

Communist Organisation October of Spain

Against ideological Immobility

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SPAIN

Against ideological immobility

At present, there is no Marxist-Leninist party or organisation, no communist -organised or not-who did not face the necessity to analyse the causes, responsibilities, failures and errors which led the international communist movement into a hitherto inexperienced objective situation of weakness, splintering and confusion. Gradually we are extricating ourselves from this situation but there are many problems and questions we have to deal with.

For reasons which must be explained any time, the multilateral meetings held by some of our parties for the last couple of years did not succeed in having the efforts congealed into practice. The steps were positive but remained simple steps and got continuous not before now. The spirit on the meetings in the Dominican Republic, in Germany and in Ecuador (1992 to 1994) and the resolutions made there, especially at the last meeting, now seem to create the conditions to make progress and to end the political, ideological and organisational immobility which constituted a brake to progress for so many years.

Let us put aside the absurd confirmation that "the collapse of the so called socialist countries including People's Albania did not concern us because we "suspected it already for a long time". It is true, this confirmation is correct but neither the form of that collapse nor the amazing speed of these events - especially in Albania- nor its consequences were foreseen by us or could have been foreseen. Thus, every communist is to face this classical question:

WHAT MUST BE DONE?

Though we created the Marxist-Leninist parties and organisations as such in the sixties we cannot say that the things which happened within the communist movement before, during and after the Second World War did not concern us. There exists a manifest chronological chain of the events which began many years before Comrade Joseph Stalin's death. In this or that way, everything is connected with each other. Therefore, a profound research and analysis is needed, and this requires general as well as special efforts (1).

Meanwhile, we manage to get a similar common effort going. We are outlining some ideas which might contribute to discussion. If we look back to the past years we should note that in the parties, in general, a trite and vulgar interpretation of Marxism and thus of Leninism predominated. Doing so was one of the reasons we criticised the revisionist parties and broke with them. However, after we had formed the Marxist-Leninist "avant-gardes", we maintained this attitude, maybe in an unconscious but real manner. That is an attitude in which the role of ideas, i.e. of the ideology, was not sufficiently taken into consideration in developing the struggle, the parties and the organisations.

Irrespective of whether we do accept this or not, this contributed to the fact that we delayed the fight against the bourgeois ideology with all its aspects and manifestations and that we did not attach this fight its full importance. This attitude furthered the appearance

(1) Here, we must point to the commendable work of the comrades from PCOF entitled "Contribution to the

Balance of Socialist Experience in the USSR".

of pessimist and defeatist positions which were based, above all, on the collapse of the "socialist camp" and the denial of the possibility of socialism, communism and, naturally, of a proletarian revolution. In principle, such positions imply the same old story told by Bernstein, its best known theoretician.

After having liquidated the PCE (M-L) by making use of a great ideological weakness, without which they would not have realised their criminal aims in such a dramatic way, the Spanish traitors and renegades launched muddle-headed attempts to put forward a theory of their distortions. Obviously, they immersed their ideas and intentions in a fruitless and vague cloud of hot air and incantations of clinging to the principles, to the revolution etc. Is it a coincidence that their positions are, in some cases, even in conformity with the sayings of the traitors and renegades of other countries?

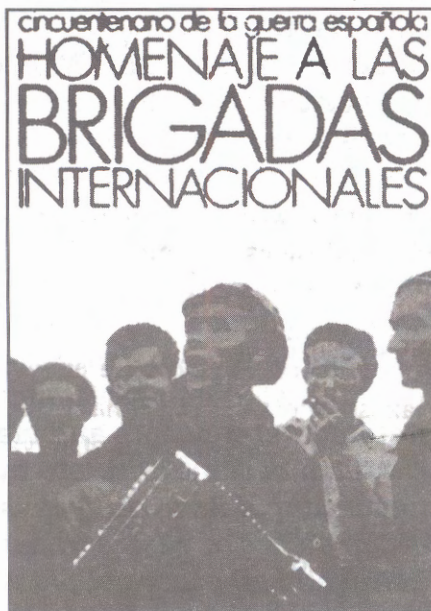
Let us, at present, ignore the factor of provocation and even of police. The above mentioned experience constitutes a partial explanation for the hard blows we suffered. The point is not to complain about it or give an account of it but that we have to strike at the root of it, to know what we did wrong or what we failed to do. That is absolutely necessary in order to understand the things that took place and to stand against the reactionary ideological offensive which continues to strike blows on us.

In spite of the use (and even misuse) of revolutionary phrases, it is obvious that the underlying vulgar materialism hampered the necessary ideological development of the parties by preventing us from seeing the critical point of the situation we were jammed in. At present, this lack of ideological and, consequently, of theoretical development

becomes apparent in an alarming manner.

We are disturbed at a certain generalised schematism and the damage caused by it. Unfortunately, our bitter experience is not at all single. Schematism, in general connected with hair-splitting (consisting in a flood of words and a lack of concept in the mode of forming an opinion), causes a dangerous weakening and, in some cases, the going astray of the ideological, theoretical fight against revisionism. We must not lose sight of the fact that revisionism is the most dangerous of the ideological currents, because, among other things, this current penetrates into the so-called masses, i.e. in the people, with greater ease.

Many things have changed; for instance, the transformations undergone and even the form of appearance of the revisionists. In principle, however, their positions remained the same. In a concealed way or openly, according to the case, they deny or distort Marxism-Leninism, pronounce it obsolete and antiquated by scientific-technological developments and discoveries. They also deny -in this or that manner, with this or that nuance- the possibility of the proletarian revolution, and all of them, all without exception, practise class collaboration. Today, the reference, e.g. to the "dictatorship of proletariat" or to



the "democratic centralism" makes them shudder in the same way as a social democrat shuddered in the twenties (2).

This schematism leads to metaphysical determinism in a disastrous manner. In a certain way, it has grown into a habit to consider the evolution of social struggle in a straight line, developing without unevenness and relapses, independent of conscious

(2) In our opinion, fight against revisionism has to be classified as ideological and political in its principal aspect. In respect to the former, we have the impression that delimitation of camps, concepts and expressions is absolutely necessary notwithstanding the importance of nuances (Lenin). In respect to the latter, we do not exclude the possibility of tactical agreements and alliances in relation to certain problems at a certain time. The popular front policy presented by Dimitroff at the Seventh Convention of

the International (in 1935) is clear, concrete and logical. However, it is a different matter how this concrete policy of unity was performed -which was wrong- after the decline of Nazi fascism.

At present, we have the impression that the comrades from the Communist Party of Colombia (ML) are implementing a correct and clear policy of unity with the FARC and the ELN in connection with the specific problems of time in their country.

action of men. As if the communists were to play the role of witnesses instead of actors, limiting themselves to the knowledge of the inevitable evolution of class struggle instead of playing the role of its ardent inspirations.

Marxism is not a closed, firmly established and immobile science. It is not the end of an ideological finding process or theoretical work. It has not been presented once and for ever. It is not a closed system of thought the conclusions of which had been overcome what these and those theoreticians undertook to pronounce, among whom there are these crowds of "communist intellectuals", "clear-sighted", "disappointed" and ringleaders of the "business of remorse" (Benedetti).

There is no communist who will deny the fact that Marxism is not a dogma. On the contrary, it is an instruction for action. Nobody denies that it is a live science, that theory must continuously be developed in the light of changes and new elements which have appeared and have an effect on society. In conformity with what we said above, we must not shrink back from correcting, modifying and replacing statements, concepts and views which became obsolete by momentum of its own. This is one of the pieces of advice given by Lenin and all other people who contributed to bringing Marxism up to date.

This updating must be a continuous process. For many years, however, almost nothing happened in this respect, apart from insulated and laudable intentions. When an attempt was undertaken to get out of this theoretical and thus practical immobility, we faced with sharp refusals with the explanations that this was not in conformity, from A to Z, with what is written by "classical authors". We, most of those who write in this review, have witnessed how -during the last fifteen years (we could go back further)- the projects, proposals and initiatives of practical and theoretical co-operation among the parties were rejected by some people who would previously, after having heard the arguments of the former Party of Labour of Albania or of another "great party", have approved them.

Rejecting and fighting against ideological

immobility does neither mean falling into pedantry nor theoretically treating, once more, all the things which have already been theoretically treated. We are talking about following the dialectic evolution of things -internal and external political situations, specific circumstances, general manifestations. We are talking about constantly heightening our analyses, daring to correct or modify them, removing things which are no more valid and adding the new, and all that without being scared of being labelled as heretics.

"What has been written is written." Sure, but what does it mean? We can quote numerous cases in which, for instance, Lenin corrected his own ideas. In his

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"Preface to the English edition of the Communist Manifesto" (in 1888), Engels called some passages of this work obsolete:

"Today, they should be reviewed in more than one respect (...) in view of practical experiences. (I insist in constating) that criticising the socialist literature has been done incompletely."

He also points out that some statements "are still correct in their general features, (but) have been surpassed by practice as the political situation and the historical development have totally changed."

Engels, however, did not modify anything in the Manifest, as it "is a historical

document which we are not entitled to alter."

He did not do so but in later years he took these shortcomings into consideration, for this just reason. We must recall the fact that Engels constantly emphasised that "each important scientific discovery will result in a new form of materialism."

Naturally, Engels was not a "Marxist" to the taste of those who promulgate Marxism with deviations and curtailments and who distort it. The "new forms of Marxism" confirmed by Engels must not be thrown into a sack riddled with holes. On the contrary, they must be taken into consideration especially in a changing world like the world of today. We go through periods of questions and of big question marks. In such periods truth is not absolute, it is even very relative. In such periods it may be useful if we look back in order to understand the present time better.

In this sense, the most important thing is to pay attention to the findings Marx and Engels resumed from the fundamental laws of nature, of history and of thought when formulating the following four principal statements:

1. Law of motion: Everything changes constantly.
2. Law of interaction: Everything has an effect on all other things.
3. Law of contradiction: In everything, there is a contradiction between what is coming into being and what is fading away, and motion is born by the fight of these two opposite forces.
4. Law of progression by leaps: Evolution results in revolution.(3)

These are the four fundamental laws Lenin had in view in his whole theoretical work (e.g. confer "Materialism and Empiriocriticism").

Although the things which took place have not been much analysed, we clearly see the effect of these laws which never wholly cease to have an effect on the international communist movement. We experienced the enormous changes which came into being and were driven by objective causes and which the subjective condition-makers were not able to stop. We experienced vehement contradictions, in particular as well as in general, and -in spite of temporary but great regression- an evolutionary accumulation which will lead to qualitative leaps.

We communists, however (and that cannot be repeated too often), are not dogmatists or a kind of people who confine themselves to repeating hackneyed clichés. On the contrary, as we are Marxists-Leninists, we are to assume our role of

explorers with full consciousness, making our theoretical statements which constantly must be renewed and enriched on the basis of analyses.

On an abstract level, we may be very faithful to the utterance of Marxism-Leninism. However, if we give no answers, if we are not capable of making the spirit determining the utterance (Stalin), then we shall soon lose sight of the essence of Marxism and thus the fundamental conclusion that the class struggle - together with the ideas developed during this struggle and driving it- is the motor of history.

Summary: Those who make statements -which are correct in their time but can be passed by evolution or the dialectical process- immobile, absolute realities are completely in the wrong track, and the consequences of doing so are serious. This dialectical process and experience requires us to make clear the necessity of new statements. However, we must not consider these statements, too, absolute realities.

We must never forget the fact that reality is relative, for it has a special content at every given time. What is reality in certain conditions will not be the same when the conditions change. For communists, Marxism-Leninism reflects consciousness as being a historical process, graded from ignorance over knowledge of insulated facts and aspects up to a heightened and more profound consciousness and the discovery of the laws of development which, according to the laws of motion, of interaction and of contradiction, are new in comparison to the prior laws.

Once more we must take care not to become schematists with respect to the what we have said previously. The schematic formula "authentic realities

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(3) Hegel, often quoted by Marx and Lenin, describes these four laws in his work but with an idealistic charge centred in his theory of "absolute idea" ("Science of Logic" and "Philosophy of Nature"). According to Lenin, the Hegelian dialectic was a great achievement of the German philosophy, in spite of the contradiction between the dialectical method used by Hegel and his metaphysical system. Based on Hegel, Marx and Engels rejected Hegel's ideological aspects and constructed their dialectical method on the scientific basis of materialism. So they set the four laws quoted by us. Perhaps this may make the question

clearer. It was Marx himself who pointed out:

"My dialectical method is not only fundamentally different from Hegel's but even, all in all, its reverse. According to Hegel, progress of thought, which is transformed by him -under the name of idea- into a subject with own life, is the creator of real being and this is nothing but the exterior form in which thought incarnates itself. According to me, ideal being is nothing but material being transported into and translated in the man's head." ("Capital", volume 1)

are always unchangeable" (Duehring) is as wrong as the thinking of the Machists (contested by Lenin) that - on the basis of certain events by which constantly new concepts come into being and replace the obsolete ones - "reality is nothing but a subjective and arbitrary idea in the man's head". Lenin replied (in "Materialism and Empiriocriticism") that each discovery is an "absolute" progress of objective consciousness and each scientific ideology can be assigned to an objective reality.

Based on the bitter experience which hit us so hard but which could not defeat us, we can state that "the unity of science and practical action, the connection of theory and practice is the North Star of the communists." (Constantinoff, "Historical Materialism", Moscow 1951)

Without a militant dialectical-materialist theory and practice, the expression of unity and struggle of the Marxist-Leninists will remain nothing but a wishful thinking.

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