bases of French domination over the Ivory Coast. These include: (1) The Defense Agreement; this agreement was revised in 2012. (2) The Treaty of Cooperation. (3) The Agreement on economic, monetary and financial cooperation. (4) The Agreement on military and technical assistance. (5) The Agreement on cooperation in the field of Justice. (6) The Agreement on cooperation in higher education. (7) The Agreement on cultural cooperation. (8) The Agreement on cooperation in the field of civil aviation. (9) The Agreement on cooperation on mail and telecommunications. (10) The Agreement on cooperation on trade. (11) The Agreement on cooperation on personnel matters. (12) The Agreement on technical cooperation relating to magistrates made available to the republic of the Ivory Coast.

This whole range of agreements covers all fields of the political, economic, social and cultural life of the State of the Ivory Coast. They were all signed on the same day, April 24, 1961, as soon as independence was granted. One might say that this was even before the young State made its marks in the family of nations, the official proclamation of independence having taken place on August 7, 1960, only eight months before. France wanted to act quickly as a lover in a hurry to celebrate his wedding before the bride could change her mind and turn to another suitor.

Generally speaking, the agreements claim to be founded on the links that “freely” unite the Republic of France and the Republic of the Ivory Coast, on the basis of mutual respect between the two States. These agreements are supposed to promote close “cooperation” between the parties in various fields.

Apart from these misleading general considerations, which hide the desire of the former colonial power to maintain colonial ties with its former colony by legal and diplomatic means, these agreements emphasize the position of supplicant of the Ivory Coast. “The French Republic, at the request of the Republic of the Ivory Coast...” is the preamble to all these agreements. It is therefore the Ivory Coast which is requesting this in order to “survive.” But later on, the more explicit clauses show that it is France that derives the full benefit from these agreements without obligation on its part. Thus, these agreements emphasize the non-binding nature of French obligations toward the Ivory Coast. It reads: “The French Government facilitates, **to the extent of its abilities**, the training and the improvement of personnel in the public or private sectors requested by the Republic of the Ivory Coast.” The same applies to the provision for all types of teaching personnel, magistrates, etc. It is the same refrain for the assistance or aid provided by France for the determination, study and implementation of programs of telecommunication equipment.

In addition to the non-binding nature of the French obligations in these agreements, one notes the granting of specious privileges to the French party. Facilities and exclusive rights are granted by the Republic of the Ivory Coast to the French Republic and its companies for certain activities or in certain fields. Let us quote at random: The Republic of the Ivory Coast agrees to “give priority to the French government in the recruitment of personnel.” “The Republic of the Ivory Coast shall provide facilities to the French government to open educational establishments in the territory of the Republic of the Ivory Coast under its authority (that of the French government).” “...It shall provide conditions for the importation duty-free of books, films and discs from the other contracting party.” “Ships under the flag of either of the two States in the ports, territorial waters and waters of the other State shall enjoy the same treatment with regard to fishing, passenger transport, customs formalities and port formalities, levying of port duties and taxes and

all facilities granted for operations in the ports.” “Financial assistance for economic and social development affecting studies, purchases of equipment or supplies and the carrying out of works shall be subject to reserved markets, in principle for enterprises of French or Ivorian nationality.”

The monetary agreement is the standard agreement that establishes France’s control over the Ivory Coast: “The issuing institution (of currency) is a national establishment with its headquarters in Paris.” “The Board of Directors (of the issuing institution of currency) shall be composed of representatives of the member States of the West African Monetary Union and the French Republic.” “A national monetary committee shall be established in each State, including, in particular, a State administrator on the board of directors and a representative of the French Republic.” No comment necessary.

Finally, these agreements are characterized by the existence of secret special clauses which have not been published: “The relations between the French treasury and the Ivorian treasury remain governed by a special agreement.”

In sum, these agreements are like the association between horse and rider. The latter sits on the back of the former, holding him by the reins to prevent him from going anywhere, braking him and leading him where he wants. Such have been the links between France, the former colonial power, and the Ivory Coast since 1960.

The penetration of other imperialist powers into the Ivory Coast

French imperialism is certainly dominant in the Ivory Coast, which it inherited in the colonial partition of 1885. It was officially granted this territory in 1893. Forced by the struggles of the colonized peoples, it had to grant national sovereignty to its colonies, but it gave itself the means to preserve its colonial privileges in the Ivory Coast. But one of the characteristics of a neocolonial State is that it is open to the greed of all the other imperialists. In this competition, the rising imperialist powers are the most aggressive. Thus, the US, which after the Second World War in 1945 became the chief imperialist power, attempted to establish itself in the back yards of the former colonial powers. The emerg-

ing countries (China, India, Morocco, South Africa, etc.) that aspire to the rank of imperialist powers are also getting in on the act.

In the Ivory Coast, U.S. imperialism has become a dominant force in the oil and mining sector. It is extending its tentacles into the banking sector. A survey carried out by the Party in May of 2017 shows that over 70% of the new companies established since 2015 are Chinese, Indian or Moroccan in sectors such as banking, cement, food processing, tourism, hotels, etc.

This means that there is stiff competition among the imperialists in the Ivory Coast, even though French imperialism is still largely dominant.

An underdeveloped nation where the people live in poverty

The upper bourgeois and their imperialist masters are constantly predicting a bright future for the Ivory Coast. In 1960, the first president, Houphouët Boigny, asked the Ivoirians to tighten their belts for 20 years in order to achieve prosperity by 1980. Liberty and democracy were muzzled during this period. But in 1980, the coffers were empty, and the expected prosperity did not appear. The IMF and World Bank invited themselves into the country to establish structural adjustment programs in order to ward off the fate of the neocolonial State. Since then, all the demagogic promises of the successive governments of the upper bourgeois can no longer put to sleep the people who are more than ever in poverty.



Since 2012, the Ouattara government wants people to believe that the Ivory Coast will be an emerging country by the year 2020. It is worth saying a few words about this situation, which has become the slogan of almost all the African countries. With the collapse of the first socialist state in 1989-1990 and the unification of the world capitalist market that followed, the bourgeois political specialists classify the countries of the world into four categories. The countries of the first category are the developed countries (Western Europe, North America and Japan), the second are the emerging countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, Morocco, Pakistan, South Africa), the third are the countries on the road of development (including sub-Saharan African countries), and the fourth are the least developed or underdeveloped countries (including sub-Saharan African countries).

The Ivory Coast wants to be ranked among the emerging countries in 2020. But three years from this deadline, what is the reality? Let us compare, on the basis of IMF statistics from 2016, some socio-economic parameters of the Ivory Coast with those of Morocco, one of the countries that rank among the lower scale of the emerging countries. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita is \$3 per day compared with \$10 for Morocco. Exports of manufactured goods account for 20% of total exports compared with 60% for Morocco. The added value of agriculture in the GDP is 30% against 10% for Morocco. The poverty index is 48% (no comment), the Human Development Index (HDI) is 0.452, placing the Ivory Coast 168th out of the 197 countries in the world (no comment). The unemployment rate is 45%; the illiteracy rate is 50%, compared with 20% for Morocco; the infant mortality rate is 64/1000; life expectancy is 54 years, access to drinking water is 60%, to electricity is 62%. These official figures from the IMF are enough to show that the Ivory Coast is still an underdeveloped country where poverty, illiteracy and unemployment exist side-by-side. To become an emergent country by 2020 is a chimera, because the gap between the characteristics of the socio-economic reality in the Ivory Coast and the internationally required parameters to be considered an emergent country speak for themselves. Youth unemployment persists and is increasing. The road infrastructure is in the same state of disrepair as it was in 2010. Many households in the towns and the country-

side continue to use chaotic connections for electricity or they light a storm lamp. Many drink water from backwaters or wells. The health system has not improved; the public hospitals in the Ivory Coast remain a deathtrap. The education system produces people who are unemployed. Housing is still cruelly lacking in all major cities, creating slums. In a word, the Ivoirians of the popular classes live in poverty.

The Ouattara government, a despotic government at bay

The elementary freedoms guaranteed by the bourgeois constitution are cheerfully flouted by the Ouattara government. Since 2011, secondary-school students no longer have the right to unionize. For university students, the Ouattara government has imposed puppet organizations in its pay, the student councils, formed of the heads of the departments. The university exemptions no longer exist because the universities are watched over by the national police and the unofficial militias of the government. All the demonstrations against this state of affairs by secondary-school and university students and teachers have either been repressed or blocked by the corrupt trade union leaders. The demonstrations by the opposition parties continue to be sabotaged by the militias of the RDR [Union of the Republicans, Ouattara's party – *translator's note*]; This was the case with the PCRCI demonstration in Port Bouet on December 21, 2013, the FPI [Ivoirian Popular Front, Laurent Gbagbo's party – *translator's note*] demonstrations in January, February, March and April; the demonstrations of the parties opposed to the autocratic constitution in October 2016, which were savagely repressed.

The Ouattara government also has difficulty in guaranteeing the security of the citizens. This situation is worsening day by day with the attacks against the symbols of the State (police and gendarmerie stations, and military barracks). During the last two months, July and August 2017, there were about ten attacks of this type. The assailants took weapons from the barracks that were attacked and obtain financial resources by breaking into economic companies. The government has so far remained powerless in the face of what looks like a preparation for a coup by opposing bourgeois clans.

The Ouattara government is making every effort to break the strikes of the trade unions and the demonstrations of the people, to imprison journalists and opponents. It is a government at bay whose practices arouse the wishes for coups by opposing clans of the upper bourgeois.

The Tactics of the PCRCI

All the parties of the Ivorian upper bourgeoisie have experienced State power. After independence in 1960, Houphouët promised the dream of a golden life to the peoples by offering up the Ivory Coast to French imperialism. But in 1993, toward the end of his life, despite the subsidies to him administered by the donors of international funds, the Ivory Coast was classified by the IMF as a heavily indebted poor country. His successor, Henri Konan Bédié, was not able to reduce the poverty. Taking advantage of the awakening of the popular struggles for freedoms and bread, a clan of the upper bourgeoisie put an end to his power with a military coup in 1999. The coup leaders and their civilian allies, preoccupied with the desire to fill their stomachs, could not do better. Poverty increased, freedom and democracy were drastically reduced. In 2000, the refounders [refers to Gbagbo's policy of "restructuring dependence" – *translator's note*], took power to rebuild the Ivory Coast, without breaking with imperialism, the diversion of public funds or the gagging of freedom. For ten years, imperialist domination did not decline. Poverty greatly increased; freedom and democracy were undermined. In the presidential elections of 2010, imperialism chose to bring back the Houphouëtists. The refounders were swept away by the war. But this clan of upper bourgeois, linked to imperialism, addicted to corruption, the theft of public funds and supporters of a despotic government, cannot miraculously advance the Ivory Coast on the road to democracy, liberties, social well-being and modernity. This clan cannot find solutions to the evils that undermine Ivorian society. The Ouattara government had promised to administer the country in a transparent and rigorous manner. But after his first term in office, this government is being eaten away by corruption, mismanagement and tribalism. Public procurement contracts of billions of CFA francs are rigged without the offenders incurring the least sanction. All economic initiatives are submitted to

the IMF and World Bank. The people live in poverty and are determined to fight against plundering. The contradictions among the various clans that make up this coalition are continuing. The revolt of the soldiers, although they have been won over to the president's side, is an indicator of this crisis at the top. The probability is high that a new reactionary war will take place. It is the eve of the battle to prepare for 2020, the election year.

The political parties of the bourgeois opposition are also preparing for 2020. Fronts are being born or are being prepared. Even if these parties, victims of the despotism of Ouattara's government, quibble over freedom and democracy, they expect support from international imperialism, especially French imperialism.

Since 2015, the popular masses have resumed their struggles in difficult conditions: disorganization and regimentation of the trade unions, repression, criminalization of struggles, corruption of trade union big-wigs, etc. But these popular struggles are increasing in frequency and intensity. The experience of unitary struggles is developing.

In sum, we can say that we are on the eve of a revolutionary situation that can lead to a revolutionary crisis. Faced with this situation, what is the party of the proletariat doing?

The Ivory Coast is doing badly; it is in chaos! Every day demonstrations are taking place, proof of this chaos. Meanwhile, the upper bourgeoisie within in the RHDP, despite the contradic-



tions that oppose them, are organizing to stay in power in 2020. They are trying hard to find the best ones whose main task is to continue the same policy; to sell off the national wealth to the multinationals, to exploit the working class, to plunder the fruits of the labor of the peasants, small merchants and those engaged in transport; to fraudulently take the resources of the State; to institute despotism as a mode of government.

The proletariat and the popular masses want an end to the chaos, they want a rupture with this policy; they want a sovereign, democratic, popular and modern republic where the people decide their destiny freely and with full responsibility. What should the people do to achieve this legitimate objective? They must set themselves the immediate objective to be attained and the means to achieve it.

The present poverty of the peoples, the present chaos, is the result of imperialist domination, particularly French domination, which keeps us in the bonds of economic and political dependence. French imperialism relies on the upper bourgeoisie which has imposed its power and which rules by repression and restriction of liberties. They flout the democracy inscribed in their own constitution.

The immediate task must be the seizure of State power from these predators and their masters for the establishment of a people's democratic republic that is independent and modern. This objective seems to us to be widely shared by various patriotic forces which are already making enormous efforts to carry out the fight in this direction. These forces must stop fighting among each other, stop splitting and scattering. This is the road to follow.

The Revolutionary Communist Party of the Ivory Coast (PCRCI) is initiating a platform of struggle that explains the immediate objective and the fights to be carried out.

This platform should lead to the formation of a broad front of the patriotic forces, an indispensable front to get rid of the reactionary classes.

The recent struggles of the people of the Ivory Coast show that the path is outlined to advance towards such a road. In 2016, the struggle against the reactionary constitution of the third republic, which was imposed by Ouattara only by stuffing the ballot boxes

and manipulating the results, show the people's ability to defend freedom and democracy. The unitary struggles of the peasants, civil servants and soldiers in 2016 and 2017 show that it is possible to fight together for bread and liberty and to win important victories. The struggles against the interference of international imperialism, particularly French imperialism, during the civil war in the Ivory Coast from 2002 to 2010, have shown that the people are fully conscious of the importance of defending national sovereignty. The struggle for sovereignty, liberty, democracy and bread is being built.

August, 2017

Mexico

Communist Party of Mexico (Marxist-Leninist) – PCM(ML)

The Class Struggle and the Elections of 2018

In Mexico over the last few months, the class struggle has been marked by strong struggles between the proletarian and popular masses and the bourgeoisie, the financial oligarchy and their state. There are three main scenarios in which we can see more clearly how the different social classes are acting, on the one hand trying to maintain power, to avoid the current situation from leading to a political and then a revolutionary crisis; while on the other hand, the exploited and oppressed classes are continuing to resist the offensive of capital, struggling to accumulate strength, to change the still unfavorable balance of forces in which they find themselves faced with their class enemies.

I. The economic situation in Mexico

The class struggle is unfolding in the midst of an economic situation in the country characterized by:

1. The highest inflation rate of the last nine years, which in June reached an annual rate of 6.31% according to the official data. This has caused higher prices of basic products, lowered the salary of the workers, deepened the pauperization of the working class and the popular sectors.

2. The main causes of this level of inflation were the following: a) The liberalization of energy price since January 1 of this year, which led to an average increase of 24% in the price of petroleum, household gas and electricity; this brought about an avalanche in the increase in costs of public transportation and in all commodities; b) Between November 2016 and February 2017 (the period between the United States elections and the first days of Donald Trump in the White House), there was an increase of between 20% and 30% in the value of the dollar in relation to the Mexican peso; this had a great impact on the Mexican economy, since a large volume of commodities consumed in the country are

imported from the US. Together with these factors, during the first half of 2017 there was a cumulative increase of 27% in the price of cement, the main component of the construction industry; the price of housing increased by about 10% and in general the cost of the construction of infrastructure in the country has been affected.

2. The expectation of growth for this year is limited to 1.8% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), lower than the growth of 2016, which was 2.3%. During the first half of this year there was a fall in industrial activity and although the service sector has grown, this is not indicative of an improvement in the forecast of growth for this year. Up to June of this year unemployment has stayed at 3.5%, which adds up to 1,821,000 workers, with more than 30 million Mexicans remaining in the informal sector, about 60% of the economically active population.

II. The rebellion against the rise in energy prices

The energy reform has been one of the most important of the structural reforms of Peña Nieto imposed at the end of 2013. Its effects on the privatization of state-owned enterprises, which controlled production and marketing, have had a drastic impact on the economic situation of the workers. At the beginning the 2015, there began a series auctions of the main oil facilities and wells. To eliminate the obstacles to price speculation, the Mexican government determined that beginning in January 2017, the process of total liberalization of the prices of energy supplies (petroleum, household gas and electricity) would begin. This triggered price increases, and created an effect on all consumer goods in Mexico.

One did not have to wait for the popular response. Beginning on January 1, 2017, there were spontaneous and legitimate mobilizations of the popular masses throughout the country, involving all strata of the petty bourgeoisie, who inevitably tend to be proletarianized, and important sectors of the middle bourgeoisie. This created a great explosion in several areas. The mobilization became a popular uprising or revolt, including in Ixmiquilpan and Rosarito.

Ixmiquilpan is a municipality in the Valley of Mexquital, in the central state of Hidalgo; Rosarito is a municipality in the

north of the country in the State of Baja California that borders the US; currently ruled by the PRI and PAN respectively. There, the popular sectors had not been able to mobilize strongly in the recent struggles of the Mexican people, but now the discontent that had been bottled up for a long time broke out. The actions in Ixmiquilpan started with the taking over of the gas stations, the closing of the main commercial chain stores: Chedraui, Coppel, Oxxo, etc., and the blocking of the bank branches. The masses of people were involved, and the actions intensified. The highways were blocked, including the one that leads from Mexico City to Laredo; fuel trucks were stopped and the fuel distributed to the population. Of all the actions in the country, beginning on January 4, the Mexquital Valley became the most dangerous for the Mexican State.

On Thursday, January 5, the government of Peña Nieto responded to the general discontent; it sent federal police armed to the teeth to drown the uprising in blood. The popular response was greater, and the repressive forces, joined by the municipal police, state police and the Mexican Army, fled in fear, leaving behind equipment and wounded, before the anger of the popular masses.

Two young people, Alfredo Perez and Alan Giovani Gutierrez, were assassinated and thousands were injured. That day the people of Ixmiquilpan taught a lesson to the working class and peoples: the implementation of popular assemblies (embryos of mass Soviet power) led to decisions not to raise the price of the basic products and to avoid a shortage of supplies in neighboring municipalities.

Rosarito, a town a few miles from Los Angeles, California, also joined in this wave of protests. Despite their inexperience in the popular battles, they convened around the Pemex station, along the side of the trans-peninsular highway, which connects the three Californias (North, South and United States). The Mexican State decided to use its police forces once again to carry out another bloody repression against the people on Saturday, January 7. That morning a large group of Federal Police arrived in Rosarito, with the support of the state and municipal police. Throughout the day they tried to remove the protesters, but they refused to unblock the highway. Rather, their response was to

reinforce the closing of the highway, which unleashed the anger of the fascists who sought to create a provocation, using a van to ram several police.

Then, tear gas and a police raid left more than 70 detained and journalists beaten, as another example of the real solution that Peña Nieto intends to impose on the proletariat and popular discontent. The people found more strength inside themselves and continued the protest, mobilizing important sectors from Tijuana, Mexicali, Tecate, Ensenada and the Day Laborers of San Quintin, turning the whole region upside down. This forced the US government to temporarily close the border posts that connect with Mexico in that area.

Throughout the country, demonstrations took place. For the first time the Mexican State unleashed a large-scale provocation: paramilitary groups and organizations connected to the regime carried out acts of violence and looting. Their aim was to unleash terror on a large scale in order to immobilize the masses and neutralize their fight against rising energy prices. In the midst of all this, Ixmiquilpan and Rosarito were the spearheads that marked the mass struggle in the beginning of 2017.

After these popular uprisings, on January 31 all the organized forces in the country called for a large demonstration against the measures of the federal government, forcing the regime to change its strategy of liberalizing energy prices, carrying out daily increases from January until the end of the year, in order to water down the popular struggle.

III. The electoral fraud in the State of Mexico

Last June, elections were held in four states of the Republic, including in the State of Mexico (bordering on Mexico City and the headquarters of the Atlacomulco group, an economic group of Peña Nieto). The elections in this state were the most significant in this period because they showed the tactics and strategy of the main oligarchic groups in the country looking towards the elections of 2018, when voting will take place to elect the President of the Republic, the 128 members of the Senate, the 500 deputies, 30 state elections (for governors and local congresses) for a total of 32 states and several municipal authorities and members of local congresses.

In the 2017 elections, more than 47% of the population did not vote. Thus, and through electoral fraud, the PRI won again in the State of Mexico, where all the forecasts showed that Delfina Gomez, the candidate of Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, would win. The conciliatory attitude of the Movement of National Regeneration (Morena), the party led by Lopez Obrador, was also evident. The masses were very willing to take to the streets against the electoral fraud; however Morena imposed its conciliatory attitude, demobilizing its social base. For its part the mass movement, the democratic and revolutionary organizations, called for street demonstrations, rejecting the electoral fraud. We carried out some popular demonstrations and a symbolic encirclement of the Electoral Institute of the State of Mexico (IEEM), the institution responsible for declaring who is the new Governor. However, the organized social movement as a whole did not have enough strength to unleash an anti-fraud movement that would have been able to take advantage of all the discontent of the masses in this situation and that would set a great precedent for the elections of 2018.

IV. The Building of a United Front and the General Political Strike

Between the rebellion against the rise in fuel prices and the fraud in the elections in the State of Mexico; within the mass movement there were important efforts to build a United Front and a unitary Plan of Action of all the trade union and popular forces of the country. Thus, we began with an action plan called



“National Campaign for Organization and Mobilization,” which took place between January 17 and February 5, whose main day of mobilization was January 31. This first plan of struggle was headed by the Social and Unitary Broad Front, led by the Union of Telephone Operators of the Mexican Republic (STRM) and the unions in the National Union of Workers (UNT). Then the effort of three collectives: The People’s National Assembly led by the Parents of the 43 [student-teachers of Ayotzinapa]; the National Assembly of the Resistance (which brought together an important number of sectors that mobilized against the rise in fuel prices) and the National Assembly of Coordination of the Workers of the Countryside and City (ANATCC) organized by the National Coordinator of Education Workers (CNTE), convened the First Meeting for the Unity of the Mexican People last April 1 and 2, agreeing on the fundamental issues to bring together the popular movement in the country:

a) A unitary plan of struggle concentrated on four main mobilizations: May 1, June 19, September 1 and September 26; these dates would increase the ability, strength and radicalism of the mass mobilizations until September 26, when it would be 3 years since the disappearance of the students of Ayotzinapa, and would be the strongest mobilization of this year.

b) A National Political Coordination of the Meeting for the Unity of the Mexican People was formed, which has been meeting monthly to comply with what was agreed to at the First Meeting and evaluating the tasks at each step.

c) A nine-point Program of Unitary Struggle, which highlights the struggle against the structural reforms, the return alive of the disappeared, the freedom of the political prisoners, the defense of natural resources, the peoples’ territory and national sovereignty, the defense of the rights of women and the struggle for the downfall of Peña Nieto, among others.

d) The holding of a Second National Meeting for the Unity of the Mexican People, to be held on October 14 and 15 of this year. The objective of this Second Meeting is to draw up a Plan of Unitary Action that would last until at least July of next year.

The Communist Party of Mexico (Marxist kept up this - Leninist) (PCMML), the Revolutionary Popular Front (FPR) and their mass organizations, have been carrying out this task, putting

at the center our proposals for mass movement: the building of a large National Assembly of the Proletariat and Peoples of Mexico, which has been taking shape and increasing in vitality in the unitary processes and especially the National Meeting for the Unity of the Mexican People, where our propositions along with other proposals is being discussed. We have also been insisting on the need to build a United Plan of Struggle for the entire workers', peasants' and people's movement that puts at the center the organization of the General Political Strike, which would bring about a change in the balance of forces for the Mexican proletariat. In this sense, we pay attention to the four unitary actions that were agreed on for this year, but especially to push for this September 26th to become a test that leads the masses to understand by their own experience the possibility and necessity of a General Political Strike.

A Unitary Command of a national character, which would play the role of General Staff for the whole mass movement, is another one of those tasks which we continue to prioritize, faced with the multiple centers of leadership of the mass movement today. To the mass movement, we continue to propose a Program of Struggle of a democratic-revolutionary character, which would put at the center the need to overthrow the current regime, the formation of a Revolutionary Provisional Government that would convene a National Constituent, Democratic, Proletarian and Popular Assembly.

In Mexico, we have considered these to be the imperative tasks that we must develop in the present conditions of the country, in order to advance in the process of revolutionary accumulation of forces, thus bringing the proletariat and peoples of Mexico closer to the victory of tactics and strategy of proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

V. Towards 2018 and the elections in Mexico

In order to correctly prepare for of the class struggle in 2018, in which the elections will play an important role, the PCMML and the FPR published a document called "The electoral question and tactics of the Marxist-Leninists," in which we make a general analysis of the conditions of the country and the conditions in which we think the 2018 elections will be held. Also, we make a

detailed account of the various experiences that our Party has had in this field. We outline what our Party think must be the elements for a Revolutionary Electoral Tactic and at the end of the document we point out the particular element of our proposed intervention and that of the mass movement in the 2018 elections.

Concerning the elements of a Revolutionary Electoral Tactic, we point out that is indispensable to point out the limits of this election tactic, which very often is one of the most dangerous deviations into which one can fall when one adopts this form of struggle. One must establish this mainly because it is subordinate to the strategic objective of the proletarian revolution and must not be considered as the fundamental means for the seizure of power, because it is not prioritized above other forms of struggle of the proletariat and the popular masses, such as the General Political Strike, street fighting, the general insurrection and the armed struggle, as various forms of the revolutionary violence of the masses. The electoral struggle must be a means to promote the need for the overthrow of the dictatorship of capital by revolutionary means.

For the communists and revolutionaries, if the conditions exist, it only makes sense to enter into the electoral arena to unmask the bourgeois character of each election, the rottenness of the political system under capitalism-imperialism; making clear that a radical change in the conditions of life, study and work of the masses can only be the work of the masses themselves and will never come from any one person much less from the bourgeois institutions of the country.



The fundamental reason for our entering into the electoral process is to break with all vestiges of electoral and parliamentary illusions that survive in the consciousness of the masses. We must clearly oppose our strategic vision and the need to organize the masses in opposition to the individualism of a caudillo that opportunism puts forward as tactics in the electoral processes.

One condition of principle for the communists and revolutionaries in the midst of electoral battles is to never hide our banners; hiding our red flags of the hammer, sickle and star would not at all help to increase our presence among the popular masses; still less masking our participation with talks and proposals that have nothing to do with our political program and our true tactical and strategic objectives.

The linking and intertwining of the electoral participation with other forms of struggle, especially street fighting, with the General Political Strike is indispensable; one cannot carry out participation in elections on the one hand while separating this from the development of actions of street mobilization. In fact, in our experience, the periods of greater street mobilization were the ones that have won the greatest victories for the popular movement.

To guarantee the revolutionary nature of our tactics in this field, we must never forget the maxim that tactics can vary in 24 hours and more so in the electoral field, being subordinated to the mass movement. For example, it may be correct to present candidacies, to carry out intense electoral campaigns, but circumstances can lead us to a situation in which, on the day of the election, we have to change radically, give up all our candidacies and call for the total boycott of the elections.

Towards 2018

It is undeniable that these elections will not fundamentally change the oligarchic dictatorship and the level of dependence of Mexico on Yankee imperialism. It is evident that up to now there has been an agreement at the upper echelons of the financial oligarchy that the options for governing Mexico after 2018 lie, on the one hand, on the right-wing and the extreme right-wing represented by the PRI and PAN, or on social democracy now represented by MORENA, headed by Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador.

Both cases are already under the control of the financial oligarchy, and both only represent two different forms of exercising the dictatorship of capital.

In this scenario, our Party and the FPR are proposing a tactic to intervene in these elections, whose general lines consist of:

1. Participating in the 2018 electoral scene with a strong wave of street mobilizations and a more solid United Front, which will bring the struggle of the masses closer to the General Political Strike and advance in the building of the National Assembly of the Proletariat and the Peoples of Mexico.

2. Participating actively in the 2018 elections, putting forth our own democratic-revolutionary program, promoting candidates from the ranks of the mass movement, and developing our own campaign, with the program of unitary struggle that the movement has achieved so far, which means that we will not raise proposals or platforms of the bourgeois parties.

3. We consider that in this electoral process, we can develop the mass movement to gain greater influence and to look for a bloc of democratic popular representatives that can occupy parliamentary seats, which would be considered a popular victory.

4. The popular candidates that we are ready to support could be registered in the parties of bourgeois opposition, headed especially by Morena. However, we do not rule out the road of independent candidacies, including, in various regions of the country, ones which could bring the movement together. In specific municipalities they could be the independent candidacy of the Indigenous National Congress (CNI) and the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN), with the problem that this candidacy so far has not been opened up to the entire organized movement of the country.

5. The fundamental thing for our Party and the FPR is that the 2018 electoral scene should not weaken or divide the process of the accumulation of forces that the workers and peoples of Mexico have achieved so far. On the contrary, they must take advantage of this scene to continue increasing our strength in order to build the embryos of Soviet mass power and to continue projecting the struggle for the proletarian revolution, socialism and communism.

Peru

Peruvian Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist)

The October Revolution and the Building of Socialism

“The epoch of proletarian revolutions has just begun. The advent of socialism represents an historical necessity which results from the objective development of society. This is inevitable. The counter-revolutions which have been carried out and the obstacles which emerge can prolong the existence of the old exploiting system to some extent, but they are powerless to halt the march of human society towards its socialist future.”

(Enver Hoxha, *Eurocommunism Is Anti-Communism*)

One of the most important contributions of the October Revolution to the workers and peoples of the world is the experience of building Socialism, based on a thorough understanding of the laws of social development, the historic mission of the working class and its allied forces, the leading role of the Communist Party, the revolution for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the destruction of its state, the need to establish and exercise the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat as a state form that brings about the transition from capitalism to communism, among other elements, of which we consider these the most important.

Many falsehoods about Socialism have been spread, the bourgeoisie has played its part in the ideological struggle, counting on its social-democratic allies who, since the fall of revisionism in the former Soviet Union, have maintained that “socialism has failed,” that it was the “socialization of poverty,” “the elimination of personal initiative and competition,” the “excessive control of the way of life,” the “seizure of property in general,” that “if you have two cows socialism takes one away to give it to someone else,” that “under socialism the idle are maintained,” that “socialism is a police regime,” among other falsehoods that are constantly repeated by the press and are reproduced in the daily conversations of the people. One hears them in the com-

ments of young people who in most cases are considered “apolitical.” This shows that in the ideological struggle the bourgeoisie has won over the majority of the population and has politicized the people around bourgeoisie’s class interests in order to shore up the capitalist system as the “most advanced form of democracy.” It is applying the dirty propaganda principle of Joseph Goebbels: “Lie, lie and lie, so that something will remain; the bigger the lie, the more people will believe it.” There is no such thing as being apolitical, since everything has a class stamp; science, philosophy, music, art, education, everything is connected to the class struggle and being “apolitical” is only in the interest of preserving the social status quo.

The lies of bourgeois propaganda are intended to break the will of the workers and peoples to fight for Socialism as a political, economic and social alternative; so that they do not seek to put an end to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, the exploitation of one human being by another, the ruin and pauperization of the workers, so as not to put an end to the wars of aggression among the imperialist powers and against the peoples; so that they do not fight against the shifting of the costs of the crisis on their shoulders; so that they do not fight against privatization and making work precarious and that they also consider normal the seizure of the national wealth by the imperialist powers, the commoditization of the rights that make education, health, social security and recreation inaccessible to their children.

To refute the bourgeois propaganda we cite some articles from the Constitution of the USSR of 1936, which unlike any bourgeois republic establishes in its Magna Carta an alternative for the development of peoples once the means of production have been socialized and the working class has taken the power political of the State.

On the “seizure of property in general,” that “if you have two cows socialism takes one away to give it to someone else.”

Article 10. The right of citizens to personal ownership of their incomes from work and of their savings, of their dwelling houses and subsidiary household economy, their household furniture and utensils and articles of personal use and convenience, as well as the right of inheritance of personal property of citizens, is protected by law.

This article, which is completely clear, corresponds with what Marx and Engels pointed out in the Communist Manifesto on personal property. This refutes the falsehoods of the bourgeoisie that claims that socialism and communism will confiscate all kinds of property, so that the people will be afraid of the proletarian revolution and so that the bourgeois exploiters and expropriators are not expropriated. ***“Communism deprives no man of the power to appropriate the products of society; all that it does is to deprive him of the power to subjugate the labour of others by means of such appropriation.”*** (Communist Manifesto, Marx and Engels).

On the “socialization of poverty”, the Soviet Constitution states:

Article 11. The economic life of the U.S.S.R. is determined and directed by the state national economic plan with the aim of increasing the public wealth, of steadily improving the material conditions of the working people and raising their cultural level, of consolidating the independence of the U.S.S.R. and strengthening its defensive capacity.

The implementation of this article is shown in the development achieved by the Soviet Union that was often on a par with the technical and industrial development of the big capitalist powers, which allowed the international proletariat to have a bulwark for its revolutionary advance.

“Under socialism the idle are maintained;” in this respect the Constitution of 1936 shows the new concept of work that was being forged after the proletarian revolution and with the possibility of achieving full employment as a result of economic planning, the diversification and development of the productive forces, on the basis of the law of harmonious development of the national economy.

Article 12. In the U.S.S.R. work is a duty and a matter of honor for every able-bodied citizen, in accordance with the principle: “He who does not work, neither shall he eat.” In the U.S.S.R. the principle applied is that of socialism: “From each according to his ability, to each according to his work.”

Article 118. Citizens of the U.S.S.R. have the right to work, that is, are guaranteed the right to employment and payment for their work in accordance with its quantity and quality. The right to work is ensured by the socialist organization of the national economy, the steady growth of the productive forces of Soviet society, the elimination of the possibility of economic crises, and the abolition of unemployment.

On “socialism as a police regime” and “excessive control of the way of life”: we can point out that the police and terror regime is an invention of the bourgeoisie to blame socialism for what is happening in reality in the bourgeois “democratic” republics. Here the people who go out to protest in order to improve their material conditions of existence are repressed, here the use of public spaces for popular rallies is prohibited, here revolutionary literature is outlawed, here intelligence agencies are used to follow the popular leaders and bring false charges against them; only in the socialist countries has popular organization and participation been encouraged for the building of the new society. In this respect the Soviet Constitution points out:

Article 125. In conformity with the interests of the working people, and in order to strengthen the socialist system, the citizens of the U.S.S.R. are guaranteed by law:

a) freedom of speech;

b) freedom of the press;

(c) freedom of assembly, including the holding of mass meetings;

d) freedom of parades and demonstrations in the streets.

These civil rights are ensured by placing at the disposal of the working people and their organizations printing presses, stocks of paper, public buildings, the streets, communications facilities and other material requisites for the exercise of these rights.

Article 127. Citizens of the U.S.S.R. are guaranteed inviolability of the person. No person may be placed under arrest except by decision of a court or with the sanction of a procurator.

Article 128. The inviolability of the homes of citizens and privacy of correspondence are protected by law.

Article 129. The U.S.S.R. affords the right of asylum to foreign citizens persecuted for defending the interests of the working people, or for their scientific activities, or for their struggle for national liberation.



Article 130. It is the duty of every citizen of the U.S.S.R. to abide by the Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, to observe the laws, to maintain labour discipline, honestly to perform public duties, and to respect the rules of socialist intercourse.

“The elimination of personal initiative and competition” is another falsehood of the bourgeoisie that it also seeks to blame on socialism. Under the capitalist system the initiative and competition of small production is eliminated by the domination of monopolies and their interest in buy up everything, which prevents the development of the productive forces and science if this goes against their economic interest.

The revolution and the building of socialism is one of the processes in which initiative, criticism and self-criticism and creativity develop at previously unseen levels. As the working class undertakes the immense task of building a new society, emulation and competition are elements that improve the skill in work and provide better conditions for its reorganization. In this respect Lenin stated: ***“Far from extinguishing competition, socialism, on the contrary, for the first time creates the opportunity for employing it on a really wide and on a really mass scale, for actually drawing the majority of working people into a field of labour in which they can display their abilities, develop the capacities, and reveal those talents, so abundant among the people whom capitalism crushed, suppressed and strangled in thousands and millions.”*** (Lenin, “How to Organize Competition,” *Collected Works*, Vol. 26.)

Bourgeois propaganda has no interest in spreading among the men and women of the working people the achievements made by the working class in the U.S.S.R. in order to improve their material and cultural conditions. Here are some examples:

Article 119. Citizens of the U.S.S.R. have the right to rest and leisure. The right to rest and leisure is ensured by the reduction of the working day to seven hours for the overwhelming majority of the workers and its reduction to six hours for occupations whose working conditions are difficult, and to four hours in sectors in which these conditions are especially difficult; the institution of annual vacations

with full pay for workers and employees and the provision of a wide network of sanatoria, rest homes and clubs for the accommodation of the working people.

Article 120. Citizens of the U.S.S.R. have the right to maintenance in old age and also in the case of sickness or loss of capacity to work. This right is ensured by the extensive development of social insurance of workers and employees at state expense, free medical service for the working people and the provision of a wide network of health resorts for the use of the working people.

Article 121. Citizens of the U.S.S.R. have the right to education. The right to general and mandatory education is ensured up to eight grades, to general polytechnic education for the great majority, to professional and technical education and specialized intermediate and higher education, based on the connection of study with life, with production; the greatest possible provision of free education at night, free education of all kinds and a system of State scholarships; the education in schools in the native language, and by the organization in the factories, state farms and collective farms of free vocational, technical and agronomic education for the working people.

Article 122. Women in the U.S.S.R. are accorded equal rights with men in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life. The possibility of exercising these rights is ensured to women by granting them an equal right with men to work, payment for work, rest and leisure, social insurance and education, and by state protection of the interests of mother and child; State aid to mothers with large numbers of children and to single mothers; the granting of paid leave to pregnant women, and the provision of a wide network of maternity homes, nurseries and kindergartens.

Article 123. Equality of rights of citizens of the U.S.S.R., irrespective of their nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life, is an infeasible law....

In the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolutions, capitalism as a system is not an alternative for the realization of the aspirations of the working class and peoples; it cannot create full employment, consistently develop initiative and competition, put an end to crises, stop stimulating and organizing wars; it is incapable of putting an end to corruption, crime and exploitation; moreover it is still playing its fascist card.

The workers must prepare ourselves more decisively for the tasks of the revolution for national liberation and Socialism.

I. The Social Revolution of the Proletariat, Necessary Condition for the Building of Socialism and Its Relevance for Today

The social revolution of the proletariat involves the violent change of the social structures and the property relations of bourgeois society, the expropriation of the exploiting classes, and the seizure of political power by the proletariat, as the most advanced class that brings about the radical transformation of society and the suppression of all forms of exploitation of one human being by another.

“The conquest of power by the proletariat does not mean ‘peacefully’ capturing the ready-made bourgeois State machinery by means of a parliamentary majority. The bourgeoisie resorts to every means of violence and terror to safeguard and strengthen its predatory property and its political domination. Like the feudal nobility of the past, the bourgeoisie cannot abandon its historical position to the new class without a desperate and frantic struggle. Hence, the violence of the bourgeoisie can be suppressed only by the stern violence of the proletariat.” (The Program and Statutes of the Communist International, 1928)

In the process of organizing and making the socialist revolution, the proletariat, which has ceased to be a class in itself and has become a class for itself, has its General Staff, its fighting vanguard, the highest organized expression of its class interest, the Communist Party, which leads the revolutionary process as the only representative of the political interests of the working class, through which People’s Power in the Dictatorship of the Proletariat is established and exercised.

In the carrying out of the proletarian revolution, neither the leadership of the Communist Party nor the active participation of the laboring class and the hegemonic role of the working class can be dispensed with. *“There is no means of immediately delivering the poor of town and country from the burden of working for the rich. The working people have no one to place their hopes in and no one to rely upon but themselves. Nobody will free the working man from poverty if he does not free himself. And to free themselves the workers of the whole country, the whole of Russia, must unite in one union, in one party.”* (Lenin, “To the Rural Poor,” *Collected Works*, Vol. 6.)

The proletarian revolution is not the result of the spontaneous action of the masses, of voluntarism, of radicalization resulting from the individual indignation of the intellectuals, of the pretentious actions of the petty bourgeoisie; rather, it is an organized and systematized appearance by the Communist Party, which as representative of the interests of the working class extends its work of education, organization and mobilization of the popular masses in order to prepare them for the struggle for their liberation. Lenin (in “Marxism and Insurrection,” *Collected Works*, vol. 26) pointed out about the insurrection: *“To be successful, insurrection must rely not upon conspiracy and not upon a party, but upon the advanced class. That is the first point. Insurrection must rely upon a revolutionary upsurge of the people. That is the second point. Insurrection must rely upon that turning-point in the history of the growing revolution when the activity of the advanced ranks of the people is at its height, and when the vacillations in the ranks of the enemy and in the ranks of the weak, half-hearted and irresolute friends of the revolution are strongest. That is the third point. And these three conditions for raising the question of insurrection distinguish Marxism from Blanquism.”*¹

The proletarian revolution is the result of the laws of social development, of the class struggle as the motive force of history that, from the emergence of classes rises to new stages up to the abolition of these classes through the destruction of the bourgeois

¹ Engels in reference to Blanquism criticizes its conspiratorial tactics, its voluntarism and its absolute rejection of any compromise along the path of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat.

state and the exercise of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Marx wrote in a letter to Joseph Weydemeyer in 1852: *“As for me, no credit is due me for discovering either the existence of classes in modern society or the struggle between them. Bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this struggle of the classes long before me, and bourgeois economists had portrayed their economic anatomy. What I did that was new was to prove: (1) that the existence of classes is bound up only with specific historical phases in the development of production; (2) that the class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat; (3) that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society.”*

Marx, in the introduction to his work *“A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,”* asserted: *“At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production or – what is merely a legal expression for the same thing – with the property relations within the framework of which they have hitherto operated. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. At that point an era of social revolution begins. With the change in the economic foundation the whole immense superstructure is more slowly or more rapidly transformed.”* This was enriched by Lenin, who, by studying imperialism as the highest and last stage of the development of the capitalist system, discovered the law of uneven economic and



political development of capitalism. Due to the high level of development of the productive forces and the high degree of socialization of production on a world scale, *“the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country alone.”* (“On the Slogan for a United States of Europe,” *Collected Works*, vol. 21.) He realized that in the era of imperialism the world economy is linked as a chain, “where a revolution could break out where the link is weakest.”

Contrary to what the bourgeoisie refers to as the “fanciful and chimerical character” of socialism, we affirm that socialism is not an invention of the Marxists; it is a social stage through which humanity passes as the product of objective laws, of the contradictions that are created between the development of the productive forces and the social relations of production, between the socialization of production and capitalist appropriation in increasingly few hands, of the class struggle that unfolds outside our will but that requires our conscious participation to bury capitalism and imperialism and to open the way to the building of the new society, of Socialism in transition to classless, communist society.

II. Principle and Law of Building Socialism

Socialism can only be built once the political power of the state has been seized by the alliance of workers and peasants, under the leadership of the Communist Party, who exercise the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in order to overcome the resistance of the capitalist class. Marx pointed out. *“Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. There corresponds to this also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.”* (“Critique of the Gotha Programme,” Marx.)

Lenin, expanding on the definition of the dictatorship of the proletariat and raising the immediate tasks of Soviet power, once the means of production had been socialized and the resistance of the bourgeoisie crushed, established the need to organize the peasants and the agricultural proletariat into production cooperatives, to exercise workers’ control and administration in the factories, to do away with illiteracy and to advance technical educa-

tion for the workers, the reorganization of work and the increase of productivity; the electrification of all Russia, the industrialization that Stalin later developed... *“As I have had occasion to point out more than once..., the dictatorship of the proletariat is not only the use of force against the exploiters, and not even mainly the use of force. The economic foundation of this use of revolutionary force, the guarantee of its effectiveness and success is the fact that the proletariat represents and creates a higher type of social organisation of labour compared with capitalism. This is what is important, this is the source of the strength and the guarantee that the final triumph of communism is inevitable....”* (“A Great Beginning,” Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29.)

Socialism as the first phase of communist society, where it proposes to put an end to private ownership of the main means of production, to the political power of the bourgeoisie and the evils and vices inherited from the capitalist system, seeks to lay the material and cultural basis for the building of Communism based on the fundamental economic law of socialism. This is *“the securing of the maximum satisfaction of the constantly rising material and cultural requirements of the whole of society through the continuous expansion and perfection of socialist production on the basis of higher techniques.”* (“Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR,” Stalin). Also, socialism has a principle on which it builds its economic system and the production of material goods, which is the principle: *“From each according to his ability, to each according to his work.”* This differs from the higher phase of communist society in which: *“after the enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labour, and with it also the antithesis between mental and physical labour, has vanished; after labour has become not only a means of life but itself life’s prime want; after the productive forces have also increased with the all-round development of the individual, and all the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly – only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be crossed in its entirety and society inscribe on its banners: From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!”* (Critique of the Gotha Programme, Marx.)

The building of socialism shows its success based on the understanding of the law of correspondence of the relations of pro-

duction with the character of the productive forces, the law of the harmonious development of the national economy that demands the substitution of the capitalist relations of production by socialist ones, economic planning, the industrialization of the country, the rational use of natural resources, the increased productivity of labor and the cultural development of the working people. It essentially resolves the contradiction between the city and the countryside, between mental and physical labor, between industry and agriculture on the basis of socialized property and the development of technique in production.

III. Emulation, Cooperative Organization and the New Conception of Work

The October Socialist Revolution opened a new stage to make use of the individual initiative and its integration with the collective development of the working people, on the basis of socialized property and the raising of the cultural level of the working people. In order to carry this out, the Bolsheviks nurtured the initiative of the working class and promoted socialist emulation. Lenin points out: *“Only now is the opportunity created for the truly mass display of enterprise, competition and bold initiative.... [It] has only now become a field in which the working man can reveal his talents, unbend his back a little, rise to his full height, and feel that he is a human being. For the first time after centuries of working for others, of forced labour for the exploiter, it has become possible to work for oneself and moreover to employ all the achievements of modern technology and culture in one’s work.”* (“How to Organize Competition,” Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26.)

Lenin refuted the formulations of the bourgeoisie who, despite having been given the opportunity, continue to repeat it in order to confuse the new generations. He pointed out: *“Capitalism long ago replaced small, independent commodity production, under which competition could develop enterprise, energy and bold initiative to any considerable extent, by large- and very large-scale factory production, joint stock companies, syndicates and other monopolies. Under such capitalism, competition means the incredibly brutal suppression of the enterprise, energy and bold initiative of the mass of the population, of its overwhelming*

majority, of ninety-nine out of every hundred toilers; it also means that competition is replaced by financial fraud, nepotism, servility on the upper rungs of the social ladder.” (“How to Organize Competition,” Lenin.)

One of the notable features of socialist emulation is that it has brought about a radical change in the attitude of human beings towards work. They no longer conceive it as the heavy and humiliating burden that it was before, make it into a matter of dignity, heroism, courage, glory and the proper function of the healthy organism. Socialist emulation based its action on the principles of collaboration and of socialist mutual aid of the workers, of the help of the advanced workers to the backward workers. This was done in order to achieve a general rise [of production], it was proposed as a measure to combat routine, inertia and bureaucracy.

Socialist emulation in the USSR went through several stages, with the initial form of Communist Saturdays, where the railway workers of Moscow-Kazan worked without pay for the Republic in their free hours of Saturdays during the civil war. *It continued with shock-work of the first five-year plan and the Stakhanov movement of the second plan. The Stakhanov movement pointed to a new stage in the history of emulation, since it rests first and foremost in the new technique due to socialist industrialization. This movement engendered high labor productivity, and provided evident proof of the superiority of socialism over capitalism.*

With the assured leadership and support of the Communist Party, socialist emulation was the inexhaustible source of initiative and the spirit of creativity of the working people, and laid the foundation for the flourishing of socialist culture.

IV. The Proletarian Cultural Revolution under Socialism

The role of organizer of the new society, which corresponds to the proletariat, presupposes a material base that supports it and a cultural elevation that allows him to better understand the social laws which he must try to master and use them in his interest. It also needs the formation of a new human being with communist morality who will advance towards the full realization of the historical mission of the proletariat, to put an end to social classes and to build communism. *It is an indispensable premise of the*

progress of the socialist forms of the economy and of the elevation of the cultural level of the proletariat, which transforms its own nature, becomes a direct element in all aspects of the life of society, brings this process transformation to the other classes and, thereby, prepares the ground for the elimination of classes in general.

The phrase “proletarian cultural revolution” should not be used to cover up the power struggle between revisionist cliques that took place in China in 1966. But it should be understood as a process where the working class in power is aware of the need and prepared to take the next step, based on dialectical materialist science, on the advance of technique and the development of productive forces. Thus it must break with the ideological paradigms that are inherited from capitalist society, break with the vestiges of the relations that bind the State with the church, reorganize the work completely on socialist bases, stimulate the participation of the people in politics, the spreading of criticism and self-criticism and combating the vestiges of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois thought, etc.

The experience of the building of socialism in the Soviet Union illuminates the struggle of the peoples in the tasks of the seizure of political power and the building of the new society. This is one of the most important legacies we inherited from the October Revolution; we Marxist-Leninist communists must use this experience as an initial contribution, to understand their advances and limitations, to recreate the building of socialism according to our own reality. This should not be a copy, a reproduction or a worn-out invention that is the result of the good intentions of some people. Rather, its building must be based on the study of our own reality, the understanding of the laws of social development, the creative application of the universal truths of Marxism-Leninism to our concrete reality and the action of the working class and its Marxist-Leninist Communist Party.

*CC of the PCP (M-L)
September 2017*

Spain

Communist Party of Spain (Marxist-Leninist) – PCE (ML)

Santiago Baranga

On the Referendum in Catalonia

It is to be expected that, at the time of publication of this article, the referendum on Catalonia's independence, scheduled for October 1, will have been held in one way or another. A different question is its practical consequences, depending on the level of participation— although its promoters have reduced the importance of that fact, referring to the low level of voting in the very few referendums that have taken place in Spain – and the way in which the State has framed it. So far, the ranks for independence have been cleared of the most indecisive elements, with the replacement in July of the *consellers*¹ of the Presidency, Education, Business and Home Affairs,¹ of the secretary of the Autonomous Government and of the director of the *Mossos d'Esquadra* (autonomous police). In this way, the unity of discourse (provided by Oriol Junqueras, leader of the historic petty-bourgeois group Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya, Republican Left of Catalonia, ERC) necessary to promote the so-called *process* towards independence, both before and after the referendum, has been achieved.

As is usual in Spain, the “debate” – in the large state and private media – on a matter as important as the possible independence of the most economically powerful territory has been centered on the most superficial aspects, such as the legal problems of the Generalitat (the autonomous government structure) to acquire ballot boxes.² And it was developed, of course, in the rough

¹ Members of the government (Ministers) in the autonomous regions in which Catalan is also an official language (Catalonia, Balearic Islands and the Valencian Country).

² According to the 1978 Constitution and subsequent legislation, the authorization for the convening of different (and very restricted) types of referendums is the exclusive jurisdiction of the State. It was J. Sole Tura (PCE representative in the Commission on Constitu-

tone that characterizes the monarchist opinion makers and with the well-known anti-Catalan issues. Everything to conceal the true class nature of the State and its tremendous lack of democratic affairs, far worse than in other bourgeois regimes of “our environment” as a result of its Francoist origin. On the other hand, the main issue has been the equally fond recourse to “fiscal plunder” by Madrid. However, for Catalonia it is much easier to justify the rupture in political terms, as has also been done, citing the obvious lack of democracy and the anachronism of the regime of 1978 in regard to the “national question.” Faced with this, the ultra-conservative government of Rajoy has no defense.

“Liberal democracy” laid bare

On the other hand, as could not be otherwise given its sinister origins, the People’s Party (PP) is opposed to the referendum, stubbornly shielding itself by legality and the “State of law,” thus trusting in a *sociological Francoism* that continues to be faithfully obedient to the norms imposed by the authorities, however

tional Affairs responsible for preparing the text of the 1978 Constitution) who proposed the restriction of the referendum, which in the Preliminary Draft Constitution established, in a manner similar to the Italian constitution: “The approval of laws voted by the Cortes General [Spanish legislature] and not yet sanctioned, political decisions of special importance and the repeal of laws in force, may be submitted to a referendum of all citizens.” The argument he gave (against the opinion of the pro-Franco Popular Alliance, which resembled the position of the right wing on the women’s vote in 1931, perhaps relying on the fact that everything had been “very well tied up “ after the dictatorship) was that “the problem that we have today is not that the same parties are in power, but to make... the parties be representative, that the parties be strong, that the parties be recognized as concrete interpreters of the great masses of the population, and that this is the main thing.” J. Oliver Araujo, “The referendum in the Spanish constitutional system,” in *Cuadernos de la Facultad de Derecho (Review of the Faculty of Law)*, no. 15 (1986), p. 106-107. It is one more of numerous examples that Eurocommunism was eager to “touch power” at all costs, the first victim having been the vindication of the Republic.

irrational or brutal they might be. For this, it counts on the unconditional support of the “reenergized” PSOE [Spanish Socialist Workers’ Party] of Pedro Sánchezⁱⁱ and, of course, of the ultra-Spanish neoliberal Citizens’ Party, which has been exercising the role of the PP since the last elections. It has also done this in the town halls, provincial councils and autonomous parliaments. With a maneuver that recalls the old Francoist ploy of “organic democracy” or “State of law,” they try to justify the unjustifiable: that the law, a historical and therefore contingent product, as an expression of the interests of the class in power (like the State), can be placed as an immovable slab above the popular will to provide a new framework of political relations (self-determination).

They still give another turn to this pirouette, clinging to a second myth of liberalism that is “national sovereignty.” In reality, it has only been since the announcement that the referendum would be held a few years ago, that the discussion around the term “nation” to refer to Catalonia in its Statute of Autonomy has become important.³ Not being recognized as a nation, they argue, one cannot speak of national sovereignty, since that refers to all Spanish citizens. Therefore, this reasoning concludes, any deci-

³ It does not seem to us unreasonable to say that the movement that led to the call for the referendum on October 1 has its starting point that: the Constitutional Court and the Congress of Deputies introduced important changes, as has already been pointed out, in the Statute of Autonomy that had been approved by a very large majority of the Catalan voters; that produced a turning point in the relationship of Catalonia with the central State. The economic crisis added fuel to the fire, aggravating a social situation already quite degraded after 30 years of autonomous government in the hands of the nationalist bourgeoisie of *Convergència i Unió* (CiU – Convergence and Union). For the specific analysis of other aspects of this process, see *October*, numbers 58 (December 2012), 66 (October 2013), 86 (October 2015) and 106 (July 2017), as well as successive reports approved by our Central Committee. On the national question in Spain, see the article of the same title in *Unity and Struggle* #21 (February 2011), as well as *The problem of the nationalities in Spain*, published by the PCE (ML) in the 1970s and recently reproduced by Aurora 17.

sion on the possible separation of one part of the territory would have to be voted on by all of Spain. Obviously, the Constitution does not allow this nor do those who justify themselves in this way have any interest in holding a referendum; but this juggling allows them to appear as the true defenders of “democracy.” Once again, putting form above content, contingent above principles, to maintain a “democracy” that, as the paid publicists insistently repeat, is identified with “respect for the rule of law that we have all endowed ourselves with” and whose structure thus acquires an imminent character. But, in reality, the repeated “single sovereignty” has, as the “social State”, clear Francoist reminiscences; in this case, its correspondence to the Organic Law of the State (1967) in its article 2: “National sovereignty is one and indivisible, without being subject to delegation or renunciation.”

It is easy to note, for any observer who is not too thick-headed, that in Spanish politics the fetishes of liberalism are particularly bare, in their falsity; such is the coarseness (or brutality) with which the Spanish right-wing manages its authoritarian nature in an “advanced democratic society.”⁴ Obviously, neither is the vaunted *division of powers* safe from this systematic distortion of the theoretical principles espoused by liberalism, and which in other countries is carried out more modestly. See, if not,



A monarchy voted for in the referendum on the Constitution that we have **all** provided ourselves!

⁴ Preamble to the Constitution of 1978.

the blatant connivance shown by judges, the Spanish Government and Parliament, which, if it was already clamorous in terms of corruption, has acquired really serious hues in relation to Catalonia, closing off any path to a political resolution of the conflict. That is why the recent statements of Vice-President Saenz de Santamaría are so gossipy, when he criticized the new steps of the Generalitat for their “disconnection” from the State, saying that “In Spain, with a consolidated democracy, that someone intends to form an autocracy in which the President of the Generalitat gives orders to not only the *consellers*, but to the Catalan Parliament and the judges, and breaks up the division of powers... is an aberrant product.”

It should be noted, in closing this section, that the Spanish liberals⁵ adopted this ideology as a way of “whitening” their fascist past, which makes the fetishes to which we are referring here adopt a particularly somber character in their hypocrisy, since they conceal a concrete class domination with a specific historical development, and a *Weltanschauung* (world view) equally particularly reactionary, in relation to the use made by other bourgeoisies that are somewhat more “civilized”.

Coercion and weight of the “dirty war”

Precisely for that reason, the relative – and intermittent – calm is striking (and not a little disturbing, knowing the long trajectory of the Ministry of the Interior in relation to the “dirty war,” espionage against political rivals and campaigns of disinformation), with which the [Spanish] Government is promoting what they call the “independence challenge” (or “separatist”, as the most insolent call it, bringing back the vocabulary of Spanish fascism). Until August, everything seemed to indicate that the insistence of Rajoy and his vice-president on repeating abstract threats (“we will enforce the law”) was in line with letting the Catalan situation rot until it led to a dead end, relying on the fact that the lack of tangible results would erode popular support for

⁵ Keep in mind that we are using the term “liberal” for the current represented by the thoughts of John Locke, John Stuart Mill, etc., and not in the progressive sense that it is used in the U.S., for example.

the *process* and unity of the independence bloc. In this, “low intensity” repression used selectively against high officials and subordinate functionaries (registrars, interrogators, disqualifiers, etc.), as well as acts of more or less symbolic coercion, such as the entrance of the Civil Guard into the Catalan Parliament, are clearly associated with the coup d’état of February 23, 1981, or to that of January of 1874 against the First Republic.

In this way, the PP seemed to commit itself to an eventual bankruptcy of the adversary “above,” thanks to the disagreement or intimidation of sectors of the independence coalition *Junts pel Si – Together for the Yes* [referring to a future vote on Independence] (ERC and Partit Demòcrata Europeu Català – Catalan European Democratic Party – or PDeCAT, heir of the majority of the former coalition CiU – Convergence and Unity); and the “disbanding effect” between the civil servants of the Generalitat and the municipalities from below, so that the referendum eventually would become too partial or clearly ineffective in practice. To these maneuvers was added the struggle between the [Spanish] Government and the Generalitat for the attitude that the *Mossos d’Esquadra* would take on the day of the referendum, whose unions were very upset by the situation in which they would be placed by a call for referendum that was not agreed upon by the central Government, since they would be forced to disobey the courts, or even to repress the voters at the entrance to the polling stations. As it must occur to many employees of the base of the civil service, only a significantly overwhelming popular movement in favor of the referendum and independence could decide those who were “lukewarm” to risk it, and Rajoy knows it.

However, the above-mentioned replacement of senior officials – all belonging to the PDeCAT – in July, and their replacement by people clearly in tune with the *process*, allowed them to close ranks around Junqueras. He has become the real strong man of the *Government*, representing the rise of the ERC to become the new hegemonic force, thanks to the downfall of the Catalan right. It should be noted, however, that there is no unanimity among the local leaders of the PDeCAT, and a new instability is still possible at the grassroots level. Of course, after the new appointments the debate over the position of the *Mossos* disap-

peared from the public scene, dominated by its new *Major*, Josep Lluís Trapero, especially after the attack on August 17.ⁱⁱⁱ

In this scenario of closing ranks among the supporters of independence, the Government of Rajoy reinforced its threats against those in charge of the functioning of the [Catalan] Parliament, as well as the financial pressure. At the same time, his monotonous public discourse varied somewhat, expressly rejecting the use of force and even the suspension of Catalan autonomy – which he had defended earlier this year – to focus on the legal route, the threat of disqualification of Catalan politicians and appeals against the successive decisions of the Generalitat (which, curiously, in fact, joined into the game, periodically forgetting the proclaimed road of disobedience). It seems, therefore, that the Government had calculated the “boomerang effect” that a tougher intervention would have, reinforcing support for independence. In fact, we are witnessing a redivision of roles in which there is no shortage of calls for taking measures of force – allowed by the Constitution, which accounts for its nature⁶ – to increase the pressure on supporters of independence and their possible allies, but which would allow the government to appear “moderate.”

Already, in 2012 Colonel Francisco Alaman threatened a military intervention in Catalonia if it proclaimed independence; hiding behind Article 8 of the monarchy’s Constitution and the chauvinist argument that Spain “is not just any nation, but one the most important that the history of humanity has produced.” In November of 2014, the Chief of Staff of the Army commented on this situation, stating that the armed forces are the “tool that the government has to make sure the law and the Constitution are complied with,” and that for that reason the military should “be

⁶ Article 8 establishes that “The Armed Forces... have as their mission to guarantee the sovereignty and independence of Spain, to defend its territorial integrity and the constitutional order,” while according to Article 155 the autonomy of a territory can be suspended: “If an Autonomous Community does not fulfill its obligations imposed by the Constitution or other laws, or acts in a manner that seriously undermines the general interest of Spain, the Government... may take the necessary measures to compel the autonomous community to fulfill those obligations or to protect the general interest.”

prepared to intervene in whatever manner the Government decides,” whether it be “to go to Afghanistan or Valencia.”

Regarding the suspension of Catalonia’s autonomy, it is backed by the most right-wing sector of the PP (those faithful to ex-President Aznar and the PP of Catalonia), but also of those responsible for the first PSOE governments, Alfonso Guerra and the sinister Felipe Gonzalez. Meanwhile, former Foreign Minister Garcia-Margallo has even proposed the suspension of autonomy for one day, to prevent the referendum and take control of the *Mossos*. However, the former head of diplomacy, more pragmatically, believes that some form of political negotiation is necessary, which would include a constitutional reform. An option that both the Government and the Citizens’ Party deny.

On the contrary, it seems that for some months, the idea has been gaining ground in the Government of resorting to the National Security Law, which was enacted by the PP and PSOE in September of 2015. This is one of those *ad hoc* laws which the monarchist parties periodically approve, with the objective of gradually reducing political rights, such as the Law on Political Parties, approved in 2012 against the Abertzale Basque left.^{iv} That law, which cynically pretends to “guarantee the defense of Spain and its constitutional principles and values” and to “protect the liberty and well-being of the citizens,” would allow power to be placed in the hands of an authority subject to the central government and to take control of the *Mossos*.

Rajoy and his supporters have followed this line since the Jihadist attacks of August 17. But the attempts of the Government and Monarchy to capitalize on the public’s condemnation of *Daesh* terrorism, and above all the new battle around the role of the *Mossos*, are campaigns of intoxication in order to break relations with the independence sectors, as well as the known connections between the police, the ultra-right-wing and the Jihadists. These obscure the position of those responsible for the Interior Ministry, in Madrid as well as in Generalitat, giving rise to all types of interpretations. Whether they are true or not, it is undeniable that the State has made it appear to many people as the February 23 of Felipe VI, that the response to the attacks have been a crude attempt to gain popularity and legitimacy. It is trying to appear as the saviors of democracy and social welfare, the

same way as his father made use of the attempted coup of 1981.^v This time, however, the rejection by a good part of Catalan society and the recent mediation of the Bourbon over the sale of arms to the Saudis, have made this attempt to introduce the slogan of “holy union” end in a fiasco.

Nationalism and Social Polarization

With all of these maneuvers, the Monarchist State is contributing to deepening its own crisis, as it is leading to the disaffection of growing numbers in various social classes, including those which formed part of the *power bloc*,^{vi} and which made possible the agreement between the oligarchic parties and the Catalan bourgeoisie in power^{vii} so that they could divide the public budgets among themselves, at the ministerial as well the autonomous level. However, simultaneously, there is another process taking place, in contradiction with the previous one, which is also a growing part of the oligarchy’s political project, above all, outside of Catalonia. At least it appears so, because in that territory the mobilizations by pro-independence forces, as well as the stupidities and outrages of the PP and the Citizens’ Party (which are especially reactionary in Catalonia)^{viii} make the possible backing of Spanish patriots almost invisible, which appear in public in the elections. And even among those who do not vote for independence there are important shades, which extend from the right-wing of the PP and the Citizens’ Party to the support for self-determination of *Catalonia si que es pot* (CSQP, Catalonia Yes We Can – an alliance which is made up of Podemos and other populist currents, as well as the Catalonia federation of *United Left* and the *Eco-socialists*),^{ix} through the timid “federalizing positions”^x of the PSC (Party of Socialists of Catalonia, in federation with the PSOE).

But what is indeed evident is that since 2010, Catalan politics and society have become increasingly polarized with regard to the importance of the national question and the rupture with Spain⁷ that the various classes and sections of classes are going

⁷ In the autonomous elections of 2015, held as a plebiscite on independence by the pro-independence forces (Junts pel Si and CUP – Popular Unity Candidacy), these groups obtained 47.74% of the

through, and in turn is tearing apart many organizations. Among the independence supporters, first was the breaking off of the Democratic Union from the CiU coalition with the CDC (Democratic Convergence of Catalonia);^{xi} but the latter's reformation as the PDeCAT^{xii} is now going through the difficulties pointed out above. The "anti-capitalists" of the CUP have also suffered internal shake-ups, which were finally "resolved" by closing ranks behind the independence project, with their eyes upon the corruption of the bourgeois CiU.^{xiii} It is worth mentioning the ease with which the ERC managed to evolve from being the support of a very damaged CiU to become the hegemonic force of Catalanism.^{xiv} It has achieved this by imposing its dynamism on its allies and strongly agitating, with more conviction and internal unity than anyone else, the banner of secession (without perceptibly changing the material conditions of the population, which are insistently blamed on the "corrupt policies" of Madrid). Under that banner, it has been able to hide its coexistence with the CiU that is corrupt from head to toe and is guilty of the economic and social catastrophe, which in turn has fed the discontent that has nurtured the movement towards independence.⁸ But, covering and wrapping up the rotten corpse of that bourgeois force with the skin of the *Junts pel sí*, far from causing damage to the policies of the ERC, Junqueras has been able to become the leader^{xv} of much of the rank-and-file of the CiU⁹. We can only imagine

votes (72 seats out of 135); those who defended the right to self-determination but did not directly call for independence (CSQP and UDC – Democratic Union of Catalonia) obtained 11.45% (11 seats, none of them for UDC); while the forces opposing both possibilities (PP, PSOE and Citizens' Party) got 39.17% of the votes and 52 seats. The pro-independence forces considered this electoral victory as support by the Catalans for independence.

⁸ In fact, this "national split" has its inverse in the ERC, which has even managed to attract support for independence from a large part of the immigrant vote, both from other regions as well as from abroad.

⁹ The polls give ERC 30% of those likely to vote, 16 points more than in 2012, the last elections in which it ran alone. It is the same percentage that the CiU obtained in the 2012 election.

what it would do later with that rotten corpse; but as we pointed out in a previous article, it will be difficult for the CiU to jump off the wave which its former boss Artur Mas has been riding.

On the other hand, the PSC has been breaking up in different directions, as a result of its nature as a multi-class party. While some Catalonian sectors have gone over to the ERC, intermediate professional sectors, and a good part of the workers from the areas on or near the coast between Tarragona and Barcelona and around the latter – which originated from the economic immigration from other regions – have been giving their support^{xvi} to the populist *Catalunya sí que es pot* or even the Spanish right-wing Citizens' Party. In 2015 both forces had their best results, precisely in what had previously been the “red belt” that had voted for the PSC.^{xvii} These same districts were practically the only ones in which the independence forces as a whole obtained less than 50% of the vote in 2015.

Beyond the ICV (Initiative for Catalonia-Greens, eco-socialists) and the EUiA (United and Alternative Left, part of IU),^{xviii} which are more ideologically defined and part of the Catalonian panorama, this polarization has a stronger effect on populist allies in *Catalonia en comú* (which includes the mayor of Barcelona, Ada Culao, and the Catalonian branch of Podemos). Populism is being torn apart,^{xix} because of its rampant opportunism, between positions of principle (favoring self-determination) and the search for an alliance with the PSOE at the all-Spanish level. That is why it does not take a position on the referendum



and independence, which has affected it internally, resulting in division among its members over whether to participate in the referendum and whether to vote for independence.^{xx} To that we can add – regarding Catalonia – calculations over electoral alliances which so concern these petty-bourgeois “social activists,” the pressures from the right and the increasing hostility from the ranks of the supporters of independence, as a result of their “collaborating,” but also because the CUP and the populists are competing for the young urban vote, which is linked to the movements in the neighborhoods, feminists, etc. In sum, they share some petty-bourgeois and post-modernist tendencies. That is why, although in the general elections [for the Spanish Congress], they appear to maintain the same support, the polls show a drop in their vote in eventual regional elections in Catalonia.^{xxi}

We have already pointed out how the economic crisis has resulted in sectors of the working class joining the pro-independence political project, which has managed to identify independence with prosperity (despite being allied with the elements which promoted the neoliberal measures). Another clear tendency is that another sector of the class which does not share that Catalanian identity is moving towards backing the force which best represents Spanish nationalism, the Citizens’ Party, while the same mistake is found in the middle class and professional sectors, especially in some districts (which are also the most economically developed). In other regions, the Citizens’ Party is also supported by professionals and the urban petty bourgeoisie, although the identity question is not an issue (or it appears in another form).

The other sectors of the bourgeoisie, even before the 2015 autonomous elections, the Catalan business group *Cercle d’Economia* [Economic Circle] distanced itself from pro-independence positions, arguing that secession would only be possible through a legal referendum, with the aim of extending self-government in Catalonia. This has also been for years the position of the pro-big business *Foment del Treball*, whose interest is in a fiscal pact with Madrid and the “institutional dialogue” which would make that possible. The chambers of commerce and other business organizations initially did indeed support a “national pact for the right to decide,” while they believed that an agreement was

possible like the “Scottish agreement” and that, as a final option, were pressing to establish a new fiscal framework. Yet, the Government’s intense international work, which forced its foreign allies to make declarations against a possible separation of Catalonia, has had results in the various sectors of capital: as the president of the Chamber of Commerce of Barcelona recently declared, the chambers of commerce of Catalonia oppose any situation which would result in leaving the European Union: “Catalonia cannot be outside of Europe even one second, because there could be very important repercussions.” They no longer believe the insistence of Junqueras (take note of the fact) that an independent Catalonia would continue within the European Union.

These words show that the earlier statement of our party was correct:

“Therefore, if historically the Basque and Catalan oligarchy have used nationalism and the threat of separation to force the Castilian-Andalusian oligarchy to cede to it a predominant position of political Power [...] today, after having achieved its main objectives in this area, what they are primarily interested in is to consolidate their own regime. Of course, they will maintain their pawns in the nationalist movement and it is even possible that at a given moment they will bring this movement into action, as a way of forcing their allies in Madrid to surrender some position or area of power to the Catalan or Basque oligarchy, but they will not go beyond this point.”¹⁰

On the other hand, this behavior of the Catalan bourgeoisie proves that, regarding what the independence forces defend, we are not at the stage of the formation of nations, and therefore this is not the task of revolutionaries:

“The chief problem for the young bourgeoisie is the problem of the market. Its aim is to sell its goods and to emerge victorious from competition with the bourgeoisie of a different nationality. Hence its desire to secure its ‘own,’ its ‘home’ market. The mar-

¹⁰ PCE (ML), “The Problem of the Nationalities in the Framework of the Revolution in Spain,” Madrid, *Vanguardia Obrera*, 1977, p. 38.

ket is the first school in which the bourgeoisie learns its nationalism."¹¹

As the words of the President of the Chamber of Commerce of Barcelona indicate, the main interest of the bourgeoisie is to maintain its integration with the Spanish bourgeoisie, so that the Spanish State will keep the foreign markets open for the Catalan bourgeoisie, which is the major objective in the era of imperialism. The "march towards the past" which the independence forces want – denying the historic common process of the peoples of Spain^{xxiii} and its evolution – expresses "the dreams of the small and intermediate Catalan bourgeoisie, forever dispossessed of political Power by the monopolies and the banks."¹²

The Proletariat, Nationalism and Self-Determination

In his youth, Marx wrote some lines which can help to explain the moment which the people of Catalonia are living through:

"Only in the name of the general rights of society can a particular class vindicate for itself general domination. For the storming of this emancipatory position, and hence for the political exploitation of all sections of society in the interests of its own section, revolutionary energy and spiritual self-feeling alone are not sufficient. For the revolution of a nation, and the emancipation of a particular class of civil society to coincide, for one estate to be acknowledged as the estate of the whole society, all the defects of society must conversely be concentrated in another class, a particular estate must be the estate of the general stumbling-block, the incorporation of the general limitation, a particular social sphere must be recognized as the notorious crime of the whole of society, so that liberation from that sphere appears as general self-liberation. For one estate to be par excellence the estate of liberation, another estate must conversely be the obvious estate of oppression. The negative general significance of the French nobility and the French clergy determined the positive general significance of the nearest neighboring and opposed class of the bourgeoisie.

¹¹ Stalin, "Marxism and the National Question" (1913)

¹² PCE (ML), :The Problem of the Nationalities..., p. 74.

“But no particular class in Germany has the constituency, the penetration, the courage, or the ruthlessness that could mark it out as the negative representative of society. No more has any estate the breadth of soul that identifies itself, even for a moment, with the soul of the nation, the geniality that inspires material might to political violence, or that revolutionary daring which flings at the adversary the defiant words: I am nothing but I must be everything.”¹³

There is no doubt that if something is missing today in Catalan politics it is revolutionary creativity and energy. In fact, even when the reconstitution of the unity of capital around its own class interests makes it appear as it truly is, “the obstacle imposed on all,” it seems as if none of the players are “familiar with the crime,” focused as they are on identifying themselves, as if under a spell, with the soul of the people: a soul which is split by the nation. They are just like those who “must be everything,” but they are not because others who can say that “they are nothing” have taken their role. And then?

Let us continue with Marx’ criticism of Hegel:

“Where, then, is the positive possibility of a German emancipation?... In the formulation of a class with radical chains... an estate which is the dissolution of all estates, a sphere which has a universal character by its universal suffering and claims no particular right because no particular wrong, but wrong generally, is perpetuated against it; which can invoke no historical, but only human, title; which does not stand in any one-sided antithesis to the consequences but in all-round antithesis to the premises of German statehood; a sphere, finally, which cannot emancipate itself without emancipating itself from all other spheres of society and thereby emancipating all other spheres of society, which, in a word, is the complete loss of man and hence can win itself only through the complete re-winning of man. This dissolution of society as a particular estate is the proletariat.”

Indeed, as Lenin would later point out, the proletariat is the only class capable of leading the objectives of the revolution to the end, including the democratic objectives, for the reasons that

¹³ K. Marx, “Introduction to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right” (1844)

the quotes from Marx point out. However, why isn't the proletariat of Catalonia – or of Spain – not in a condition to fulfill that mission? Why is it unable to identify itself with the people and convert its strength into political power? As Stalin said, “Whether the proletariat rallies to the banner of bourgeois nationalism depends on the degree of development of class antagonisms, on the class consciousness and degree of organisation of the proletariat. The class-conscious proletariat has its own tried banner, and has no need to rally to the banner of the bourgeoisie.”¹⁴

And, as the first of the conditions has been clearly achieved, it is not the same with the subjective factors, and much has to do with the lamentable role which the once powerful PSUC played towards the end of the Franco period and during the Transition, after it had united the national demands with the class demands, and put them under the flag of the proletariat.¹⁵ The ideological and organizational weakness of the proletariat, and the growing predominance of the petty bourgeoisie in the ranks of the left – which was becoming, as a result, more and more reformist – facilitated the hegemony of the petty-bourgeois nationalist positions, as happened with the rest of the nationalities of Spain. It has been the economic crisis, united with the political deterioration and the lack of prestige of the ruling bourgeoisie, which has allowed the petty bourgeoisie of the ERC, as we said, to extend its hegemony among the working class and the rest of the people. Faced with a left which lacked its own discourse, the ERC, by means of shifting responsibilities towards the central Spanish State, a social-democratic program and the defense of a strong alternative political project (also lacking in the left in the rest of Spain, which long ago had renounced the Republic, in order to focus on questions of autonomy^{xxiii} which had been prepared together with Franco's politicians), was capable of mobilizing a population which was exhausted by the cutbacks and upset by the difficult conditions of life and the corruption scandals headed by the CiU.

¹⁴ Stalin, “Marxism and the National Question”

¹⁵ For the process by which the hegemony of the proletariat in the movement for Catalan national liberties in the face of the dictatorship fell apart, see “The Problem of Nationalities in Spain,” *op. cit.*

Nevertheless, as the latest reports of our Central Committee pointed out, even though in the intermediate period we may witness a worsening of the crisis of the regime that is the legacy of Francoism, if the pro-independence forces continue on the road that they have been following, nothing good for the proletariat will come from this struggle between sectors of the bourgeoisie. This struggle does nothing but throw smoke on the true political causes of the lamentable situation which the working classes live under the whole Spanish State. And although it may be difficult to predict how far the confrontation will go, it is clear that in this fight the true problems of the workers and the peoples of Spain are not being discussed.

The PCE (ML) has always defended the right of self-determination of the historic nationalities, in the same manner that it has always defended the federative State as the alternative which allows the unity of the defense of identity of each nationality with the common interests of the working classes of all the peoples of the Spanish state:

Marxism-Leninism *“in all countries therefore proclaims the right of nations to self-determination. The right of self-determination means that only the nation itself has the right to determine its destiny, that no one has the right forcibly to interfere in the life of the nation, to destroy its schools and other institutions, to violate its habits and customs, to repress its language, or curtail its rights.”*¹⁶

And this is because, as Stalin stated,

“Restriction of freedom of movement, disfranchisement, repression of language, closing of schools, and other forms of persecution affect the workers no less, if not more, than the bourgeoisie. Such a state of affairs can only serve to retard the free development of the intellectual forces of the proletariat of subject nations.”...

“But the policy of nationalist persecution is dangerous to the cause of the proletariat also on another account. It diverts the attention of large strata from social questions, questions of the class struggle, to national questions, questions ‘common’ to the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. And this creates a favourable

¹⁶ Stalin, “Marxism and the National Question.”

soil for lying propaganda about 'harmony of interests,' for glossing over the class interests of the proletariat and for the intellectual enslavement of the workers. This creates a serious obstacle to the cause of uniting the workers of all nationalities."¹⁷

We believe that the example of Catalonia is sufficiently eloquent in this respect. On the other hand,

*"...the workers are interested in the complete amalgamation of all their fellow-workers into a single international army, in their speedy and final emancipation from intellectual bondage to the bourgeoisie, and in the full and free development of the intellectual forces of their brothers, whatever nation they may belong to. The workers therefore combat and will continue to combat the policy of national oppression in all its forms."*¹⁸

*"The national question has become a part of the general question of the proletarian revolution, a part of the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat."*¹⁹

Only the proletariat, as the objectively revolutionary class, and in relation with the struggle against imperialism, can end national oppression.

That is why, and since *"victorious socialism must necessarily establish a full democracy,... not only introduce full equality of nations but also realise the right of the oppressed nations to self-determination, i.e., the right to free political separation. Socialist parties which did not show by all their activity, both now, during the revolution, and after its victory, that they would liberate the enslaved nations and build up relations with them on the basis of a free union – and free union is a false phrase without the right to secede – these parties would be betraying socialism."*²⁰

We defended this alternative in the struggle against Francoism and when, at the start of the transition, the national bourgeoisie was hiding behind the Spain of the autonomous regions in order to guarantee its class interests. We did it when, under the monarchy that was the legacy of Francoism, the nation-

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Stalin, "The Foundations of Leninism" (1924).

²⁰ Lenin, "The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination" (1916)

alist bourgeoisie supported the governments of the PSOE and the PP with its votes in the monarchical legislature.^{xxiv} And we continue doing it. Thus,

*“The obligations of Social-Democracy, which defends the interests of the proletariat, and the rights of a nation, which consists of various classes, are two different things. In fighting for the right of nations to self-determination, the aim of Social-Democracy is to put an end to the policy of national oppression.... This is what essentially distinguishes the policy of the class-conscious proletariat from the policy of the bourgeoisie, which attempts to aggravate and fan the national struggle and to prolong and sharpen the national movement. And that is why the class-conscious proletariat cannot rally under the ‘national’ flag of the bourgeoisie.”*²¹

Just as our Party said in 1977, *“self-determination is a word without content if we do not point out **under which conditions it can be exercised, which are the revolutionary achievements to which we should aspire and without which we cannot talk about exercising the right to self-determination.**”*²²

It is true that there is a much higher level of popular cohesion and will in Catalonia, and that has been made clear, recently, by the dignified response to the presence of Rajoy and of the Bourbon King in the protest against the attacks of August 17. But as we have already pointed out, the petty bourgeoisie has never had the intention of breaking the chains of the proletariat. The few and vague words in the “program” of the independence forces have been disturbing. The general claims of “advances,” liberty and progress, and even of “internationalism,” have to be contrasted with other key elements of the messages of *Junts pel Sí*, which are being carefully relegated to the second level of importance. The Europeanism expressed by its leaders, for example; the enthusiasm for the manner in which Kosovo became an “independent” U.S. base in Europe in the past; the recent references of an army which should integrate into other armed forces, etc. Or, in everyday concerns, the matter of education (half of which is in private hands) or of health care, whose future privatization was

²¹ Stalin, “Marxism and the National Question”

²² PCE (ML), “The problem of the nationalities...,” 1977, p. 51.

supported some time ago by a speech in the Catalan National Assembly, the same body which organized the big demonstrations for independence, and by the CiU. Obviously, none of this is being discussed much as we approach the decisive moment, when the “interests of the nation” take up all the attention and all the energy. Of course, this is not how we revolutionaries should act:

“Mr. Lev Yurkevich acts like a real bourgeois, and a short-sighted, narrow-minded, obtuse bourgeois at that, i.e., like a philistine, when he dismisses the benefits to be gained from the intercourse, amalgamation and assimilation of the proletariat of the two nations, for the sake of the momentary success of the Ukrainian national cause. The national cause comes first and the proletarian cause second, the bourgeois nationalists say, with the Yurkeviches, Dontsovs and similar would-be Marxists repeating it after them. The proletarian cause must come first, we say, because it not only protects the lasting and fundamental interests of labour and of humanity, but also those of democracy; and without democracy neither an autonomous nor an independent Ukraine is conceivable....

“To throw off the feudal yoke, all national oppression, and all privileges enjoyed by any particular nation or language, is the imperative duty of the proletariat as a democratic force.... But to go beyond these strictly limited and definite historical limits in helping bourgeois nationalism means betraying the proletariat and siding with the bourgeoisie. There is a border-line here, which is often very slight and which the... nationalist socialists completely lose sight of.”²³

No, our task is absolutely not to hold back the class struggle of the proletariat of the nationalities, to divert its struggle only against the oppressor central State and to form a type of “national union” in defense of bourgeois demands of each nationality.²⁴ In fact, as Lenin said,

“From their daily experience the masses know perfectly well the value of geographical and economic ties and the advantages of a big market and a big state. They will, therefore, resort to

²³ Lenin, “Critical Remarks on the National Question” (1913)

²⁴ PCE (ML), “The problem of the nationalities...,” 1977, p. 51.

secession only when national oppression and national friction make joint life absolutely intolerable and hinder any and all economic intercourse."²⁵

Well then, it is evident that a Spain in which the different nationalities enjoy equal rights and responsibilities (including the right of separation) cannot be the Spain of the bourgeoisie or the monarchy, but a revolutionary Spain, which is why the peoples should fight under the leadership of the proletariat:

*"No other class has the ability to led the peoples of Spain along the road toward the conquest of their rights, including their national rights, along the road which will lead to the end of oppression and exploitation of the regions, along the road of revolution."*²⁶

As we of the PCE (ML), have not ceased pointing out, we understand that, under the concrete conditions of Spain, the struggle for the People's Democratic and Federative Republic is key in the struggle for the defeat of capitalism in our country and the building of Socialism, without building a "Chinese Wall" between the tasks of the people's-democratic revolution and the proletarian revolution.

That is why it is of vital importance that we give the proletariat an organizational instrument, the Communist Party, one that is cohesive and capable of leading the rest of the popular strata in their fight against the oligarchic State and in the conquest of its own goals, united with their class brothers of the different nationalities. Only in this way can the immense reserve of popular energies, which has been demonstrated in recent years under the aegis of the pro-independence bourgeoisie, help to advance our class in its liberation. This demands that the working class gain experience in the struggle for the right of self-determination against the backward legislation of the monarchy which is a legacy of the dictatorship. This would contribute to weakening the oligarchic State, proving its true nature and that of the petty-bourgeois movement and tirelessly defending the right of the Catalan people to decide their own destiny. But we must also

²⁵ "Lenin, "On the Right of Nations to Self-Determination" (1914)

²⁶ PCE (ML), "The problem of the nationalities....," 1977, p. 79

express our rejection of independence and explain the reasons why we absolutely do not believe that that this is the moment – and much less if it is led by the petty bourgeoisie – the best formula for realizing the goals of the Spanish proletarian class as a whole, or specifically of the Catalan proletariat.

It is time that we communists return to the proletariat the banner of national rights, and that the workers and other popular sectors of the different nationalities and regions forge an alliance that will allow us to topple the monarchist regime, conquering new spaces of freedom for all the peoples of Spain through the Republic, and towards Socialism.

September of 2017



Without a rupture, without a Republic, there will be no change
 Federation of Republicans
 Popular and Federative Republic

Endnotes

The endnotes below are from additional clarifications sent by the PCE(ML) that are not in the Spanish edition – *translator's note*.

ⁱ The Ministry of the Presidency has among its functions the support and assistance to the President of the Generalitat of Catalonia, the advice, representation and legal defense of the Catalan Gov-

ernment, the coordination among departments, attention to citizens, relationship with the media, the development of self-government and others. The Ministry of Business is dedicated to matters related to internal trade, consumption, tourism, industry and energy, but it also has among its responsibilities the universities, the quality of the university system and the promotion of research. The Ministry of Home Affairs deals with the security of citizens, traffic, public emergencies and shows, among other functions.

ⁱⁱ Spanish Socialist Workers' Party is the historical socialist party (founded in 1879), which today is comparable to the German SPD, the "third way" of Tony Blair, to the French PS or the Democratic Party of the USA, for its "socio-liberal" ideology. In recent years it has suffered serious problems due to its loss of votes and its different internal tendencies: one that subjects itself to the politics of the Popular Party (a conservative party, in the Government) and to the "State interests," on the one hand ; and one that wants to return to a social-democratic policy, on the other. In the past months there was a strong struggle that resulted in the victory of Pedro Sanchez as General Secretary, with the support of the rank and file, who defended this second line. However, regarding the political process in Catalonia Sanchez has ended up subjecting itself to the PP to defend the "unity of Spain" at any price.

ⁱⁱⁱ On August 17 there was a jihadist attack in the city of Barcelona and another in Cambrils (in the province of Tarragona). In the police response, the head of the *Mossos* (Catalan police), J.L. Traperó, gained considerable visibility. Furthermore, in the following days a great controversy broke out in the media about the responsibility for the security failures and the coordination of the different police forces (the Catalan *Mossos* and the National Police and Civil Guard, which function in the rest of Spain); those errors (including concealment of information) were attributed to those who carried out the attacks. From then on, what was discussed was no longer the political position of the *Mossos*, but their possible responsibility for not having avoided the attacks. This was, in our opinion, to erode their image as a body and to incite internal division, in anticipation of what could happen on October 1 (it was not clear if the *Mossos* would obey the Catalan authorities or the Spanish ones).

^{iv} *Abertzale* is the word in the Basque language used to designate nationalists. In this way, it is used above all for the nationalist left (the currents that come from the ETA, which began as an armed

anti-Franco movement); but, despite this, the expression “abertzale left” is usually used.

^v The “February 23 of Felipe VI” is like speaking of the “18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte.” That is, that the Spanish State has tried to use the attacks to give Felipe VI the legitimacy that he does not have. Later, the same would be done with the referendum of October 1. It is the same as Felipe’s father, Juan Carlos I, did to “stop” the coup (or attempted coup, to be more exact): to use his role to justify his throne to many people, with the support of the parties of the regime and the media, and to acquire the legitimacy that he did not have before, because he was Franco’s heir. Felipe tried to do the same thing, in regard to the State’s response to the attacks first, and then defending the unity of Spain against Catalan nationalism.

^{vi} We say “power bloc” in reference to the Gramscian concept. That alliance of social forces had included, until a few years ago, important sections of the Catalan bourgeoisie, represented by what was the CiU, that today defend the independence movement. Other sections, particularly those with greater economic power and international projection, have remained aligned with Madrid.

^{vii} The CiU gave parliamentary support in Madrid to Spanish governments, both of the PP and the PSOE, when these parties won the elections without reaching an absolute majority: this was the case in 1993 (PSOE) and 1996 (PP). The ERC also supported the governments of the PSOE since 2004.

^{viii} The PP has come to promote openly xenophobic and racist campaigns in Catalonia. For its part, the Citizens’ Party has until now not fostered a policy of mobilization of Spanish nationalism. All this, together with the hegemony of Catalan nationalism (especially at the municipal level – in towns and cities – and in the media of the Generalitat), and Catalan nationalism’s high degree of popular organization (in cultural and sports associations, etc.), has made that Spanish nationalist current practically invisible in the streets.

^{ix} *Catalunya sí que es pot* (Catalonia yes we can) groups together the organization of Podemos in Catalonia and other sectors of a similar ideology, which we have called “populist.” We do not use this term to refer to the Citizens’ Party, but to a whole populist current that refers to “citizens” – conceived as a mass of individuals – instead of classes and thus rejects as a matter of principle organization and “ideologies” (although of course it has both). This rejection of “politics” is used by Podemos on the left (in fact, many of its ca-

dres and voters come from the United Left) and the Citizens' Party on the right. Here we use "populist sectors" to refer to organizations and people who share those ideas with Podemos, but are not part of that party; together with them they formed the coalition "*Catalunya sí que es pot*" to present themselves in the last Catalan elections. The name is clearly inspired by the populism of Barak Obama's first electoral campaign. The same happened with Podemos, which emerged between 2013 and 2014. They can be compared in many ways with the "Five Star Movement" of Italy.

^x "Federalizing positions" or simplify "federal ideas" are those that the party that represents the PSOE in Catalonia, the Party of Catalan Socialists (PSC), defend. We do not say federal, but "federalizing," because they are only trying to reform the constitutional framework and the territorial structure of the Spanish State. What they propose is to deepen the present "autonomous State" without addressing, for example, the problem of sovereignty (or sovereignties). In Catalonia, both the PSOE and United Left have parties that are "federated" to all-Spanish parties.

^{xi} Democratic Convergence of Catalonia (CDC) is a conservative Catalan nationalist party that was the most important part of the CiU coalition. Except for the brief period of PSC government, the Presidency of the Catalan government has always been in the hands of the CDC. It stood for close ties to the financial world and to Opus Dei, a power group within the Catholic Church.

^{xii} For many years CDC and UDC formed the coalition CiU: *Convergència i Unió* (Convergence and Union). When UDC left the coalition, CDC refounded itself, changing its name to PDeCAT.

^{xiii} The CUP split in two when it decided to support the Catalan government headed by CiU, which was besieged by cases of corruption. After a very tense assembly, the final vote (strange and not very transparent) decided that the CUP would support the government in the Catalan Parliament, in exchange for advancing towards independence. Thus the CUP closed ranks around independence, and also closed its eyes to the corruption that had affected CiU (that is, it accepted it).

^{xiv} In recent years, the ERC was, the support (or crutch) of the CiU, which was very damaged by corruption cases and the wear and tear of 30 years of government; however, finally the ERC has managed to turn the old CiU into an almost marginal force, according to the polls (CiU won in almost half of the Catalan municipalities in

2015, and has more than a third of the Catalan councilors), and to incorporate it into its independence project.

^{xv} Now it is Junqueras (of the ERC) who guides the policy of the independence movement, and therefore also guides those sectors of the rank and file of the old CiU (PDeCAT) that are taking the road to independence.

^{xvi} The PSC (the PSOE in Catalonia) has been losing votes that have gone in different directions: some to the ERC, and others to “Catalonia yes we can” or to the Citizens’ Party. Within the PSC there have always coexisted a Catalan nationalist current and another more “Spanish,” because its vote consisted largely of a Spanish population that immigrated to Catalonia. Therefore, part of the nationalist votes have gone over to the ERC, while voters who identify more with Spain have gone over to “Catalonia yes we can” (on the left) or to the Citizens’ Party (on the right, with a very strong Spanish nationalist character).

^{xvii} The worker “socialist” voters have always been concentrated in the cities near Barcelona, to which Spanish immigrants moved in past decades. It is in those areas where the votes for the Citizens’ Party and for “Catalonia yes we can” have increased the most.

^{xviii} Initiative for Catalonia-Greens is a party that represented United Left (IU) in Catalonia since 1987. It split from the IU in 1997. Esquerra Unida i Alternativa (EUiA, United and Alternative Left is an organization formed in 1998 by communists who, within the Initiative for Catalonia (IC), were opposed to its breaking with the United Left (moreover, the IC leadership wanted the communist parties that formed it to dissolve themselves into the IC). Since 2003, ICV and EUiA have formed electoral coalitions, but they have not gone back to organic unity.

^{xix} Both in Podemos and its Catalan equivalents (Podem and Catalunya en Comun – Catalonia in Common, the coalition in which Podem participates, and which has its same populist ideology) there has been a clear internal division over the attitude they should adopt towards the referendum on October 1.

^{xx} In this whole populist current represented by Podemos and Catalonia in Common there have been serious discussions (which have been publicly known), because their members did not agree on whether to support the referendum. One part not only supported the referendum, but also thought that they should vote for independence.

^{xxi} The members of Podemos and Catalonia in Common hesitate because, due to their opportunism, they give most importance to the possible electoral results of their politics; they know that a good part of the young and urban vote that they receive is favorable to self-determination (and even to independence). Therefore, if they did not support the referendum, they risked that part of those voters would go to the CUP, which shares many of Podemos' post-modern messages and, thus (and also because of its radical appearance) it can easily attract those same voters.

^{xxii} The “common process” means that it is a historic process that the peoples of Spain have shared. Catalan and Basque nationalism hinder this process (for example, the fight against the Napoleonic occupation, or against the monarchy, or against Nazi-fascism), and therefore they have no sense of a “Spanish nation” that has a different content than the chauvinist one that the bourgeoisie and fascism have given it.

^{xxiii} The Spanish left, instead of defending and promoting a “strong” political alternative (one that is general, of the State: the Republic), adapted itself to the State that was agreed to with the Francoists and decided to work at the level of each autonomous region, with the demands that it could defend in that framework; that is, those that do not question the existing political and social order.

^{xxiv} The Catalan and Basque nationalist bourgeoisies “**supported with their votes**” in the monarchical legislature the governments of the PP and PSOE because they shared the same class interests. We point this out to remember what non-Spanish nationalism has represented in recent decades.

Tunisia

Workers' Party of Tunisia – PTT

Broadening the Front of Resistance to the Right-Wing Policies of the Coalition in Power

Social mobilization against neoliberal policies

Unlike in previous years, this year the social and popular mobilizations in Tunisia have taken a wider and different turn:

- by their duration, since they well exceed their usual season. Indeed, it has become a custom to see the social movements concentrated in the first months of the year, especially in January, called the “month of revolts” in post-colonial Tunisia. To cite just a few examples, let us recall that January 26, 1978, is the date of the first general strike, decided on and launched by the powerful trade union federation, the UGTT (Tunisian General Union of Labor); on January 25, 1980, an armed commando composed of young Tunisians trained in Libya seized the city of Gafsa, in the south of the country; on January 3, 1984, the “bread revolt” spread throughout the country following an exorbitant increase in the price of bread; on January 5, 2008, the revolt in the mining basin was begun, which was repressed in blood after six months of resistance, on January 14, 2011, the flight of the dictator marked a decisive step in the Tunisian “Revolution” launched on December 17, 2010, in Sidi Bouzid.
- by their geographical extent: many regions in the south as well as in the north of the country have organized different forms of mobilizations ranging from simple street demonstrations, to sit-ins, to hunger strikes, to general regional strikes (all sectors of activity together) that paralyzed many cities for a day or more.
- by the diversity of the demands: these mobilizations have been organized against the general deterioration of conditions of life (unemployment, declining purchasing power, etc.), against social injustice, against regional inequalities, against marginalization and precariousness, against corruption, nepo-

tism, etc. They have not lost sight of the central slogan chanted by thousands of Tunisians in the glorious days of January 2011, that is, “employment, freedom, and national dignity,” a unifying slogan that sums up the main aspirations of the Tunisian popular classes, and which continues to resound in all protest actions.

- by broadening the social strata who are taking part: it is no longer only the unemployed graduates or the students youths, but also teachers and public employees, temporary workers, small peasants, tradespeople and artisans; and even self-employed lawyers, pharmacists and doctors. This means that the weight of the crisis no longer spares any social stratum, even the so-called middle class on which the regime has always counted.

The mobilizations have been growing, with peaks such as the big demonstration on May 13 against the bill submitted by the president of the republic to parliament for the third time for the so-called economic and financial reconciliation, or the sit-in of the young people in the regions of Tataouine and Kébili around the oil facilities (in the Sahara) in which one young person has already been killed (Anwar Sekrafi, struck by a vehicle of the national guard, which was ordered to disperse those sitting in) and dozens arrested.

Faced with these growing mobilizations, the authorities used both the carrot and the stick. The government began by turning a deaf ear, expecting that in time the mobilization would possibly end. Then it began sending emissaries to the regions in turmoil, the “left” ministers, that left that accepted that its representatives would play the role of figureheads in this so-called government of national unity and, when needed, to put out the flames of revolt. However, they failed miserably and were sent away by the angry mob wherever they went.

The president of the republic was called to the aid of his troops and, on May 10, as a last resort, he addressed the people. This was a widely publicized speech in which, while admitting in passing the failure of his government, he denounced the “troublemakers” and threatened to use force against any kind of protest. Relying on the current state of emergency, he called on the army to take up positions around the sites that produce wealth to

prevent any attempt to block production. The Workers' Party saw this as a declaration of war against the people and called for resistance.

"This situation," according to a statement of the Workers' Party, "requires the revolutionary and progressive forces to multiply their efforts to prepare for battle and to clarify their vision and their program. First, to defend individual and collective freedoms and preserve the democratic achievements. Second, to strengthen the social movement, protecting it against corporatist or regionalist aims, to give it a deeply rooted national dimension and combine its demands in the framework of a general program that will guide it."

A month of September that augurs a year of great battles

Usually in Tunisia, September is a period of transition between the relaxation that plagues the country during the very long summer season and the revival on all fronts which usually takes place in October: school, cultural, political and social revival. But it seems that this will not be the case this year, since the first two weeks of the month have already seen great battles taking place inside parliament (supposed to be on vacation) and in the streets.

Indeed, because of the climate of general paralyzing of the country that weighs heavily on the lives of citizens, the idea that the coalition in power will be able to provide a glimmer of hope for this anguished people seems to dissipate day by day. Five months have passed since the Minister of National Education was dismissed without the head of government being able to replace him, so arduous have been the struggles between the parties in power. Four months without a Finance Minister, during the whole period of preparation of the new state budget. And two months later, the interim minister will be accused of corruption and tried by a court in the capital. Thus, the summer months were spent in forecasting the imminent reshuffle of the ministers, in making and unmaking the future government.

In this state of general stagnation, a special session of the Assembly of People's Representatives (parliament) was convened for three days beginning on September 11, which was to vote confidence in the new government whose composition had been announced the day before, to elect the missing members of ISIE

[Independent Higher Authority for Elections] and to examine for the nth time a bill on “economic and financial reconciliation,” which would give amnesty to the corrupt members of the former regime among the high state officials. The coalition in power, despite its strong parliamentary majority, chose this precise moment to pass these provisions, far from any popular pressure that was struggling to resume.

Three days of great debate, three days when only the voices of the deputies of the Popular Front and the democratic opposition were heard, on the three issues on the agenda.

Even though this “government of war,” as its leader, Youssef Chahed, called it, obtained the confidence of the parliament, it is nevertheless true that it deserved all sorts of harsh criticism, denigration and condemnation for its composition and program. “War against the people,” replied the deputies of the Popular Front, since this new / former government, which maintained the ministers of the ruling coalition who had distinguished themselves by their incompetence since 2014. There was something even more serious: the return of some ministers of Ben Ali who had been in office until the fall of the dictator. The worst, and luckily for them ridicule does not kill, was the vote of the deputies of the Islamist party (Nahdha) for Ben Ali’s ministers, the same ones who were responsible for all the evils (torture, imprisonment, disappearances, etc.) experienced by thousands of members and sympathizers of the Islamist party. And after this vote of



confidence there were the surreal scenes of the leaders of Nahdha rushing to embrace their former torturers.

The third day of the parliamentary debates was the saddest and most serious one: the ruling coalition wanted to force through the bill on “economic and financial reconciliation” dear to the president of the republic. It would allow him to reinstate corrupt officials, who had made their fortune through all kinds of embezzlement, who have stolen public money and received bribes. This comes at a time when the head of the government is launching a false campaign of “fighting against corruption.” Given that the bill could not obtain the approval of the Supreme Council of the Judiciary, acting as a Constitutional Court which has not yet been created, the Speaker of the Parliament failed to submit it to the Council, in flagrant violation of the provisions of the constitution. This was denounced by the opposition deputies, who did everything they could to prevent the vote and refused to take part in it. This did not prevent the reactionaries in power from forcing it through by 117 votes (out of the 217 that make up the Assembly).

Since then the battlefield has changed ground: the rejection of this law and its necessary abrogation have become the affair of the people. The deputies of the Popular Front immediately returned to their favorite place: among the popular masses, at the head of street demonstrations that began spontaneously in all the major cities of the country. Two days of huge mobilizations ended with one huge popular demonstration in the streets of the capital, organized by the Popular Front, other opposition forces and many associations and organizations of civil society.

It is therefore the war against “Youssef Chahed’s war” that has already been unleashed and will be revived by the government’s attempts to implement the “painful measures” dictated by the international financial institutions (IMF, World Bank and Council of Europe), and which he “promised” to the people. Indeed, the draft budget for 2018 provides for the crossing of all the lines, those that even Ben Ali did not dare to cross:

- The revision of the system of subsidies or the outright elimination of the subsidy fund, introduced since the 1960s to enable millions of Tunisians to survive. Let us recall here that in January 1984, the Mzali government, which had eliminated the subsidy for a single product, bread, led to a general re-

volt that was repressed in blood, the “bread revolt,” but which in the end was successful.

- The restructuring of the social funds (retirement, health insurance, etc.) by raising the retirement age in a country with more than 200 thousand unemployed graduates, increasing employee contribution rates, lowering retirement pensions.
- The revision of free education and certain public services.
- The privatization of what remains of the nationalized companies and especially the airlines, the railway company, the electric and gas company and the national company for the extraction and distribution of water.

If such measures are approved and enforced, it would condemn large sections of society to death. Already today, we are witnessing the growing impoverishment of the middle classes who are no longer able to make ends meet. This is the program of the “reactionary war” that the new government is called upon to put in place in order to again subjugate this people, who in 2011 dared to raise their heads and chase away their dictator.

On the other hand, the living forces of the country, the workers, youth, small civil servants, small traders, small peasants and democratic sectors are preparing the counter-offensive with the aim of not only overthrowing this government but of overthrowing this comprador and anti-popular regime.

August, 2017

Turkey

Party of Labour - EMEP

The Relevance of Marx's *Capital* After 150 Years

Capital, the masterpiece of Karl Marx, the founder of scientific socialism, is 150 years old. The analysis made in the first volume of this work, which was the only volume published in his lifetime, has been validated by historical experience in these 150 years, and it has been a unique guide to understand the world we live in.

In *Capital*, Marx set out the fundamental relations and forces which are obscured by the superficial manifestations of capitalism, formulated “the law of economic development of modern society”, and provided a scientific basis for the action of the modern working class, the gravediggers of capitalism.

In this work, where he brought together the mature results of his long studies on political economy, Marx laid bare the formation of capitalism, the conditions for its existence and the dynamics which inevitably lead it to collapse.

In this respect, *Capital* will continue to be a relevant and valid work so long as capitalism exists. Moreover, the dark prospect of the world which threatens the future of humanity makes the reading and discussing of *Capital* even more necessary.

As the world economy is still under the threat of stagnation and instability following the 2008 crisis of capitalism, as we are faced with many other problems such as the deepening exploitation and sharpening imperialist rivalry, poverty, hunger and war in the underdeveloped world, the migrant crisis, the rise of fascism and other reactionary ideologies, ecological crisis, etc., *Capital* is such an important guide today to understand the world around us.

2017 is not only the 150th year of *Capital* but also the centenary of the first working class revolution in history, led by the Marxists of Russia who followed the path of *Capital*. These anniversaries are so closely interconnected that they cannot be evaluated separately. Russia was the first country where this great

work was fully translated, in 1872. The 3000 copies of this Russian translation were sold out quickly and were debated widely among Russian intellectuals. This interest was partly due to Russia’s specific historical and intellectual conditions. However, more importantly, in a country where capitalism was developing, reading and debating *Capital* in order to understand the course of historical development had to do not only with the intellectual power of this work but also its real function: To change the world in a conscious way.

General Information About *Capital*

Although the first volume of *Capital*, published in 1867, brought together the important results of long years of studies in political economy, it constitutes just one section of the scientific analysis of bourgeois society. Marx wrote the draft notes that would later become the second and third volumes of *Capital* in the mid-1860s, before the completion of the first volume. These notes were later collected and made ready for publication by his comrade and close friend Friedrich Engels. Engels published the second volume, dealing with the process of the circulation of capital, in 1885 with the subheading “The Process of Capitalist Production as a Whole”, and the third volume focusing on the basic mechanisms of the practical workings of capitalism in 1894. It was not until the 1950s when *Theories of Surplus Value*, also known as the fourth volume of *Capital*, a critical analysis of the huge literature of economics included in *Capital*, was printed as a whole.

What can also be considered as part of *Capital* is Marx’s manuscripts in 1857-58 on the subjects that he thought should be included in *Capital* or in a wider work. These manuscripts were published in 1939-41 in German by the Marx-Engels Institute with the title *Grundrisse der Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie*. Marx’s *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, published in 1859, was an important complementary work to *Capital*, although Marx said that the content of that work was covered in the first volume of *Capital*. Indeed, the scheme that Marx foresaw for the study of political economy was much wider than what was in *Capital*. In his draft in 1857, he states that he would analyse political economy in the following six chapters: Capital,

Land Ownership, Wage Labour, the State, Foreign Trade, World Market and Crises. The first three titles were covered in different order in the three volumes of *Capital*. However, he did not live to complete his work on the remaining three subjects. Nevertheless, the analysis and research method Marx put forward in *Capital* left us with a sufficient starting point for the study of those subjects.

Capital has the subheading *A Critique of Political Economy*. This is a subject that Marx had been interested in since his youth, when he was orientated towards communism: “A ruthless criticism of the existing order”.¹ The programme of criticism Marx put forward for human emancipation focused initially on the critique of religion, law, the theory of the state and philosophy, partly due to the intellectual formation of Marx. As the lead commentator of the *Rheinische Zeitung* in 1842-43, his attention was drawn to economic problems due to the debates in the Rhine State Parliament on illegal forestry, the disintegration of land ownership, free trade and protectionism.

Being immersed in economic problems, Marx came to the conclusion that “*neither legal relations nor political forms could be comprehended whether by themselves or on the basis of a so-called general development of the human mind, but that on the contrary they originate in the material conditions of life, the totality of which Hegel, following the example of English and French thinkers of the 18th century, embraces within the term ‘civil society’, that the anatomy of this civil society, however, has to be sought in political economy*”.²

In his famous preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, published in 1859, Marx summarised the historical materialist method that he had reached as a result of his studies. In this preface, Marx states that the source of the movement that brings about social change should be sought in the material relations of production which are independent of the will, consciousness and intentions of people, and it is these relations that determine them. Material relations of production correspond

¹ Letter from Marx to Ruge, September 1843

² *Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, 1859

with a given level of development of the forces of production. *The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness.*

According to Marx, social history is based on the fact that specific social forms where social phenomena are interconnected in a consistent order of internal relations follow one another.³ To understand change one needs to apply dialectics – the science of correlations, motion and development – to history. Underneath different social forms in history lie different modes of production, which express the dialectical unity between material relations of production and productive forces. The transition from one mode of production to another is the result of the contradictions between the productive forces and the material relations of production. These contradictions manifest themselves in the form of class struggles and are the engines of historical change. Therefore, since the emergence of classes, *“The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles”*.⁴ According to Marx, Western European societies where capitalism was born as a specific mode of production went through the stages of primitive communism, slavery and feudalism successively. Capitalism emerged from the womb of feudalism. In *Capital*, Marx makes an organic and historical analysis of this specific mode of production. This analysis is based on the dialectical method. He concretised the dialectical and historical materialist method in the analysis of capitalism, and set forth the necessity of overcoming the internal contradictions of capitalism through political and social revolution.

The Method and Structure of *Capital*

As *Capital* aims to study the formation of capitalism and the conditions for its existence and collapse, it contains a detailed analysis of historical change as well as an abstraction of changing relations. On this matter, Marx expresses his gratitude to Hegelian dialectics. *“The mystification which dialectics suffers in*

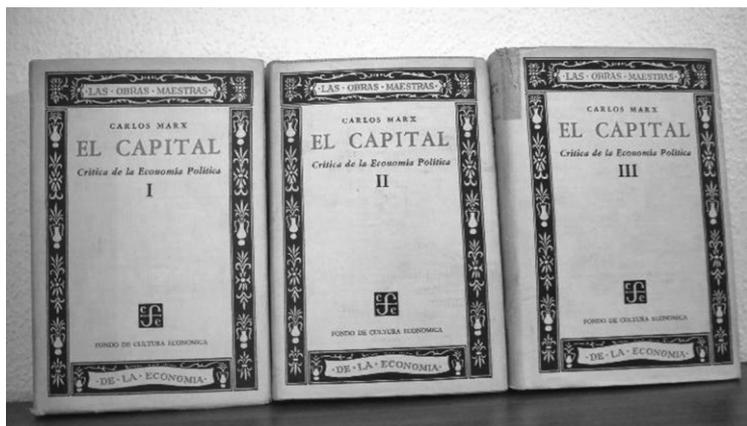
³ *Capital*, Volume I, *Afterword to the Second German Edition*.

⁴ *Communist Manifesto*

Hegel's hands, by no means prevents him from being the first to present its general form of working in a comprehensive and conscious manner. With him it is standing on its head. It must be turned right side up again, if you would discover the rational kernel within the mystical shell."⁵

Marx's main point of departure is that change is not independent of things, and that one should investigate how, when and in which direction change is taking place. In *Capital*, meticulously presenting the savage methods of the process of formation of capitalism, which he describes as primitive accumulation of capital, the struggles for the factory regulations in Britain, and the terrible working conditions of the workers in the factories by making references to official reports, Marx not only reveals these but also makes a connection with an abstract analysis of the relations that the capitalist mode of production is based on.

In his *Grundrisse*, in the chapter titled *The Method of Political Economy*, Marx expresses his method of studying political economy as the method of *rising from the abstract to the concrete*. According to him, "*In the analysis of economic forms, moreover, neither microscopes nor chemical reagents are of use. The force of abstraction must replace both*".⁶ This method requires a study using a series of abstractions in order to rise from appearance to essence, from the real concrete to the concrete built



⁵ *Capital*, Volume I, *Afterword to the Second German Edition*.

⁶ *Capital*, Volume I, *Preface to the First German Edition*.

in the mind. Commodity is the starting point for the abstraction used in *Capital*. This is because “*in bourgeois society the commodity form of the product of labour – or the value form of the commodity – is the economic cell form*”.⁷

In *Capital*, Marx begins with a rather abstract analysis of the commodity and develops categories such as use value, exchange value, money as a form of value, surplus value and the accumulation of capital. In each stage of abstraction, on the basis of the inherent connections and contradictions of each category, he rises to more complicated categories. For instance, from the contradictory relation between the use value of commodities and their exchange value, he derives the characteristics of money, and on the basis of the same contradiction, he points to the inevitability of capitalist crises.

The arrangement of the volumes of *Capital* also shows how Marx proceeds from one abstraction to another. In Volume I, we see an analysis of *capital in general*. Making a complete abstraction of the internal differentiation of capital and the price systems in the market, Marx focuses on the relation between capital and waged labour, the fundamental relation that enables the existence of capitalism. He puts forth the fact that the production of the surplus value is the basis of capital accumulation which enables the reproduction of capitalism, and that this exploitation is materialised by controlling the labour process through the realisation of absolute and relative surplus value.

Moving on from this analysis of *capital in general* in Volume I, we see the analysis of the sphere of circulation of capital and its reproduction process in Volume II. And in Volume III, we see the move from the level of capital in general to the level of multiple capitals and an analysis of the operation of capitalism in its concrete reality. The conversion of surplus-value into profit and of the rate of surplus-value into the rate of profit, the equalisation of the rate of profit as a result of the competition among capitalists, the tendency of the rate of profit to fall, the transformation of surplus-value into profit, interest and rent, and the credit mechanism are all analysed here.

⁷ *Capital*, Volume I, *Preface to the First German Edition*.

Capital being analysed in consecutive levels of abstraction in different volumes of *Capital* means that the economic categories are transformed continuously. For instance, the surplus-value being discussed at a level of abstraction of *capital in general* in Volume I, transforms into the categories such as profit and interest in the context of singular capitals in Volume III. Similarly, the concept of value in Volume I appears in the form of production prices in Volume III.

Critique of Political Economy in *Capital*

In his article *The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism* written in 1913, Lenin states that Marx's doctrine emerged as the direct and immediate continuation of the teachings of the greatest representatives of philosophy, political economy and socialism, and that it is the legitimate successor to the best that people produced in the 19th century, as represented by German philosophy, English political economy and French socialism. In the light of this general evaluation, one can say that Marx, with the guidance of the dialectical method of the tradition of classical German critical philosophy, made a critical analysis of capitalism on the basis of the theoretical foundation that English political economy had produced, and he tried to establish how to bring about modern communism, which was a product of French socialist tradition, through the conscious action of the working class and why this is necessitated by the laws of motion of capitalism.

The critique of bourgeois society that Marx developed in *Capital* is based on the theoretical foundations put forward by classical English political economy, represented by the works of Adam Smith and David Ricardo. Although classical political economy was developed mainly by English thinkers, the contribution of the French school of Physiocracy was praised by Marx and had an important role to play. Marx advanced classical political economy consistently and formulated the labour theory of value and the theory of surplus value. In this respect, Marx is both a critique of classical political economy and its final great representative.

Marx is the one who first used and put in the scientific literature the concept of classical political economy. He states that it

started with William Petty in Britain and Pierre Boisguilbert in France in the 17th century, and that it ended in the first quarter of the 19th century in these countries with David Ricardo and Sismondi respectively.⁸ He expresses the main idea behind this claim in *Capital*:

*“Once for all I may here state, that by classical political economy, I understand that economy which, since the time of W. Petty, has investigated the real relations of production in bourgeois society, in contradistinction to vulgar economy, which deals with appearances only, ruminates without ceasing on the materials long since provided by scientific economy, and there seeks plausible explanations of the most obtrusive phenomena, for bourgeois daily use, but for the rest, confines itself to systematising in a pedantic way, and proclaiming for everlasting truths, the trite ideas held by the self-complacent bourgeoisie with regard to their own world, to them the best of all possible worlds.”*⁹

The scientific character of political economy that Marx points to was developed on two pillars starting from the second half of the 17th century. The first is the labour theory of value as the regulating principle for the price system in the market and for distribution, and the second is the search for the conditions of economic reproduction. In classical political economy, the labour theory of value was developed mainly in England, while the theoretical innovations in economic reproduction were materialised mainly by French thinkers. These two pillars constitute the road map for the later development of scientific political economy. Classical political economy approaches economic life on the basis of the relations between the three main classes of capitalist society: the capitalists, working class and landowners. It tries to explain how the incomes of these three classes in the form of profit, wage and rent respectively are determined and the relationships between them. However, in doing so, as in the case of Ricardo, it *“consciously makes the antagonism of class interests, of wages and profits, of profits and rent, the starting point of his investigations, naively taking this antagonism for a social law of*

⁸ *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy.*

⁹ *Capital*, Volume I., footnote to Chapter 1, Section 4

Nature".¹⁰

According to Marx, the scientific successes of classical political economy result, to a great extent, from the progressive and critical position of the bourgeoisie, owning up to the interests of all classes in society, during its power struggle against feudalism and its remnant classes. Enlightenment philosophy was the main intellectual spring of this school. Enlightenment philosophers considered market society and its relations as the fundamental condition for human progress and civilisation against the religious dogmatic ideas, traditions and relations of bondage of feudal society. For them, market society based on contractual relations were crucial for the development of productive forces, material and intellectual development of society, individual freedoms and equality before the law. This perspective led to the perpetuation of market relations and an understanding of market institutions being the rational form of natural order. Thus, all pre-capitalist history was considered as a progress towards the natural order of the market, and the laws of bourgeois society were expressed as eternal laws which regulate the productive activity of men. In this framework, individualism and competition that stem from the competitive form of market relations were attributed to human nature.

The most important critique of political economy Marx made is that these philosophers ignored the historical character of capitalist relations. Generalising the conception of the free individual that they borrowed from Enlightenment philosophy, the leading



¹⁰ *Capital*, Volume I, *Afterword to the Second German Edition*.

philosophers of classical political economy ignored different social orders under which production was organised, and treated categories that were specific to capitalism as universal and eternal ones. As Engels states:

*“The conditions under which men produce and exchange vary from country to country, and within each country again from generation to generation. Political economy, therefore, cannot be the same for all countries and for all historical epochs. The inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego have not got so far as mass production and world trade, any more than they have experience of bill-jobbing or a Stock Exchange crash. Anyone who attempted to bring the political economy of Tierra del Fuego under the same laws as are operative in present-day England would obviously produce nothing but the most banal commonplaces. Political economy is therefore essentially a historical science. It deals with material which is historical, that is, constantly changing; it must first investigate the special laws of each individual stage in the evolution of production and exchange, and only when it has completed this investigation will it be able to establish the few quite general laws which hold good for production and exchange in general.”*¹¹

Because of its consideration of the institutions and relations innate to capitalism as natural law, the tradition of classical political economy, as a whole, deliberately ignored fundamental institutional characteristics that define capitalism. Thus, it considers capital not as a social relation which enables the realisation of profit for the capitalist class, subjugating the very producers to its own development, but as instruments and machinery which help realise a general process of production that is universally valid. Similarly, capitalist private ownership of the means of production is treated within the framework of a universal definition of ownership, in such a way that it covers all different forms of ownership. For instance, a small producer’s ownership of land, worked by the whole family in a village economy, or the hunter’s bow and arrow in a hunter-gatherer society, is treated in the same way as capitalist ownership. This kind of understanding of own-

¹¹ *Anti-Dühring*, Part II, Section I

ership, built solely on the basis of the appearances of capitalism, played a significant role in justifying capitalism.

Having pushed aside the distinguishing characteristics of capitalist production and eternalising it, the tradition of classical political economy turned, inevitably, to the relations of exchange as a main base for its analysis. This is a very functional perspective in terms of justification of capitalism. This is because exchange is a voluntary activity which takes place between free and equal individuals, and is based on mutual benefit. As long as it remains in this sphere, it is inevitable to produce results “in equal terms”. Marx expresses the illusion of equality and freedom generated by this sphere of exchange:

“This sphere that we are deserting, within whose boundaries the sale and purchase of labour power goes on, is in fact a very Eden of the innate rights of man. There alone rule Freedom, Equality, Property and Bentham. Freedom, because both buyer and seller of a commodity, say of labour power, are constrained only by their own free will. They contract as free agents, and the agreement they come to, is but the form in which they give legal expression to their common will. Equality, because each enters into relation with the other, as with a simple owner of commodities, and they exchange equivalent for equivalent. Property, because each disposes only of what is his own. And Bentham, because each looks only to himself. The only force that brings them together and puts them in relation with each other, is the selfishness, the gain and the private interests of each. Each looks to himself only, and no one troubles himself about the rest, and just because they do so, do they all, in accordance with the pre-established harmony of things, or under the auspices of an all-shrewd providence, work together to their mutual advantage, for the common weal and in the interest of all.”¹²

The moment we leave the sphere of exchange, which produces the illusion of “equality” and “freedom”, the same people assume different characters:

“He, who before was the money owner, now strides in front as capitalist; the possessor of labour power follows as his labourer. The one with an air of importance, smirking, intent on

¹² *Capital*, Volume I, Chapter 6

business; the other, timid and holding back, like one who is bringing his own hide to market and has nothing to expect but – a hiding.”¹³

Although the tradition of classical political economy declared bourgeois social relations to be universally valid, until 1830s it built an economic science which investigated the actual relations of production in bourgeois society in the struggle that it waged against the old social structure. The founding thinkers of classical political economy such as Adam Smith and David Ricardo considered the development of productive forces as a main condition for progress, and made their analysis with a concern for the advancement of the productive forces, without the worry of justifying the narrow interests of the bourgeoisie. This allowed them to approach the relations of bourgeois society with scientific objectivity.

The limited scientific character of classical political economy began to retreat as the struggle of the bourgeoisie for power against the traditional aristocracy in Western Europe became successful. Naive loyalty to the progress of the productive forces was replaced by concern for the justification of the narrow interests of the bourgeoisie, which was organising as the ruling class. The literature of political economy following the death of Ricardo in 1823 became less scientific and more superficial, defending the narrow daily interests of the capitalist class and finding excuses on their behalf. Marx called this vulgar political economy. Having negated the labour theory of value, this school paved the way for the marginalist school which set the foundation for modern bourgeois economics.

Capital and Modern Bourgeois Economics

Capital was met with a conspiracy of silence by the German press and academic circles when it was first published in Germany in 1867. There is nothing surprising about this silence as it was a book of sharp, scientific criticism of capitalism, full of witty exposures of pseudo-scientific theses of vulgar academic economics.

Capital was being read and discussed by circles of advanced

¹³ *Capital*, Volume I, Chapter 6

German workers but, in order to make it more known to wider circles, Engels wrote a review from a bourgeois viewpoint, changing his style, and asked his friends to write similar reviews to get more coverage from the German press. Despite this, official German economic circles ignored *Capital* until the 1880s.

By then, bourgeois economics was on the eve of a fundamental transformation that it was rushed into in order to protect the class interests of the bourgeoisie. Even in the 1830s, following the death of Ricardo, scientific political economy began to turn into a defender of the immediate interests of the bourgeoisie. Classical political economy, which was a product of the progressive period of the bourgeoisie, began to be considered in those years as a dangerous and unnecessary burden, especially because of the logical consequences that the labour theory of value implied.

As a result of the bourgeoisie no longer being the progressive class across Europe in the second half of the 19th century and getting organised as a hegemonic class in cooperation with the remnants of the old regime, and the emergence of monopoly capitalism as a result of the tendency of capital to concentrate and centralise, fuelled the abandonment of classical political economy, which analysed the economy on the basis of the existence of opposing classes and their contradictions. It was now time to free political economy from the class struggle and to create a new science in accordance with the class interests of the bourgeoisie.



In connection with this quest, the works published in the 1870s in Britain, Austria and France by Stanley Jevons, Carl Menger and Leon Walras respectively and almost simultaneously, destroyed the last crumbs of classical political economy. What these economists had in common was that they all used the concept of marginal utility as their point of departure, and that they tried to explain the economic process as a whole on the basis of the psychological relation between human beings and commodities in the process of exchange. This school was called marginalism and it laid the foundation of a new economic approach, completely abandoning the framework of classical political economy which was based on the labour theory of value, and defining value in accordance with a subjective use value.

In order to build a mechanical science which could get universal acknowledgement, it took the relations established among people in the process of production and exchange, institutions and history, completely outside of political economy. The founders of marginalism declared these factors as belonging to the normative sphere and claimed that, on the basis of the principle of utility and private interest, they formed positive economics which was based on the analysis of the process of commodity exchange. Thus, using the instruments of 19th century positivism, they turned this analysis of exchange based on utilitarian assumptions with regard to human nature into universal, natural realities. As a result of this new line of thought, the term economics came to replace political economy in the late 19th century. Therefore, it is very meaningful that *Capital* was published at this time when bourgeois economics abandoned everything scientific and began to adopt some pseudo-scientific, scholastic collection of dogmas.

Bourgeois economics was aware of *Capital*, but it continued to ignore it. Nevertheless, its representatives of high intellectual calibre did not refrain from doing justice to Marx. For instance, referring to Nassau Senior’s idea that the source of profit was due to the abstinence of the capitalist, an opinion Marx relentlessly ridiculed in *Capital*, Alfred Marshall, who considered Marx as “a tendentious thinker who had mischievously misunderstood Ri-

cardo”¹⁴, said the following in his *Principles of Economics*, where he set out the foundations of modern academic economics:

“Karl Marx and his followers have found much amusement in contemplating the accumulations of wealth which result from the abstinence of Baron Rothschild, which they contrast with the extravagance of a labourer who feeds a family of seven on seven shillings a week; and who, living up to his full income, practices no economic abstinence at all.”¹⁵

Such examples are exceptions. It was Eugen Böhm von Bawerk, an Austrian economist, who expressed discontent for the first time about *Capital's* power and influence. In his book *The End of the Marxist System (Zum Abschluss des Marxschen Systems)* published in 1896, Böhm Bawerk claimed that there were inconsistencies between the first and third volumes of *Capital*, that while the first volume discussed values rather than prices, the third one discussed production prices, and that this proved how baseless was the analysis in *Capital*.

This criticism is invalid for two reasons. Firstly, Marx had completed the framework of Volume 3 before the publication of Volume 1. It is not possible that a researcher as meticulous as Marx was not aware of this problem. Secondly, as we tried to explain earlier, Marx discussed the workings of capitalism at different levels of abstraction in these two volumes. Therefore, it is not a problem of an inconsistency that Marx was not aware of but one of a lack of understanding on Böhm Bawerk's part.

Böhm Bawerk, writing a critique following the publication of Volume 3 of *Capital's* in 1895, demonstrates how powerful Marxism was in that period. In that year, Böhm Bawerk was the Minister of Finance in Austria, a position he held with intervals until 1904. His book, which struck a “deadly blow” at *Capital*, was swiftly translated into Russian and then into English under the title *Karl Marx and the Close of His System*. During the Cold War year, this book became popular again in an effort to prove the inconsistencies of *Capital*. And in the 1960s it was this book

¹⁴ Maurice Dobb, *Theories of Value and Distribution Since Adam Smith*, London, Cambridge University Press, 1973, p. 141.

¹⁵ E.K. Hunt & Mark Lautzenheiser, *History of Economic Thought*, New York, M.E. Sharpe, 2011, p. 289.

that the debates on the “question of transformation”, involving Marxist economists as well as gurus of bourgeois economics, such as the Nobel prize winner Paul Samuelson, were based on.

One can say that bourgeois economics had two different but interconnected positions on *Capital*. The first one reflects enmity stemming directly from the bourgeois class instinct. For instance, John Maynard Keynes, one of the most influential names of bourgeois economics in the 20th century, expresses the following in an article, *A Short View of Russia*, that he wrote in 1925 after a visit to the USSR:

*“How can I accept a doctrine which sets up as its bible, above and beyond criticism, an obsolete economic textbook which I know to be not only scientifically erroneous but without interest or application for the modern world? How can I adopt a creed which, preferring the mud to the fish, exalts the boorish proletariat above the bourgeois and the intelligentsia who, with whatever faults, are the quality in life and surely carry the seeds of all human advancement?”*¹⁶

Keynes’ article is full of similar insults. According to him, Marxism drags people into hopeless dreams, creating excitement similar to religious scriptures and hymns. Despite his harsh views of Marxism, Keynes did not try to ‘negate’ Marx but focused on rebuilding bourgeois economics on a ‘realist’ basis for the reorganisation of capitalism against the double threat posed by the Great Depression and the socialist achievements in the USSR. Moreover, with the confidence and flexibility of being an elite member of the classical liberal tradition of British politics, Keynes was instrumental in keeping Marxists such as Maurice Dobb and Piero Sraffa, who did not hide his sympathy for Marxism and who was also a close friend of Antonio Gramsci, in Cambridge University.

Reactionary liberal members of the Austrian School were the most significant representatives of the hostile and doctrinaire position against Marx and his *Capital*. In the 1920s Ludwig von Mises launched an attack against Marxism’s critique of capitalism. In the late 1930s this attack intensified with neoliberal

¹⁶ John M. Keynes, *Essays in Persuasion*, New York, W. W. Norton & Company, 1963, p. 300.

thinkers who joined the *Walter Lippmann Colloquium*. The neo-liberals who attended this conference, such as Friedrich Hayek, went full force to disprove *Capital* and eradicate the intellectual influence of Marxism in the face of the threat posed by the Soviet Union. Following this conference, the *Mont Pèlerin Society* was founded in 1947, led by Hayek and reinforced by figures such as Milton Friedman and Karl Popper. It became the centre for an organised activity of the negation of the economic and social theories of Marxism.

The second position against *Capital* seemed to admit the intellectual power of Marx and tried to break the critical analysis of capitalism in *Capital* from its fundamental connections and reconcile it with bourgeois schools of thought. This tendency began with the efforts of the Russian Legal Marxists, who were influenced mainly by reformist ideas of the representatives of the Second International, such as Bernstein and Kautsky, to reconcile some theoretical subjects discussed in *Capital* with the categories of bourgeois economics, and continued throughout the 20th century, taking different forms.

In the academia of the 20th century, many schools or debates on Marxism around different aspects of capitalism bear the signs of this conciliatory tendency, although on a critical basis. Left-wing Keynesianism, Sraffian economics, Analytical Marxism, the Dependency School, Regulation School, World Systems Theory, Structuralism, Market Socialism, New Imperialism, etc. many schools and debates played a significant role in deforming Marx's critical analysis of capitalism and devoiding it of its essence. Of course, there are also researchers in academia who try to understand the modern world in a creative way in light of the theoretical wealth that was displayed in *Capital*. However, they are very limited in numbers and influence.

One must reflect on the fact that a gigantic work like *Capital* could find a place in the academic world only by passing through the prism of different bourgeois schools of economics. There are two reasons for that. First, in an academia under the reign of positivism, which sets an obstacle to the comprehension of reality by compartmentalising social experience into isolated departments, it is not easy to understand a work such as *Capital*, which is not based on interdisciplinary sections, where the progressive experi-

ence of humanity in its totality is displayed with a critical eye. Interdisciplinary differentiations, institutionalised in academia, and a teaching practice that goes along with it, hinder reaching a wholesome and systematic viewpoint that is displayed in *Capital*.

The second and more important reason for *Capital* not being read and discussed widely in the intellectual world is the fact that bourgeois economics got the message of *Capital* right, which is that bourgeois hegemony is based on the production of the surplus value. Thus, economics must somehow obscure this reality. It is for this reason that while in other fields of social science “radical” ideas were allowed to be discussed and be given place in the education programmes, provided that they remained in the academic parameters, in the economic arena, the essence of the pseudoscientific curriculum driven by vulgar positivism of the last quarter of the 19th century did not change; on the contrary it became more technical and ignored even empirical reality.

The content of the study of economics at the university level is determined by the economists who work in the most elite US universities, who are at the same time in managing positions in and decide the programmes of imperialist institutions such as the IMF and World Bank, and who work as consultants in prominent institutions of finance capital such as Goldman Sachs.

Research programmes and theoretical works in the economic field are set by the elite representatives of this tradition and through instruments such as Nobel prizes, which go mainly to those economists who do research that responds to the actual needs of capitalism. A great majority of the founders and later managers of the *Mont Pèlerin Society* were awarded the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences.

In short, the bourgeoisie monopolises knowledge in the economic field. Due to this ideological hegemony, the rhetoric of “the requirements of economics”, which serves no other purpose than obscuring the real nature of capitalism, is easily accepted among the working class and progressive intellectuals.

For the working class to take up the struggle against the capitalist attacks directed against it and against humanity as a whole, this hegemony has to be broken. For this reason, it is an urgent task to read and discuss *Capital* on its 150th anniversary.

August, 2017

Venezuela

Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Venezuela **– PCMLV**

In the Centennial Year of the Great October Socialist Revolution the PCMLV Readies Its Forces for Combat

1. Hold the IV Congress and Adapt Our Tactics

For several days we Marxist-Leninists of Venezuela concentrated on carrying out the IV Congress of the PCMLV, delegates representing the membership and the various organizations of the masses came together to debate and bring up to date our fundamental theses, political line and statutes, as well as to evaluate the political situation in order to adapt the tactics of the party to the times that we live in, which are especially turbulent in the case of Venezuela.

In an atmosphere of proletarian democracy and revolutionary energy, honoring the 100 years of the Great October Socialist Revolution and the 10 years since our first congress, as well as the fighting actions of our comrades, we had intense days of labor in which the work of the Central Committee that led the party between the III and IV Congress was evaluated, establishing an average level of growth and fulfillment of our plans.

From a qualitative point of view, the development of the political and organizational level of the leadership and membership was seen, some members of the CC were removed for inconsistency and ideological weaknesses, which did not affect the functioning nor cause more problems than those already existing due to their non-fulfillment.

In quantitative terms, one can evaluate an average growth of the number of members, a greater national presence, as well as the expansion of the party and its mass organizations to the majority of the states of the country, in all areas of work and with all social sectors.

The interventions of the national and international delegates made it possible to clarify the fundamental elements of the Marxist-Leninist politics at the international, regional and national

levels, which necessarily expresses a higher level of mastery and understanding of revolutionary politics, resolving differences with the application of the scientific method of dialectical materialism.

The greetings of the fraternal parties and of the ICMLPO were presented showing the victories of the Marxist-Leninists with the holding of each congress. This is not only an organizational but also an ideological victory over the petty-bourgeois, opportunist, reformist, revisionist and reactionary tendencies with which we are fighting for the leadership of the proletariat.

2. Consolidate the Organizations to Reach the Broad Masses

The IV Congress reaffirms the party's commitment to take up its historical responsibility, raises the need to advance towards the broad masses, as well as the willingness of the real cadres to take up the tasks that the party deems most appropriate for the fulfillment of the new tasks.

The CC elected at the IV Congress takes up the leadership of the party at a turbulent time at the national and international level. In the period that is beginning there will certainly be complicated times, in the scenarios that we can foresee at the local, national and regional level. These scenarios will demand clarity from our party on the ideological and practical elements of politics in order to place ourselves at the head of the masses, to guide them and direct them correctly toward victory in the coming combats. For this the CC has a mandate to strictly apply the statutes and achieve greater effectiveness for the expansion of our abilities.

An important point of this Congress that took up precious time was the debate on the theses of the party and the political line, fundamental aspects that were brought up to date in the context of the today's reality.

We start from the definition by Marx and Engels in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* that expresses the theses as follows:

“The theoretical conclusions of the Communists are in no way based on ideas or principles that have been invented, or discovered, by this or that would-be universal reformer. They merely express, in general terms, actual relations springing from an

existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes.”

These theses represent central elements to define the way to approach the complex stage in which our party identifies an international offensive by the most extreme right, levels of ebb of the revolutionary movement and confusion among sectors of the vanguard and the broad masses given the collapse of the reformist programs. This demands that we raise up the proposals of the revolutionary left and especially of the Marxist-Leninists, differentiating ourselves from opportunism and reformism, confronting the right in order to open the way for the revival of the broad masses on the basis of a Marxist Leninist program.

3. Analyze the Contradictions and Prepare for a Revolutionary Crisis

The fundamental contradictions and their continual sharpening have led the class struggle in Venezuela in recent times to the limits of “politics by other means.” The preparations for war have been present in every situation, but especially recently, until July 30 with the election of the Constituent National Assembly (ANC). The street confrontations have been on the rise since the beginning in 2017 up to now in a very important violent escalation, which left deep wounds in a society that has seen close up the economic encirclement and armed aggression such as the action of the fascist bands and the threats of imperialist intervention.



It is clear that internally and externally the levels of confrontation have advanced in a spiral that places the people of Venezuela in the sights of an enemy who has great experience in the use of overt and covert methods to destroy the forces that are opposed to it globally. It uses its local puppets with the external support of a whole network of artificial and human intelligence, the media, financial resources, logistics and operational forces with experience in the conduct of war.

The seriousness of the situation and the character of the enemy does not allow us to belittle the complexity of the present political moment, where history places us in circumstances that will define the future of our country, the region and perhaps the world according to the decisions that the various actors make in such a complicated scenario. First, we Marxist-Leninists must emphasize the class positions, so that the limits of the various contenders are clearly demarcated. This is especially so that the people are able to understand the level of confrontation that they are experiencing and their national and international forms in which the plan of the right-wing opposition, the reformist tactics and the Marxist-Leninist program must be made clear to the masses as we work to win them towards our programmatic positions.

It is necessary to clarify that the current situation is due to the sharpening of the contradictions of the capitalist mode of production in its imperialist stage, and not simply to the problem of what is called an “empire” that wants to subjugate a country in order to rob its resources. We must make clear that the interests of all the imperialists are in conflict as an expression of the largest world monopolies, representing the capitalists who, as an exploiting class, have contradictions among each other and therefore fight each other for the redivision of the loot, while at the same time they prevent the exploited from starting a chain of revolutions capable of bringing together more and more peoples on the basis of solidarity with the working class and the exploited. Thus the imperialists, of one bloc or another, as the highest form of monopoly capitalism, are making every effort to keep their forces prepared in the fight against their real strategic enemy: the revolution and socialism.

The capitalists are taking advantage of the contradictions among themselves, or they exaggerate them, in order to confuse

and use the people as a pawn of some faction of capital. The capitalists usually reach agreements among themselves in order to maintain the capitalist mode of production, sometimes making cosmetic modifications or imposing autocratic policies. Therefore one must deepen the study of the various contradictions under way in order not to end up playing the game of one or another group of capitalists to the detriment of our real class interests.

Lenin had already put forward his theses on the national and colonial problem to the Third International in 1920, stating that the most important idea is to establish “the distinction between oppressed and oppressing nations” because “*In this age of imperialism, it is particularly important for the proletariat and the Communist International to establish the concrete economic facts and to proceed from concrete realities, not from abstract postulates, in all colonial and national problems.*”¹ Emphasizing the question of whether or not to support the bourgeois-democratic movement in backward countries, defined since then by the Communist International as the revolutionary national movement, had created certain discrepancies leading to unanimously reaching agreement that “*we, as Communists, should and will support bourgeois-liberation movements in the colonies only when they are genuinely revolutionary, and when their exponents do not hinder our work of educating and organizing in a revolutionary spirit the peasantry and the masses of the exploited. If these conditions do not exist, the Communists in these countries must combat the reformist bourgeoisie...*”²

The contradiction between the imperialist countries and the dependent countries is increasingly evident; in the oppressed nations there are sectors that are struggling to carry out their national development, hampered by the current international relations and the oppressor nations that insist on maintaining their domination over the raw materials, markets and cheap labor. This they get without great effort through their local representatives who

¹ “Report of the Commission on the National and the Colonial Questions. The Second Congress of the Communist International.” V.I. Lenin. *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, English Edition. Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1966, p. 240.

² *Ibid.* p. 242.

act as an instrument for direct subjugation, trying to hide the sinister hands of imperialist capital that exploits, plunders and assassinates while at their conferences they speak of human rights and “democratic” freedoms. “Democracy in general” certainly does not exist anywhere, because in a society where there are private owners of the means of production, they accumulate immense wealth at the expense of the majority that does not even have the means of subsistence.

Every day this irrepressible contradiction between capital and labor increases. This gives rise to the other contradictions, taking the most acute and direct form in the class struggle, which is evident in every factory or center of exploitation. In each country, whether imperialist or dependent, the wage earner demands a greater share in the benefits of the productive process, since he is aware that his labor power creates the surplus value appropriated by the capitalist. The latter tries to constantly appropriate higher rates of alienated labor by intensifying or extending the working day and eliminating benefits, to which the worker responds with mobilizations and demands.

*...”the imperialist bourgeoisie is doing everything in its power to implant a reformist movement among the oppressed nations too. There has been a certain rapprochement between the bourgeoisie of the exploiting countries and that of the colonies, so that very often – perhaps even in most cases – the bourgeoisie of the oppressed countries, while it does support the national movement, is in full accord with the imperialist bourgeoisie, i.e., joins forces with it against all revolutionary movements and revolutionary classes.”*³

In the particular situation of Venezuela, the economic, political and possibly military aggression of the US-EU imperialist bloc and the participation of the traditional bourgeoisie as an agent of Yankee imperialism is clear. The latter is trying to regain absolute control of all the resources of this country, as it had years before. Since the beginning of the Bolivarian process, there has been a certain level of restrictions and controls by a petty-bourgeois government with some nationalist talk that has implemented a bourgeois-democratic program.

³ Ibid.

The imperialists of the China-Russia bloc are certainly interested in supporting the Venezuelan government in this situation, but not for reasons of philanthropic or ideological solidarity. They do this for economic and geostrategic reasons, for their own capitalist interests, to prepare the conditions for future confrontations with the contending bloc. This does not mean that the contradictions between the governments of China and Russia are disappearing, but they become secondary due to the new redivision of territories and markets, associating with one sector of the local bourgeoisie, which is becoming a local representative of their monopolies and interests.

The living conditions of the population are being affected by high inflation, hoarding, shortages and the high cost of living. Moreover, in recent months there have been intense daily confrontations in the streets. Sectors of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie set up combat zones with their defensive perimeters, barricades, sandbags and urban fighting tactics. This shows without a doubt that the struggle has escalated to a higher level. The Bolivarian government, starting from a defensive and reformist position, in the middle of a parliamentary crisis due to the removal of power from the National Assembly (AN) by the Supreme Court of Justice (TSJ), was able to carry out a political response by convening the Constituent National Assembly (ANC). Here the opposition abstained from participation in order to defend the National Assembly (AN) elected in December 2015 with an opposition majority. This allowed the government, which promoted a sectoral type of election imitating the people's democratic Assemblies, to obtain an absolute majority with representatives from all sectors of society with an important class nature, with 79 representatives of the workers and 5 of business owners, among other special features worthy of study.

Combining political actions such as the convening of the ANC with actions against the violent strongholds of the right has temporarily demobilized the internal enemy, representative of the traditional bourgeoisie, the puppets of the US-EU capitalist bloc. This shows that without a doubt the possibilities of a violent confrontation are present in Venezuelan society, that reactionary violence is lurking and that the class struggle continues to be the

motive force of history, although some members of the government are determined to deny this.

4. Promote the Class Struggle and the People’s Organization

With a government of the reformist petty bourgeoisie that upholds a program with nationalist characteristics, firm measures to expropriate the capitalists cannot be expected. It can maintain a bourgeois democratic position with a mixed economy with some state and communal ownership. Here those sectors of capital willing to negotiate with a government embargoed by the US are favored and the government has established ever deeper ties of dependency with the China-Russia bloc.

In this scenario our task is to stimulate the class struggle and the people’s organization, to denounce the government’s weaknesses and negotiation with the capitalists who are striking at the living conditions of the people. In this way, we must take part in the leadership of the broad masses and moreover make use of the conditions of imperialist threats to fight to create the conditions for national liberation from the imperialist yoke in the only truly possible way: through scientific socialism. This means the suppression of the exploiters, a planned national economy, revolutionary workers control, promoting food sovereignty and economic sovereignty in general, developing heavy and medium-



Banner reads: Workers and students united in combat for the building of scientific socialism!

sized industry, confronting conciliation and the pacifist illusions or the supposed neutrality. It means promoting the struggle for the interests of the workers and peasants in everyday life, taking control of the businesses and properties of those who directly or indirectly take part the actions of the enemy and encouraging the independent organization of the workers, peasants and commune members in order to defend their rights against the exploiting bourgeoisie, first of all the Yankee imperialists, but also the abuses of the Chinese and Russian imperialists, who have the same objectives although they differ in form.

The policy of unity, alliances and agreements plays an important role in our work for the Popular Unity, a unity of all the exploited and oppressed layers of society. We must add the action of internationalists ready to fight for their oppressed brothers and sisters, including the aboriginal ethnic groups, Afro-descendants, women, youth and minorities of all kinds organized to fight the oppressors. We must likewise confront the proposal of National Unity, because this presupposes unity between exploiters and exploited. This would mean putting the movement for national liberation under the leadership of those who do not believe in or much less work for liberation, since their goal is to be the representatives of the businesses of any of the imperialist blocs and to maintain class oppression.

Every day the weaknesses of reformism and the price that the popular majority must pay, the flamboyant declarations of the reformists and their instability to plan, implement and maintain firm action against the bourgeoisie, are clearly evident. For example we consider that the action of the Supreme Court of Justice to remove the authority of the parliament (National Assembly) was a favorable and laudable step from the revolutionary point of view. However, the inconsistency of the government and its internal contradictions undermined this measure, since it incorrectly did not transfer the power of parliament to a popular organization. This also unmasks the bourgeois nature of the state institutions and the need to replace them by taking steps in a truly democratic way.

Given the political crisis caused by the removal by the TSJ of the power of the AN and the crossing over of the Attorney General of the Republic to the opposition, the government convened the

Constituent National Assembly (ANC) but left the National Assembly (AN) active. This created a parallel power and coexistence between the ANC and the AN, showing the government's vacillating spirit and fear of confronting the traditional bourgeoisie and its parties.

We also consider correct the actions against the pro-Yankee right-wing opposition movement and its subjection by the popular forces, around which the government also vacillated. We consider it necessary to strengthen the fight against the reactionary forces, to strike at their sources of funding, to occupy the companies that join the capitalist lockout through revolutionary workers' control, to occupy the land and subdue the representatives of the bourgeoisie. We have carried out such actions in some areas of the country, with favorable results for the revolutionary movement, for the workers and for our party in particular.

The elections to the ANC and its establishment have allowed the government to avoid a situation that combined violent actions and threats of imperialist intervention. However, the economic problem remains intact and even aggravated due to the internal and external pressures, to the inability of the petty bourgeoisie in the government to definitively subdue the bourgeoisie. This can create a new situation of confrontations, mass discontent and a revolutionary crisis according to the measures that may be taken in the next days, and we must be prepared for this.

**Socialism Is Only Built with the Worker-Peasant Alliance
in Power and the People in Arms**

**One Hundred Years after the Great Socialist
October Revolution, Fight on to Victory**

*CC of the PCMLV
August 2017*