

THE CAPITALIST DEGENERATION OF THE COLLECTIVE FARMS IN THE SOVIET UNION TODAY

Nexhmedin Luari
Senior Scientific Worker

During the years 1928-1936, under the leadership of J.V. Stalin and in conformity with the teachings of V.I. Lenin, the collectivization of agriculture in the Soviet Union was completed with overall success. The completion of this important process, the transformation of the small private economies into large collective economies, marked the triumph of socialism in the countryside, too. Thus the economy of the Soviet Union was established with both feet on socialist ground, as Lenin instructed.

“In 1937 the collective farms accounted for 93 per cent of the total number of peasant households, while the grain crop area of the collective farms amounted to 99 per cent of the total grain crop area sown by the peasantry” (History of the CPSU (b). a brief course, 1945, p. 347).

The collectivization of agriculture overturned the old relations of production, barred the way to the development of capitalism in the countryside and of the exploitation of peasants, established new relations of solidarity and mutual help in the countryside, as well as between town and countryside, between the working class and the peasantry, thus further strengthening the alliance of these friendly classes.

It provided the Soviet state with its socialist base in the broadest and most vital, but also the most backward sector of the people's economy.

After the death of J.V. Stalin, with the coming to power of the Khrushchev group, and especially following the 20th Congress of the CPSU, the restoration of capitalism began to extend to the countryside as well. Thus “Soviet society turned bourgeois down to its tiniest pores, capitalism was restored in all fields.”*

* Enver Hoxha, Report to the 7th Congress of the PLA, Tirana, 1976, p. 215, Alb. ed.

With the degeneration of the character of the ownership of collective farms, the relations of distribution in the Soviet Union also degenerated. In fact, today, the labour power of the collective farmer has been transformed into a commodity. The collective farmer is paid for only a very small part of the work he does, while most of the results of his labour are appropriated without payment by the new bourgeoisie through channels of the realization of the collective capitalist ownership and the state monopoly ownership. Mere juridical proclamation does not define the character of ownership. What is important is its real aspect, the economic aspect. From the economic aspect, the important thing is, first who decides how property is used; second, what mechanisms are used for the administration of this property; third, who profits from this property. The present-day capitalist collective farms in the Soviet Union are collective only in name, while their content has changed in all directions. Although formally the main means of production are not directly the property of the bourgeoisie, as they are in classical capitalist society, the new rural bourgeoisie which runs these farms appropriates the labour of others and the profits which are drawn from this property and this capitalist distribution. Hence, the collective farm property has been transformed into capitalist property of a specific group of the new rural bourgeoisie and production in the collective farms is now based on profit and the enrichment of this bourgeoisie. With the re-

establishment of capitalist relations, the economic laws of capitalism operate in the Soviet countryside, too.

The revisionists' action of breaking up the MTS and selling the tractors and other farm machinery to the collective farms was one of the anti-Marxist acts which destroyed the socialist system established in the Soviet countryside. This capitalist measure accelerated the bourgeois degeneration of the collective farm order.

With the breaking up of the MTS, the Soviet revisionists placed large quantities of the main means of production in the sphere of the circulation of commodities, thus reviving the market mechanism and departing from the socialist road. Engels condemned the existence of the circulation of commodities in the so-called economic communes of Dihring, regarding this as an element which inevitably gives birth to capitalism.

The abandonment of the socialist principle of distribution according to the quantity and quality of work done, the establishment of forms of remuneration contrary to this principle, have created marked differences in the incomes distributed among the collective farmers, and especially, between their incomes and those of the managers and administrative personnel who comprise the new bourgeoisie. All this has led to alteration of the social class structure of the Soviet countryside, where there are now the class of exploiters and the class of the exploited, regardless of the fact that amongst them there are strata of different economic levels according to the place they occupy in the production and distribution of the surplus value.

Consistently adhering to the Marxist-Leninist principles in the field of distribution, the PLA has never allowed the creation of great disproportions in incomes between town and countryside, or within them.

The Soviet revisionists tried in vain to cover up and disguise their capitalist practices in the field of distribution, through anti-scientific and anti-Marxist theorizing, such as the so-called revolution in the field of incomes, the social differentiation of labour, etc which, in fact, create the terrain for the new bourgeoisie of town and countryside to increase the exploitation and use any means to enrich itself in every way.

According to the Marxist-Leninist theory, the private plot of the cooperativist, as an economic phenomenon, comes into being with the collectivization of agriculture. It has a transitory and temporary character and represents an auxiliary economy which serves to fulfil certain requirements of the families of cooperative members, but is not an economy producing for market production. It was treated as such in the Soviet Union as long as Stalin was alive and the CPSU stood on Marxist position.

At the November 1978 Plenum of the CC of the Soviet revisionist party, it was stressed that "... it is essential that a climate of warm encouragement is created for the individual (read: private) agricultural economies... for they do useful work for the state. This is an extremely important issue..." (Ekonomicheskaya gazeta, No. 12. p. 16, 1979). The decision of June 6, 1979, of the CC of the Soviet revisionist party and the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union on encouraging private production is a continuation and deepening of this line and has enthused the observers in the capitalist countries who notice with pleasure that "the Soviet party and government hope to stop the downhill course of private production" AT A. Foreign News, July 3, 1979, p. 10)). As a result of this, the private sector as a whole,

accounts for more than 25 per cent of total agricultural production, and frequently the amount of agricultural and livestock products from the individual plots sold on the private market is greater for some products than the amount of the same products which the state capitalist sector (the state farms) sells. Prices for these goods on this market are two to three times higher than on the state capitalist market. In the Soviet Union today, about 600,000 collective farmers and other private producers sell agricultural and livestock products on the peasant market. Twenty-eight peasant markets with 20,000 stalls have been opened for this purpose in Moscow alone. (ATA, Foreign News. November 12, 1980.)

The capitalist system is incapable of ensuring stability in agricultural production. In the world today about one billion people suffer from hunger and 450 million others live on the verge of starvation. (ATA, Foreign News, June 9, 1980, p. 5.) Albania is among the European countries with least arable land per head of population. Nevertheless, by relying on the cooperativist order, the ever increasing needs of consumption, industry and export for bread grain and other agricultural and livestock products are ever better fulfilled in conformity with the requirements of the socio-economic development of the country. "The collectivization of agriculture, carried out over a period, step by step, as well as the unceasing strengthening of the common property, are proving the superiority and vitality of the socialist cooperativist order right now, when all over the world, not only in the backward countries, but even in the so-called advanced countries, there is a great shortage of agricultural products."* Thanks to the correct Marxist-Leninist line of our Party, "We are able to produce 5 times more bread grain than before Liberation, while in 1979, as compared with 1960, agricultural production was about 3 times greater."**

* Enver Hoxha. Report to the 7th Congress of the PLA, pp. 45-46, Alb. ed.

** Mehmet Shehu, "A Magnificent Balance of Victories in the Course of 35 Years of Socialist Albania", Tirana, 1979, p. 14, Alb. ed.

Analysis of the experience gained by the PLA during these 36 years of socialist construction shows that the safeguarding and strengthening of socialist ownership in its two forms, as well as the constant improvement of the relations of distribution in a revolutionary way, under the dictatorship of the proletariat, have decisive importance. Through the dictatorship of the proletariat, the PLA has constantly strengthened and developed both forms of socialist property, has ensured that this property is really owned by the working class, the cooperativist peasantry and all the other working people and used in the interests of the whole society, allowing no individual person or stratum to profit and enrich themselves from it.

The capitalist degeneration of the collective farm order in the Soviet Union, and the transformation of the socialist collective economies into capitalist collective economies wiped out one of the most hard-won historic victories of the proletarian revolution after the seizure of power under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin.