

Platform

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The World Anti-imperialist Platform

A stylized illustration of a woman with dark hair, wearing a light-colored long-sleeved shirt, holding a large, dark red flag aloft with her right arm. The background is a solid red color. The illustration is rendered in a flat, graphic style with some shading to suggest form and movement.





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Opportunism and the Collapse of the Second International

V.I. Lenin

January 1916

The article was written by Lenin in German and published in January 1916 in the first issue of the theoretical organ of the Zimmerwald Left, the magazine Vorbote (Herald). Earlier, Lenin had written an article in Russian under the same title; it was first published in the magazine Proletarskaya Revolutsia (Proletarian Revolution) No. 5 (28) in 1924, and is included in Volume 21 of Lenin's Collected Works (LCW), where the text is not quite identical with the one in Vorbote.

Has the Second International really ceased to exist? This is being stubbornly denied by its most authoritative representatives, like Kautsky and Vandervelde. Their point of view is that, save for the rupture of relations, nothing has really happened; all is quite well.

To get at the truth of the matter, let us turn to the Manifesto of the Basle Congress of 1912, which applies particularly to the present imperialist world war and which was accepted by all the socialist parties of the world. No socialist, be it noted, will dare in theory deny the necessity of making a concrete, historical appraisal of every war.

Now that war has broken out, neither the avowed opportunists nor the Kautskyites dare repudiate the Basle Manifesto or compare its demands with the conduct of the socialist parties during the war. Why? Because the Manifesto completely exposes both.

There is not a single word in the Basle Manifesto about the defence of the fatherland, or about the difference between a war of aggression and a war of defence; there is nothing in it at all about what

the opportunists and Kautskyites^[1] of Germany and of the Quadruple Alliance^[2] at all crossroads are now dinning into the ears of the world. Nor could it have said anything of the sort, because what it does say absolutely rules out the use of such concepts. It makes a highly concrete reference to the series of political and economic conflicts which had for decades been preparing the ground for the present war, had become quite apparent in 1912, and which brought about the war in 1914. The Manifesto recalls the Russo-Austrian conflict for “hegemony in the Balkans”; the conflicts between Britain, France and Germany (between all these countries!) over their “policy of conquest in Asia Minor”; the Austro-Italian conflict over the “striving for domination” in Albania, etc. In short, the Manifesto defines all these as conflicts emanating from “capitalist imperialism”. Thus, the Manifesto very clearly recognises the predatory, imperialist, reactionary, slave-driving character of the present war, i.e., a character which makes the idea of defending the fatherland theoretical nonsense and a practical absurdity. The big sharks are fighting each other to gobble up other peoples’ “fatherlands”. The Manifesto draws the inevitable conclusions from undisputed historical facts: the war “cannot be justified on the slightest pretext of its being in the interest of the people”; it is being prepared “for the sake of the capitalists’ profits and the ambitions of dynasties”. It would be a “crime” for the workers to “shoot each other down”. That is what the Manifesto says.

The epoch of capitalist imperialism is one of ripe and rotten-ripe capitalism, which is about to

collapse, and which is mature enough to make way for socialism. The period between 1789 and 1871 was one of progressive capitalism when the overthrow of feudalism and absolutism, and liberation from the foreign yoke were on history's agenda. "Defence of the fatherland", i.e., defence against oppression, was permissible on these grounds, and on these alone. The term would be applicable even now in a war against the imperialist Great Powers, but it would be absurd to apply it to a war between the imperialist Great Powers, a war to decide who gets the biggest piece of the Balkan countries, Asia Minor, etc. It is not surprising, therefore, that the "socialists" who advocate "defence of the fatherland" in the present war shun the Basle Manifesto as a thief shuns the scene of his crime. For the Manifesto proves them to be social-chauvinists, i.e., socialists in words, but chauvinists in deeds, who are helping "their own" bourgeoisie to rob other countries and enslave other nations. That is the very substance of chauvinism—to defend one's "own" fatherland even when its acts are aimed at enslaving other peoples' fatherlands.

Recognition that a war is being fought for national liberation implies one set of tactics; its recognition as an imperialist war, another. The Manifesto clearly points to the latter. The war, it says, "will bring on an economic and political crisis", which must be "utilised", not to lessen the crisis, not to defend the fatherland, but, on the contrary, to "rouse" the masses and "hasten the downfall of capitalist rule". It is impossible to hasten something for which historical conditions are not yet mature. The Manifesto declares that social revolution is possible, that the conditions for it have matured, and that it will break out precisely in connection with war. Referring to the examples of the Paris Commune and the Revolution of 1905 in Russia, i.e., examples of mass strikes and of civil war, the Manifesto declares that "the ruling classes" fear "a proletarian revolution". It is sheer falsehood to

claim, as Kautsky does, that the socialist attitude to the present war has not been defined. This question was not merely discussed, but decided in Basle, where the tactics of revolutionary proletarian mass struggle were recognised.

It is downright hypocrisy to ignore the Basle Manifesto altogether, or in its most essential parts, and to quote instead the speeches of leaders, or the resolutions of various parties, which, in the first place, antedate the Basle Congress, secondly, were not decisions adopted by the parties of the whole world, and thirdly, applied to various possible wars, but never to the present war. The point is that the epoch of national wars between the big European powers has been superseded by an epoch of imperialist wars between them, and that the Basle Manifesto had to recognise this fact officially for the first time.

It would be a mistake to regard the Basle Manifesto as an empty threat, a collection of platitudes, as so much hot air. Those whom the Manifesto exposes would like to have it that way. But it is not true. The Manifesto is but the fruit of the great propaganda work carried on throughout the entire epoch of the Second International; it is but the summary of all that the socialists had disseminated among the masses in the hundreds of thousands of speeches, articles and manifestos in all languages. It merely reiterates what Jules Guesde, for example, wrote in 1899, when he castigated socialist ministerialism in the event of war: he wrote of war provoked by the "capitalist pirates" (*En Garde!*, p. 175); it merely repeats what Kautsky wrote in 1909 in his *Road to Power*, where he admitted that the "peaceful" epoch was over and that the epoch of wars and revolutions was on. To represent the Basle Manifesto as so much talk, or as a mistake, is to regard as mere talk, or as a mistake, everything the socialists have done in the last twenty-five years. The opportunists and the Kautskyites find the contradiction between the Manifesto and its non-

application so intolerable because it lays bare the profound contradictions in the work of the Second International. The relatively “peaceful” character of the period between 1871 and 1914 served to foster opportunism first as a mood, then as a trend, until finally it formed a group or stratum among the labour bureaucracy and petty-bourgeois fellow-travellers. These elements were able to gain control of the labour movement only by paying lip-service to revolutionary aims and revolutionary tactics. They were able to win the confidence of the masses only by their protestations that all this “peaceful” work served to prepare the proletarian revolution. This contradiction was a boil which just had to burst, and burst it has. Here is the question: is it worth trying, as Kautsky and Co. are doing, to force the pus back into the body for the sake of “unity” (with the pus), or should the pus be removed as quickly and as thoroughly as possible, regardless of the pang of pain caused by the process, to help bring about the complete recovery of the body of the labour movement?

Those who voted for war credits, entered cabinets and advocated defence of the fatherland in 1914–15 have patently betrayed socialism. Only hypocrites will deny it. This betrayal must be explained.

It would be absurd to regard the whole question as one of personalities. What has opportunism to do with it when men like Plekhanov and Guesde, etc.—asks Kautsky (*Die Neue Zeit*, May 28, 1915). What has opportunism to do with it when Kautsky, etc.—replies Axelrod on behalf of the opportunists of the Quadruple Alliance (*Die Krise der Sozialdemokratie*, Zurich, 1915, p. 21). This is a complete farce. If the crisis of the whole movement is to be explained, an examination must be made, firstly, of the economic significance of the present policy; secondly, its underlying ideas; and thirdly, its connection with the history of the various trends in the socialist movement.

What is the economic substance of defencism in the war of 1914–15? The bourgeoisie of all the big powers are waging the war to divide and exploit the world, and oppress other nations. A few crumbs of the bourgeoisie’s huge profits may come the way of the small group of labour bureaucrats, labour aristocrats, and petty-bourgeois fellow-travellers. Social-chauvinism and opportunism have the same class basis, namely, the alliance of a small section of privileged workers with “their” national bourgeoisie against the working-class masses; the alliance between the lackeys of the bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie against the class the latter is exploiting.

Opportunism and social-chauvinism have the same political content, namely, class collaboration, repudiation of the dictatorship of the proletariat, repudiation of revolutionary action, unconditional acceptance of bourgeois legality, confidence in the bourgeoisie and lack of confidence in the proletariat. Social-chauvinism is the direct continuation and consummation of British liberal-labour politics, of Millerandism and Bernsteinism.^[3]

The struggle between the two main trends in the labour movement—revolutionary socialism and opportunist socialism—fills the entire period from 1889 to 1914. Even today there are two main trends on the attitude to war in every country. Let us drop the bourgeois and opportunist habit of referring to personalities. Let us take the trends in a number of countries. Let us take ten European countries: Germany, Britain, Russia, Italy, Holland, Sweden, Bulgaria, Switzerland, Belgium and France. In the first eight the division into opportunist and revolutionary trends corresponds to the division into social-chauvinists and internationalists. In Germany the strongholds of social-chauvinism are *Sozialistische Monatshefte*^[4] and Legien and Co.; in Britain the Fabians^[5] and the Labour Party^[6] (the I.L.P.^[7] has always been allied with them and has supported their organ, and in this bloc it has always

been weaker than the social-chauvinists, whereas three-sevenths of the B.S.P. ^[8] are internationalists); in Russia this trend is represented by Nasha Zarya ^[9] (now Nashe Dyelo), by the Organising Committee, ^[10] and by the Duma group led by Chkheidze; in Italy it is represented by the reformists with Bissolati at their head; in Holland, by Troelstra's party; in Sweden, by the majority of the Party led by Branting; in Bulgaria, by the so-called "Shiroki" ^[11] socialists; in Switzerland by Greulich and Co. In all these countries it is the revolutionary Social-Democrats who have voiced a more or less vigorous protest against social-chauvinism. France and Belgium are the two exceptions; there internationalism also exists, but is very weak.

Social-chauvinism is opportunism in its finished form. It is quite ripe for an open, frequently vulgar, alliance with the bourgeoisie and the general staffs. It is this alliance that gives it great power and a monopoly of the legal press and of deceiving the masses. It is absurd to go on regarding opportunism as an inner-party phenomenon. It is ridiculous to think of carrying out the Basle resolution together with David, Legien, Hyndman, Plekhanov and Webb. Unity with the social-chauvinists means unity with one's "own" national bourgeoisie, which exploits other nations; it means splitting the international proletariat. This does not mean that an immediate break with the opportunists is possible everywhere; it means only that historically this break is imminent; that it is necessary and inevitable for the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat; that history, which has led us from "peaceful" capitalism to imperialist capitalism, has paved the way for this break. *Volentem ducunt fata, nolentem trahunt.* ^[12]

This is very well understood by the shrewd representatives of the bourgeoisie. That is why they are so lavish in their praise of the present

socialist parties, headed by the "defenders of the fatherland", i.e., the defenders of imperialist plunder. That is why the social-chauvinist leaders are rewarded by their governments either with ministerial posts (in France and Britain), or with a monopoly of unhindered legal existence (in Germany and Russia). That is why in Germany, where the Social-Democratic Party was strongest and where its transformation into a national-liberal counter-revolutionary labour party has been most obvious, things have got to the stage where the public prosecutor qualifies the struggle between the "minority" and the "majority" as "incitement to class hatred"! That is why the greatest concern of the clever opportunists is to retain the former "unity" of the old parties, which did the bourgeoisie so many good turns in 1914 and 1915. The views held by these opportunists in all countries of the world were expounded with commendable frankness by a German Social-Democrat in an article signed "Monitor" which appeared in April 1915, in the reactionary magazine *Preussische Jahrbücher*. ^[13] Monitor thinks that it would be very dangerous for the bourgeoisie if the Social-Democrats were to move still further to the right. "It must preserve its character as a labour party with socialist ideals; for the day it gives this up a new party will arise and adopt the programme the old party had disavowed, giving it a still more radical formulation" (*Preussische Jahrbücher*, 1915, No.4, p. 50–51).

Monitor hit the nail on the head. That is just what the British Liberals and the French Radicals have always wanted—phrases with a revolutionary ring to deceive the masses and induce them to place their trust in the Lloyd Georges, the Sembats, the Renaudels, the Legiens, and the Kautskys, in the men capable of preaching "defence of the fatherland" in a predatory war.

But Monitor represents only one variety of opportunism, the frank, crude, cynical variety.

Others act with stealth, subtlety, and “honesty”. Engels once said that for the working class “honest” opportunists were the greatest danger.^[14] Here is one example.

Kautsky wrote in *Die Neue Zeit* (November 26, 1915) as follows: “The opposition against the majority is growing; the masses are in an opposition mood... After the war [only after the war?—N. L.] class antagonisms will become so sharp that radicalism will gain the upper hand among the masses... After the war [only after the war?—N. L.] we shall be menaced with the desertion of the radical elements from the Party and their influx into the party of anti-parliamentary [?? meaning extra-parliamentary] mass action... Thus, our Party is splitting up into two extreme camps which have nothing in common.” To preserve unity, Kautsky tries to persuade the majority in the Reichstag to allow the minority to make a few radical parliamentary speeches. That means Kautsky wants to use a few radical parliamentary speeches to reconcile the revolutionary masses with the opportunists, who have “nothing in common” with revolution, who have long had the leadership of the trade unions, and now, relying on their close alliance with the bourgeoisie and the government, have also captured the leadership of the Party. What essential difference is there between this and Monitor’s “programme”? There is none, save for the sugary phrases which prostitute Marxism.

At a meeting of the Reichstag group on March 18, 1915, Wurm, a Kautskyite, “warned” against “pulling the strings too taut. There is growing opposition among the workers’ masses to the majority of the group, we must keep to the Marxist [?! probably a misprint: this should read “the Monitor”] Centre” (*Klassenkampf gegen den Krieg! Material zum Fall Liebknecht. Als Manuskript gedruckt*,^[15] p. 67.) Thus we find that the revolutionary sentiment of the masses was admitted as a fact on behalf of all the Kautskyites

(the so-called Centre) as early as March, 1915!! But eight and a half months later, Kautsky again comes forward with the proposal to “reconcile” the militant masses with the opportunist, counter-revolutionary party—and he wants to do this with a few revolutionary-sounding phrases!!

War is often useful in exposing what is rotten and discarding the conventionalities.

Let us compare the British Fabians with the German Kautskyites. Here is what a real Marxist, Frederick Engels, wrote about the former on January 18, 1893: “... a band of careerists who have understanding enough to realise the inevitability of the social revolution, but who could not possibly entrust this gigantic task to the raw proletariat alone... Fear of the revolution is their fundamental principle” (*Letters to Sorge*, p. 390).^[16]

And on November 11, 1893, he wrote: “... these haughty bourgeois who kindly condescend to emancipate the proletariat from above if only it would have sense enough to realise that such a raw, uneducated mass cannot liberate itself and can achieve nothing without the kindness of these clever lawyers, writers and sentimental old women” (*ibid.*, p. 401).^[17]

In theory Kautsky looks down upon the Fabians with the contempt of a Pharisee for a poor sinner, for he swears by “Marxism”. But what actual difference is there between the two? Both signed the Basle Manifesto, and both treated it as Wilhelm II treated Belgian neutrality. But Marx all his life castigated those who strove to quench the revolutionary spirit of the workers.

Kautsky has put forward his new theory of “ultra-imperialism” in opposition to the revolutionary Marxists. By this he means that the “rivalries of national finance capitals” are to be superseded by the “joint exploitation of the world by international finance capital” (*Die Neue Zeit*, April 30, 1915). But he adds: “We do not as yet have sufficient data to decide whether this new phase of capitalism is

possible.” On the grounds of the mere assumption of a “new phase”, which he does not even dare declare definitely “possible”, the inventor of this “phase” rejects his own revolutionary declarations as well as the revolutionary tasks and revolutionary tactics of the proletariat—rejects them now, in the “phase” of a crisis, which has already broken out, the phase of war and the unprecedented aggravation of class antagonisms! Is this not Fabianism at its most abominable?

Axelrod, the leader of the Russian Kautskyites, says, “The centre of gravity of the problem of internationalising the proletarian movement for emancipation is the internationalisation of everyday practice”; for example, “labour protection and insurance legislation must become the object of the workers’ international organisation and action” (Axelrod, *The Crisis of Social-Democracy*, Zurich, 1915, pp. 39–40). Not only Legien, David and the Webbs, but even Lloyd George himself, and Naumann, Briand and Milyukov would quite obviously subscribe to such “internationalism”. As in 1912, Axelrod is quite prepared to utter the most revolutionary phrases for the very distant future, if the future International “comes out [against the governments in the event of war] and raises a revolutionary storm”. How brave we are! But when it comes to supporting and developing the incipient revolutionary ferment among the masses now, Axelrod says that these tactics of revolutionary mass action “would be justified to some extent if we were on the very eve of the social revolution, as was the case in Russia, for example, where the student demonstrations of 1901 heralded the approaching decisive battles against absolutism”. At the present moment, however, all that is “utopia”, “Bakuninism”, etc. This is fully in the spirit of Kolb, David, Südekum and Legien.

What dear old Axelrod forgets is that in 1901 nobody in Russia knew, or could have known, that the first “decisive battle” would take place

four years later—please note, four years later—and that it would be “indecisive”. Nevertheless, we revolutionary Marxists alone were right at that time: we ridiculed the Krichevskys and Martynovs, who called for an immediate assault. We merely advised the workers to kick out the opportunists everywhere and to exert every effort to support, sharpen and extend the demonstrations and other mass revolutionary action. The present situation in Europe is absolutely similar. It would be absurd to call for an “immediate” assault; but it would be a shame to call oneself a Social-Democrat and not to advise the workers to break with the opportunists and exert all their efforts to strengthen, deepen, extend and sharpen the incipient revolutionary movement and demonstrations. Revolution never falls ready-made from the skies, and when revolutionary ferment starts no one can say whether and when it will lead to a “real”, “genuine” revolution. Kautsky and Axelrod are giving the workers old, shop-worn, counter-revolutionary advice. Kautsky and Axelrod are feeding the masses with hopes that the future International will surely be revolutionary, but they are doing this for the sole purpose of protecting, camouflaging and prettifying the present domination of the counter-revolutionary elements—the Legiens, Davids, Vanderveldes and Hyndmans. Is it not obvious that “unity” with Legien and Co. is the best means of preparing the “future” revolutionary International?

“It would be folly to strive to convert the world war into civil war,” declares David, the leader of the German opportunists (*Die Sozialdemokratie und der Weltkrieg*, 1915, p. 172), in reply to the manifesto of the Central Committee of our Party, November 1, 1914. This manifesto says, inter alia:

“However difficult that transformation may seem at any given moment, socialists will never relinquish systematic, persistent and undeviating preparatory work in this direction now that war has become a fact.”^[18]

(This passage is also quoted by David, p. 171.) A month before David's book appeared our Party published its resolutions defining "systematic preparation" as follows: (1) refusal to vote for credits; (2) disruption of the class truce; (3) formation of illegal organisations; (4) support for solidarity manifestations in the trenches; (5) support for all revolutionary mass action.^[19]

David is almost as brave as Axelrod. In 1912, he did not think that reference to the Paris Commune in anticipation of the war was "folly".

Plekhanov, a typical representative of the Entente social-chauvinists, takes the same view of revolutionary tactics as David. He calls them a "farcical dream". But listen to Kolb, an avowed opportunist, who wrote: "The consequence of the tactics of Liebknecht's followers would be that the struggle within the German nation would be brought up to boiling point" (*Die Sozialdemokratie am Scheidewege*, p. 50).

But what is a struggle brought up to boiling point if not civil war?

If our Central Committee's tactics, which broadly coincide with those of the Zimmerwald Left,^[20] were "folly", "dreams", "adventurism", "Bakuninism"—as David, Plekhanov, Axelrod, Kautsky and others have asserted—they could never lead to a "struggle within a nation", let alone to a struggle brought up to boiling point. Nowhere in the world have anarchist phrases brought about a struggle within a nation. But the facts indicate that precisely in 1915, as a result of the crisis produced by the war, revolutionary ferment among the masses is on the increase, and there is a spread of strikes and political demonstrations in Russia, strikes in Italy and in Britain, and hunger demonstrations and political demonstrations in Germany. Are these not the beginnings of revolutionary mass struggles?

The sum and substance of Social-Democracy's practical programme in this war is to support, develop, extend and sharpen mass revolutionary

action, and to set up illegal organisations, for without them there is no way of telling the truth to the masses of people even in the "free" countries. The rest is either lies or mere verbiage, whatever its trappings of opportunist or pacifist theory.^[21]

When we are told that these "Russian tactics" (David's expression) are not suitable for Europe, we usually reply by pointing to the facts. On October 30, a delegation of Berlin women comrades called on the Party's Presidium in Berlin, and stated that "now that we have a large organising apparatus it is much easier to distribute illegal pamphlets and leaflets and to organise 'banned meetings' than it was under the Anti-Socialist Law. . . . Ways and means are not lacking, but the will evidently is" (*Berner Tagwacht*,^[22] 1915, No. 271).

Had these bad comrades been led astray by the Russian "sectarians", etc.? Is it these comrades who represent the real masses, or is it Legien and Kautsky? Legien, who in his report on January 27, 1915, fumed against the "anarchistic" idea of forming underground organisations; or Kautsky, who has become such a counter-revolutionary that on November 26, four days before the 10,000-strong demonstration in Berlin, he denounced street demonstrations as "adventurism"!!

We've had enough of empty talk, and of prostituted "Marxism" à la Kautsky! After twenty-five years of the Second International, after the Basle Manifesto, the workers will no longer believe fine words. Opportunism is rotten-ripe; it has been transformed into social-chauvinism and has definitely deserted to the bourgeois camp. It has severed its spiritual and political ties with Social-Democracy. It will also break off its organisational ties. The workers are already demanding "illegal" pamphlets and "banned" meetings, i.e., underground organisations to support the revolutionary mass movement. Only when "war against war" is conducted on these lines does it cease to be empty talk and becomes Social-Democratic work. In spite of all difficulties,

setbacks, mistakes, delusions and interruptions, this work will lead humanity to the victorious proletarian revolution.

Notes

[1] This does not refer to the personalities of Kautsky's followers in Germany, but to the international type of pseudo-Marxist who vacillates between opportunism and radicalism, but is in reality only a fig-leaf for opportunism.—Lenin

[2] The Quadruple Alliance—the imperialist alliance of Britain, France, Russia and Italy, which in 1915 withdrew from the Dreisbund and joined the Triple Entente.

[3] An opportunist trend in German and international Social-Democracy hostile to Marxism. It emerged in Germany at the end of the 19th century, and got its name from Eduard Bernstein, a German Social-Democrat, who tried to revise Marx's revolutionary theory on the lines of bourgeois liberalism. Among his supporters in Russia were the legal Marxists, the Economists, the Bund and the Mensheviks.

[4] *Sozialistische Monatshefte* (Socialist Monthly)—the chief organ of the German Social-Democratic opportunists and an organ of international opportunism; during the First World War it took a social-chauvinist stand; published in Berlin from 1897 to 1933.

[5] Members of the Fabian Society, a British reformist organisation founded in 1884; it got its name from the Roman commander, Fabius Maximus (d. 203 B.C.), surnamed Cunctator, that is, the delayer, for his tactics of harassing Hannibal's army without risking a pitched battle. Most of the Society's members were bourgeois intellectuals: scholars, writers, politicians (such as Sidney and Beatrice Webb, Bernard Shaw, Ramsay MacDonald, etc.); they denied the need for the class struggle of the proletariat and a socialist revolution, and insisted that the transition from capitalism to socialism lay only through petty reform and a gradual transformation of society. Lenin said it was "an extremely opportunist trend" (see LCW, Vol. 13, p. 358.) In 1900, the Fabian Society was affiliated to the Labour Party. Fabian socialism is one of the ideological sources of the Labour Party policy.

During the First World War, the Fabians took a social-chauvinist stand. For Lenin's description of the Fabians, see "British Pacifism and the British Dislike of Theory" (LCW, Vol. 21).

[6] Founded in 1900 as an amalgamation of trade unions, socialist organisations and groups to seat workers's representatives in Parliament (Committee for Labour Representation). In 1906, it took the name of Labour Party. Trade-unionists are automatically members of the Party provided they pay membership dues. It is headed by an Executive Committee which together with the Trade Union General Council and the Executive Committee of the Co-operative Party constitute the so-called National Labour Council. The Co-operative Party and the I.L.P. are corporate members of the Labour Party.

Initially a working men's party (it was subsequently joined by considerable numbers of petty-bourgeois elements), the Labour Party is opportunist in ideology and tactics. Since its emergence its leaders have been conducting a policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie. "The Labour Party is an out-and-out bourgeois party, for although it does consist of workers it is led by reactionaries—the worst reactionaries who operate in the spirit of the bourgeoisie..." (See

LCW, Vol. 31, "Speech on the Membership in the British Labour Party, Delivered on August 6, 1920, at the Second Congress of the Communist International".) During the First World War, its leaders took a social-chauvinist stand.

Labour Governments (1924, 1929, 1945 and 1950) have conducted the policy of British imperialism. Dissatisfaction with the leadership's policy among the British working people has led to a Left-wing trend in the Party opposing the leadership's official policy.

[7] The Independent Labour Party (I.L.P.) is a reformist organisation founded by the leaders of the "new trade unions" in 1893, during the upswing in the strike movement and the working-class movement for independence from the bourgeois parties. The I.L.P. included members of the "new trade unions" and a number of old ones, and also intellectuals and petty-bourgeois elements influenced by the Fabians. The Party was headed by Keir Hardie. From the outset it took a bourgeois-reformist stand, concentrating on the parliamentary forms of struggle and parliamentary deals with the Liberal Party. Lenin said it was "in practice an opportunist party which has always depended on the bourgeoisie" (see LCW, Vol. 29, "The Tasks of the Third International").

At the outbreak of the First World War, the I.L.P. issued an anti-war manifesto, but soon slid down to social-chauvinist positions.

[8] The British Socialist Party was founded in Manchester in 1911 by a merger of the Social-Democratic Party with other socialist groups. It spread Marxist ideas and was a party that was "not opportunist and was really independent of the Liberals" (see LCW, Vol. 19, p. 273.) But its small membership and weak ties with the masses lent it a somewhat sectarian character. During the First World War, a struggle broke out within it between the internationalist trend (William Gallacher, Albert Inkpin, John Maclean, Theodore Rothstein, and others) and the social-chauvinist trend led by Hyndman. Some in the internationalist trend took a Centrist stand on a number of issues. In February 1916, a group of B.S.P. members founded *The Call*, a newspaper which played a great part in rallying the internationalists. The B.S.P. annual conference at Salford in April 1916 condemned the social-chauvinist stand of Hyndman and his supporters, and they left the Party.

The B.S.P. welcomed the Great October Socialist Revolution. Its members took a leading part in the British working people's movement in defense of Soviet Russia against foreign intervention. In 1919, the majority of its local organisations (98 against 4) voted in favour of joining the Communist International. Together with the Communist Unity Group, the B.S.P. played the decisive role in founding the Communist Party of Great Britain. At the first unity congress held in 1920, the overwhelming majority of local B.S.P. organisations joined the Communist Party.

[9] *Nasha Zarya* (Our Dawn)—a legal monthly of the Menshevik liquidators published in Petersburg from January 1910 to September 1914. It was the liquidators' centre in Russia. With the outbreak of the First World War the journal took a social-chauvinist stand.

[10] Organising Committee (O.C.)—the Mensheviks' governing centre, formed at the August conference of Menshevik liquidators and all anti-Party groups and trends in 1912.

[11] *Shiroki* (Broad) Socialists—an opportunist trend within the Bulgarian Social-Democratic Party.

[12] The Fates lead the willing, drag the unwilling.—Ed.

[13] Preussische Jahrbücher (Prussian Yearbook)—a conservative monthly of the German capitalists and landowners published in Berlin from 1858 to 1935.

[14] Friedrich Engels, “Zur Kritik des sozial-demokratischen Programmwurfes 1891” (published in *Die Neue Zeit*, Jg. XX, 1901, B. II, No. 1).

[15] *The Class Struggle Against the War. Material on the Liebknecht Case.* Printed for private circulation only.—Ed.

[16] Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1955, p. 537.

[17] Engels’s letter to Friedrich Albert Sorge of November 11, 1893. (No English translation available.)

[18] See present edition, Vol. 21, “The War and Russian Social-Democracy”.—Ed.

[19] *Ibid.*, Vol. 21, “The Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. Groups Abroad”.—Ed.

[20] The Zimmerwald Left was formed by Lenin at the first socialist conference of internationalists at Zimmerwald, Switzerland, in early September 1915; it was, Lenin said, the first step in the development of the internationalist movement against the war. The Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, were the only group within the Zimmerwald Left to take a consistently correct stand. The group also included a number of inconsistent internationalists, whose mistakes Lenin criticised in “The Junius Pamphlet”, and “The Discussion of Self-Determination Summed Up” (see pp. 305–19, 320–60 of this volume).

[21] At the International Women’s Congress held in Berne in March 1915, the representatives of the Central Committee of our Party urged that it was absolutely necessary to set up illegal organisations. This was rejected. The British women laughed at this proposal and praised British “liberty”. But a few months later British newspapers, like the *Labour Leader*,^[23] reached us with blank spaces, and then came the news of police raids, confiscation of pamphlets, arrests, and Draconian sentences imposed on comrades who had spoken in Britain about peace, nothing but peace!—Lenin

[22] *Berner Tagwacht* (Berne Reveille)—the organ of the Social-Democratic Party of Switzerland, published in Berne from 1893. In 1909–18, it was edited by R. Grimm. At the outbreak of the First World War, it carried articles by Liebknecht, Mehring and other Left-wing Social-Democrats. From 1917 the newspaper gave open support to the social-chauvinists. The paper’s present stand on the key domestic and foreign policy issues coincides with that of bourgeois newspapers.

[23] A weekly founded in 1891. From 1893 it was an organ of the I.L.P.; from 1922, it was called the *New Leader*, and since 1946 it has been known as the *Socialist Leader*.

The Palestinian resistance is changing the world

Harpal Brar | Communist Party of Great Britain (Marxist-Leninist)

The entire settler-colonial project is on the rocks, and with it the Anglo-American imperialist domination of the middle east.

The zionist murder machine continues its daily slaughter of unarmed Palestinian men, women and children, taking a toll of hundreds each day. At the time of writing (22 January), 30,000 Gazans have been murdered, the overwhelming majority of them being women and children, whereas 70,000 have been badly wounded.

This horrendous toll does not take into account those who are missing or under the vast areas of rubble that are the result of indiscriminate zionist bombing raids. Eighty percent of northern Gaza's homes have been destroyed.

The zionist state has blocked almost all electricity, water, food supplies and medicines from reaching the imprisoned Gazans. As a result, according to United Nations agencies, at least a quarter of the territory's population is at risk of famine. In addition to large-scale deaths through bombing, people have begun to die of starvation and disease consequent upon the destruction of infrastructure such as sewage facilities, water purification plants, non-availability of electricity for running medical equipment.

Gaza's sole power station has been offline since 11 October. For lack of security, the World Food Programme, on which a large section of the population is reliant, has been forced to stop distributing food to northern Gaza. Most of the imperialist countries have stopped funding the relief agency Unwra on the basis of an accusation,

so far unproved, that a dozen of its employees (out of a total of 13,000!) were involved in the 7 October assault by the resistance on southern Israel, leaving a gap of \$450bn in the agency's funding, further endangering the lives of tens of thousands of innocent Palestinians.

This collective punishment, which is a war crime under international law, is calculated to cause the disappearance of Palestine and the destruction of the Palestinian people. This plan is a plan for the ethnic cleansing of Palestine. It has been implemented ever since the creation of the zionist state which was accompanied by the expulsion of 750,000 people from their homes and land, people who constituted three-quarters of the Palestinian population at the time.

Since the events of 7 October, the zionists have accelerated that programme through the mass slaughter of Gaza's citizenry and the wholesale destruction of its material wealth and means of life. Cultural centres; universities and schools; places of religious worship; and hospitals—have been reduced to rubble without a murmur from Israel's imperialist backers—the self-proclaimed guardians of democracy, freedom, human rights, the rule of law and suchlike hypocritical cant.

At the beginning of its bombing of northern Gaza, the Israeli government told the residents there to move to the safety of southern Gaza while continuing to slaughter those on the move. Having run out of targets in the north, the IDF started bombing the south. Now it has started bombing the southernmost Rafah area and there is nowhere for the Gazans go except live in hastily erected tents—

without food, water, electricity or medicines, while still subject to terror bombing.

Let alone anyone else, the oil-rich Arab states such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have failed to come forward to fill Unwra's funding gap, which for them would be no more than small change. While paying lip service to the cause of Palestinian self-determination, most Arab states would rather the Palestine disappeared from the face of the middle east so that they could 'normalise' their relations with Israel.

But 7 October has upset their plans, as it has those of Israel and its imperialist patrons. There is a deluge of pent-up rage on the Arab street which the ruling circles in these countries will ignore at their peril.

The role of Yemen

While most of the Arab governments in the middle east have shamefully failed, quite against the wishes of their own people, to come to the aid of the besieged and brutally bombed people of Gaza, who have been suffering slaughter by the fascist zionist murder gangs euphemistically called the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) for nearly five months, the one government that has rendered the most selfless service and unstinting help to them is the government of Yemen.

In response to the Israeli onslaught on Gaza, the Yemeni government, contemptuously referred to in the imperialist media as the 'Houthis', have brought the Red Sea to a near standstill. Anglo-American imperialism has been waging war against the Yemeni people for a long time.

But from 2015 until very recently the imperialist role was somewhat hidden as it waged the war using Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates as proxies, supplying them with weaponry and

intelligence. The brave Yemeni people fought back against these proxies, taking the war to their territories and disrupting their oil production, forcing them to discontinue their unjust aggression against the people of Yemen.

The Yemenis were targeting vessels owned by Israel or those engaged in supplying materials to it. They seized the *Galaxy Leader*, partly owned by an Israeli. No longer able to stand on the sidelines, the USA and Britain started bombing targets in Yemen on 11 January this year—all in the name of 'freedom of navigation', and attempting to assemble a 'coalition of the willing' to fight against the Yemenis.

Not many countries came forward to volunteer for this dangerous enterprise—not even the Saudis or the UAE, whose eight years of brutal proxy war taught them not to mess with the Yemeni people.

In the most devastating attack so far, the Yemeni resistance on 18 February forced the crew of a commercial ship to abandon it. This strike on the *Rubymar*, carrying a cargo from the UAE to Bulgaria, served to underline the Yemeni ability to target vessels navigating in the Red Sea despite US and British attacks on missile launching sites of the resistance.

The vessel, which a resistance spokesperson described as being British, is now at risk of sinking. This is the first reported direct hit for the resistance since it sparked a fire on 26 January on the *Marlin Luanda*, a fuel tanker operating on behalf of *Trafigura* commodity trader.

The arrivals of container ships at the entrance to the Red Sea have fallen more than 90 percent since early December 2023 according to data from London-based *Clarkson*, while non-containerised bulk carrier arrivals have fallen by only 50 percent—these carrying bulk commodities in large

holds.

Referring to the Rubymar strike, and emphasising the discriminate and humane stance of the Yemeni resistance, spokesperson Yahya Sare'e said: "During the operation we made sure that the ship's crew exited safely."

The Rubymar was flying the flag of Belize but has an address in the British port of Southampton; it is a Lebanon-operated vessel but it is registered in Britain.

The actions of the resistance in the Red Sea have pushed up shipping costs and lengthened delivery times as the ships of the targeted countries, avoiding navigation through the Red Sea, are forced to take the longer route through the Cape of Good Hope.

Referring to a resistance strike from the nearby Red Sea port of Hodeidah, Mr Sare'e added: "The Yemeni air defences were able to shoot down an American plane with a suitable missile while it was carrying out hostile missions against our country." He identified the downed aircraft as an MQ9, an unmanned aircraft known as a Reaper drone. What has further alarmed the American defence establishment is that the Yemenis have been deploying unmanned underwater vessels (UUVs) in a series of attacks.

Israel losing the battle for public opinion

The imperialist states, especially the US and Britain, are complicit in Israel's genocidal war, which they are not only supporting but facilitating with arms and ammunition as well as diplomatic cover. The USA cannot even bring itself to call for a ceasefire and has vetoed several resolutions at the UN security council that did call for a ceasefire.

Every week, planeloads of lethal weaponry from the USA land in Israel to help facilitate the

zionist genocide that is underway in Gaza. There is overwhelming support for Israel's crimes in the US Congress—70 out of 100 senators voted for Biden's \$95bn security bill, which included \$14bn in 'aid' for Israel.

There is an increasing disconnect between the ruling class and the masses of people in these countries, where Israel has lost the battle for public opinion. While public opinion is on the move, the ruling circles cling to their unsustainable stance.

According to an AP-NORC poll in January, 50 percent of US adults, including a majority of Democrats and a majority of Independents, believe that Israel has "gone too far". Arab-Americans, traditionally Democratic party supporters in key swing states such as Michigan, could well desert this disgusting outfit in protest. Young people's sympathies are tilting in favour of Palestine.

Hundreds of thousands of people, including large numbers of jews, have staged demonstrations in the USA against Israel's genocidal war against the Palestinian people and US backing for it.

One cannot but have the greatest regard and admiration for the courageous stand taken by eminent people of jewish descent such as Max Blumenthal, Arron Matté, Dr Gabor Matté, Dr Norman Finkelstein, Katie Halper and several others in the USA and Canada who, in the face of attacks by imperialist stooges, have stood up in defence of the Palestinian people's right to resist, and who have mercilessly exposed zionist crimes.

Likewise, one must bow one's head to Israelis such as Professors Avi Shloam, Ilan Pappé and Gideon Levy of the Ha'aretz newspaper, who show exemplary courage in their exposure of zionism and support for the Palestinian people alike.

Hundreds of thousands of people have been regularly marching in Britain to show their anger at

the slaughter in Gaza and the British government's support for it. Defying threats from the authorities, they have been defiantly waving Palestinian flags and shouting 'From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free'—a slogan that the authorities have unsuccessfully tried to ban.

Vain attempts at repression

Unable to win the argument, those in power are increasingly resorting to repression, with the police selectively arresting peaceful protesters under anti-terrorism and other such legislation. Among those targeted have been members of the Communist Party of Great Britain (Marxist-Leninist)—CPGB-ML—who have been arrested, handcuffed and detained in isolation while their homes were raided and searched aggressively in the middle of the night.

All this is because, on the one hand, the CPGB-ML has been a consistent supporter of the right of the Palestinians to self-determination and of their right to resist the Zionist occupation of their country and, on the other hand, it has over the years exposed the fascist essence of Zionism, as, for instance, through its booklet *Zionism—a Racist, Antisemitic and Reactionary Tool of Imperialism*.

This is happening because the CPGB-ML's message is beginning to resonate with a wider section of the population. It is an attempt by the authorities to suppress it, but this attempt is destined to fail. Like all reactionaries, the authorities are lifting a rock only to drop it on their own feet.

The Palestinian people have the right to resist by any means, including by armed resistance—a right which is recognised under international law. As an occupying power, Israel has no right of self-defence.

Contrary to the assertions of the despicable

bourgeois political representatives and their media organs, it is the Israeli state and its armed forces who are guilty of terrorism; it is they who are guilty of subjecting the people of Palestine to the kind of holocaust to which the Hitlerites subjected the Jews, and many other people, during the second world war.

This is a truth recognised by the majority of humanity. For telling this truth our comrades are being persecuted. But in the end, the truth shall be victorious. Imperialist governments will be no more successful in suppressing this truth than the Catholic Church of yore was successful in attempting to suppress Galileo's teaching that the earth moves round the sun.

The significance of 7 October

The resistance operation launched on 7 October has changed not just the shape of middle east politics but also the shape of discourse in the imperialist countries. No longer is Israel regarded as invincible. The events of 7 October revealed it to be very vulnerable indeed, which has enraged the Zionist rulers to the point of madness.

Israel is far from achieving its declared twin goals—namely, to destroy the Palestinian resistance and to secure the return of the Israelis detained by the Palestinian liberation fighters. Notwithstanding the relentless bombing and destruction of human life and property, the resistance continues to fight with courage and determination.

On 23 January alone, in the most difficult circumstances, the resistance eliminated 24 occupation soldiers at the al-Maghazi refugee camp. Where there is oppression there is bound to be resistance. There is one way to bring an end to the resistance and that way is to end the occupation.

These events have alarmed Israel's imperialist

backers. In Britain, the House of Commons was reduced to a pitiable shambles on Wednesday 22 February over the question of an SNP resolution calling for a ceasefire in Gaza.

The Labour party is falling apart over the question of Palestine, with threats of rebellion by an increasing number of its parliamentarians and local councillors—all of whom had before 7 October been cowed into submission by Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer, with the full support of the ruling class and its organs of propaganda, which have been another casualty of 7 October.

An increasing number of people are deserting these purveyors of lies and deception, instead getting their information from social media platforms.

Brutality in the West Bank

While the world's attention has been focussed on Gaza, the zionist occupation has continued its brutality in the West Bank. In 2023, one of the bloodiest of years, zionist forces killed 487 Palestinians there. Since 22 October: an airstrike has destroyed al-Ansar mosque; fighter jets and drones have destroyed buildings in refugee camps across the West Bank, with 84 children killed between 7 October and 12 January; drone strikes turned streets to rubble in Tukrem and Balata refugee camps on 17 January, killing ten people.

Between 7 October and 12 January there were 381 settler attacks on Palestinians, and 600 Palestinians have been displaced from their West Bank homes. This was facilitated by Itmar Ben-Gvir, Israel's national security minister, who has made it easier for settlers to acquire guns.

Role of the Palestinian Authority

Within the Palestinian camp, the Palestinian

Authority (PA) has become an extension of the zionist occupation to control the Palestinian people. Its 'president', Mahmoud Abbas, is no more than a quisling serving Israel. On 1 January, PA forces murdered resistance fighter Ahmed Obeidi while imprisoning other resistance fighters and confiscating their weapons.

On 10 January, US secretary of state Antony Blinken's visit to the area met with massive protests outside the Ramallah headquarters of the PA, which were violently suppressed by the PA forces. The Palestine Centre for Policy and Survey Research found that support for Abbas's party Fatah was down to 14 percent, and that 90 percent of West Bank Palestinians want Abbas to resign.

Sixty percent across Palestine and 70 percent in the West Bank were in favour of armed struggle as the route to liberation.

Craven role of bourgeois journalists and politicians

Whenever bourgeois journalists interview a Palestinian or a supporter of the Palestinian cause, the first question they ask is: Do you condemn the 7 October assault on southern Israel by Hamas (the imperialist expression for the resistance, which actually is composed of many shades of political orientation but united in their resistance to Israeli occupation and their determination to free Palestine from zionists)?

But this cowardly and corrupt coterie, their wallets stuffed with crumbs coming from the table of imperialist gangsters, never ask zionist spokespersons, or those representing their imperialist masters: Do you condemn the murder of thousands of defenceless Palestinians in Gaza?

Do you condemn the denial of food, water, electricity and medicines to the imprisoned

Gazans? Do you condemn the destruction of hospitals, universities, schools and churches by the Israeli air force? Do you condemn the destruction of most of the residential property in Gaza?

Any bourgeois journalist who asked such uncomfortable questions would be labelled an antisemite and immediately dismissed from their lucrative employment and probably prosecuted for a hate crime if not for violating the anti-terror legislation. It is therefore not surprising that these pampered purveyors of deceit and lies, knowing on which side their bread is buttered, maintain a deadly silence.

They don't even have the courage to defend Julian Assange, a fellow journalist, who has been hounded and incarcerated for a decade for exposing the crimes committed by Anglo-American imperialism and its vassals in their neverending wars against people everywhere, especially in the middle east, whose governments come into imperialist crosshairs through pursuing an independent course in the conduct of their foreign policy or in the management of their economy.

What is true of bourgeois journalists applies just as much to the equally corrupt and cowardly bourgeois politicians and their governments, which Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels correctly characterised as the committees for managing the affairs of the bourgeoisie.

The right to resist occupation by any means

Those who feign outrage at the alleged 'atrocities' of the resistance on 7 October ought to be reminded of the atrocities committed by zionism over a period of more than seven decades against the people of Palestine.

How would any other people react in similar circumstances? Are we to condemn the French

resistance for armed struggle against the Nazi occupiers? Are we to condemn the Warsaw ghetto rising?

During their first war of independence, when the Indian people rose up against their brutal British colonisers, the Indian revolutionaries were accused of committing atrocities against the British, and the British press went lurid with jingoistic fury. But Marx and Engels were on the side of the Indian revolutionaries, reminding the British public of the crimes committed by the British rulers of India over a long period against the Indian people.

Writing in the New York Daily Tribune of 16 September 1857, Marx said: "However infamous the conduct of sepoys, it is only a reflex in a concentrated form, of England's own conduct in India, not only during the epoch of the foundation of her Eastern Empire, but even during the last ten years of its settled rule.

"To characterise that rule, it suffices to say that torture formed an organic institution of its financial policy," adding that "here is something in human history like retribution; and it is a rule of historical retribution that its instrument is forged not by the offended, but by the offender himself." (The Indian Revolt)

Three weeks earlier, in his article Investigation of tortures in India, detailing the extortion and violence practised by the British rulers on the Indian people, he wrote:

"We have here given but a brief and mildly-coloured chapter from the real history of British rule in India. In view of such facts, dispassionate and thoughtful men may perhaps be led to ask whether a people are not justified in attempting to expel the foreign conquerors who have so abused their subjects. And if the English could do these things in cold blood, is it surprising that

the insurgent hindus should be guilty, in the fury of revolt and conflict, of the crimes and cruelties alleged against them?” (Our emphasis)

The above penetrating observations of Marx are relevant to the conflict in Palestine. The instruments of retribution, as revealed by 7 October, were forged by the offending zionists and their imperialist backers, not by the offended Palestinians. If the zionists could do in cold blood what they have been doing for 75 years against the Palestinian people, is it surprising that the Palestinian resistance “should be guilty, in the fury of revolt and conflict, of the crimes and cruelties alleged” against it?

Dropping a rock

There is an old saying: Man proposes and God disposes. Imperialism has grand schemes for world domination. The zionists have plans for ethnically cleansing historic Palestine. These plans are in ruins and are being disposed of by modern-day gods—that is, by the anti-imperialist resistance in several parts of the globe.

The imperialist proxy war in Ukraine against Russia is collapsing with each passing day, just as Israel’s grip on Palestine is confronted with a mortal threat.

Imperialism’s attempt to effect regime change in Russia and to dismember it through a combination of economic sanctions and war is facing a devastatingly humiliating defeat. Likewise, Israel’s army, notwithstanding its fascistic brutality, is making no progress against the Palestinian resistance.

The Israeli economy is suffering badly as the call-up of 300,000 has left it short of people to run businesses and other establishments. It has been forced to evacuate 42 communities along

its northern border because of the low intensity armed conflict between Hezbollah, the Lebanese resistance movement, and the IDF.

Several thousand Israelis have also fled the southern border with Gaza. All those evacuated from the north and south of Israel have to be accommodated and fed, putting Israeli resources under severe stress. Thousands of Israelis with dual nationality have fled Israel since the beginning of the conflict.

Israel and its patrons are facing an acute dilemma, to get out of which they may well double down and extend the war. That very dangerous option would only hasten their doom.

The two-state solution

Imperialism, while paying lip-service to a two-state solution for ending the conflict in Palestine, has done nothing to implement it. The results of 7 October have forced the USA and its allies to once again return to it, but this ‘solution’ is long dead, for two reasons.

First, the presence of 700,000 settlers, with their special roads on which Palestinians are not allowed to drive, the confiscation of water resources by the settlers, the apartheid wall and hundreds of checkpoints, have reduced the West Bank to dozens of unconnected Bantustans. Gaza has been under siege for nearly two decades, and is now reduced to rubble. East Jerusalem has slowly been taken over by the zionists.

Second, as if the above were not enough to put an end to the fairy tale of the two-state formula for an independent Palestinian state alongside a separate jewish state, the Israeli parliament and prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s war cabinet have declared that they will never accept or allow the creation of an independent Palestinian state.

Thus the Palestinian people have no option but to struggle for the dismantling of the monstrosity called Israel and in its place to create a secular state where muslims, christians and jews can live with equal rights, without any having special rights or privileges.

Until that comes about there will be no end to this conflict.

Growing resistance

Not only in Palestine but also in Lebanon, Iraq and Syria, not to speak of Yemen, the resistance is attacking US bases and the USA is bombing again on the pretext that three of its soldiers were killed by resistance attacks.

The lives of certain US citizens are more important to US imperialism than others—such as Rachel Corrie, a US citizen deliberately murdered by an Israeli soldier who crushed her to death by driving a bulldozer over her as she heroically stood in the way of the demolition of Palestinian homes.

Or Shireen Abu Akleh, shot dead in cold blood by an IDF soldier who could clearly see the Press badge on her jacket as she reported on the siege of the Jenin refugee camp.

Or Gonzalo Lira (another American citizen) murdered by the SBU (Ukraine's secret service). Not a word on Mr Lira's death has appeared in the imperialist press and electronic media, which have devoted thousands of hours of broadcasting time and tons of paper to the death in prison of Alexei Navalny, who has been portrayed as the most important Russian freedom fighter whose death has been pinned on Russian president Vladimir Putin.

The fact that Navalny commanded no support among the Russian people is of little concern to the bribed imperialist political and media establishment. Anyone who wants to know more

about this supposed 'fighter against corruption' should read Scott Ritter's recent article about his true role.

This is how the self-appointed guardians of truth and freedom safeguard their much-vaunted values.

Death to zionism!

Death to imperialism!

Victory to the resistance!

On the joint declaration of the social chauvinists of Europe

Communist Labour Party of Turkey/Leninist

Several “communist” parties who have come together under the name “European Communist Action” organised a conference “in order to evaluate the experiences and conclusions of the communists during the second year of the imperialist war in Ukraine.”

They did well. They have once again given us the opportunity to see that they are doing their best to cover up the most important facts about the war, the real cause of the war, its class character and their political line in order to curry favour with their imperialist masters.

Anyone who wants to see an example of how a person, party or group of parties can claim to act in the name of the world proletariat and in reality serve their imperialist masters can look at the joint declaration of the “European Communist Action.” There is no need for anything else. In revolutionary communist literature, acting in the name of communism and serving the bourgeoisie is called social chauvinism.

The “European Communist Action” (hereafter we will refer to this social chauvinist group only as “ECA”) is a social chauvinist group that acts in the name of communism but in reality serves its imperialist masters, especially the US, NATO and the EU. They are nothing more than a “group” because there is not the slightest that they represent a “movement.”

In order for the reader to better understand the political character of this group, some brief information about their past is in order.

Except for one or two of them, the parties that make up the “ECA” operated under the name “European Communist Initiative” (ECI) from 2013 until September 2023. They formed part of

the ongoing conference of the worldwide meeting of communist and workers’ parties (IMCWP). After the war in Ukraine, neither at the IMCWP conferences in Havana and Izmir, nor at the ECI meetings led by the KKE, could they issue a joint statement on the war. They could not issue it because they did not have a common view, a common ground on this most fundamental issue. There was not much the KKE could do in the IMCWP, but it could well “throw its weight” within the ECI. And so it did. The ECI shamefully ended its life in September 2023 with a teleconference via Zoom. After the KKE presentation, it was hastily declared that the ECI had completed its mission and they pulled the plug!

Thus, in order to get rid of “the important ideological and political differences ... which creates insurmountable obstacles for the continuation of the ECI,” a new, narrower organisation was formed in line with the views of the KKE: The European Communist Action (ECA)!

The global civil war waged by the USA and other imperialists against the world proletariat and working classes, the oppressed peoples of the world in general, and the war waged by the Russian army against imperialism and fascism in particular, have caused the path of collaboration with the bourgeoisie to mature and forced these social reformist parties to reveal their true social chauvinist faces. They could no longer hide their true bourgeois collaborationist faces. This was the inevitable result of the war. This social reformist, compromising, collaborationist boil matured as a result of the war and was revealed to us in the form of social chauvinism.

The joint statement issued by the parties that

came together as the “ECA” on the 2nd anniversary of the war was a document that showed how these parties, in the name of “communism” sided with their imperialist and reactionary states and governments. Now let’s have a look at that statement.

Is The War In Ukraine An Imperialist War?

“Marxism, which does not degrade itself by stooping to the philistine’s level, requires an historical analysis of each war” (Lenin). That is to say, if a party is to express an opinion on an emerging war, it has to make a concrete evaluation of that war; it has to analyze, in a concrete manner that relies on evidence, the situation in the warring countries, but also class relations at the global level and the general conditions of the imperialist epoch.

The “ECA” answers “yes” to the above question without hesitation. It claims that this war is an imperialist war and asserts that siding with one of the parties, for example the Russian army, means siding with its own government, its own bourgeoisie. And what is the concrete evidence that the “ECA” puts forward for this claim? There is no concrete evidence, only abstract claims, nothing more than the idea that “If I say so, it is so.” Now let us analyse these claims from their statement.

In article 1 of the statement of the “ECA” we find the following “concrete” assessment of the cause of the war:

“1. The imperialist war in Ukraine has led to thousands of deaths. Millions were forced to leave their homes and country. This imperialist war is an extension of the conditions that emerged after the dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and which have tragic consequences for the working classes all over the world. It was the overthrow of socialism that prepared the ground for this war, in which the blood of two peoples who worked together for decades to build a new society on socialist foundations, who fought shoulder

to shoulder against fascism and brought it to its knees, is being shed.”

The only worthwhile opinion (if one can call it that) among all this empty talk, which is otherwise presented without a single piece of concrete evidence, is this: The war results from the dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, of socialism. “It was the overthrow of socialism that prepared the ground for this war.”

To say this is to say nothing. They put forward no idea about this war or about its causes. Because the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the destruction of socialism led not only to this war but to countless wars, to the unbridled aggression of the US-NATO-British imperialists in countless parts of the world. Under the conditions of the existence of the Soviet Union, these imperialists and their aggressive military organisation NATO could not dare to attack any country as they pleased. The disintegration of the Soviet Union and the destruction of socialism encouraged them in their aggressive policies and they started to carry out attacks everywhere. The wars in Iraq I and II, Yugoslavia, Libya, Syria, Afghanistan, and Israel’s aggression in the Middle East, etc., are all “an extension of the conditions that emerged after the dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and which have tragic consequences for the working classes all over the world.”

So, to say that the war is “the result of the collapse of socialism and the conditions that emerged after this collapse” is to say nothing about this war. What we need, however, is, to use Lenin’s words, “a concrete evaluation of each war separately.”

It is obvious that the parties that make up the “ECA” are in a state of complete confusion. On the one hand, they are trying to curry favour with their imperialist masters, but on the other hand, they are trying to do it in a way that is compatible with the word “communist” in their name. According to the “ECA,” there is an imperialist war, but they

cannot call Russia, one of the parties to the war, “imperialist.” That is to say, on the one side there are the familiar imperialist states; on the other side—at least for now—there is Russia, which is not yet imperialist.

We come to point 2 of the statement, where glaring confusion and demagoguery reign. Before that, however, we should make an intermediate note. There is obviously no unanimity of thought within the “ECA” on the definition of Russia. While one section defines Russia as “imperialist”—we know that the KKE is of this opinion—another section, for example, the TKP (the Communist Party of Turkey), opposes this definition. As an intermediate way, as a ground for compromise, they have come together in the freakish idea that “there is an imperialist war, but this is an imperialist war in which one of the parties is not an imperialist.” Now we can continue with Article 2 as it is.

“2. The most important factor fuelling the conflict on this ground is the fight among capitalists for the plundering of all underground and surface resources, the wealth produced by the workers. At the root of this conflict lies the competition and contradictions within the imperialist system as a whole, which in this case were expressed in the expansion of NATO and the EU to the east and the aspiration of the Russian bourgeoisie to establish new forms of organisations of capitalist states in the territories of the former USSR.”

What do we understand here that the phrase of “the aspiration of the Russian bourgeoisie to establish new forms of organisations of capitalist states in the territories of the former USSR.” Nothing! Suppose the Russian bourgeoisie were to wish to establish new forms of state organisation in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan or any other “territory of the former USSR.” What would the result be? Is that why they went to war with the USA-NATO and others? Or, on the contrary, did these imperialists decide to wage war against the

“Russian bourgeoisie” because of this desire? As a concrete analysis of the war, they heap of platitudes about “the desires of the Russian bourgeoisie” before the working class and nothing else.

There is an “imperialist war”; this is true. But from the point of view of the US-NATO-UK-European imperialists, this is an imperialist war. From the point of view of the world proletariat, labouring peoples, socialist states, and global revolutionary forces, it is an anti-imperialist, anti-fascist war.

This war has arisen out of the general conditions in which the imperialist-capitalist system, that is, imperialism, especially the USA, has been living in the last twenty to twenty-five years. But what are the main lines of today’s general conditions of the imperialist epoch?

To put it in the most general terms, in the last quarter of a century, the imperialist-capitalist system has entered a process of decline, of collapse, of the loss of its world hegemony. The entire historical development of the capitalist mode of production and the fact that the productive forces have reached the point where they cannot fit into the shells of this mode of production and the struggles of the world proletariat and labouring peoples, the poor masses against capitalism and the world bourgeoisie, which have turned into revolts, uprisings, and revolutions, have formed the basic lines and general conditions of this process.

Our era is the era of the collapse of imperialism and social revolutions. NATO itself has determined that our century is the “century of uprisings” and has started to shape all its economic and military policies according to this prediction. To reverse this process, the imperialists, led by the USA and their military organisation NATO, have launched a war against the world working class, working peoples, socialist countries and revolutionary-democratic popular governments oriented towards socialism. This is a global civil war between the world bourgeoisie and the world proletariat, socialist

countries, labouring, poor, oppressed peoples. Without understanding these features of our epoch and the global civil war arising from these features, it is impossible to understand either the wars in different countries or the unbridled policy of aggression of the imperialists against the territory of Russia.

The imperialists, i.e. the USA and other imperialist-reactionary states, which surround it like little jackals, are doing their utmost to erase all signs and every trace of socialism from the face of the earth. They are preparing to attack not only Russia but also Cuba and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, China, Vietnam, Laos, Venezuela, Nicaragua, and many other countries.

Russia, whose relations with socialist and socialist-orientated revolutionary-democratic popular governments are close to the Soviet-era line of foreign relations, was an obstacle to these aims. Social chauvinists will not like it, but such were the relations between Cuba and Russia, such are the relations with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Such are the relations with China and with Venezuela, where US imperialism wants to bring its henchmen to power. Needless to say, the relations between Cuba, Venezuela, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and Russia were the greatest obstacle to the destructive economic, financial, technical, and military policies of the imperialists on these countries. This is a concrete, verifiable fact.

Syria is a more typical example. It is a well-known and recognised fact that if it were not for the active support of Russia, Syria today would have become a farm for the production and export to the world of religious fascist murderous hordes. For the imperialists, but especially for the US and British imperialists to consolidate their domination in the Middle East, the capture of Syria through Turkey and the religious fascist gangs was extremely important. The whole world knows that the Syrian

war is not over. Russia, with its active military intervention, has frustrated the ambitions of the imperialists and their subcontractors in the region.

Russia's military and economic activity and policy on the African continent has also been one of the biggest obstacles to the imperialists' plans for the African continent. The poor, labouring peoples of the African countries, who expelled French imperialism from their lands with the direct help of Russia, and indirect help of China, are the peoples who know and express this fact best.

Did USSR Become A Thing Of The Past? Why Is The USA Attacking Russia?

All these concrete facts and conditions constitute important reasons why the imperialists want to attack Russia, despite the powers in the Kremlin, which wants to get on "good terms" with them, compromise with them and even join NATO. But we have not yet touched upon the most important reason, the decisive reason for the imperialist aggression against Russia. That reason is this: despite the bloody counter-revolution of 1991-93 and the significant restoration of capitalism, imperialists, first and foremost the USA, do not believe that socialism in Russia has been completely uprooted. We will give evidence of this.

But first, we must emphasise the following: Whether the USA and its imperialist followers are mistaken in these beliefs and thoughts is not important for now. What is important is that they have this belief and that it motivates them to attack Russia in the first place.

They believe that socialism in Russia can be completely, uprooted from the life, culture, language, literature and art, habits, and aspirations of the people to disappear without a trace only through the dismemberment and destruction of Russia as a state.

The imperialists, unlike their henchmen, are neither fools nor slackers. They are accustomed

to “taking the bull by the horns”; they leave nothing to chance. That is why, unlike the social-chauvinists, who believe more than anyone else and before anyone else that socialism in the former Soviet territories has been consigned to history, the imperialists cannot rest until they see Russia disintegrate and disappear as a state.

If the social-chauvinists who make up the “ECA” want proof, let them look at the article entitled “Preparing for the Final Collapse of the Soviet Union and the Dissolution of the Russian Federation.”

Korkut Boratav explains the importance of this article in “Sol Haber,” the organ of the TKP, which hosted the “ECA” meeting:

“In the CIA, in the Pentagon, such texts are kept away from casual observers as ‘top secret’ documents. This Policy Note, on the other hand, bears the signature of Luke Coffey, a senior fellow at Hudson, and is publicly available.

The Hudson Institute’s track record, however, suggests that the document should be taken seriously. It is a neo-con organisation founded in 1960 by Herman Kahn, a major contributor to the US nuclear war doctrine... It is closely aligned with the Republican Party.

The views in the aforementioned Policy Note are in line with the intentions of Biden, who called for ‘regime change’ in Russia after the war in Ukraine. It probably also sheds light on the current, functional scenarios of the US state institutions.”

The article begins with the following paragraph:

“The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the resignation of Mikhail Gorbachev as president of the Soviet Union in 1991 marked the beginning of the collapse of the USSR, but not the collapse itself. Although the legal personality of the USSR ceased to exist after 1991, the collapse of the USSR is still ongoing today. The two Chechen wars, the Russian invasion of Georgia in 2008, the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014, the on-off border

conflicts between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, and the Second Karabakh War between Armenia and Azerbaijan in 2020 are just a few examples. The Soviet Union is still collapsing today.”

That is to say, it is irrelevant whether this is actually the case or not—the US does not believe that the USSR has finally collapsed. It sees the problem as a process and thinks that the “process of collapse” is continuing. But this process is not over and Russia’s defeat in Ukraine (taking Russia’s defeat as a certainty) will only be the second stage of the process, but still not its end.

The article continues with the following prediction:

“Future historians, however, are likely to describe Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 as the most important, if not the last, moment in the collapse of the Soviet Union. We do not know when the war in Ukraine will end, but it will probably mark the dissolution of the Russian Federation (the legal successor to the Soviet Union) as it is known today. It is undeniable that Russia’s economy has suffered a major blow, its military capacity has been destroyed and its influence in the regions where it once held sway has diminished.”

There is a lovely proverb in Turkish; “the hungry chicken dreams that it is in the feed shed.” The goals listed in the article as “predictions” do not go beyond the dreams of a hungry chicken. We know that the US and all other imperialist states pin all their hopes on a decisive defeat of Russia in the war. The authors of the policy note have the same hopes. It is not our business to make predictions about the future of the war. But we can say, at least for the time being, to the chagrin of the social chauvinist “ECA” community, the following: The war is not going at all according to the imperialists’ wishes. Fascist Ukraine is being defeated—and we say “for the time being” with caution.

It is true that the war between Russia and the NATO-US-UK-EU imperialists—not to mention

the jackals around the big tigers—is a turning point in history. The Leninists made and explained this determination on the very second day of the war. However, this break will not be in the direction the imperialists hope for, that the USSR will be buried in history, but in the opposite direction! We see the signs of it everywhere.

To avoid misunderstandings, we must also say the following: Our words should not be taken to suggest that the USSR will be revived. The USSR, as a product of certain historical conditions, was an example of one form of socialism. It would not be correct to say in advance what the new form will be like. On the contrary, we have no doubt that socialism will flourish on the territory of the USSR again and in a much stronger form than before. We say this not as an expression of “faith,” but in the sense that all traces of socialism have not and cannot be erased from the territory of the USSR, whereas the process is now beginning to reverse itself.

All the developments we are witnessing now are the practical realisation of the ideas put forward by Engels in “The Role of Force in History.” Force is being defeated by economic development in the forward evolution of history. That is all.

We can now come to the most summarised answer to our question in the subtitle. The USSR did not and could not become history. The attacks on Russia by the US and other imperialists aim to bring this process, which they consider unfinished, to an end.

The exploitation of Russia’s natural resources, raw materials, and other riches certainly whet the imperialists’ appetite. But this is not even worth mentioning when compared to the great goal of destroying socialism without a trace.

Imperialism and the Fascist Movement

These same general conditions of the imperialist-capitalist system explain why the imperialist states,

which boast of being the “cradle of democracy,” organise neo-nazi fascists in Europe and religious fascists in Asia and elsewhere all over the world. There is a direct link between imperialism, monopoly capitalism, and fascism—not just an indirect one. This is known and we assume that the parties forming the “ECA,” which are “communist” in name and social chauvinist in reality, would also accept this characterization.

To put it in a way that the component parties of the “ECA” can understand, you can no longer explain the movements and policies of the US, UK, and EU imperialists without pointing to fascism and the fascist movement. The reverse is also true. You cannot explain the existence and actions of fascists, neo-nazis, and religious fascist gangs, in today’s common parlance, without pointing to the US and the imperialists around them and analysing their relationship.

In other words, if there is a struggle against US imperialism or any other imperialist state, if there is a war, it is inevitable that it is a war or struggle against fascism. This is a trend that results from the general conditions in which imperialism finds itself.

We can see concrete expressions of this in the ongoing struggles and wars against these imperialists in Syria, Libya, Africa, Iraq, Ukraine, etc. Of course, we take into account that each country has its own specific conditions. In Ukraine, the force actually fighting on the field on behalf of the imperialists is the Ukrainian army as well as the neo-nazi fascists who are intertwined with this army. It is almost impossible to separate them.

We are witnessing a different form of this in Syria and other forms in Iraq and Africa. Nevertheless, all these examples have one thing in common. This is that in almost all cases fascist gangs are being mobilised for war together with the imperialist armies, often in front of them. This intertwining also gives the war against imperialism an antifascist

character and vice versa.

It is known that in Libya, Syria, Afghanistan, in countless countries of the African continent, the imperialists themselves organise, arm, and provide all kinds of material and technical support to religious fascist murderers such as al-Shabaab, al-Qaeda, al-Nusra, and ISIS. It has been proven beyond dispute that the fascists called neo-nazis in Europe, the Banderites, were organised, trained, and armed by the secret services of the European imperialist states and then sent to Ukraine.

The social-chauvinists who gathered under the name of “ECA” have not a word to say on this subject. Since they have nothing to say, the only thing they can do is to portray the presence of fascists in Ukraine as something small and insignificant and to divert the attention of the world proletariat and working people.

In article 6 of their statement, they do this as follows:

“Although the Russian leadership claims that its main objective in continuing the war is the denazification of the region and aims to break the siege by the Western bloc, it is clear that the main motivation behind is the protection of the interests of the Russian capitalist class in the wider region.”

They present their abstract claims as evidence like this, whereas they should be presenting concrete evidence.

It is true that “the Russian leadership claims that its main objective in continuing the war is the denazification of the region and aims to break the siege by the Western bloc,” and it says this at every opportunity. What concrete evidence do you have to refute this? Does the Russian leadership not send neo-nazis to their ancestors in the sky, but protect them? Instead of producing evidence, the “ECA” offers as evidence the empty phrase. “No, the Russian leadership is motivated by something else.” When a person has nothing to say on a serious issue, he tries to fill the pathetic void of ideas with

such words.

Our century, as recognised by NATO, is the “century of uprisings”; it is a revolutionary age. Since the Seattle uprising in 1999, revolts and uprisings against imperialism, fascism, and capitalism have not stopped. In order to stop this decadent process, US imperialism launched a “Global Civil War” against the proletariat and working peoples of the world with the “Twin Towers” provocation on 11 September 2001. (Trump recently announced that the destruction of the Twin Towers was the work of the USA).

In this global civil war, fascist gangs are one of the most important military instruments of the imperialists. The imperialist states and their secret services could continue the global civil war by using these fascist gangs against the working class and popular masses. And so they did. We know that the murderous hordes called Al-Qaeda are US-made and were organised to fight against the Soviets. ISIS was also organised by the US, British and French imperialists. The Muslim Brotherhood gang, which is active in the Middle East, in Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and many other Arab countries, was the work of the British imperialists against communism decades ago. Not to mention Al-Shabaab, which carries out bloody operations on behalf of imperialism on the African continent. The revolutionary democratic forces of Africa have realised that to get rid of this scourge, it is necessary to expel French imperialism from Africa and they are now doing just that.

It has just been revealed that the fascist party AfD in Germany has been holding meetings with the German intelligence services. In Ukraine, the Bandera fascists, which the social chauvinist “ECA” tries to downplay in order to deceive the people, have taken over the entire state, are organised and armed as a separate army, and exist as an officially recognised force intertwined with the Ukrainian army. Bandera has been declared a “national hero” by the fascist government in Ukraine.

We will not deal with how and what massacres were committed by the Bandera fascists under the banner of Hitler's fascism. It is enough to know that the head of these fascists, Semyon Bandera, is responsible for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews. This rogue fascist, whom the "ECA" never uttered a word about, collaborated with Hitler's army against the USSR and fought against the Red Army.

Another concrete fact, which the "ECA" people do not mention in a single word, is that the children, grandchildren, and followers of the Bandera fascist came to power in 2014 through the "Maidan coup" organised by the USA at a cost of 5 billion dollars. Neither "ECA" nor anyone else can explain the Ukraine-Russia war or the conditions that prepared it without mentioning the US-organised "Maidan coup."

Instead of discussing these conditions that led to the war, the "Communist" parties, which have assembled under the name of "ECA" tell us the following tale:

"The war being waged on the territory of Ukraine, is not an anti-imperialist or anti-fascist war, as claimed by the leadership of capitalist Russia and its apologists, a fact that our parties have pointed out from the beginning and has been proven many times in the past two years."

What has been "proved many times in two years"? That this war is not antifascist? Or, on the contrary, that this war is being waged on the Ukrainian side by fascists themselves, that the Ukrainian fascists in the war are day by day revealing their real fascist identity? Not only Ukrainian fascists, but also European fascists, even Latin American fascists—Colombian fascists, for example, have taken part in this war, as evidenced by the flags and symbols they carry and the tattoos they have carved on their bodies.

A quote from a news item by the organ of the TKP, which is a component of the "ECA"

group, summarizes this point best. The news is accompanied by a photograph. The title of the article is "Neo-Nazis in Ukraine: 'Our goal is fascist dictatorship'" A short part of the news report is as follows: "According to a report published in Global Research, neo-Nazis from countries such as Sweden, Bulgaria, and Hungary have arrived in Ukraine and are organising troops to fight against the eastern regions of Ukraine.

"The Swedes fighting in the Azov battalion, which has flags inspired by Nazi symbols, state that their goal is a 'white Ukraine.' The Swedish media organisation The Local reports the following about the battalion, which includes four Swedish militants:

"Azov is a special unit of about 300 soldiers, including volunteers from Europe. Although it was set up by the Ukrainian government, it is not part of the Ukrainian army and is led by ultra-nationalists. Anton Shekhotsov, a Ukrainian political scientist who researches ultra-nationalist movements, emphasises that these groups are not fighting for a democratic Ukraine, but for a fascist dictatorship.'

"This confirms the existence of neo-Nazi elements, which mainstream Western media outlets have ignored since the beginning of the crisis in Ukraine, and that these groups are working with the US-backed Kiev government and the military" (Sol Haber 02.08.2014)

This article was written ten years ago after the fascist Maidan coup. Imagine the situation now! Need we say more? So, according to these "communists," the war against those who fight for a "white Ukraine" carrying fascist flags and symbols, who "fight not for a democratic Ukraine, but for a fascist dictatorship," against gangs, not just a few individuals or groups, but gangs gathered from all over the world, who have become a full component of the Ukrainian army, who are supported and armed by the USA, who leads them to war against

Russia and the Russian population in Ukraine, is not antifascist.

Well, if the war against a fascist state, its army, and its fascist government is not an anti-fascist war, please, “communists” of the “ECA” tell us how and against whom an anti-fascist war is fought.

These communist parties advise us to remain neutral in the war between gangs fighting in the service of the USA and other imperialists, for their interests, under fascist flags and symbols, on the one hand, and soldiers carrying red flags on tanks and using the symbols of communism on their uniforms, on the other. Why? Because they have said from the beginning that this is not an anti-fascist war! No, such nonsense, such rubbish, cannot be out of ignorance; it can only be out of love for being a servant to the bourgeoisie.

There is no doubt that this war is an anti-fascist, anti-imperialist war. In the two years that have passed, this fact has been proved day in and day out by hundreds and thousands of events and facts.

Donetsk And Lugansk People’s Republics

Just as a criminal turns his head away from the scene of a crime, the parties united under the name “ECA” turn their heads away and whistle about the Donetsk and Lugansk People’s Republics. There is not a word about these two People’s Republics in their statements. However, you cannot say a single intelligent word about the Russian-Ukrainian war without discussing the uprising of the people of Donbas against the fascist Maidan coup and the declaration of the Donetsk and Lugansk People’s Republics on 7 May 2014 as a result of this uprising.

They cannot do this, and that is precisely why, instead of establishing the relation between the general conditions of imperialism in our epoch and the uprising of the working and labouring classes of Donbas against the fascist Maidan Coup and the proclamation of the Donetsk and Lugansk People’s Republics as a result of this uprising, they resort to

this tautology:

“5. The protagonists of the war are not the people of the two countries but their capitalist classes. Presenting the war as a war between Ukraine and Russia obscures the real actors of the war and makes it difficult to understand its class character. The ongoing war is being waged between the Russian capitalist class and its allies on the one hand and the Ukrainian capitalist class, the USA, the EU and NATO on the other hand.”

Even the imperialists occasionally admit that the Russian-Ukrainian war did not start in February 2022, but in fact in 2014, yet the “ECA” does not say a word about it. Why is that? The reason is simple: Because if they mentioned these two People’s Republics, they would at least feel obliged, because of the word “communist” in their name, to take the side of these two People’s Republics which have a socialist orientation and are led by communists. Instead, they find it best to look the other way and ignore these two People’s Republics. These so-called “materialists” think that by ignoring them, the People’s Republics will also disappear.

However, one of the most important, albeit not the only reason for the Russian-Ukrainian war, was the declaration of these two People’s Republics in the Donbas region, led by the communists. For the imperialists, who had been wondering whether the USSR had been buried in history, the fact that these two People’s Republics had raised the flag of socialism in the territory of the former USSR was a nightmare that they could not bear.

Fascist Ukraine, with the unlimited support of the imperialists, put all its strength into action to destroy these two People’s Republics. The fascist Ukrainian government mobilised all the fascist forces at its disposal, released fascists in prisons, and put them at the head of the fascist Azov battalions. Here are some words of Andriy Biletsky, known as the “White Leader,” who was put in charge of Azov:

“The goal of the struggle of our generation is to create the ‘Third Reich’, Greater Ukraine. The historic task of our nation in this critical century is to lead the white peoples of the world to organise a final crusade for their existence and to lead this crusade against inhumanity led by the Sami...

The migrant problem is indeed a key issue. Our goal is to destroy everything that destroys our people. As you know, you can bring back everything—the economy, order in the streets, demography, a strong army and navy, nuclear weapons—but the one thing you cannot bring back is the purity of blood... .”

Meanwhile, the imperialists were stalling, trying to buy time for the fascist Ukrainian army and government to prepare for war. The Kremlin did not want to burn bridges with them and dreamed of reconciliation and coexistence with the MINSK agreements. The imperialists admitted years later, after it was too late, through the signatories of the agreement, the German Merkel and the French François Hollande, that they had concluded the MINSK Agreement not for a real ceasefire between the two People’s Republics and the fascist Ukrainian government, but to eliminate the two People’s Republics and to buy time to prepare for a war against Russia.

For eight years the imperialists, especially the US, Britain, Germany, and France, have been preparing Ukraine for the destruction of these two People’s Republics and for a war against Russia. The Kremlin, hoping to reconcile with the imperialists and to maintain all kinds of relations with them, neither recognised the People’s Republics nor supported them openly during this period. As a result of the pressure of the Russian people, it was content to give limited, underhand support to the two People’s Republics.

The Kremlin rejected the calls of the leaders of the People’s Republics (and the CPRF) to intervene against the violent aggression of the fascist

Ukrainian state. It accommodated the stalling of Merkel and Hollande. On 24 February, in the first days of the war, the Leninist Party stated that if Russia was to be criticised, it should not be criticised for starting a war against Ukraine, but for waiting until now. Indeed, at the end of the second year of the war, Putin proved the rightness and correctness of the Leninist Party’s criticism when he said: “The only thing we can regret is that Russia did not start active action in Ukraine earlier, thinking that we were dealing with honourable people.”

In Donbas, it was not only the fascist Ukrainian state, its army, and neo-Nazis fighting with the working class, labouring peoples, revolutionary forces, and communists of Donbas. On the contrary, while all the neo-nazis and fascist forces of the world were carried to war by the secret services of the imperialist states to the ranks of the fascist Ukrainian army, the revolutionary forces of the world, revolutionary internationalists, and communists also rushed to war in the ranks of the Donetsk and Lugansk People’s Republics alongside the people of Donbas. While this is a tangible, proven fact, the “ECA” groups with the word “communist” in their names can say the following words with great shamelessness:

“7. One of the most important elements showing the class character of this war is anti-communism, which is being intentionally raised in the region.”

There is no need to dwell on the anti-communism of fascist Ukraine. Anti-communism is the basic line of the Ukrainian government, army, and forces; this is known.

But can it be said about the other side, the Donetsk and Lugansk People’s Republics; moreover, can it be said about the Russian Army, whose coat patch is still the Sickle-Hammer as it was in the USSR period, where in some places there are fighting soldiers carrying red flags on tanks using sickle and hammer crests? The military forces of the Donetsk

and Lugansk People's Republics are fighting on the front line and are playing a not-insignificant role in the war. Without a word about all this, the "ECA" equates the fascist Ukrainian forces with the Russian side. What better service can be rendered to the imperialists?

What is the basis for the allegations that the "leadership of Russia" (in the words of the "ECA") is anti-communist? They do not state it explicitly, but we know that they are based on some of Putin's words. It is true that Putin criticised Lenin on the Ukraine issue, the October Revolution, and the question of self-determination. But what does this mean? Putin is not a communist. Everyone knows this and he himself says so. But even if Putin is not a communist, the fact that he is trying to create a "hysteria" against communism can only be the ravings of social-chauvinists who want to curry favour with their imperialist masters. In Russia, communist parties are not banned, nor is there the slightest restriction on the symbols of communism. We know that the emblem of the Russian army remains the hammer and sickle. We also know that all statues, including Lenin's mausoleum, and all symbols and values belonging to the USSR period have not been touched and cannot be touched.

Social chauvinists will not like it, but we know that Putin jealously claims the victory of the USSR over fascist Germany; that the teaching of books and literature of the USSR period has been re-introduced into the school curriculum; that it is forbidden by law to belittle the victory of the USSR, that is Stalin's victory over Hitler's fascism; that the "Bologna system" imposed by the imperialists in education has been abandoned; that the statue of Fidel Castro erected in Russia was inaugurated by Putin himself; that there are very strong relations between the current Cuban leadership and Putin, etc. Why don't the "ECA," who claim they seek to determine the true class character of the war with an objective evaluation (!), never mention these

facts?

In this case, let us ask once again, what can come out of Putin's words about Lenin? Absolutely nothing. It would be better to end this chapter by quoting the words of Engels, the greatest dialectician known to history alongside Marx.

"Suppose these people imagine that they can seize power; what is the harm? If they have made the hole that will collapse the dam, the flood itself will soon tear them from their illusions. (...) Look at Bismarck, who became a revolutionary against his will, and at Gladstone, who finally came to blows with the Tsar whom he worshipped." (Letter to Vera Zasulich, 23 April 1885).

Is The Russian Bourgeoisie In Favour Or Against The War?

According to the "ECA," who show everything upside down to please their imperialist masters and who do not hesitate to falsify the facts, it is an indisputable fact that the Russian bourgeoisie is behind the war. Why? Because Russia is "imperialist"; therefore this war is an inter-imperialist war. Well, once you characterise Russia as imperialist, the rest comes like a thread; there is no need to even undertake a "concrete analysis" of THIS war. This is the whole "scientific" view of the "ECA" on the war.

In real life, we see the opposite. The Russian bourgeoisie or so-called "oligarchs" are not in favour of this war but against it. Some of them, as we shall see an example of in a moment, have made very harsh statements against Russia after taking refuge with the imperialists. Some of them kept silent out of fear and tried to protect the wealth that they stole. Here is the news that will serve as an example for those who fled to the imperialist countries and said all sorts of things against Russia:

"54-year-old billionaire Oleg Tinkov, founder of Tinkoff Bank with 20 million customers, announced that he renounced his Russian

citizenship. Tinkov said, 'I cannot be associated with a fascist country that kills innocent people. It is a shame for me to continue to hold this passport in my hands.'"

We trust the reader's patience and provide the rest of the article, which is also relevant. It continues as follows:

"I cannot be associated with a fascist country that starts a war with its peaceful neighbour and kills innocent people. It is a shame for me to continue to hold this passport. I hope that other Russian business people will follow my example, which will weaken the Putin regime and its economy. And eventually defeat him. I hate Putin's Russia, but I love all Russians who openly oppose this crazy war!"

We do not have a complete list, but as far as we have been able to determine, the names of the "oligarchs" on the Forbes billionaire list who have fled Russia due to the war are as follows: Timur Turlov, Duben Vardanyan, Yuriy Milner, Nikolay Storonskiy, Oleg Tinkov, Igor Makarov, Vasiliy Anisimov. These are thieves who have stolen enough to enter the Forbes billionaires list. To these must be added oligarchs like Abramovich, and figures like the Chubays, who were primarily responsible for the dismantling of the Soviet Union and the organisation of the theft and plunder.

These are the thieves who directly and openly oppose Russia's declaration of war against the imperialists, and who, as soon as they have so determined their allegiance, take their leave in the imperialist countries. Then there are the thieving "oligarchs" who, although they do not support the war, do not openly make statements against it. These have remained in Russia and are now waiting patiently for the day when the storm will blow over and they will return to their old days of plunder. They oppose the war underhandedly and endeavour to prevent the government from taking economic and political measures against the haute

bourgeoisie.

Now, the "ECA" might respond with a joke like this: Three trees do not make a forest! Or, if a few strands are missing from someone's head, he will not be bald! No doubt, it is so. With one difference: if the trees continue to be planted and the hairs continue to fall, let the "ECA" members have no doubt, even the most bushy-haired will become bald; what started with the planting of three trees will become a forest after a while. It is a matter of process. Therefore, our suggestion to the "ECA" who regard the victory of capitalism in Russia as a fait accompli is that they should pay attention to the process of "recovery of stolen properties" in Russia, which started some time ago but is gaining momentum. It would be appropriate to give three examples to clear their minds.

The first example is a "nationalisation" that took place in early January this year. It reads as follows:

"A number of companies belonging to Alexei Hotin's RusOil holding have been placed under trusteeship and placed under the control of Romimushchestvo (the Russian Property Administration). The Khotin affair is important; moreover, to some extent it is reminiscent of the intimidation of other oligarchs in the course of the liquidation of Khodorkovsky. Add to this the fact that at the end of the year the property of another oligarch, Alexander Klyachin, was seized in connection with Khotin. The reason given was tax debt."

The second example is as follows:

"Roshim was appointed to the management of Metafraks Kemikals, the largest producer of formalin and methanol in Russia, whose 94.2% stake was nationalised last September on the grounds of corruption during the privatisation (i.e. theft and plunder) of the 90s. Last April, the Bashkir Soda Company (BKS) was de facto nationalised and Roshim was appointed to manage the 47% of the company's shares

that had been transferred to the Russian Real Estate Administration (Rosimushchestvo). The management of all major chemical enterprises in Southern Russia also seems to have been transferred to Roshim. Roshim was previously called “Russkiy Vodorod,” but was renamed Roshim by government decree last year. Moreover, last October Roshim took over the management of Nortek and YSZ Avia in Altai Krai. The former produces tyres for vehicles (including heavy vehicles); the latter is the only producer of aircraft tyres in Russia.”

And the third example:

“The Russian General Prosecutor’s Office’s application for the transfer (nationalisation) of the assets of the Chelyabin Electrometallurgical Combine (CEMC) (renamed *Kompaniya Etalon* last July) from ‘illegal ownership’ to state ownership has been accepted; the parent company CEMC and its subsidiaries Serov Ammunition Plant and Kuznets Ferroalloys have become state property. The prosecutor’s application had been justified on the grounds that the 1992 privatisation was illegal. In a meeting with the governor of Chelyabin oblast in the middle of this month, Putin said that harmful production would be moved out of the city and the plants would be transferred to the local government. In the *Forbes* 2021 list, ÇEMK was ranked among the 200 largest companies in Russia with an annual revenue of 49 billion rubles. The enterprises seized by ÇEMK were symbols of Stalin-era industrialisation, the foundations of which were laid in 1929. Yuri Antipov, the boss of the TECK, and his family were 170th in the list of the 200 richest people in Russia in 2021, with \$700 million. As far as I understand, the CEMK owns not only Chelyabin, but also numerous other companies from Vladivostok to Yamal. Interfax has listed some of the nationalisation cases that have had a positive outcome in recent years: Rolf, Voljskiy orgsintez,

Uralbiofabrm, Metafraks Kemikals, TGK-2, Rus-Oil, Kaliningrad Port, Konti-Rus, Vyatich, etc.”

There are many examples, but there is no need to repeat them. Suffice it to say that this process, led by the Federal Prosecutor General’s Office, continues to accelerate. The source of this information on “nationalisation” is Hazal Yalın, who lives in Russia and we understand that she follows the developments and processes in Russia carefully and day by day. There is not the slightest reason to doubt their accuracy.

Nevertheless, all these examples and explanations of thieving oligarchs may not have been enough to convince the “ECA” social chauvinists. In order to be sure, we must also look at the question from the point of view of the relations between imperialist finance capital and the Russian bourgeoisie.

When we look at the problem from this point of view, we see the following: The Russian bourgeoisie has no other way to develop and accelerate its capital accumulation than to join the world market and the financial system of imperialist capital. Not only the Russian bourgeoisie, but the bourgeoisie of any country in the world cannot flourish and develop without being integrated into the system of imperialist finance capital. The war has destroyed the bridges between the Russian bourgeoisie and imperialist finance capital. The yachts, bank accounts, and fortunes of some of them were confiscated; their activities in other countries of the world were eliminated, their trade was either banned or made impossible, etc. Imperialist monopolies, banks, and financial capital subjugate the capital groups, the capital class, not only in their own countries, but anywhere in the world, and eliminate all conditions of development except coming under their domination.

That is why the Russian bourgeoisie opposed any war with Ukraine from the very beginning and why they opposed the uprising of the working and labouring classes of Donbas, which would pave the

way for such a war, and the subsequent recognition and support of the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics. The interests of the Russian bourgeoisie lie not in war with the imperialist states but in close and intensive cooperation with them.

There is no need to dwell on the other articles of the "ECA" declaration that contain nothing more than generalised statements. The possibility of the "global civil war" launched by the imperialist states against the working class, labouring peoples, and revolutionary forces of the world turning into an all-out inter-state war is increasing day by day. The imperialist states, which could not find what they hoped from the global civil war, could not win the war; on the contrary, witnessing the rise of revolts, uprisings, and social revolutions, they are now provoking a war that will drag humanity into a total catastrophe.

This is the meaning of French President Macron's call to send troops to Ukraine to fight against Russia; the recently-deciphered plans of the high-ranking officers of the German army to blow up the Crimean Bridge, and the continuous shipments of weapons and equipment to the fascist Ukrainian government.

Will a total world war break out? It is impossible to give a definite "yes" or "no" answer to this question. But we can say the following: Today's conditions are quite different from those of 1914 and 1945. We live in a revolutionary era. The imperialist-capitalist system is in the process of collapse. We face revolutionary mass actions, revolts, uprisings, and revolutionary attempts supported by millions of people every day.

The conditions of imperialism and the war have matured the social reformist boil, transforming it into social chauvinism. The emergence of the boil of social chauvinism at a time when the world proletariat and labouring peoples need revolutionary communist parties more than ever will, of course, lead to negative consequences for

the revolutionary communist movement. However, we cannot undo what has been done. The Belgian communists have shown what must be done by expelling their social chauvinist leaders from the party.

Let us not forget that "the development of the proletariat everywhere passes through civil war"(Engels, Letter to August Bebel, 28.10.1882).

Renegades, drifting towards the Symplegades of opportunism. Shipwrecked between Scylla and Charybdis (dogmatism & revisionism) Part 2

Dimitrios Patelis | Revolutionary Unification (Greece)

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The comfort of opportunism: Between Scylla of dogmatism and Charybdis of revisionism.

1) Dogmatic certainties.

As far as the theory of Marxism is concerned, opportunism first manifests itself as dogmatism, to then evolve into skepticism and revisionism^[1].

Dogmatism and revisionism are two seemingly opposing and mutually exclusive tendencies of the degeneration of revolutionary theory. In reality, they are both doctrines and ideological constructions invented and recruited by opportunists to justify their respective drifts towards positions that serve the interests of the class enemy of the workers' revolutionary movement.

Dogma is the uncritical acceptance of the absolute truth of an idea without conditions or limits. An archetypal historical form of dogma and dogmatism is religion as a form of social consciousness.

Within the framework of dogmatism, Marxism

is seen exclusively as a complete, exhaustive, uniform, closed and self-sufficient system in which one can find 'answers' to all probable and improbable questions/problems! The dogmatist claims the unconditional and unlimited absolute validity of their 'truth' in everything and always, reducing revolutionary theory to a reserve of fragmentary, unconnected, ahistorical and irrefutable texts and 'positions', e.g. passages from the works of the classics of Marxism, ripe for every use... In this way, the dogmatist adopts only those elements of the theory that are considered complete and mature, while rejecting the earlier, less developed (and therefore more contradictory) but indispensable stages of its development, as is predicted by historical law. In this way, they cut off and absolutise the present of Marxism's theoretical acquis from its past. Their theory, understood as a fixed and closed system, is thus projected only as a rejection, a negation, a discontinuity (epistemological, political, etc.), an 'epistemological break' (as in Althusser's revision of Marxism) in relation to its past and to the acquis of the history of civilisation. For example, the contradictory relationship between Marx and Hegel, i.e. the culmination of pre-Marxist dialectical logic and methodological thought, is rejected.

This view not only cuts Marxism off from its dialectical relation to its historical past, but also rejects a priori any qualitative (let alone essential) differentiation, difference (let alone antithesis and contradiction) within its 'Marxism'. However, there can be no development without the existence of

1. A certain source of development; and
2. An internal contradictory nature (in which its contradictory relation to its external environment and to its past is dialectically sublated).

'Marxism', viewed in this way, projects itself as an

explicitly ahistorical phenomenon, which emerged without known origins and which exists as a given.

The most dynamic and essential aspect of Marxism, its dialectical method, is either subordinated to the conservatively fixed 'system' (transformed into a typical formality of statements, into dogmatic scholasticism) or rejected altogether. The dialectical method, however, the methodology of the organic whole, constitutes the developmental aspect of theory par excellence; in other words, it is the theory (the system) itself, from the point of view of its movement, its development, always within the context of its specific historical conditions and limits. It is the means, paths and ways of the movement of thought within the cognitive/research process (if we emphasise the theory) on which the subject's action is based (if we emphasise its practical, transforming and organising activity), the means, paths and ways of the transformation of the object by the subject.

Thus dogmatic 'Marxism', detached from its past and internally fixed, can have neither a living present nor a future. The only relation that this 'Marxism' can have with the future is a certain mechanical and linear transfer, an extrapolation in time of the conservatively fixed state of Marxism currently embraced by the dogmatist.

In some cases, it is common for the dogmatist to idealise a historical phase/state of past Marxism as 'complete', unquestionably 'correct and ideal', and to view regression, the total restoration to that 'authentic and ideal' state of the past as 'development'! Time freezes, while regressive stagnation suppresses movement and eradicates any progress.

This is particularly evident in the way the dogmatists deal with the current crisis of theory. For them, by definition, there can be no such crisis.

In their view, the entire problem lies in the fact that Marxism once reached (they don't know how) the height of its glory and splendour, but unfortunately 'when it fell into the hands of some 'deceivers', 'traitors', 'revisionists', 'impostors', 'bearers of a false line', etc., it suffered breakdowns and damage, deformations and distortions!

Therefore, it is sufficient to return to 'authentic Marxism' (which many variants of dogmatism identify at different stages of its history, in the work of various Marxist leaders, or in various interpretations of it) in order to solve the problem, because back then, there were, still are and always will be comprehensive and complete answers, even to questions that had not yet come to the foreground of history at the time of Marx, (see, for example, the question of the fundamental contradiction and the general law-governed contradictions of socialist construction, the question of the modern phases of development of scientific and technological progress, automation, biotechnology, space technologies, etc.)! So simple!

2) Revisionist uncertainties.

All revisionism seeks to move in the opposite direction to that of dogmatism. The dogmatist is quick to preserve in Marxism even those elements which no longer correspond to the new context and engages in a conservation/taxidermy of Marxism, isolating it from the ever-changing life; the revisionists, by invoking new facts (what they perceive as 'new facts'), reject as parts of Marxism even those parts which are proven to retain their relevance even in changing circumstances, dismissing elements which they consider to be finite and clearly obsolete elements of its most fundamental positions and acquis (if not of Marxism as a whole)!

This unscientific total rejection of the acquis and valid positions of Marxism in the name of 'historicity', in the name of its historical relativity, condemns the theory (or rather what is left of it after the revisionist 'purgatory') to the a priori inability of our revolutionary theory to provide a complete, valid and sufficient for the subject's action description, explanation/interpretation and prediction of reality!

From the perspective of historical relativism, the revisionist reduces Marxism to a predominantly (if not absolutely) historically limited phenomenon of minor scope, a 'material' (stock of 'positions', statements, etc.) open to revision and therefore constantly revised at will. Unlike the dogmatist, the revisionist ignores the qualitative (and essential) difference between Marxism and both earlier and contemporary opposing theories, ultimately diffusing Marxism into them, dismantling the historical continuity in the process of the emergence, formation and development of Marxism. In this way, in Marxism itself, the revisionist reduces its most developed and mature elements to its most inferior and immature, thus rendering the boundaries between Marxism and earlier or rival, opposing, etc. concepts from vague and muddled, to non-existent.

In promoting their 'anti-dogmatic' and 'renovationist' stance, the adherents of this tendency refer to the rapid changes of today and the alleged inherent inability of Marxism to anticipate them. Sometimes, certain revisionists point to weaknesses within Marxism, highlighting its insufficiently refined aspects (this may appear to some as a step forward in comparison to dogmatism). For example, they point to some inadequacies on the question of the inverse effect of social consciousness on social being, of the

superstructure on the economic base. This question becomes particularly important in the transition of society to a communist society, which (unlike, for example, the transition from feudalism to capitalism) is only possible consciously, on the basis of scientific planning, and not spontaneously.

3) How dogmatic practices pave the way for revisionism.

Historically, the 'work' of dogmatism usually prepares the ground for resentment, revulsion and rejection of Marxism, or more precisely of the caricatured, distorted image propagated by the dogmatists. This contributes to the spread of views for the subsequent complete rejection of this dogmatically mummified version of Marxism by the revisionists.

What, then, is the de facto prelude to the onslaught of revisionism, on the side of the dogmatists? Practices linked to the dogmatic detachment from the context and historical conjuncture of knowledge of the emergence and formulation of certain positions of Marxism, to their schematisation and mechanistic classification, as if they were dogmas of a religious metaphysical cut, destined for mechanical repetition, memorisation and reproduction/mystification, as was the case with the ecclesiastical catechism in the feudal Middle Ages, or as if they were incantations, sacred phrases, syllables, words or verses, considered to have mystical or spiritual powers in their ritual repetition (such as the mantras of Hinduism and Buddhism), especially when this practice is combined with bureaucratic formalism, formal evaluations, the reinforcement of external motivation (rewards and punishments), etc. This was the kind of formalistic teaching of Marxism as an official ideology in the educational system of

the last decades of the USSR, which eventually led to a turning away from Marxism and a rejection of Marxism.

A typical example is the treatment of the question of whether social processes are governed by dialectical laws. Processes subject to dialectical laws, causality and causation are generally perceived by the dogmatist in the spirit of the Laplacian type of mechanistic determinism, as linear and absolute necessity without randomness, without a trace of contingency, probabilism, dialectics or historicity^[2], as if there were no spectrum of possibilities in history, the outcome of which depends on the increasing degree of involvement of the subject. The revisionists, who are known to prioritise the issues of the 'subjective factor' (as seen in the bourgeois pluralistic 'factor theory' many of them espouse), revolt against this cartoonishly dogmatic interpretation of causality, not to advance the scientific (dialectical and historical) conception of Marxism, but to totally reject any form of social causality and dialectical law! All in all, the revisionists do not understand that in this way society cannot even represent an object of scientific research, and is thus reduced to a playing field for a multitude of uncontrollable, irrational, etc. forces and 'agents', of which there is no end...

The following phenomenon involving the fluctuations of psychology is now almost within the scope of the predictive qualities of dialectical law: dogmatists who are confronted with events ('lived experience') which shock them, which cause them to waver in their conviction in the absolute validity of their dogmas, trap themselves in a never-ending process of total rejection of these dogmas, in locked course of transition to erratic revisionism! All too often, the very 'patriarchs' of dogmatic distortion

who present their ideological constructions as the 'only correct line' and as the 'orthodoxy of Marxism', at the slightest change of circumstances, engage in a mocking treatment of their own caricatured 'creation', to which they themselves have reduced their own 'Marxism' and which they equate with actual Marxism. The conviction of some, for example, that there can be no other type of causation than mechanistic causation, must have become an unshakable certainty, so that they can easily move on to the rejection of all social causation.

'Marxism' thus viewed, is directly opposed to the immediate, empirical reality of the 'present', a present which is examined exclusively from the point of view of everyday consciousness, of the common sense, i.e. as a given, a priori, as it is, as a chaotic, static (i.e. quantitative) accumulation of new facts and fragmentary elements. Such 'scientific' processes supposedly demonstrate the total insufficiency, inadequacy and inability of this type of 'Marxism' to interpret the 'present', so the revisionists proceed to revise and 'upgrade' it with a multitude of 'modern'—i.e. bourgeois—mainstream concepts. For example, revisionists are discovering 'moral socialism' of the Kantian type, 'democratic socialism' or 'socialism with a human face', 'communism for renewal', 'eco-socialism', 'positivist Marxism', 'structuralist Marxism' (Althusser), 'poststructural Marxism' (Foucault), 'existential Marxism', 'postmodern Marxism', 'feminist socialism', 'LGBTQ Marxism', 'convergence theory', etc. They do not understand that Marxism in itself represents a total revolution within the foundations of the sciences, inaugurating the 'synthetic science of the future' (Marx). It constitutes a dialectical system with an internal cohesion of its dialectical concepts, categories and laws on the basis of the

cohesion of the dialectical logic and methodology of the organic whole during research and in the presentation of the results of research. This system does not lend its body to the arbitrary splicing and stitching together of unrelated and discordant elements.

This 'modification' of Marxism ultimately leads to its rejection and replacement by an eclectic patchwork of bourgeois and petit-bourgeois positions. In this way, the pretence of 'renewal', the illusion of 'modernisation' based on a 'realistic' approach to the present and the fetishisation of evolution (of quantitative linear changes against the backdrop of an unchanging quality and essence) lead de facto to the rejection of the revolutionary theory and methodology of Marxism. This is the only way in which revisionists understand 'development' and 'renewal', thus taking two steps back from the dogmatists and effectively returning to pre-Marxist, obsolete forms of thought. The present is examined from the point of view of bourgeois evolutionism, from the positions of capitalist apologetics, according to which capitalism is supposedly the 'insurmountable peak of evolution', that is, from the point of view of the interests of a class that has long since fulfilled its progressive historical role and has become a force for the conservation, regression and destruction of humanity. Thus, the 'pragmatic' commitment of revisionism to the present, to the 'here and now', becomes a defence of the historically obsolete capitalist system, i.e. the past, on a global historical scale. This is the tragicomic result of revisionism.

In their attempt not to be left behind by the fetishised evolution of the present, they reject all fundamental theoretical research. Anxious to appear modern, they become postmodern... Creeping empiricism becomes the ideological

background of the absence of strategy, of the rejection of the end goal. In this way, revisionism, enslaved by the fetishism of the present, ultimately rejects progress and even seeks to 'abolish' any alternative path to the future.

4) Loss and bureaucratic management of the truth.

If the dogmatists do not seek the truth because they never doubt that their own 'Marxism', as the embodiment of absolute truth, can easily provide answers to any question at any moment, the revisionists also do not seek the truth because they always doubt and question everything. That is to say, if the former detach from the unified, contradictory, dialectical process of knowledge and absolutise the element of truth, the latter adopt the other extreme, i.e. absolutise the element of relativity of all knowledge. Thus, while the dogmatists seek to impose their own line, a monolithic unanimity (based on the certainty that the answers provided by their 'Marxism' far exceed all possible questions), the revisionists are content with 'polyphony', 'pluralism of opinions'. For the latter, since knowledge is only relative, what counts is only the identification of certain problems, the formulation of questions and different opinions, while the truth always remains unattainable and rejected.

However, despite the historically defined mirages that ideologically reinforce and reproduce these fallacies, there is a single objective truth. This truth is discovered, substantiated and developed by science, by empirical and theoretical research, and subjected to the trials and tribulations of social practice. In creative Marxism we are not concerned with answers as prophecies, nor with dispersion into a maelstrom of problems, doubts and concerns.

On the contrary, we seek the development of knowledge through the process of theoretical immersion, which presupposes the diagnosis of the concrete and historically determined dialectical unity of absolute and relative truth^[3].

Therefore, by excluding the search for objective truth from the scope of theoretical research and the necessary foresight for practice, both dogmatism and revisionism reduce the whole problem to a question of bureaucratic/administrative management, with a strong stigma of the law of bourgeois society, i.e. of what is forbidden or allowed. The dogmatic bureaucrat, on the one hand, authoritatively imposes the one and only truth, the approval and adoption of which is ultimately left to the decisions of the party or even state leadership (as the administrator by proxy of the 'appropriate' truth, as the embodiment of the 'collective wisdom of the party' in the KKE variant), prohibiting any deviation, while on the other hand, the revisionist bureaucrat demagogically declares doing us a favour by generously 'allowing' the expression of every opinion and point of view, 'freedom of speech' according to the liberal bourgeois principle of 'pluralism', 'unlimited dialogue', in the context of which all opinions and points of view are formally equally acceptable and valid (and therefore equally rejectable and invalid). In both cases, it is the bureaucratic leadership that has the final say and imposes its predetermined decisions. In both cases, we have an external and crude interference in the research process: for the dogmatists and revisionists, the 'correct line' is not a matter of scientific research and discovery of the truth, nor of a collective decision-making process based on rational arguments, but a matter of power and imposition!

Of course, actual Marxist researchers seek the

creative development of Marxist theory on the basis of its internal laws, on the basis of the real deeper needs of society and the revolutionary movement, bypassing such destructive external interventions in science. However, as long as some leaderships have real power in the correlation of forces, control the mass media, the funding of scientific institutions, centers, etc., they can exert a destructive influence on science and thereby disarm the movement, for example through the systematic silencing and misrepresentation of unpalatable ideas, but also through the denigration and subversion of dissidents.

5) Abuse and destruction of the systematic approach and method.

What the dogmatists and revisionists refer to as Marxism can only be euphemistically described as a system. The ‘Marxism’ of dogmatism, as absolutely differentiated and delimited from its past (from its presuppositions and environment, its ‘otherness’) and as internally absolutely undifferentiated, absolutely identical with itself and non-contradictory (as a set of distilled truths of equal validity and relevance), can have neither its own logical structure nor any dynamic development, since there is no movement without dialectical contradiction as an internal driving force. It consists only of a chaotic sum, a jumble, a ‘heap’ of statements. Therefore, any logical method of its formation can only be imposed from outside and from above. And, of course, the only appropriate method for this level of approach to theory is formal logic, that is, the logic of pre-dialectical cognition, of the intellect^[4], which here plays the role of the external ‘unifying’ and classifying principle. The attentive reader will have noticed that the structure of dogmatic textbooks is based mainly

(if not exclusively) on the external classification of their level of material (of categories, laws, etc.), as reflected—in the best case—in the book’s table of contents.

The revisionists deny a priori any structure, logical coherence and consistency to their ‘Marxism’ and consider any practical and theoretical/intellectual discipline to be ‘dogmatic authoritarianism’ and a ‘violent exercise’. This tradition is particularly strong among the French, who, as Hegel wrote, ‘call ‘systematique’ the dogmatic doctrine and ‘systeme’ the doctrine in which all terms are therefore derived from one definition, hence the term ‘systematique’ is for them synonymous with unilateralism^[5]. Every reference by the revisionist to the word ‘system’ is intended to emphasise its absolutely ‘open’, ‘unrestricted’, ‘free’, etc. character. This ‘methodology’ leads to the contemporary ideology of being systemically anti-systemic, to irrational ‘intertextuality’ and to the equal validity of all ‘narratives’, i.e. to ‘postmodernism’.

However, if a system, a whole, is absolutely open and unlimited, without conditions or limits, this means that it refers to its past, to its otherness, only as defined by its opposite and not at all as self-defined, as self-determined. But this means that this ‘system’ is—ultimately—self-defeating, self-dissolving, subordinating itself to its otherness and ultimately merging with it. Thus, Marxism can at best be regarded by the revisionist as one of many cultural traditions, one of many value, moral, etc. approaches, highly indeterminate and ‘malleable’ at will.

This is why the revisionist is sometimes quick to declare that the ‘method’, as opposed to the ‘system’, is of paramount importance. One should not imagine that what is being discussed here is the critical and revolutionary dialectic method

of creative Marxism. The relationship between method and system here is identical to that which E. Bernstein saw between the movement and the end goal: 'To me, that which is generally called the ultimate aim of socialism is nothing, but the movement is everything' That is, the method of the revisionist is not a law-governed, dialectical development of theory (in other words, the system itself from the point of view of its internal movement as an intellectual reconstruction of the object itself), but a chaotic, arbitrary and eclectic stitching together of heterogeneous positions, both scientific and commonplace ideas of everyday consciousness, of common sense. This is why the writings of dogmatists and revisionists are reminiscent of two different kinds of school essays. The dogmatists engage in the scholastic 'interpretation' of the central idea (dogmatic concession) or in the convergence of things, situations, relations and ideas with 'the scriptures', with their dogmas, while the revisionists engage in the arbitrary juxtaposition of disparate opinions and sophistries.

Typical is the popular 'method of proof' of the dogmatists. It is the arbitrary and selective quotation of passages from the classics of Marxism, but also from those official party texts in which the 'correct line' is formulated. This is the infamous 'quotation medley'. But the selective, ahistorical and fragmentary use of passages from the classics (whose works were formulated in specific historical conditions and frames of reference, dealing with various aspects of a multitude of problems of theory and practice, texts of various kinds and levels of argumentation, dialogue with other thinkers and dialectically contradictory statements) can be used to 'substantiate' any irrational position. That is why revisionists often resort to the 'method

of proof' of the dogmatists, 'enriching' it, of course, with 'authentic' (preferably bourgeois and petit-bourgeois) ideas of various origins.

6) Theory and critique in the whirlwind of negative mutual opposite definitions^[6].

The dogmatists are confident that 'we have enough theory!' The only role reserved for the 'theorist' is to choose at any given moment, the place, time, manner and dosage of delivering this 'eternal truth' to the ignorant, in order to meet the current needs of 'ideological work'. They do not need research. Theory can only be reduced to the current needs of propaganda, i.e. 'how do we respond to the opponent'^[7]. But the reduction of theoretical research to ongoing criticism and propaganda, to the vulgar, superficial slogan as a response to the opponent, leads to the degeneration of Marxism.

The highest level of criticism of opposing ideas, positions and theories is the positive resolution of debated issues of theory and practice. The mere adherence to the spontaneous nature of propagandistic criticism, the one-sided reliance on the direct 'logic' of debating the opponent's positions, leads to the abolition and annulment of fundamental research. The latter is not possible as long as external motives prevail, including the expediency of vulgar mainstream 'answers' to questions and, in general, on the basis of an 'agenda' imposed on research from the outside and from above, in a context of vulgar verbal confrontation for 'living space'...

The dogmatist 'theorists' tend to focus their criticism on lesser (if not completely cartoonish) representatives of the opposing theoretical camp, against whom the triumphant superiority of their own 'theory'^[8] can be effortlessly demonstrated.

If such an opponent does not exist, there is no problem: the dogmatist bureaucrat will either choose to ignore (Marx and Engels called the attitude of the bourgeois ideologists towards Marx's Capital a conspiracy of silence), or he will turn a tough opponent into a 'straw man' by portraying a caricature of the person and his ideas in order to display his own eloquence to his audience... If these wretched practices fail, there are others in his arsenal, such as the vilification and slander of his opponent. In this way, the dogmatists, in their attempt to defend Marxism, to demonstrate the unquestionable superiority, purity and self-sufficiency of their 'system', as long as they limit themselves to the propagandistic 'logic of the counterargument' to the opponent, their positions eminently stem from the opposition to the views and ideas of the opponent. This argumentation moves primarily in the opposite direction to the opponent's views, thus constituting a fruitless negation, i.e. (although marked with the opposite sign) it remains bound to the opponent's logic, thus making the opponent its determining system of reference. This practice objectively functions as a means to transform communists into followers of the dominant ideology and practice, into prisoners of the strategy and tactics of the bourgeoisie^[9]. When one is drawn into such counter-arguments, the content, direction, essence and timing of which are determined by the opponent, one is practically invalidated as a subject, transformed into a follower of the opponent with a negative sign... The communists who engage in this debate are incapable of ever gaining the strategic initiative of action, incapable of leading a victorious revolutionary mass movement, because they become, by definition, defeated followers of the dominant order of things, of the agenda set by the

actual or imaginary opponent^[10]...

7) Entrapment in the present as an escape into the indeterminate future and the opposite... Metaphysics of ends and means: means as ends in themselves.

While the revisionist fetishises the 'here and now', reducing politics to a game ruled by the present moment (see The Realpolitik of the Second International and the 'Art of the Possible'), the dogmatists tend to fetishise the distant future, transforming it into a teleological, eschatological ideal, which—through the well-known process of switching from dogmatism to revisionism—is ultimately transformed into an endless end, an unattainable dream, a utopian flight into an imaginary beyond, in order to avoid a real revolution, which they have practically abandoned in this world (as is the case with the metaphysics of strategy without tactics, the rejection of the law-governed movement in stages, etc.) in the context of the opportunist metaphysics of the KKE)... Reality has to conform to this ideal. Should reality at this moment refuse to submit to this ideal, the problem does not concern our dogmatist: so much the worse for reality!

In his ethics, then, the dogmatist activist tends to be a Jesuit: his holy end justifies all means! As the holder of 'absolute truth', by definition, he believes that he is entitled to impose his view, his 'eternally correct line', wherever he can with the power at his disposal! He has a constant tendency to rush things, to 'force' things to their conclusion. He is using casuistry to obtain justifications for any unjustifiable action. The absolute of his 'pure' theory appears in the field of ethics as a 'categorical imperative', as a metaphysical deontology that sanctifies every whim of the voluntarism of his

practice.

In practice, the revisionists reduce the whole affair to an enterprise (business as usual). In their vulgar, mainstream and flawed petit-bourgeois consciousness, political and theoretical decisions have to be made on the basis of the 'law' that they believe regulates their 'eternal' and beloved market, bargaining: the law of supply and demand. Their only concern is to 'produce' and barter for something that will 'sell out' within their political territory and beyond. So, they evaluate every step they take in terms of profitability and profiteering, while playing the game without moral qualms, without principles, accepting the rules of the opponent (who, of course, gradually ceases to be considered an opponent). This can be seen even in their formulations, e.g. 'marketplace of ideas': equating the domination of commodity and monetary relations with 'culture' and 'freedom of choice', claiming that the bourgeoisie is merely a 'social partner' but presenting themselves as the 'rivals' of the 'dogmatists/leftists', etc. Thus, while the revisionists are unscrupulously engaged in the dismantling and debasement of Marxism (as Lenin demonstrated for the leaders of the Second International), the dogmatists, regardless of their intentions, are ready to ruthlessly violate Marxism and history (always in the name of one and the other), all the while asserting their virginal purity.

With these 'interpretations' of Marxism and on the basis of their practiciness, dogmatists and revisionists carry out an astonishing ideological inversion: both reduce the means to an end in themselves. The means cease to be means to the achievement of the revolutionary objective, the content of which is either distorted (by the Jesuitical use of means incompatible with it) or abolished (by the mainstream fetishisation of

'movements' and 'activism' of revisionism). All that remains is the 'seeing and doing' of immediate tactics, vulgar tacticism^[11]...

Once freed from the Marxist commitment to the dialectical link between means and ends, the opportunist bureaucrat (dogmatist, revisionist or in transition from the former to the latter) is transformed into a morally and politically deceitful Machiavellian, ready to employ any means to achieve his opportunist 'great' ends in the political struggle, justifying the disregard of any moral norm and the systematic fraud/deception in the struggle for power (within the party, within the bourgeois political system and in international relations).

8) The shared metaphysical methodology as a basis for complementarity, supplementarity, synergy and leaps.

Here lies the touchstone, the core foundation of kinship, the common denominator of revisionism and dogmatism. For all their apparent rivalry, their methodology of thought and action bears a striking resemblance. This is because both are incapable of transcending the necessary to certain stages of the developing cognition but inadequate limits of the common mind, the everyday mainstream consciousness and the pre-dialectical level of cognition, the intellect (*Verstand*). The only logic the existence of which they acknowledge, as do all metaphysicians, is the formal logic of absolute disjunction. Not a word about the backbone of Marxism, dialectical logic. So, short-circuited to the pre-dialectical stage of cognition, they are both trapped in anti-dialectical and metaphysical thinking. As Lenin showed, when we lose sight of the fact that Marxism 'is not a dogma, but a guide to action (Engels). [...] we turn Marxism into something one-sided, distorted and lifeless; we

deprive it of its life blood; we undermine its basic theoretical foundations—dialectics, the doctrine of historical development, all-embracing and full of contradictions; we undermine its connection with the definite practical tasks of the epoch...'^[12]

The revisionists, following the bourgeois, professorial 'science', also throwing themselves 'into the swamp of philosophical vulgarisation of science, replacing "artful" (and revolutionary) dialectics by "simple" (and tranquil) "evolution".'^[13] This methodology, shared by revisionists and dogmatists alike, is also ultimately rooted in the petit-bourgeois character of their positions.

Two tendencies which describe themselves as diametrically opposed in terms of attitude to life (the absolute negation of capitalism and the acceptance in practice of the absolute and insurmountable character of capitalism) lead to two versions of petit-bourgeois socialism (of pre-Marxist origin): 'barracks communism' and the reformist 'modernisation' of total integration into the capitalist regime.

Both are based on practicicism, tacticism, creeping empiricism and political pragmatism. The common methodology and (after all) class origin of dogmatism and revisionism make it very easy to shift from the former to the latter, especially in periods of crisis and defeat of the revolutionary movement, as happened with the unprecedented counter-revolution and capitalist restoration that took place in the USSR and the European countries of early socialism. A similar escalation of such transitions was observed during the escalation of the Third World War.

It is no coincidence that the dogmatist who finally comes to question the 'irrefutable validity' and the 'absolute truth' of his dogmas, leaps with admirable ease into irrational and unbridled revisionism.

Indeed, the history of the communist movement is full of such examples of flip-flopping. One example is the noisy march of the former champion of French dogmatism, Roger Garaudy, towards other dogmas (Islam, Tibetan mysticism, Holocaust denial, etc.), i.e., towards erratic revisionism. These conversions are by no means due to the personal qualities of the individuals concerned.

9) Opportunist apostasy, ideological degeneration and the abandonment of the revolutionary perspective.

The law-governed path from dogmatism to revisionism manifests itself on a massive scale in times of crisis and war. The view, for example, that the counter-revolution initiated with perestroika or the right-wing shift of a large part of the left in Greece is entirely due to the subjective betrayal perpetrated by the protagonists of these processes is highly subjectivist/idealist (without, of course, underestimating that aspect). This perception prevents the scientific study of the deeper (international, class, organisational and ideological) causes of these phenomena, conceals their root causes and objectively contributes to their escalation and reproduction. No teratogenesis is a product of immaculate conception.

The experience of the degeneration of entire mass parties—not excluding the Social Democratic Party of Germany, founded under the direct leadership of Marx and Engels—of the Second International, and the analyses of the classics on these phenomena are particularly relevant today. As the study of the history of the degeneration of the KKE^[14] confirms, the escalation of the total conversion of communist parties to revisionism begins with the essential opportunist drift towards pro-regime positions, with the practical adoption of reformism

by the leadership, which verbally proclaims (with increasingly vague and ambiguous statements) its commitment to 'strategic' goals and 'Marxism-Leninism', and retains the traditional party symbols (its past martyrs, its name, the hammer and sickle, etc.), the 'icons'^[15], as one of the historic former secretaries-general of the KKE, Charilaos Florakis, used to say), which activate deep historically conditioned reflexes, associative emotional charges, capable of cultivating the illusion that the original revolutionary traditions are still continuing, despite the fact that the opportunist mutation, the rot, is now imminent and irreversible. These symbols take the form of ritualistic/religious 'icons'. It is possible, of course, that some communist aims (or, more precisely, proclamations that appear to be communist) remain sealed in the 'iconostasis' of the programme. But as Engels used to say, 'the official programme of a party is less important than what the party does in reality'^[16]. There may be some semblance of proletarianism, but the leadership treats the terms 'proletariat' and 'working class' with a similar demagogic flattery to that of bourgeois politicians, sanctifying the word 'people' and 'substituting revolutionary development for revolutionary development with phraseological hypocrisy about revolution'^[17].

In effect, however, for them '...the overthrow of the capitalist system is unattainably remote, and therefore has absolutely no significance for practical present-day politics; one can mediate, compromise and philanthropise to one's heart's content. It is just the same with the class struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie. It is recognised on paper because its existence can no longer be denied, but in practice it is hushed up, diluted, attenuated...'^[18] Here we are dealing with 'people who under the pretence of indefatigable activity not only do

nothing themselves but also try to prevent anything happening at all except chatter; the same people whose fear of every form of action... obstructed the movement at every step and finally brought about its downfall; the same people who see a reaction and are then quite astonished to find themselves at last in a blind alley where neither resistance nor flight is possible; the same people who want to confine history within their narrow petty-bourgeois horizon and over whose heads history invariably proceeds to the order of the day.'^[19]

The gradual addiction of the party base to the opportunistic pursuit of micro-politics of the moment, the intense ideologisation of this practice with its torrential promotion (by the party and the bourgeois media) as the only 'realistic' alternative and concrete proposal, and the systematic elimination of any serious opposition (from above, through distortion, silencing and ideological terrorism leading to fanaticism, inactivity and finally abstention from social issues altogether) will eventually lead to the clear and explicit rejection of even these remaining symbols/'icons'. The pace, rhythm, and concrete steps towards the degeneration of the traditional revolutionary parties are always chosen with a view to exercising a controlled manipulation of the consciousness and behaviour of the masses through ideological and practical mithridatism, based on the well-known bourgeois conditioning method, the 'Overton window'. It is typical, for example, that the first person to try to answer Bernstein's revisionist attack in the name of Marxist orthodoxy was Kautsky, who later became a proponent of 'social imperialism' and an enemy of the Bolshevik revolution, but who until the end of his life maintained the pure and honest intentions of his 'Marxist orthodoxy', his belief in 'pure class struggle', and so on.

Yet, 'This forgetting of the great, the principal considerations for the momentary interests of the day, this struggling and striving for the success of the moment regardless of later consequences, this sacrifice of the future of the movement for its present, may be 'honestly' meant, but it is and remains opportunism, and 'honest' opportunism is perhaps the most dangerous of all!'^[20]

10) Healthy elements within the dynamics of the development of knowledge and practice, and the fall into morbid deadlocks.

It should be noted that we are pointing out the characteristics of these two currently dominant tendencies of Marxism in a kind of 'typical pure form'. In fact, there are several variants and intermediate types which can essentially be traced back to the two above.

Apart from the conscious bearers of bourgeois ideology, the apologists for the modernisation of capitalism and the bureaucratised and degenerated (former) workers' parties, a lively critical mood, a certain healthy questioning and skepticism can occasionally manifest itself among some people who are friendly to revisionism. If these signs are only elements of a certain phase/stage in the process of deepening their worldview, under certain conditions, with strong intervention by communists, they can develop into critical revolutionary, i.e. creative positions (if, of course, the revisionists do not short-circuit the consciousness of these people with their disruptive propaganda).

If we exclude the bureaucratic apologists, whose self-interest is to justify and ensure their existence and function within the apparatus by reproducing the bureaucratic structures they serve, using a dogmatised 'Marxism' as an ideological

cover for their actions, in the context of the dogmatic tendency, in situations of confusion and disintegration, a defensive tendency of 'adherence and loyalty to principles' is sometimes observed by honest ordinary people, well-intentioned and attached to dogmatism, precisely because of the harsh conditions of class struggle they are experiencing. Such people were and still are those who unyieldingly resisted the escalation of bourgeois counterrevolution in the states and countries that emerged from the bourgeois counterrevolution in the USSR, who opposed the newly emerging bourgeoisie and its revisionist opportunist allies. From this tendency (if it is not short-circuited, dismantled, etc.) it is also possible to move to positions of creative Marxism.

In the field of science, in theoretical activity, a certain 'dogmatism' often plays the role of a healthy and reasonable 'conservatism', resisting the disintegrating current of 'hyper-revolutionism', 'methodological anarchism'^[21], postmodern irrationalism and the tendency to deny, dismantle and destroy the scientific acquis. In other words, it acts as a counterweight to the tendency to reject the foundations of science and rationality itself. However, this 'conservatism' may well turn into pure conservatism and dogmatism if scientific activity is disconnected from new facts and limited to 'mere stereotypical reproduction' of existing knowledge/theory, without producing new knowledge through the interpretation of these facts and critical reflection on the acquis of science.

In different historical phases of the movement, one or the other of the above tendencies becomes dominant. In conditions of revolutionary upsurge, revolutionary situations, sharpening of class struggle, during illegal underground operation, etc., the dogmatic left tendency prevails. However,

in long, mild, evolutionary and peaceful periods of capitalist society or in the defeat of the global revolutionary movement by the counterrevolution, especially in the countries of imperialism, the revisionist tendency prevails. This tendency is particularly established in the left movements of the capitalist countries with a high or average level of development, which is also linked to radical changes in the conditions and way of life of the workers (due to the possibilities offered to the ruling classes by their technological etc. superiority over the weakly developed countries, due to the fact that the working class aristocracy is bought off with a share of the monopoly super-profits that they siphon off from the whole planet, and so on).

It should be pointed out that, from the point of view of revisionism, every creative consistent Marxist appears to be dogmatic. And conversely, from the point of view of dogmatism, every creative Marxist tendency is characterised as revisionist... The superficial, metaphysical categorisation that characterises both these tendencies is also activated here at the level of automatic instinct, of conditioned reflex...

A few conclusions.

As we have seen, the escalation of the Third World War inevitably leads to the polarisation and division of the global anti-imperialist and revolutionary movement. The relentless conflict between the forces of the imperialist axis of aggression, led by the USA, and the forces of socialism and anti-imperialism is also flooding the movement. Degenerative trends that have been going on for decades—if not centuries—are manifesting themselves explosively and accelerating. Try as they might, the forces of today's most dangerous opportunism are no longer able to effectively

disguise their complicity with the attacking imperialist axis.

In this text we have outlined the theoretical and practical features of the relationship between opportunism and dogmatism and revisionism by examining some key issues:

- how do they view the theoretical system of Marxism and its relation to method, to dialectics?
- what is their de facto (and not proclaimed) methodology?
- what is their relationship to the origins of Marxism and to the tendencies opposed to it?
- how do they examine the past, present and future of theory and political practice?
- what are their epistemological positions and how do they deal with the question of scientific truth?
- what are their social/class origins and their de facto role in the balance of class forces?
- what is their moral philosophy?
- what kind of politics do they practice?
- how they relate strategy to tactics, means to ends, etc.

These are not, of course, questions of 'academic' interest.

Obviously, of crucial importance in the degenerative process of integration of a party into the capitalist regime is the gradual shift of its practical and organisational action in the direction of undermining and invalidating the revolutionary subject and the anti-imperialist popular forces, in the direction of acting in the interests of imperialism within the movement. This degeneration is organically connected with the devaluation and disregard of the leading role of the revolutionary theory and methodology of Marxism-Leninism, with the severing of its organic connection with the labour/people's movement, with the abandonment of the revolutionary goal

of its creative development. However, the creative development of Marxism is its only form of its existence: to renounce this creative development is to transform Marxism into something else. This is why opportunists are forced to metaphysically separate theory from practice, while reducing scientific theory to vulgar and mainstream propaganda ideological constructions in order to cover up their opportunist/pro-regime drift. In doing so, they de facto reject and abandon both revolutionary theory and revolutionary practice, since, as Lenin stated, ‘Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement. [...] the role of vanguard fighter can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by the most advanced theory.’^[22] This is why the opportunists replace revolutionary theory with arbitrary ideologies in order to propagandistically invest their practices that undermine the movement, occasionally crawling between Scylla of dogmatism and Charybdis of revisionism, between the supposedly unconditional and boundless ‘loyalty’ and ‘defence of positions’ of their mummified metaphysical dogmatic distortion and unstable deconstruction of Marxism and its substitution with all kinds of bourgeois, metaphysical ideological constructions/dogmas.

As we have seen, precisely because of their class standing, which is internally linked to their metaphysical methodology, these two tendencies prove to be extremely fruitless and incapable of developing revolutionary theory, incapable of contributing to the enrichment, to the development of the revolutionary movement. The realisation of this conclusion is a necessary condition for the creative development of Marxism, but not a sufficient one.

The task of the World Anti-Imperialist Platform

is to broaden and deepen its action and influence in the work of coordinating the forces of anti-imperialism and socialism into a united victorious front, to expose and crush the most subversive and destructive forces of opportunism within the movement and to contribute to the restoration and development of the leading role of the consistent communist forces in the struggle. This extremely complex and vital duty for the survival and progress of humanity requires an upgrading of the research and development of revolutionary theory and methodology.

An indispensable condition for the unmasking and crushing of opportunism, which acts as an agent for the strategic interests of the axis within the movement, is the scientific identification of the mechanisms that link opportunism with the two main versions of the distortion and destruction of revolutionary theory and practice: dogmatism and revisionism. A relentless struggle is needed to expose the real role, to unmask, to theoretically, ideologically, morally, and organisationally crush the venomous, destructive apostasy of the opportunists-renegades, under whatever dogmatic and/or revisionist toxic machinations they may disguise their subversive role.

Such knowledge of these mechanisms makes the deceptive subversive moves of the opportunists more predictable, helps to expose and crush the enemy that has infiltrated the ranks of the movement and equips the WAP to escalate its struggle more effectively until the final victory of the forces of anti-imperialism and socialism.

Notes

[1] Elements of this study were first articulated in a manuscript/monograph I wrote in Moscow in 1989. Parts of this discourse have been published below: Д. Пателис, М. Дафермос, П. Павлидис, Буржуазная контрреволюция и некоторые итоги развития марксизма. (К вопросу о стратегии и тактике революционного

исследования), in: Труды Международной Логико-Исторической Школы (МЛИШ). ИСТОРИЯ И РЕАЛЬНОСТЬ: УРОКИ ТЕОРИИ И ПРАКТИКИ. ВЫПУСК 2 (Москва, 1995)

[2] Mechanistic determinism of this type relates to certain levels of the natural sciences and their corresponding worldview. See V. I. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*, Lenin Collected Works, Progress Publishers, 1972, Moscow, Volume 14, pages 17-362, and the related works of E. Bitsakis and J. D. Beernal.

[3] See V. I. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*, Lenin Collected Works, Progress Publishers, 1972, Moscow, Volume 14, pages 17-362

[4] 'Reason and Intellect, concepts which express two mutually necessary aspects of development of scientific knowledge, and also moral and artistic thinking, two mutually helping abilities. The intellectual ability is characterized by the fact that notions within it are not in the process of transformation and remain stable, and act as ready-made theoretical "yardsticks" for empirical material and for constructing results. Hence, the abstract character of intellectual operations and their results, which gives ground for the cult of abstractions and for ascribing to them an independent creative role. Armed with I. alone man makes his life increasingly more intellectual—a sphere of rationality. On the contrary, reasoning ability is characterised by the fact that notions enter the process of transformation. Aims and values are seen in the process of their change, and the theoretical process is directed to a specific ideal, leading to the development of the subject of knowledge, of values, etc. If scientific research based on intellectual ability alone is contrary to morality and art, R. creates the atmosphere of their communion...'. (Reason and Intellect, in: *Dictionary of Philosophy*, Edited by I. Frolov, English translation, Progress Publishers, 1984 Moscow, Progress, p. 352).

[5] G. Hegel, *Lectures on the history of Philosophy*, book 2, vol. 10, Moscow 1932, p. 321.

[6] Translation note: direct translation of the Greek term 'ετερροπροσδιορισμός' is 'opposite definition', meaning the process by which something or someone becomes defined by the very thing they are opposed to.

[7] One can, of course, proclaim to be in favour of the development of theory, but by always promoting the 'current issues', the 'practice', they make their proclamations an empty hypocrisy.

[8] Bukharin, for example, often did this. The range and depth of a theorist, of a theory, is determined, among other things, by whom, what and why he chooses to make the object of his critique. For the classics, critique is never an end in itself. It is always an organic component of research, whether dictated by the need to overcome or even crush tendencies dangerous to science, society and the movement. It is no coincidence that revolutionary theory and methodology were developed by the classics of Marxism through research, through critical absorption of the most advanced acquis of the classics of their time, in confrontation with the pioneers, the titans of classical bourgeois science of the time in all fields: political economy, philosophy, utopian socialism, history, anthropology, natural and mathematical sciences.

[9] The same is true of those tendencies which have occasionally broken away from the degenerated workers' parties and have focused their attention primarily on differentiating themselves from these

parties, typically bearing the permanent mark of the phase of their own differentiation, confrontation and 'severing of the umbilical cord' with the historical party...

[10] Often the negative opposite definition of trends, organisations and tendencies is also in the foreground, in which they are labelled with the prefix 'anti-' ('anti-capitalists', 'anti-Soviets', 'anti-Stalinists', 'anti-revisionists', 'anti-Maoists', 'anti-Zahariadists', recently 'anti-sexists', etc.).

[11] The character of a 'movement' taken on by various groups wanting to define themselves as being to the left of the degenerated, 'pro-establishment' parties, etc., leaves the way open for their own right-wing degeneration...

[12] 'Certain Features of the Historical Development of Marxism' Lenin Collected Works, Progress Publishers, [1974], Moscow, Volume 17, pages 39-44.

[13] V.I. Lenin, 'Marxism and Revisionism' Lenin Collected Works, Progress Publishers, 1973, Moscow, Volume 15, pages 29-39.

[14] On the degeneration and the danger that the KKE's framework of opportunism/revisionism represents for the world movement, see also: 'The political stance of the Communist Party of Greece ... a communist stance?' by the Chilean Communist Party (Proletarian Action), WAP organ, July 2023 edition, as well as their entire series of articles on the topic.

[15] Translation note: The word 'icons' is used here as a reference to the religious iconography of the Orthodox Church.

[16] See Engels' letter of 18-28 March 1875 to August Bebel.

[17] See 'Revelations Concerning the Communist Trial in Cologne by Karl Marx 1853'

[18] Marx-Engels Correspondence 1879 Marx and Engels to Bebel, Liebknecht, Bracke and others

[19] Same as above.

[20] Engels, 'A Critique of the Draft Social-Democratic Program of 1891'

[21] The title of the relevant work of P. Feyerabend 'Against Method: Outline of an Anarchistic Theory of Knowledge' is indicative.

[22] V.I. Lenin, 'What Is To Be Done? Dogmatism And 'Freedom of Criticism' pt. D. 'Engels On the Importance of the Theoretical Struggle'

Identity politics or class politics?

I. Liberalism or socialism?

Joti Brar | Communist Party of Great Britain (Marxist-Leninist)

Where is the obsession with ‘identity’ leading us and why is it so inimical to the class struggle?^[1]

I. LIBERALISM OR SOCIALISM?

1. Liberalism: the ideology of the bourgeoisie

The hub of modern social life is the class struggle. In the course of this struggle each class is guided by its own ideology. The bourgeoisie has its own ideology—so-called liberalism. The proletariat also has its own ideology—this, as is well known, is socialism.

With these words Josef Stalin opened his 1907 pamphlet *Anarchism or Socialism?*, and they serve as an excellent starting point also for our discussion. Liberalism was the ideology of the rising bourgeoisie.

The revolutionary origin of liberalism (whose main content is an emphasis on the rights of the individual) was seen in the struggle against feudalism. Wherever the bourgeoisie fought to overthrow serfdom, wherever it fought against landed aristocracies and absolute monarchies, it did so under the slogan of the liberty and equality of all men.

On coming to power, however, the limits of this slogan were revealed. As the new rulers made haste to secure their position and to disarm the workers who had supported them, it became clear that liberty and equality were not to be extended to the unpropertied masses, nor to women, slaves or colonised peoples. As a minority ruling class, the capitalists, like the feudal and slave-owning exploiters before them, set about modifying their

ideals in order to fit them to their new position as masters of society—most importantly as an exploiting class whose wealth and power came from monopolising the wealth produced by the exploited masses.

In its quest to control nature and expand profitable enterprise, the bourgeoisie opened up the entire world to scientific investigation. But as discoveries of science began to come into conflict with the goal of preserving bourgeois class rule and the capitalist system of production, scientific investigation itself came under attack. Well-funded branches of pseudoscience were established to justify the hierarchy of exploited and exploiter, the second-class status accorded to women, the inhuman treatment meted out to colonised and enslaved peoples, etc—and to try to ‘prove’ the eternal nature of capitalist production relations.

As the great Russian Marxist Georgi Plekhanov noted in 1907:

Marx very truly said that the greater the development of the contradiction between the growing productive forces and the existing social order, the more does the ideology of the master class become imbued with hypocrisy. The more the falseness of this ideology is revealed by life, the more elevated and virtuous does the language of that class become.^[2]

And as Lenin observed in 1908:

There is a well-known saying that if geometrical axioms affected human interests, attempts would certainly be made to refute them. Theories of natural history [ie, Darwin’s theory of evolution] which conflicted with the old prejudices of theology

provoked, and still provoke, the most rabid opposition.

No wonder, therefore, that the Marxian doctrine, which directly serves to enlighten and organise the advanced class in modern society, indicates the tasks facing this class and demonstrates the inevitable replacement (by virtue of economic development) of the present system by a new order—no wonder that this doctrine has had to fight for every step forward in the course of its life. (Our emphasis)^[3]

Bourgeois liberalism long ago ceased to have any revolutionary or progressive content—ceased in fact to be more than empty rhetoric used to cover actions by our rulers that are completely contradictory even to their own professed ideals. Today, when a tiny parasitic bourgeoisie presides over the vicious death throes of decaying monopoly capitalism (imperialism), the role of liberalism is entirely reactionary and utterly hypocritical.

While claiming to care about the rights of the individual, liberal ideologues justify the most obscene crimes against the vast masses of humanity—a mass made up of hundreds of millions of individuals, whose individuality is never remembered by the bourgeoisie until such time as it suits their latest agenda.

Hence the ‘rights’ of Syrians to live in a country that doesn’t have a secret police or any machinery of repression was suddenly discovered to be a priority by the bourgeois liberals at precisely the moment when imperialism was fomenting its forces for proxy war and regime change in Syria.

The fact that every state (being an organ of class rule) has a machinery of repression, including secret police, was not mentioned by the promoters of this liberally-blessed war. The right of the Syrian masses to live free from the fear of terrorising bombs and atrocities was equally absent from the freedom-loving liberal narrative, as was their right to choose their government and their political

system.

Absent too was any reference to the fact that the state of emergency under which Syrians lived for decades, and which of necessity made the state machinery of repression more prominent in their lives, was necessitated by constant imperialist attempts to destroy the country’s independence, which had been ongoing ever since Syria emerged from the grip of colonial France, and an ongoing state of war with Zionist Israel, imperialism’s stooge regime in the middle east, which has been illegally occupying part of Syria (the Golan Heights) since 1967, and never ceases to infiltrate the country with saboteurs and spies.

Something similar was seen in Britain during World War Two. The very real threat of invasion by Germany meant that Britain’s state machinery was put onto an emergency footing. Potential spies (along with many innocent civilians) were rounded up and imprisoned; citizens were told to be watchful for any unusual activities that could indicate active sympathy for the enemy.

How would British workers have felt about a foreign power—the USA, for example—using that state of emergency as a justification for bombing their government out of existence? Would they have been more or less likely to support the government in such a situation? Would the destruction of their schools, roads, power stations, water supplies, factories, farms and hospitals by an invading force have been more palatable because it was supposedly motivated by a desire to free them from the abuses of their autocratic leaders?

Of course, this comparison is flawed because the British government is an imperialist one, while the Syrian government is anti-imperialist, and therefore it is on the same side as its people in the struggle for independence from imperialism.

All the same, it serves to illustrate the nonsensical and hypocritical nature of the justifications given by liberals for imperialist war. Closer examination

reveals that the only ‘right’ these ‘humanitarians’ really respect is the right of the exploiters to exploit. In the eyes of the liberals, resistance to the domination of the imperialists; attempts, whether by individuals, by mass movements or by whole nations, to take control of resources and use them for the benefit of the masses rather than for the profit of a few, must be ruthlessly crushed.

Liberalism’s role in this process is to prettify it with slogans about peace, democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

This example is one of thousands we could offer to make the same point: bourgeois liberalism long ago lost the right to be judged by its words; it must be judged by its actions, and by the outcomes of its actions. Bourgeois liberals may wax lyrical on the subject of ‘universal’ rights and equality, but these words are unfailingly a cover for actions that preserve the right of a tiny minority to maintain its political and economic grip over the vast masses of humanity, pushing them into ever deeper poverty while amassing vast wealth to itself.

Bourgeois liberalism is the enemy of the working class and oppressed peoples; the enemy of the struggle for socialism, which is a struggle for meaningful rights and meaningful equality for all.

2. The liberal myth of rights and freedoms for all

In capitalist society, bourgeois liberalism is infused into our veins from birth. It is drip-fed through the stories we read, through school and college curriculums, through newspapers, radio and television. It teaches us to put ourselves—our individual freedom—first, in order that we might achieve happiness and fulfilment.

We are told endlessly about our ‘rights’—our right to choose how and where we live; our right to choose what we do for a living; our right to choose whom to marry, or whether or not to have children; our right to ‘follow our dreams’.

Entirely missing from all this discussion over our theoretical ‘freedoms’, ‘rights’ and ‘choices’ is the way that all these are in practice curtailed more or less completely by the conditions in which people actually find themselves. What choice does a child have about what kind of housing or education he is provided with if he is born into a poor family? What choice does a woman have about whether or not to have a child if she has no money and no family or community support? What choice does a worker have about where to live or how to eat if he has no job and no money? What choice does a sixth-former have about career paths if she has no ability to pay for training?

Bourgeois liberalism tells individuals they are free to choose—and then puts the blame on them if their ‘choices’ don’t lead to happiness and fulfilment. But capitalist society sees to it that in practice many of these apparent choices are either extremely limited or entirely non-existent.

Meanwhile, capitalist production leads inexorably to a society where communal and familial bonds are increasingly severed and all that is left between individuals is what Marx called the ‘cash nexus’.

The bourgeoisie, historically, has played a most revolutionary part.

The bourgeoisie, wherever it has got the upper hand, has put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations. It has pitilessly torn asunder the motley feudal ties that bound man to his ‘natural superiors’, and has left remaining no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous ‘cash payment’.

It has drowned the most heavenly ecstasies of religious fervour, of chivalrous enthusiasm, of philistine sentimentalism, in the icy water of egotistical calculation. It has resolved personal worth into exchange value, and in place of the numberless indefeasible chartered freedoms, has set up that single, unconscionable freedom—Free Trade.

In one word, for exploitation, veiled by religious and political illusions, it has substituted naked, shameless, direct, brutal exploitation.

The bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honoured and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage labourers.

The bourgeoisie has torn away from the family its sentimental veil, and has reduced the family relation to a mere money relation.^[4]

This process has accelerated greatly even since Marx's day, and the result of the breaking of all social bonds is isolation and misery for vast swathes of the masses, who are increasingly bereft of meaningful social contact or support. Thus the mass of workers find themselves left alone to sink or swim as best they can in a world where nothing can be obtained without money, no matter how necessary it is for existence, and people are valued by their earnings and possessions, no matter what their personal qualities may be—all while they are endlessly assured that their trammelled and stressful existences are somehow the result of their own 'life choices'.

Liberalism's emphasis on the 'rights' and 'choices' of the individual in such a situation simply provides a cover for the workings of the capitalist system, which is just as social as any other, but whose ideological representatives refuse to recognise the social relationships underpinning the creation of our rulers' wealth. Capital is a social relation—a relation between people—first and foremost, but its ideologues push instead the idea that the poor are poor through their own personal failings and bad life choices, rather than through the workings of the capitalist system of production for profit.

Socialism, on the other hand, recognises that man is first and foremost a collective, social animal. Nothing in society is achieved by individuals; we are all of us reliant on one other, and all of us are

happiest when we are working together towards a common aim. And not only does humankind need social contact and a sense of community to stay sane and healthy, but the tremendous means of production that capitalism has called into being demand social action on a massive scale.

In order to harness society's productive power to the full; in order to unlock its true potential to provide a decent, cultured and ever-rising standard of living to the entire human race, we must not only act collectively at work, but in all spheres of life—and we must do so consciously, rather than unknowingly, as at present.

In order to resolve the contradictions of capitalist production (social labour, private appropriation) and create the conditions for the development of a new, higher and truly human civilisation, we must think and act as a collective.

Socialism therefore puts the needs of the collective above the needs or desires of any single individual. But in doing so, it creates the conditions in which individuals (all individuals and not just a privileged few) are truly able to flourish and express themselves—supported and valued by their community.

3. Left liberalism: a (petty) bourgeois conscience

Liberalism must not be regarded as something whole and indivisible: it is subdivided into different trends, corresponding to the different strata of the bourgeoisie.

So wrote Stalin in *Anarchism or Socialism?* So far we have looked at liberalism as a whole. The particular trend within liberalism that we are interested in here is left liberalism. Left liberals, like all liberals, wish to maintain the rule of the bourgeoisie, but they believe that the best way to ensure capitalism's survival is to try to reform the system's worst aspects and give it a friendlier face—very often dressed up in socialist terminology in

order to make it more acceptable to the working class.

The left and right wings of liberalism in Britain share the same programme, which can be summed up in three words: Save British imperialism. Where their proponents differ is on tactics. The right-wing liberals' arrogance towards the oppressed workers at home and abroad upsets the left wingers, who have been affected by the progress of the movements for socialism and national liberation of the last century just enough to be embarrassed by such blatantly chauvinist attitudes.

Left liberalism is infused with concepts of guilt and privilege, and puts forward in practice a programme of conscience-salving activities. It is particularly characteristic of a certain section of the labour aristocracy (better-off, more privileged workers), some of the more altruistic members of the petty bourgeoisie and even a miniscule section of the bourgeoisie—that is, of those among the privileged classes who have become aware of the fact that the unequal distribution of wealth in society has in some way benefited them (by giving them a better education, for example, and access to well-paid jobs and better housing), and who wish somehow that amends could be made (so long, of course, as such restitution doesn't affect their own elevated position).

Left liberalism informs the ideology of a minority of the Labour party—its left wing—and of left Labour's various 'left' hangers-on such as the Trotskyites and revisionists. From the left-liberal standpoint, it is entirely respectable to criticise the worst aspects and abuses of capitalist imperialism, but only if the solutions on offer (if any are offered at all) are those which do not threaten the system of capitalist production. Any attempt to look beyond capitalism's limits is absolutely out of bounds, as is any serious suggestion that those limits are anything but inevitable and eternal.

Trotskyism may have begun its life as a variant of

socialism, but it degenerated very rapidly into a tool of the bourgeoisie for promoting imperialist ideas and goals under the guise of seemingly Marxist phraseology. Today it represents merely the extreme left wing of the bourgeois political spectrum at best, and a state-sponsored provocation at worst.

Socialism, on the other hand, is not a part of this spectrum at all. Marxism—scientific socialism—is the political ideology of the proletariat (propertyless wage-workers), the class whose interests are entirely opposed to those of the bourgeoisie.^[5]

Socialism is based on historical and economic science, and is guided by materialist philosophy—an understanding that matter is primary, and that our ideas are a reflection of material reality, which exists outside of and irrespective of our imagination. Left liberalism, to the extent that it puts forward any programme of action to its followers, is based on emotion and individualism, and is guided by idealist philosophy—the belief that ideas are primary and that material reality exists only in so far as we believe in it.

As the ideology of the rising class—the class that is destined to take over the running of society in the interests of all humanity—Marxism is the ideology of the future, filled with energy and optimism, and infused with an unshakeable conviction that workers have the ability to conquer all challenges and raise humanity out of the filth and degradation that has been the inevitable by-product of all advance during the period of class societies.

Left liberalism, on the other hand, has no faith in the workers and only the most depressed vision of humanity's future. It is pessimistic through and through and believes the venality and corruption of bourgeois society to be an expression of base human nature, rather than an inevitable product of a particular social system.^[6]

Left liberalism (usually characterised by Marxists as opportunism: the ditching of the long-term aims of the working class for real or imagined

short-term gains), is in its own way also grounded in material reality—namely, in the privileges that its representatives draw from the continued existence of imperialism; in the superprofits made by the imperialist ruling class. The fundamental programme of these opportunists—that capitalism can be reformed to become ‘fairer’ and more equitable—is pure idealism (ie, it is entirely imaginary).

In order to present a programme that seems to be plausible, however, left liberals promote the idea that the job of political activists is first and foremost to change the attitudes of individuals. Socialists, on the other hand, strive to change the economic and social system that creates and shapes those attitudes.

It is left-liberal opportunism that people have in mind when they think of a ‘leftie’—a (probably vegan) do-gooder who combines a patronising attitude towards those less enlightened than himself with a desire to ‘fix’ the system through a combination of lecturing, hectoring, charitable works and reforms.

With the development of monopoly capitalism and the ever-increasing concentration of capital into fewer and fewer hands, the ruling class is becoming an ever-tinier minority of the population. This being the case, it must work hard to keep devising ways to divide the working class against itself so as to maintain its rule.

Its agents in the working-class movement and in the universities work incessantly to corrupt Marxism—the principal weapon of the working class in organising against capitalist rule—and to both denude it of its revolutionary content and separate it entirely from the mass of the workers.

The ruling class knows, as the workers do not, just what a threat their organisation under the banner of Marxist science would represent to decaying capitalist rule.

Identity politics have provided some of the

principal levers used by the bourgeoisie over the last four decades to effect divisions within the working class and undermine the movement for socialism.

The aims of identity politics do not transcend the boundaries of capitalism. Instead of fighting against the system that creates inequality, the root cause of most of our problems, the petty-bourgeois elements in the ‘left-wing’ movement are forever directing workers’ energies into the harmless channels of obsession with various one-point programmes. Having gone through bourgeois feminism and black separatism, their latest obsession is to promote the ideology of ‘LGBT+’. Left-liberal opportunists might see and even criticise the excesses and obscenities of moribund capitalist imperialism, but their limited horizons interpret these not as systemic failings, but as mere unfairness, which must be addressed first and foremost by somehow ‘levelling the playing field’.

The fact that this goal (if it were really to apply to everyone) is entirely unreachable within capitalist society does not persuade the exponents of ‘fair play’ to think again. The demand for ‘equal rights’ within capitalism shows the absolute limit of the left-liberal mindset. An inability either to understand the roots of the present economic system, or to really imagine anything beyond it stops such people from understanding what is blindingly obvious to any right-thinking worker: the capitalist system is not capable of treating people equally.

For every person who does well, there will always be a hundred or a thousand or a hundred thousand who do not—not because of any intrinsic weakness in their character, or lack of application or natural ability, but because the opportunity is simply not there in a competitive anarchic system of production for profit.

Even if every single person in capitalist society had an equally fantastic education, including

valuable work experience, cultural development and postgraduate training, there would still be an army of unemployed workers—only now this army would be a well-educated one, and new excuses would have to be found for its existence.

If every single person in capitalist society took their fantastic education and a pot of money in order to start a small business, only one in a thousand would be able to get that business off the ground even for a year, never mind making it profitable in the long term—again, not because of any intrinsic weakness in their character, or lack of application or natural ability, but because the possibility for every business to succeed is simply not there. Not only are there not business opportunities for all, there are not even employment opportunities for all—the pool of the unemployed being as fundamental to the workings of capitalism as workers and bosses; as capital itself.^[7]

In a world where jobs and opportunities are rationed—a world where workers are forced into constant competition with one another—every advantage of birth, education, gender, skin colour, etc can play its part in the outcome for any individual. It is this luck-of-the-draw randomness in the allocation of life chances under capitalism that is so uncomfortable for workers of all backgrounds to live with. The enormous part played by chance in determining our place in the social hierarchy often sits especially uneasily with those who happen to have fallen on the ‘lucky’ side.

While claiming (and perhaps even believing) to be acting in a most ‘democratic’ and ‘socialist’ way, the petty-bourgeois opportunists are only falling into the trap that has been laid for them by the bourgeoisie. It is perfectly right, of course, to oppose institutional discrimination on grounds of race, sex, nationality, religion, age or sexual orientation. Such discrimination offends against our humanitarian feelings precisely because it creates unnecessary divisions in the working class and prevents it

from uniting against its common enemy. But it is thoroughly reactionary to elevate this opposition into a one-point programme that trumps all other questions and serves only to further exacerbate the divisions between workers.

For those who have been born into more than their ‘fair share’ of the world’s wealth and resources, there are three main responses to the situation in which they find themselves. They can either:

1. Deny that luck is involved at all, and come up with other justifications for their good fortune in life. This is what leads to the assertion that we live in a ‘meritocracy’, for example (an argument favoured by those whose superior education and family connections gives them access to the best-paid jobs). It also leads to the commonly expressed view of the upper classes (usually, but not always, in private) that the mass of poorer workers are by nature simply not fit for anything other than menial work.

2. Feel guilty and find some conscience-salving activity to engage in: charitable or other ‘good works’, campaigns for political reform, etc.

3. Recognise that there is no solution to the problem within capitalism and join the movement for socialist revolution, knowing that while we cannot choose what we are born into, we can certainly choose what we do with the start we have been given and with whatever resources we have access to.

4. How did we get here?

As Black Agenda Report’s Bruce A Dixon pointed out in his three-part series on the dead end of so-called ‘intersectionalism’ (the fashionable academic term for identity politics):

If we’re not asking and answering the question how can we take power, we’re wasting our own and other people’s time and energy.^[8]

For the bourgeoisie, petty-bourgeois identity

politics have proven extremely useful. Under the cover of Marxian phraseology, they have been smuggled into the working-class movement, taking advantage of the ideological retreat of socialism that came with the triumph and advance of revisionism.

As the communist movement lost its theoretical foundations and firm leadership (from 1953 onwards, following the death of Stalin and the takeover of the Soviet and international communist leadership by revisionists), it retreated—slowly at first but then in complete disarray (from 1991, following the complete collapse of the revisionist Soviet Union), so that petty-bourgeois left-liberal trends such as Trotskyism, anarchism and identity politics found fertile ground on which to grow, and have joined forces to the extent that, as far as the masses are concerned, there appears to be a total consensus on ‘the left’ about the correctness of taking an individual approach to key social questions such as racism and women’s oppression, and of taking a lead from bourgeois academia in framing our understanding of these issues.

Precisely because they divert workers away from the struggle for state power, the founders of our party have been fighting identity politics—along with other bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideas in the working-class movement—ever since they came to Marxism back in the late 1960s. At the same time as fighting pro-imperialist Trotskyism in the anti-Vietnam war movement, and pro-imperialist revisionism in the communist movement, these comrades fought pro-capitalist bourgeois feminism in the then newly emerging women’s movement. From the 1970s onwards, while continuing the fight against revisionism and Trotskyism, they fought against pro-imperialist black nationalism and fake ‘antifascism’ in the anti-racist movement.

The histories of some of these struggles are documented in the books *Marxism and the Emancipation of Women* (Ed Ella Rule, 2000)

and *Bourgeois Nationalism or Proletarian Internationalism?* (Harpal Brar, 1998), both of which are essential reading for all comrades who are serious about mastering the theory and tactics of the struggle for socialism.

Notes

[1] Quick definitions:

Identity politics: a political approach based on prioritising issues perceived as most relevant to a restricted racial, religious, ethnic, sexual, social, cultural or other identity, and forming political alliances with others on this basis and irrespective of social class.

Class politics: the politics of working people, based on a recognition of the individual’s underlying social relationship with the means of production irrespective of their racial, religious, ethnic, sexual, social, cultural or other identity.

* Workers, at the mercy of their employers, have a common class interest, and struggle for better conditions of life and employment within the capitalist system. They also struggle to end exploitative class society altogether and replace it with socialism, which will abolish private ownership of the means of production, thereby doing away with class antagonisms and exploitation.

Hence the Marxist slogan: ‘Workers of the world unite; you have nothing to lose but your chains, you have a world to win!’

[2] GV Plekhanov, *Fundamental Problems of Marxism*, Section XV, 1907.

[3] ‘Marxism and revisionism’ by VI Lenin, April 1908, *Collected Works*, Volume 15.

[4] K Marx and F Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, 1848.

[5] There is much confusion these days about what it means to be ‘propertyless’. The ruling class has deliberately promoted the idea that having a few shares in British Gas or owning their own home (with or without an onerous mortgage) gives someone a ‘stake in the system’ and counts as ‘property’. But in the Marxist sense, property means wealth someone is able to use as capital in order to live by exploiting others. A home someone lives in, even if they nominally ‘own’ it, is certainly not ‘property’ in this sense!

In essence, a proletarian is a wage-worker who must sell himself by the hour, day, week etc in order to get money for survival and who has no other means of support.

[6] The concept of ‘human nature’ is another one that has been the subject of much obfuscation by the ruling class. It is endlessly repeated, for example, that socialism is impossible because it ‘goes against human nature’—humans ‘self-evidently’ being selfish and greedy.

The Marxist understanding of human nature is that man’s beliefs about what is ‘natural’ for humans has changed with every change in the mode of production. While primitive communist tribes considered it to be human nature that people should share and cooperate, class societies have all in various ways described human nature as being something quite different.

It is unsurprising that for many people born into and shaped by an economic system that rewards sociopathic behaviours, it should indeed

appear 'self-evident' that humans are inherently selfish and must therefore be unsuitable material out of which to build a communistic society.

The truth, however, is that we are shaped as much by our environment as by our genetics. Indeed, our genetics themselves are responsive to our environment. The experience of the USSR and other socialist countries has been that the behaviours which people routinely exhibit (and which therefore appear to reflect their 'nature') change very quickly once their environment has been changed. Without the insecurity and competition of life under capitalism, the true extent of our innate selfishness is seen to be far less than has been traditionally supposed by upholders of the 'capitalism is merely a reflection of human nature' theory.

Our true essence as human beings, that which remains no matter what society we are part of, will only become clear when we are freed from the fetters of class hierarchies and exploitation. But that the humans of the future are more likely to resemble those of our primitive communistic past (whose existence accounts for the overwhelming majority of human history) can perhaps be deduced from the plethora of mental and physical illness that plagues people in western societies in which all bonds of community and meaningful human connection are breaking down. No amount of cash and no mountain of stuff, it appears, can satisfy the basic human need for a social place and social meaning.

[7] See K Marx, *Capital*, Volume 1, 1867, Chapter 25.

[8] 'Are intersectionalism or Afro-pessimism paths to power? Probably not' by BA Dixon, *Black Agenda Report*, 16 February 2018.

The theory of subjugation first

Stephen Cho | Coordinator of the Korean International Forum

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Kim Jong-un, chairman of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, formalised the country's new approach regarding the "subjugation" of the South in a speech to the Supreme People's Assembly on January 15. Although this change in approach towards reunification had already been announced at a plenary meeting of the central committee of the Workers Party of Korea in late December, this decision by the highest organ of state power has another meaning.

This "declaration of subjugation" has changed many things. First, the DPRK made certain theoretical changes to its existing theory of national liberation and democratic revolution, known as the theory of liberation of South Korea, and to its theory of national reunification based on the proposal for founding the Democratic Federal Republic of Koryo, which was declared at the sixth congress of the Workers Party of Korea in 1980.

Previously, the WPK noted the intrinsic connection between the theory of national liberation and democratic revolution and the theory of national reunification, formalizing them as a line of independence, democracy and reunification. Specifically, the aim was to achieve anti-US independence, antifascist democratization, and national reunification, in that order, with independence expected to come first. The process of revolution and reunification was clearly expected to proceed from anti-US independence through antifascist democratization and on to national reunification.

When the US army entered South Korea as an occupying force in 1945, South Korea was recolonised and was eventually fascistized as the pro-Japanese collaborators were transformed into

pro-American collaborators. Since the tragedy of Korea's division began with this occupation, the focus on 'independence first' was agreed on not only by the leadership of the DPRK but also by the revolutionary forces of the South.

With Pyongyang's "declaration of subjugation", however, the theory of 'independence first' has been replaced by the theory of 'subjugation first'. That is: the DPRK now believes that independence, democracy and reunification can only be achieved once the subjugation of the southern puppet regime has been accomplished.

From a theoretical standpoint, we can explain this new outlook as follows: The subjugation of the southern regime is at the same time a process of antifascist and nationwide democratization. These are the two stages of democratization needed in South Korea: a first stage of antifascist democratization and a higher stage through the establishment of a people's democratic government in the South.

Antifascist democratization will require the liquidation of fascist groups, the repeal of fascist laws and the dismantling of fascist organizations. The fascist cliques in South Korea are almost without exception pro-American and pro-Japanese.

The subjugation of the southern regime will at the same time launch a process of nationwide democratization. With the liquidation of the pro-fascist, pro-American, pro-Japanese regime, these factions will be deprived of their economic base and prevented from ever again functioning as a political force. This would be similar (only more thorough!) to the process of liquidating Nazi collaborators in France after World War 2.

In South Korea, however, the scope and extent

of this process will be very different, since it is not a matter of a few years but of more than a century of national treason and fascist brutality carried out by the puppet forces of the south—first in cooperation with Japanese and then in cooperation with US colonizers. This process of antifascist democratization will at the same time be a nationwide democratization, achieved by the decisive addition of the power of the northern state to that of the southern revolutionary forces.

The process of subjugation, by its very nature, can only be a thoroughly unpeaceful process.

When democratization has been achieved via the subjugation of the fascist client regime, anti-US independence can easily be accomplished. If the USA continues to intervene militarily in the internal politics of Korea, this can only trigger a non-peaceful response from the Korean revolutionary forces, including from the armed forces of the DPRK. But if the USA does not intervene, choosing to stick to its current proxy war doctrine, independence in Korea can be achieved by a peaceful process—by the expulsion of all US troops and weaponry from South Korea.

At the same time as anti-US independence is being prioritized, people's democracy will also be promoted. Anti-US independence will not automatically lead to people's democracy, but it is obvious that the former will very much facilitate the latter. People's democracy can only be achieved by a thoroughly peaceful process, after the complete suppression of the fascist puppet forces.

To realize a people's democracy in the South, a new administration aimed at realizing the people's welfare will need to be established, based on the nationalization of major means of production. All foreign and comprador capital, the land of reactionary landlords, and US military bases will be reappropriated.

On this basis, the problems of unemployment and irregular work will be solved, the debts of peasants

and poor workers will be eliminated, free education and free healthcare, and free social housing can all be provided. People's democracy refers to the democratization at the local level. It is essentially the democratization for and by the people of the South themselves, even if the North might be involved.

Realizing a people's democracy comes first while the reunification of Korea is promoted simultaneously. It is the prerequisite for the reunification of Korea to achieve the political task in realizing people's democracy. The reunification of Korea will be a thoroughly peaceful process after the liquidation of the pro-US, pro-Japanese and fascist forces and the removal of the US military by the subjugation (of South Korea) and anti-US independence.

Two paths to peaceful reunification are open to a divided nation: the Korean-style federal model or the Chinese style one-state, two-system model. The difference between the former and the latter is whether the central government is federal or not. The way of peaceful reunification of Korea has been confirmed as a federal system since 1980. This has not changed by the "Declaration of Subjugation". This was clearly expressed in various ways in the speech at the SPA in January.

The precondition of the federal reunification is the establishment of people's democratic government in South Korea, since a reunified federal state can only be built by the consent between the socialist government in the North and the people's democratic government in the South. It will be carried out peacefully and democratically by organizing a nationwide meeting such as the joint conference of political parties and social organizations from South and North Korea in 1948.

The establishment of a people's democratic government in South Korea should be carried out via democratic elections. Realizing a people's democracy in the political sector will lead to

the establishment of a reunified federal state. Realizing people's democracy in political sector is the prerequisite for the establishment of reunified federal state. Realizing a people's democracy in political sector and the establishment of reunified federal state decisively promote realizing people's democracy in economic sector.

When realizing people's democracy in economic sector is finished, the next strategic stage to totally solve class discrimination proceeds.

At its eighth congress in 2021, the Workers Party of Korea amended its party rules, indicating that it was already preparing for this process of nationwide democratization—that is, for the new approach to reunification via subjugation of the South Korean puppet regime.

It is instructive to compare the preface to the rulebook as revised in the seventh congress with the preface as amended in 2021:

The former stated: “The immediate purpose of the Workers Party of Korea is to build a strong socialist nation in the northern half of the Republic and to carry out the task of National Liberation Democratic Revolution on a nationwide scale. The ultimate goal of the Party is to make all societies Kimilsungist-Kimjongilist societies and to fully realize the independence of the people.”

The latter, by contrast, stated: “The immediate goal of the Workers' Party of Korea is to build a wealthy and civilized socialist society in the northern half of the Republic and to realize the voluntary and democratic development of society nationwide. The ultimate goal is to realize a communist society in which the people's ideals are fully realized.”

The part of the newly amended rules, “to realize ... the democratic development of society nationwide” has the meaning of the democratization on the nationwide level. While we cannot know that whether DPRK had already defined the concept of “subjugation” when it revised its rulebook, it openly announced a new line with the metaphorical

expression “new way”.

The essence of the theory of subjugation first is the theory of the South Korean revolution.

