

Platform

September 2024 No.16

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 positioned in the lower right quadrant of the page, partially overlapping the text area.





Contents

Platform	Ten goals of World Anti-imperialist Youth Platform ····· 2
Work	The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution (Draft Platform for the Proletarian Party) ····· 3 V.I. Lenin
Article	Only a workers' movement equipped with the new revolutionary theory will ensure the inevitable victory of communism ····· 12 Victor Alexeyevich Vaziulin
	Imperialism is the era of revolution ····· 39 Communist Party of the Peoples of Spain (PCPE)
	On the Launching of the American Communist Party ····· 46 Carlos L. Garrido American Communist Party
	The Western Pacific War ····· 50 Stephen Cho Coordinator of the Korean International Forum

Ten goals of World Anti-imperialist Youth Platform

The World Anti-imperialist Youth Platform (Youth Platform) endorses with the Paris Declaration of the World Anti-imperialist Platform and expresses its determination to take the lead in its joint struggles, and affirms the following ten goals.

The Youth Platform commits itself to :

1. actively struggle in the vanguard for the final victory of the world anti-imperialist forces against the wars of imperialists' aggression including the US imperialism.
2. undauntedly and strongly fight for anti-war, anti-imperialism, anti-US with the workers and people to stop the imperialist forces' military actions, arms transportation and financial support.
3. firmly reject the mobilization of our youth as human shields on the imperialists' war of aggression.
4. widely explode the nature of imperialism's false propaganda and agitation through various means and methods.
5. oppose exploitation and plunder and stand in solidarity with the workers, peasants, and other working people.
6. increase its role as a vanguard of the youth masses for the solution of the youth problem, which is a product of imperialism and capitalism.
7. aim at genuine unity of the youth movement at the national, regional and global levels.
8. sharply and firmly carry out the ideological battle for justice against the reactionary ideologies and tendencies of pro-imperialism, revisionism, and opportunism.
9. constantly make efforts to analyze the situation scientifically and formulate revolutionary strategies.
10. thoroughly prepare themselves for the successors to the communist movement through revolutionary organizational life and practical struggles.

July 1, 2024 United States

World Anti-imperialist Youth Platform

The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution (Draft Platform for the Proletarian Party)

V.I. Lenin

Excerpts from the book “The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution (Draft Platform for the Proletarian Party)”

The Situation Within The Socialist International

16. The international obligations of the working class of Russia are precisely now coming to the forefront with particular force.

Only lazy people do not swear by internationalism these days. Even the chauvinist defencists, even Plekhanov and Potresov, even Kerensky, call themselves internationalists. It becomes the duty of the proletarian party all the more urgently, therefore, to clearly, precisely and definitely counterpoise internationalism in deed to internationalism in word.

Mere appeals to the workers of all countries, empty assurances of devotion to internationalism, direct or indirect attempts to fix a “sequence” of action by the revolutionary proletariat in the various belligerent countries, laborious efforts to conclude “agreements” between the socialists of the belligerent countries on the question of the revolutionary struggle, all the fuss over the summoning of socialist congresses for the purpose of a peace campaign, etc., etc.—no matter how sincere the authors of such ideas, attempts, and plans may be—amount, as far as their objective significance is concerned, to mere phrase-mongering, and at best are innocent and pious wishes, fit only to conceal the deception of the people by the chauvinists. The French social-chauvinists, who are the most adroit and accomplished in methods of parliamentary hocus-pocus, have long since broken the record for ranting and resonant pacifist and internationalist phrases coupled with the incredibly

brazen betrayal of socialism and the International, the acceptance of posts in governments which conduct the imperialist war, the voting of credits or loans (as Chkheidze, Skobelev, Tsereteli and Steklov have been doing recently in Russia), opposition to the revolutionary struggle in their own country, etc., etc.

Good people often forget the brutal and savage setting of the imperialist world war. This setting does not tolerate phrases, and mocks at innocent and pious wishes.

There is one, and only one, kind of real internationalism, and that is—working wholeheartedly for the development of the revolutionary movement and the revolutionary struggle in one’s own country, and supporting (by propaganda, sympathy, and material aid) this struggle, this, and only this, line, in every country without exception.

Everything else is deception and Manilovism.

During the two odd years of the war the international socialist and working-class movement in every country has evolved three trends. Whoever ignores reality and refuses to recognise the existence of these three trends, to analyse them, to fight consistently for the trend that is really internationalist, is doomed to impotence, helplessness and errors.

The three trends are:

1) The social-chauvinists, i.e., socialists in word and chauvinists in deed. People who support “defence of the fatherland” in an imperialist war (and above all in the present imperialist war).

These people are our class enemies. They have gone over to the bourgeoisie.

They are the majority of the official leaders of the official Social-Democratic parties in all countries—Plekhanov and Co. in Russia, the Scheidemanns in

Germany, Renaudel, Guesde and Sembat in France, Bissolati and Co. in Italy, Hyndman, the Fabians and the Labourites (the leaders of the “Labour Party”) in Britain, Branting and Co. in Sweden, Troelstra and his party in Holland, Stauning and his party in Denmark, Victor Berger and the other “defenders of the fatherland” in America, and so forth.

2) The second trend, known as the “Centre”, consists of people who vacillate between the social-chauvinists and the true internationalists.

The “Centre” all vow and declare that they are Marxists and internationalists, that they are for peace, for bringing every kind of “pressure” to bear upon the governments, for “demanding” in every way that their own government should “ascertain the will of the people for peace”, that they are for all sorts of peace campaigns, for peace without annexations, etc.—and for peace with the social-chauvinists. The “Centre” is for “unity”, the Centre is opposed to a split.

The “Centre” is a realm of honeyed petty-bourgeois phrases, of internationalism in word and cowardly opportunism and fawning on the social-chauvinists in deed.

The crux of the matter is that the “Centre” is not convinced of the necessity for a revolution against one’s own government; it does not preach revolution; it does not carry on a whole-hearted revolutionary struggle; and in order to evade such a struggle it resorts to the tritest ultra-“Marxist”—sounding excuses.

The social-chauvinists are our class enemies, they are bourgeois within the working-class movement. They represent a stratum, or groups, or sections of the working class which objectively have been bribed by the bourgeoisie (by better wages, positions of honour, etc.), and which help their own bourgeoisie to plunder and oppress small and weak peoples and to fight for the division of the capitalist spoils.

The “Centre” consists of routine-worshippers, eroded by the canker of legality, corrupted by the parliamentary atmosphere, etc., bureaucrats

accustomed to snug positions and soft jobs. Historically and economically speaking, they are not a separate stratum but represent only a transition from a past phase of the working-class movement—the phase between 1871 and 1914, which gave much that is valuable to the proletariat, particularly in the indispensable art of slow, sustained and systematic organisational work on a large and very large scale—to a new phase that became objectively essential with the outbreak of the first imperialist world war, which inaugurated the era of social revolution.

The chief leader and spokesman of the “Centre” is Karl Kautsky, the most outstanding authority in the Second International (1889-1914), since August 1914 a model of utter bankruptcy as a Marxist, the embodiment of unheard-of spinelessness, and the most wretched vacillations and betrayals. This “Centrist” trend includes Kautsky, Haase, Ledebour and the so-called workers’ or labour group in the Reichstag; in France it includes Longuet, Pressemane and the so-called minorities (Mensheviks) in general; in Britain, Philip Snowden, Ramsay MacDonald and many other leaders of the Independent Labour Party, and some leaders of the British Socialist Party; Morris Hillquit and many others in the United States; Turati, Tréves, Modigliani and others in Italy; Robert Grimm and others in Switzerland; Victor Adler and Co. in Austria; the party of the Organising Committee, Axelrod, Martov, Chkheidze, Tsereteli and others in Russia, and so forth.

Naturally, at times individuals unconsciously drift from the social-chauvinist to the “Centrist” position, and vice versa. Every Marxist knows that classes are distinct, even though individuals may move freely from one class to another; similarly, trends in political life are distinct in spite of the fact that individuals may change freely from one trend to another, and in spite of all attempts and efforts to amalgamate trends.

3) The third trend, that of the true internationalists, is best represented by the “Zimmerwald Left”. (We reprint as a supplement its manifesto of September

1915, to enable the reader to learn of the inception of this trend at first hand.)

Its distinctive feature is its complete break with both social-chauvinism and “Centrism”, and its gallant revolutionary struggle against its own imperialist government and its own imperialist bourgeoisie. Its principle is: “Our chief enemy is at home.” It wages a ruthless struggle against honeyed social-pacifist phrases (a social-pacifist is a socialist in word and a bourgeois pacifist in deed; bourgeois pacifists dream of an everlasting peace without the overthrow of the yoke and domination of capital) and against all subterfuges employed to deny the possibility, or the appropriateness, or the timeliness of a proletarian revolutionary struggle and of a proletarian socialist revolution in connection with the present war.

The most outstanding representative of this trend in Germany is the Spartacus group or the Internationale group, to which Karl Liebknecht belongs. Karl Liebknecht is a most celebrated representative of this trend and of the new, and genuine, proletarian International.

Karl Liebknecht called upon the workers and soldiers of Germany to turn their guns against their own government. Karl Liebknecht did that openly from the rostrum of parliament (the Reichstag). He then went to a demonstration in Potsdamer Platz, one of the largest public squares in Berlin, with illegally printed leaflets proclaiming the slogan “Down with the Government!” He was arrested and sentenced to hard labour. He is now serving his term in a German convict prison, like hundreds, if not thousands, of other true German socialists who have been imprisoned for their anti-war activities.

Karl Liebknecht in his speeches and letters mercilessly attacked not only his own Plekhanovs and Potresovs (Scheidemanns, Legiens, Davids and Co.), but also his own Centrists, his own Chkheidzes and Tseretelis (Kautsky, Haase, Ledebour and Co.).

Karl Liebknecht and his friend Otto Rühle, two out of one hundred and ten deputies, violated discipline,

destroyed the “unity” with the “Centre” and the chauvinists, and went against all of them. Liebknecht alone represents socialism, the proletarian cause, the proletarian revolution. All the rest of German Social-Democracy, to quote the apt words of Rosa Luxemburg (also a member and one of the leaders of the Spartacus group), is a “stinking corpse”.

Another group of true internationalists in Germany is that of the Bremen paper Arbeiterpolitik.

Closest to the internationalists in deed are: in France, Loriot and his friends (Bourderon and Merrheim have slid down to social-pacifism), as well as the Frenchman Henri Guilbeaux, who publishes in Geneva the journal *Demain*; in Britain, the newspaper *The Trade Unionist*, and some of the members of the British Socialist Party and of the Independent Labour Party (for instance, Russel Williams, who openly called for a break with the leaders who have betrayed socialism), the Scottish socialist school teacher MacLean, who was sentenced to hard labour by the bourgeois government of Britain for his revolutionary fight against the war, and hundreds of British socialists who are in jail for the same offence. They, and they alone, are internationalists in deed. In the United States, the Socialist Labour Party and those within the opportunist Socialist Party who in January 1917 began publication of the paper, *The Internationalist*; in Holland, the Party of the “Tribunists” which publishes the paper *De Tribune* (Pannekoek, Herman Gorter, Wijnkoop, and Henriette Roland-Holst, who, although Centrist at Zimmerwald, has now joined our ranks); in Sweden, the Party of the Young, or the Left [Swedish Social Democrats], led by Lindhagen, Ture Nerman, Carleson, Strölm and Z. Hömglund, who at Zimmerwald was personally active in the organisation of the “Zimmerwald Left”, and who is now in prison for his revolutionary fight against the war; in Denmark, Trier and his friends who have left the now purely bourgeois “Social-Democratic” Party of Denmark, headed by the Minister Stauning; in Bulgaria, the “Tesnyaki”; in

Italy, the nearest are Constantino Lazzari, secretary of the party, and Serrati, editor of the central organ, *Avanti!*; in Poland, Radek, Hanecki and other leaders of the Social-Democrats united under the “Regional Executive”, and Rosa Luxemburg, Tyszka and other leaders of the Social-Democrats united under the “Chief Executive” [executive bodies of the Social democrats in the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania]; in Switzerland, those of the Left who drew up the argument for the “referendum” (January 1917) in order to fight the social-chauvinists and the “Centre” in their own country and who at the Zurich Cantonal Socialist Convention, held at Töss on February 11, 1917, moved a consistently revolutionary resolution against the war; in Austria, the young Left-wing friends of Friedrich Adler, who acted partly through the Karl Marx Club in Vienna, now closed by the arch-reactionary Austrian Government, which is ruining Adler’s life for his heroic though ill-considered shooting at a minister, and so on.

It is not a question of shades of opinion, which certainly exist even among the Lefts. It is a question of trend. The thing is that it is not easy to be an internationalist in deed during a terrible imperialist war. Such people are few; but it is on such people alone that the future of socialism depends; they alone are the leaders of the people, and not their corrupters.

The distinction between the reformists and the revolutionaries, among the Social-Democrats, and socialists generally, was objectively bound to undergo a change under the conditions of the imperialist war. Those who confine themselves to “demanding” that the bourgeois governments should conclude peace or “ascertain the will of the peoples for peace”, etc., are actually slipping into reforms. For, objectively, the problem of the war can be solved only in a revolutionary way.

There is no possibility of this war ending in a democratic, non-coercive peace or of the people being relieved of the burden of billions paid in interest to the capitalists, who have made fortunes out of the

war, except through a revolution of the proletariat.

The most varied reforms can and must be demanded of the bourgeois governments, but one cannot, without sinking to Manilovism and reformism, demand that people and classes entangled by the thousands of threads of imperialist capital should tear those threads. And unless they are torn, all talk of a war against war is idle and deceitful prattle.

The “Kautskyites”, the “Centre”, are revolutionaries in word and reformists in deed, they are internationalists in word and accomplices of the social-chauvinists in deed.

The Collapse Of The Zimmerwald International—The Need For Founding A Third International

17. From the very outset, the Zimmerwald International adopted a vacillating, “Kautskyite”, “Centrist” position, which immediately compelled the Zimmerwald Left to dissociate itself, to separate itself from the rest, and to issue its own manifesto (published in Switzerland in Russian, German and French).

The chief shortcoming of the Zimmerwald International, and the cause of its collapse (for politically and ideologically it has already collapsed), was its vacillation and indecision on such a momentous issue of crucial practical significance as that of breaking completely with social-chauvinism and the old social-chauvinist International, headed by Vandervelde and Huysmans at The Hague (Holland), etc.

It is not as yet known in Russia that the Zimmerwald majority are nothing but Kautskyites. Yet this is the fundamental fact, one which cannot be ignored, and which is now generally known in Western Europe. Even that chauvinist, that extreme German chauvinist, Heilmann, editor of the ultra-chauvinistic *Chemnitzer Volksstimme* and contributor to Parvus’s ultra-chauvinistic *Glocke* (a “Social-Democrat”, of course, and an ardent partisan of Social-Democratic

“unity”), was compelled to acknowledge in the press that the Centre, or “Kautskyism”, and the Zimmerwald majority were one and the same thing.

This fact was definitely established at the end of 1916 and the beginning of 1917. Although social-pacifism was condemned by the Kienthal Manifesto^[1], the whole Zimmerwald Right, the entire Zimmerwald majority, sank to social-pacifism: Kautsky and Co. in a series of utterances in January and February 1917; Bourderon and Merrheim in France, who cast their votes in unanimity with the social-chauvinists for the pacifist resolutions of the Socialist Party (December 1916) and of the Confédération Générale du Travail (the national organisation of the French trade unions, also in December 1916); Turati and Co. in Italy, where the entire party took up a social-pacifist position, while Turati himself, in a speech delivered on December 17, 1916, “slipped” (not by accident, of course) into nationalist phrases whitewashing the imperialist war.

In January 1917, the chairman of the Zimmerwald and Kienthal conferences, Robert Grimm, joined the social-chauvinists in his own party (Greulich, Pflüger, Gustav Mümler and others) against the internationalists in deed.

At two conferences of Zimmerwaldists from various countries in January and February 1917, this equivocal, double-faced behaviour of the Zimmerwald majority was formally stigmatised by the Left internationalists of several countries: by Munzenberg, secretary of the international youth organisation and editor of the excellent internationalist publication *Die Jugend internationale*; by Zinoviev, representative of the Central Committee of our Party; by K. Radek of the Polish Social-Democratic Party (the “Regional Executive”), and by Hartstein, a German Social-Democrat and member of the Spartacus group.

Much is given to the Russian proletariat; nowhere in the world has the working class yet succeeded in developing so much revolutionary energy as in Russia. But to whom much is given, of him much is

required.

The Zimmerwald bog can no longer be tolerated. We must not, for the sake of the Zimmerwald “Kautskyites”, continue the semi-alliance with the chauvinist International of the Plekhanovs and Scheidemanns. We must break with this International immediately. We must remain in Zimmerwald only for purposes of information.

It is we who must found, and right now, without delay, a new, revolutionary, proletarian International, or rather, we must not fear to acknowledge publicly that this new International is already established and operating.

This is the International of those “internationalists in deed” whom I precisely listed above. They and they alone are representatives of the revolutionary, internationalist mass, and not their corrupters.

And if socialists of that type are few, let every Russian worker ask himself whether there were many really class-conscious revolutionaries in Russia on the eve of the February-March revolution of 1917.

It is not a question of numbers, but of giving correct expression to the ideas and policies of the truly revolutionary proletariat. The thing is not to “proclaim” internationalism, but to be able to be an internationalist in deed, even when times are most trying.

Let us not deceive ourselves with hopes of agreements and international congresses. As long as the imperialist war is on, international intercourse is held in the iron vise of the military dictatorship of the imperialist bourgeoisie. If even the “republican” Milyukov, who is obliged to tolerate the parallel government of the Soviet of Workers’ Deputies, did not allow Fritz Platten, the Swiss socialist, secretary of the party, an internationalist and participant in the Zimmerwald and Kienthal conferences, to enter Russia in April 1917, in spite of the fact that Platten has a Russian wife and was on his way to visit his wife’s relatives, and in spite of the fact that he had taken part in the revolution of 1905 in Riga, for which he had

been confined in a Russian prison, had given bail to the tsarist government for his release and wished to recover that bail—if the “republican” Milyukov could do such a thing in April 1917 in Russia, one can judge what value can be put on the promises and assurances, the phrases and declarations of the bourgeoisie on the subject of peace without annexations, and soon.

And the arrest of Trotsky by the British Government? And the refusal to allow Martov to leave Switzerland, and the attempt to lure him to Britain, where Trotsky’s fate awaits him?

Let us harbour no illusions. We must not deceive ourselves.

To “wait” for international congresses or conferences is simply to betray internationalism, since it has been shown that even from Stockholm neither socialists loyal to internationalism nor even their letters are allowed to come here, although this is quite possible and although a ferocious military censorship exists.

Our Party must not “wait”, but must immediately found a Third International. Hundreds of socialists imprisoned in Germany and Britain will then heave a sigh of relief, thousands and thousands of German workers who are now holding strikes and demonstrations that are frightening that scoundrel and brigand, Wilhelm, will learn from illegal leaflets of our decision, of our fraternal confidence in Karl Liebknecht, and in him alone, of our decision to fight “revolutionary defencism” even now; they will read this and be strengthened in their revolutionary internationalism.

To whom much is given, of him much is required. No other country in the world is as free as Russia is now. Let us make use of this freedom, not to advocate support for the bourgeoisie, or bourgeois “revolutionary defencism”, but in a bold, honest, proletarian, Liebknecht way to found the Third International, an International uncompromisingly hostile both to the social-chauvinist traitors and to the vacillating “Centrists”.

18. After what has been said, there is no need to

waste many words explaining that the amalgamation of Social-Democrats in Russia is out of the question.

It is better to remain with one friend only, like Liebknecht, and that means remaining with the revolutionary proletariat, than to entertain even for a moment any thought of amalgamation with the party of the Organising Committee, with Chkheidze and Tsereteli, who can tolerate a bloc with Potresov in *Rabochaya Gazeta*, who voted for the loan in the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers’ Deputies^[2], and who have sunk to “defencism”.

Let the dead bury their dead.

Whoever wants to help the waverers must first stop wavering himself.

What Should Be The Name Of Our Party—One That Will Be Correct Scientifically And Help To Clarify The Mind Of The Proletariat Politically?

19. I now come to the final point, the name of our Party. We must call ourselves the Communist Party—just as Marx and Engels called themselves.

We must repeat that we are Marxists and that we take as our basis the Communist Manifesto, which has been distorted and betrayed by the Social-Democrats on its two main points: (1) the working men have no country: “defence of the fatherland” in an imperialist war is a betrayal of socialism; and (2) the Marxist doctrine of the state has been distorted by the Second International.

The name “Social-Democracy” is scientifically incorrect, as Marx frequently pointed out, in particular, in the Critique of the Gotha Programme in 1875, and as Engels re-affirmed in a more popular form in 1894[Engels, Preface to *Internationales aus dem Volkstaat* (1871-1875)]. From capitalism mankind can pass directly only to socialism, i.e., to the social ownership of the means of production and the distribution of products according to the amount of work performed by each individual. Our Party looks farther ahead: socialism must inevitably evolve gradually into communism, upon the banner of

which is inscribed the motto, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs".

That is my first argument.

Here is the second: the second part of the name of our Party (Social-Democrats) is also scientifically incorrect. Democracy is a form of state, whereas we Marxists are opposed to every kind of state.

The leaders of the Second International (1889-1914), Plekhanov, Kautsky and their like, have vulgarised and distorted Marxism.

Marxism differs from anarchism in that it recognises the need for a state for the purpose of the transition to socialism; but (and here is where we differ from Kautsky and Co.) not a state of the type of the usual parliamentary bourgeois-democratic republic, but a state like the Paris Commune of 1871 and the Soviets of Workers' Deputies of 1905 and 1917.

My third argument: living reality, the revolution, has already actually established in our country, albeit in a weak and embryonic form, precisely this new type of "state", which is not a state in the proper sense of the word.

This is already a matter of the practical action of the people, and not merely a theory of the leaders.

The state in the proper sense of the term is domination over the people by contingents of armed men divorced from the people.

Our emergent, new state is also a state, for we too need contingents of armed men, we too need the strictest order, and must ruthlessly crush by force all attempts at either a tsarist or a Guchkov-bourgeois counter-revolution.

But our emergent, new state is no longer a state in the proper sense of the term, for in some parts of Russia these contingents of armed men are the masses themselves, the entire people, and not certain privileged persons placed over the people, and divorced from the people, and for all practical purposes undisplaceable.

We must look forward, and not backward to the usual bourgeois type of democracy, which consolidated

the rule of the bourgeoisie with the aid of the old, monarchist organs of administration, the police, the army and the bureaucracy.

We must look forward to the emergent new democracy, which is already ceasing to be a democracy, for democracy means the domination of the people, and the armed people cannot dominate themselves.

The term democracy is not only scientifically incorrect when applied to a Communist Party; it has now, since March 1917, simply become blinders put on the eyes of the revolutionary people and preventing them from boldly and freely, on their own initiative, building up the new: the Soviets of Workers', Peasants', and all other Deputies, as the sole power in the "state" and as the harbinger of the "withering away" of the state in every form.

My fourth argument: we must reckon with the actual situation in which socialism finds itself internationally.

It is not what it was during the years 1871 to 1914, when Marx and Engels knowingly put up with the inaccurate, opportunist term "Social-Democracy". For in those days, after the defeat of the Paris Commune, history made slow organisational and educational work the task of the day. Nothing else was possible. The anarchists were then (as they are now) fundamentally wrong not only theoretically, but also economically and politically. The anarchists misjudged the character of the times, for they failed to understand the world situation: the worker of Britain corrupted by imperialist profits, the Commune defeated in Paris, the recent (1871) triumph of the bourgeois national movement in Germany, the age-long sleep of semi-feudal Russia.

Marx and Engels gauged the times accurately; they understood the international situation; they understood that the approach to the beginning of the social revolution must be slow.

We, in our turn, must also understand the specific features and tasks of the new era. Let us not imitate

those sorry Marxists of whom Marx said: “I have sown dragon’s teeth and harvested fleas.”

The objective inevitability of capitalism which grew into imperialism brought about the imperialist war. The war has brought mankind to the brink of a precipice, to the brink of the destruction of civilisation, of the brutalisation and destruction of more millions, countless millions, of human beings.

The only way out is through a proletarian revolution.

At the very moment when such a revolution is beginning, when it is taking its first hesitant, groping steps, steps betraying too great a confidence in the bourgeoisie, at such a moment the majority (that is the truth, that is a fact) of the “Social-Democratic” leaders, of the “Social-Democratic” parliamentarians, of the “Social-Democratic” newspapers—and these are precisely the organs that influence the people—have deserted socialism, have betrayed socialism and have gone over to the side of “their own” national bourgeoisie.

The people have been confused, led astray and deceived by these leaders.

And we shall aid and abet that deception if we retain the old and out-of-date Party name, which is as decayed as the Second International!

Granted that “many” workers understand Social-Democracy in an honest way; but it is time to learn how to distinguish the subjective from the objective.

Subjectively, such Social-Democratic workers are most loyal leaders of the proletarians.

Objectively, however, the world situation is such that the old name of our Party makes it easier to fool the people and impedes the onward march; for at every step, in every paper, in every parliamentary group, the masses see leaders, i.e., people whose voices carry farthest and whose actions are most conspicuous; yet they are all “would-be Social-Democrats”, they are all “for unity” with the betrayers of socialism, with the social-chauvinists; and they are all presenting for payment the old bills issued by “Social-Democracy”...

And what are the arguments against?... We’ll be

confused with the Anarchist-Communists, they say...

Why are we not afraid of being confused with the Social-Nationalists, the Social-Liberals, or the Radical-Socialists, the foremost bourgeois party in the French Republic and the most adroit in the bourgeois deception of the people? ...We are told: The people are used to it, the workers have come to “love” their Social-Democratic Party.

That is the only argument. But it is an argument that dismisses the science of Marxism, the tasks of the morrow in the revolution, the objective position of world socialism, the shameful collapse of the Second International, and the harm done to the practical cause by the packs of “would-be Social-Democrats” who surround the proletarians.

It is an argument of routinism, an argument of inertia, an argument of stagnation.

But we are out to rebuild the world. We are out to put an end to the imperialist world war into which hundreds of millions of people have been drawn and in which the interests of billions and billions of capital are involved, a war which cannot end in a truly democratic peace without the greatest proletarian revolution in the history of mankind.

Yet we are afraid of our own selves. We are loth to cast off the “dear old” soiled shirt..

But it is time to cast off the soiled shirt and to put on clean linen.

Petrograd, April 10, 1917

Notes

[1] This refers to the appeal “To the Peoples Suffering Ruination and Death” adopted at the Second International Conference of the Zimmerwaldists held on April 24-30, 1916 in Kienthal (Switzerland).

[2] On April 7(20), 1917, the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet, by a majority of 21 votes against 14, adopted a resolution in favour of supporting the so-called “Liberty Loan” issued by the Provisional Government to finance the continuing imperialist war. The Bolshevik members of the Executive Committee opposed this loan, declaring that support of it was “the worst form of ‘civil truce’ thin space” and moved a resolution containing a detailed statement of their position. Several members of the E.C. not belonging to the Bolshevik group voted with the Bolsheviks. The question was put before the plenary meeting of the Soviet after a preliminary discussion in the groups.

Only a workers' movement equipped with the new revolutionary theory will ensure the inevitable victory of communism

Victor Alexeyevich Vaziulin

No counter-revolution can stop the global revolutionary process towards the unification of humanity!

Interview with Victor Alexeyevich Vaziulin, Professor of Philosophical Sciences at the Lomonosov Moscow University (Conversation of V.A. Vaziulin with members of the International Research Group "The Logic of History", 4 April 1992). Translated to English by Spiros Patelis

Contents

- Revolution & counter-revolution in the Logic of History
- Optimistic & pessimistic tragedies. The social atmosphere during WWII.
- The state of philosophical studies in the USSR in the 1950s and beyond
- Tradition & new approaches in the research of the method of K. Marx's Capital.
- The contradictory changes brought about by the policies of N. Khrushchev
- The first steps towards a Marxist perception of the process of thinking
- Key points on totalitarianism. The absurdity of the pseudo-dilemma: absolute control vs. absolute arbitrariness
- The dialectical process of knowledge and the connection between truth & delusion
- The probabilistic nature of historical laws as tendencies. The importance of method in understanding the unity of multiplicity.
- On the emergence of the new society, a spiral of the great helix of human history
- Resistance to the capitalist counter-revolution

and the prospects of the future. The progressive character of Soviet society.

Revolution & counter-revolution in the Logic of History

G. Haveman: You will soon be 60 years old. Would you agree that one of the central objects of your historical research is the transition of humanity to a new type of development? And are the predictions of your theory not contradicted by the events that have occurred since 1985 in Eastern Europe and in your country?

V. Vaziulin: I can answer your first question about the aim of my research in the affirmative. As for the second, my answer is negative, they are not contradictory. The events that took place in Eastern Europe do not contradict the general course of history in any way. History never moves in a straight line. History tends to zigzag, with many interruptions and regressions. History has not only seen revolutions, but also counter-revolutions. Today we are experiencing a counter-revolution in the countries of Eastern Europe and in the USSR. The truth is that this counter-revolution is different, because the socialist revolution in the USSR took place due to internal conditions. In the countries of Eastern Europe, the transition to the socialist system was carried out to a considerable extent with the presence of the Soviet army. Without the presence of the Soviet army, the course of events in these countries would have been unknown. Of course, even in these countries, for example in Germany in 1918, there were internal conditions for a revolution. After the war, however, the presence of Soviet troops on their territory (as in East

Germany) played a certain role. Counter-revolution took place relatively quickly in these countries, partly because of their small size and partly because of the specificity of the causes that led to the realisation of socialist revolutions in these countries. In the Soviet Union, the counter-revolution has encountered and will continue to encounter much greater difficulties, and the process will be more protracted. At present it cannot be said that the counter-revolution has completely won. There is still a possibility, although of course it is a comparatively small possibility—not of a return to the past, because a complete return to the past is impossible—but of a certain turn of events in a different direction.

In this way, we are currently experiencing a period of counter-revolution.

Counter-revolutions are not a rare phenomenon in history. And in the era of the establishment of capitalism, counter-revolutions took place in almost all capitalist countries. We know very well that in the republics of northern Italy, when capitalism began to be established, a counter-revolution took place and then feudal reaction was imposed. We know that the revolution in England led to a counter-revolution. We know that the great bourgeois revolution in France ended in counter-revolution, and then we had new bourgeois revolutions in France, until the final victory of capitalism. In fact, this was the turn of events in practically all the major countries of Western Europe, i.e. where capitalism first appeared in history. So, counter-revolution is far from being a rare phenomenon in history. If we go deeper into history, we will find that in the transition from pre-class society to class society and more specifically in the first stage of class society, slave-owning society, there are also counter-revolutions: slave-owning states appear, reach their peak and then experience decline, dissolve, and the dissolving slave-owning states disintegrate into the barbarian communities surrounding them. And so on and so forth, until the slave-owning regime was finally established.

The latter was also wiped out by the barbarians, but this time after having laid the foundations for the emergence of a new formation.

Therefore, we can say that counter-revolution is as predicated by dialectical law, just as revolution is. And in the era of a formation coming into being, counter-revolutions are practically almost inevitable.

However, the peculiarity of the present stage of development is that, in our time, the conditions for the new society, for communist society—and, in my opinion for the unification of humanity—are ripening. And because humanity is becoming more and more united, the changes are becoming more and more widespread, covering large areas and large masses of people, incomparably larger than in the past. Today the counter-revolution has taken place on such a scale that it has actually spread to a number of countries. It has taken place practically simultaneously (from the historical point of view) in an entire group of countries. There was a counter-revolution in the whole new system that was emerging. And such a large-scale counter-revolution is natural as long as the revolution in our time is in the very stage of transition to a unified humanity. That is why counter-revolutions must occupy very large areas and involve colossal masses of the population, which was not the case in the counter-revolutions of the past. The counter-revolution had to take place in a system of interconnected countries. It could not take place in a single country. It had to be carried out immediately in practically all the countries that were part of the socialist system.

Of course, for the counter-revolution to succeed, it had to start in the strongest of these countries, the largest country (in terms of area and population), that is to say, the core of this counter-revolution had to be established primarily in the Soviet Union. But this does not exclude the possibility that counter-revolutions could have been carried out more easily in the other countries of Eastern Europe. But without counter-revolution in the Soviet Union, there would

have been little chance of counter-revolution in the other countries of Eastern Europe.

Communism as the result of the law-governed helical development of humanity towards its maturity, towards its unification.

That is why the breakdown of the socialist system today does not in itself tell us anything that would strengthen the view that there will be no further development in the direction of communism. At the same time, however, there are reasons to say that development in this direction [towards communism] has taken place, is taking place, and will continue to take place. These reasons become evident when we look at the entire history of humanity. And in the history of the development of humanity, if we take the entire history of humanity as a whole, the laws of development that govern it are discernible, [laws] which testify that the next stage of the development of humanity (if humanity is not destroyed, which is likely to happen in a world war or because of the ecological crisis) is communism, and its coming in this case is simply inevitable.

The point is that the growth of humanity is governed by laws and is spiral in nature. We are now in the last part of the great spiral of the helix, which can be traced through the past history of humanity. This can also be made clear by examining the process of development of the productive forces and the process of development of the relations of production. It can also be made clear by looking at the changes in other social relations, at the changes in human beings, at the changes in all spheres of social life. Take, for example, the productive forces. Since it is impossible to describe the whole process in detail in a brief discussion, we can only refer to some features of this process. The starting point for the development of humanity is the unprocessed means of labour, which are available in nature and are used collectively. Humanity was moving from an economy that used products taken

from nature itself, that is, from a foraging economy, to production per se. In the period of the foraging economy, humanity was at the stage of survival, that is, people were simply trying to survive biologically, to ensure a minimum biological limit for themselves. As the economy developed, the biologically necessary (minimum) level was ensured and the possibility of stockpiling appeared. This was achieved by the transition to actual production. In the early stages, people basically used the forces of nature. And when they united, it was through the forces of nature. For example, the first populations appeared near rivers, where people were united by the need to tame the forces of the river, the element of water. In even more primitive forms, they were united by the need for biological survival. For an entire series of eras, the main means of production were manual means of labour. These tools ultimately (rather than directly) define the existence of private property relations. But in the process of production, tools of labour, means of production with a social character, gradually “emerged”. That is to say, development proceeded in a kind of spiral: from socially activated means (initially not even of production, but of foraging, of collecting), used socially because of natural necessity, to production on the basis of individually activated tools of manual labour, and then again to social production, but now on the basis of artificially created conditions and tools of labour, the social character of which is the result of the development of society. And this ultimately offers the possibility of uniting the whole of humanity on a radically new basis, different from that of the initial stages of the development of human history, on the basis of a conscious mastery of the conditions of existence on our planet. And in fact, due to humanity’s mastery over the conditions of its existence on Earth, the possibility of humanity’s self-destruction appeared, i.e. the reverse (negative) side of humanity’s power also matured. It is precisely because humans reach this level that they have a dilemma to solve: to live or to end their lives by

suicide. So, in a sense, we are dealing with a spiral of the helix. But as is well known, the dialectical spiral motion in a way constitutes a return. Here, we have a return to social production, but to a social production that is not based on the previous natural basis, but to a social production on a human basis, with the retention of what was already achieved during the period when manual production prevailed.

The spiral form of development is also observed in the process of the development of social relations. At the beginning we have humans who are mainly one with nature. The foraging economy is the economy in which human beings have just begun to separate themselves from nature, but because of the processes described above they have not yet detached themselves from it. The next stage is the period of class societies, characterised by the dominance of private property. People are separated from nature and this separation takes on the character of a rupture with nature. People begin to treat nature as a means to an end. Before, they were basically one with nature. Nature was both a means and an end for them. Then they begin to treat nature only in terms of benefit to themselves. At the next stage, when they master the forces of nature and find that nature somehow “retaliates” when they treat it as a means (retaliates with the threat of ecological crisis, retaliates with the threat of death, but no longer with the death of an individual human being, but with the death of the entire human race), humanity must, willingly or unwillingly, enter into a different relationship with nature in order not to destroy itself. The necessity of returning to unity with nature is established, but to a unity that now includes difference from nature. Of course, humanity will seek to achieve its goals in this phase as well, but in the context of unity with nature, in the context of preserving nature. And the main thing for the survival of humanity will be the preservation of nature. And only by protecting nature will humanity be able to protect and preserve itself. So, what we have here is a spiral of the helix. In

essence, we have gone from direct unity with nature to a rupture with nature, to the predatory (thieving) relationship with nature that characterises the society of private property. The predatory relationship reaches its fullness in capitalist society, in the period of domination of commodity and monetary relations. As the conditions for the new society, for the unification of humanity, are created in capitalist society, the conditions and possibilities for overcoming the ecological crisis naturally increase. The conditions for the unification of humanity are undoubtedly already arising in the bowels of capitalist society: the social character of ever-growing production is developing. The development of the social character of production under capitalism manifests itself in particular in the transition from free competition to the monopoly. On the one hand, the monopoly is a step towards creating the conditions for the unification of humanity, and thus towards overcoming the predominantly exploitative relationship with nature. On the other hand, it increases the power of private property, greatly intensifies the contradictions between humanity and nature, and strengthens the predatory relationship with nature. The capitalist mode of production is incapable of fundamentally resolving the contradictions between humanity and nature as long as private property is retained, for it retains the characteristics of the earlier stage, the second part of the spiral of the helix of the first negation. It retains these negative characteristics even as it gradually enters the final stage of the spiral of the helix, in which these contradictions are resolved.

In capitalist society, despite the monopolistic character of production, private property, i.e. the private character of production, is maintained. You see, the main difference between communism and capitalism is that in communism, the social character of production prevails, whereas in capitalism, the private character of production prevails. And capitalism is, so to speak, the last stage of the first negation, the “middle” of the “spiral” (the helix that

runs through human history).

The spiral movement can also be traced in the field of ideology and in various forms of social consciousness. This movement can also be traced in the structure of production. In other words, it can be said that this spiral movement governs the entire history of humanity, all spheres of social life. I simply cannot go into the matter now. I have only given two examples. I have tried to talk about this question more extensively in my work.

In this way, from the point of view of the development of the whole of human history, communism is inevitable in every respect. It is, however, a long-term process, despite the [over-optimistic] ideas of the past to the contrary. In the past, Marxists and communists of different parties understood the transition to communism as a transition from capitalism to communism. But the transition to communism is the transition from the whole of previous history to a new type of history. This means that communism must be seen in the context of world history and not in the context of the transition from one formation to another. Otherwise, we will not understand when (in what time frame) this transition is taking place, we will not understand the depth of the decisive transition that is taking place, we will not understand what it is that humanity must transform, what it must reject, what it must change. In fact, the transformations are much deeper than the mere rejection of certain features of capitalist life. If we consider the transition to communism as a transition from the whole of previous history, we must at the same time point out the following: 1) the duration of this transition must be longer than it would be if we considered this transition as a transition from capitalism to communism; 2) this transition is of global historical significance and it is in the context of this global historical process that this transition must be seen. Therefore, this transition should not be seen only from the point of view of the USSR, or the GDR, or Hungary. In other words, we have to look

at it in a radically different way. If we look at it from the point of view of only one country, we get into a dead end, we cannot see beyond our noses. We only see what is happening today. We can only see a few years ahead, at best. Therefore, in this case, for people who have a limited perspective, for these people the dissolution of the socialist system (and it must be said that it is really being dissolved) is a dissolution once and for all, it is the final death of communism. And this perspective coincides, so to speak, with the perspective of the people “in the street”, in the crowd, who are usually neither able nor willing to see beyond their own temporary interests of the moment. That is to say, from the point of view of what Marx called the man of the market and the philistine, this dissolution is final and irrevocable. It is precisely the environment of these people that is the source of the disillusioned. This background also includes a part of the communists and Marxists. Therefore, naturally, as long as there is no view of the historical perspective, the communist parties have lost the purpose of the movement and are disintegrating. This is inevitable as long as the communist parties do not see the objectives of the movement, as long as they do not see the attainability of these objectives. This process of disintegration will obviously continue for some time. But it cannot go on indefinitely. History has its laws, and as long as these laws have been paving the way for millennia, they will continue to work in the same direction. In the present case, we are not talking about some subjective desires, about faith in communism. We are talking about the fact that there are laws that we can rely on. Of course, faith is important, but it is not the main factor. If someone simply believes in communism, then he is a believer, a religious person. Then we have a combination of religion and communism. Communism is based on knowledge, on science. And for it to remain communism, it has to be based on science and knowledge.

G.H.: You have given us a detailed account of your theoretical and political position, which characterises

the current process as a counter-revolution. This is a characterisation that is far from popular today. Is it possible that this position has been shaped by a certain personal biography?

V.V.: First of all, I would like to add something: illusions are never pure illusions. Illusions are always based on something. For example, when someone imagines a centaur—an animal with a human upper part and a horse lower part—both man and the horse are real beings. But there is no such thing as a man-horse.

Every counter-revolution addresses some problems that are important at a certain moment in society. But the whole question lies in what is the primary issue here, what determines the character of the unfolding process. Why did a counter-revolution take place after the French Revolution? Because the Great French Revolution did not fully correspond to the emerging bourgeois relations. Whereas the Thermidorians, who came after the French Revolution, were more in line with certain tendencies, and yet the whole turn of events was at the same time a counter-revolution.

The same thing is happening now. Why did the counter-revolutionaries succeed in attracting people? They were able to attract people not only because they deceived them, but also because there were certain unresolved problems that needed to be solved. There were some complex and contradictory social needs that had to be met. It is the failure to meet these needs that has created these problems. But the question is how the problems are solved, by what means. Counter-revolutions do not happen in a vacuum. They are contradictory processes, just like revolutions. But here we have to distinguish what is the basic, the main, the innermost issue in this process and what is dominant from the historical perspective. And from the historical perspective, the dominant thing is first and foremost the counter-revolution. Yes, the arrogance of the bureaucracy had to be curbed, among other things. But not by the viciousness of the profiteering black marketeers.

Optimistic & pessimistic tragedies. The social atmosphere during WWII.

G.H.: We would like to understand the becoming of this position from your particular biography, which is of course linked to certain historical circumstances. Let me go back to the beginning of your path. When I try to imagine your childhood in Moscow, I am reminded of B. Okudzhava's lyrics: "Ah, war, what have you done to us, wretch! Our neighbourhoods are desolate... Hello, children, hello. Try to go back." You were nine years old at the time, and you lived with the other children in the abandoned neighbourhoods.

V.V.: First of all, I would like to distinguish my position from B. Okudzhava^[1] as a human being and from his perception of reality as expressed in his creation. B. Okudzhava has his own perception and I have mine. You will have heard that he did not come to an event dedicated to A.I. Lukyanov and even declared that he did not know any poet by that name. And this at a time when in our family library there is a book of poems by B. Okudzhava with a personal dedication to A.I. Lukyanov^[2]. In the past I did not like B. Okudzhava very much, but now he no longer exists for me as a person. I don't want to say that all his songs are bad, but we have a different overall perception. Of course there is an individual perception of situations, but there is something broader in this individual perception. I don't know if my own situation was typical, but I lived through the whole war with a sense of the inevitability of victory.

Since my childhood, a number of circumstances have contributed to me having certain heroes as role models, and these heroes have inspired optimism in me. People like Okudzhava see the war pessimistically, with a sense of foreboding, as a tragedy in itself. But (even the war) was not just a tragedy in my opinion. There are optimistic tragedies (even if they are ridiculed today) and there are pessimistic tragedies. And I think it is clear that there is a difference between a pessimistic tragedy and an optimistic tragedy. A tragedy is optimistic when there is a purpose, when

you believe that purpose will be achieved, if not by you, then by others of like mind. An example of a pessimistic tragedy is what is happening now, which has stained and is still staining the past of our country after 1917 in a pitch-black colour, today, when we have lost the high, socially important objective (which we had), because it is unattainable as long as we remain in the mindset of rejecting communism. Of course, it is possible that they did not have a high purpose in the past, but that is a different matter now.

Markus Wolf^[3]'s book (Troika) faithfully conveys the atmosphere of the time. I felt that atmosphere. There was a patriotic mood, a mood of conviction, a mood of optimism. The difficulties that everyone had were another matter. Different sections of the population had different dispositions. Those who have now flooded the television screens, those who have now seized power, those who have now seized the media, are basically representatives of the bourgeoisie, including the bourgeois intelligentsia. The bourgeois intelligentsia, even before the revolution, either had counter-revolutionary views or looked at the socialist regime and socialist ideas with contempt. They are also descendants of aristocrats, of kulaks and the petite bourgeoisie. They are descendants of former lords, representatives of the new, emerging bourgeoisie, or people who have lost their way.

As far as I am concerned, I have never faced a pessimistic tragedy. My heroes were "The Gadfly"^[4], Rakhmetov^[5] and Korchagin^[6]. Now they ridicule Korchagin, although they do not understand his psychology, they do not understand the conditions under which such a character is a distinct, necessary type. They also cling to the weaknesses of N. Ostrovsky's life. I cannot believe this, because slander is rampant. And then I was deeply influenced by Nekrasov's underrated poem "Who Can Be Happy and Free in Russia?"^[7], "Korobeiniks" ["Peddlers"]—poems of immense tragic power. My heroes were (and are) also N. Chernishevsky^[8], N. Dobroliubov^[9], the revolutionary democrats^[10], V. Lenin.

G.H.: Were your perceptions formed through books or within your family?

V.V.: Of course, the books, the social atmosphere and the cinema all played a part. I can't remember how many times we saw the film "Chapayev"^[11] in our time. Now, of course, they laugh at it, they have turned Chapayev into a joke. But who are those who ridicule him? You will have seen where they showed Lenin in an advertisement, and of course you know who makes these decisions. But that is their own business. They can mock as much as they like. But it doesn't really change anything.

V. Koshel: Victor Alexeyevich, in the social atmosphere of your childhood and youth, these heroes undoubtedly were dominant. But weren't there other heroes and other tendencies in essence?

V.V.: I think there were. In different surroundings there were different heroes. In the families of those who now crowd the television screens (to whom I have already referred) there were, as is now becoming clear, other heroes.

It is no coincidence that today Nicholas II^[12], Stolypin^[13], etc. are poetically idealised and promoted. We can see that this process was very complicated. But in my case, it happened that from childhood I had to argue and defend atheistic positions. That's why I grew up in this tradition. And in general, the situation in the country was complicated. In any case, the "former [aristocracy]" are millions of people. And the kulak class alone was not limited to one million. They are far from having disappeared. Even if they were deprived of some property after the revolution, these people did not disappear, the people remained. They wrote in a magazine, for example, that Kolchak's wife and a countess met on the trolley and reminisced about dancing at their balls. And now, to this day, old women in their 90s are shown on television, Sukhomlina^[14] is shown. They have children and grandchildren. What happened to the feelings of the kulaks? It seems that both of M. Gorbachev's grandfathers were kulaks. What kind of traditions

would the children of such a family be brought up in, if there were more or less normal relations in the family? But apparently R. Gorbacheva is also the descendant of a former kulak family. I believe in class struggle, no matter how it is interpreted today. But class struggle has not disappeared. We now see who is in power and what they are doing. You have to be blind, ignorant or deluded not to see that there are forces in power that are against the interests of the majority of the people.

G.H.: Can you think of a typical situation for your perception before or during the war?

V.V.: I remember before the war, when I was a boy, we used to go to the demonstration. We went with the workers and I remember singing and dancing until the groups started to move. We marched for hours with frequent stops, but I didn't hear anyone complaining that we were late or that it was bad, etc. The whole event was experienced as a celebration, as universal merriment.

In the 70s and 60s it was completely different. Then, especially in the 70s, participation in demonstrations became formalistic. People didn't want to take part in demonstrations and were forced to do so. The pre-war demonstrations were as far removed from those of the 1970s as heaven is from earth. That is why these impressions have remained with me to this day, even from the age of 3 or 4. I remember this demonstration in particular because it was a real celebration. They say now that there was fear. There was probably fear. But as a child I remember an atmosphere of exhilaration. And when I grew up, I also noticed that the celebrations of the October Revolution and May Day before the war were not as formalistic as they were during the years of stagnation. The truth is that a gradual decline began in the mid-60s, which ended in a complete decline in the 80s.

Concerning the fear of persecution. After the war, we lived in a block of flats where there were mostly children without fathers, because their fathers were involved in various oppositional tendencies. When

we communicated with these children, there was no discussion about this issue. Maybe because the mothers of these children did not talk to them about their fathers. And I think they didn't really know where their father was and what had happened to him. I also had a very good friend whose father was in the opposition, a secretary of the Komsomol district committee in Kiev, and he was killed during the repression. His son, however, had a completely different outlook from today's "democrats".

V.K.: Different in what way?

V.V.: His favourite hero, for example, was Zemnukhov.

V.K.: From the "Young Guard"^[15]?

V.V.: Yes, from the Young Guard. You see, these persecutions were handled in a variety of ways. The communists who returned home after the persecutions remained true to their beliefs. And I know of such cases. They had communist, socialist convictions... Whereas those who did not, for example the children of some people who did not return, who did not contact their children, these people had strong anti-socialist and strong anti-communist feelings. And I know examples.

That's it for the most vivid impressions. Of course, I think a lot of people can confirm that, if they aren't saying with prejudice that there supposedly was no enthusiasm.

The state of philosophical studies in the USSR in the 1950s and beyond.

G.H.: Can you recall your youthful reflections on your choice of career? How did you come to study in the Department of Philosophy?

V.V.: It's hard to say. I guess I just had that mentality, that's all. Obviously, N. Chernyshevsky's novel "What Is To Be Done" and, in general, N. Chernyshevsky himself played a very big role. In my opinion, K. Marx's reflections on his choice of profession in his graduation essay are in some ways typical of every young person who contemplates these questions. Not only about his calling, but also about the meaning of

life, about the relationship between the personal and the common.

G.H.: What was the situation of philosophical education in the Faculty of Philosophy at that time—in the early 1950s? What was the style of teaching? What was the bibliography available to you and what was the atmosphere like, in general, life as a student?

V.V.: Now, of course, it is difficult to talk about the atmosphere. As far as the student environment is concerned, I think there was an atmosphere of great commitment to study. I can say that this was essentially true of the majority of students. I have the impression that at the same time there was a discipline that was perhaps already ingrained. All the more so because in our class most of them had either joined the army after graduation (those who had fought in the war) or were members of Komsomol school committees, Komsomol school committee secretaries. Most of those who joined after school were gold and silver medal winners. It must be said that at that time, the Komsomol was not a formalist organisation, as it later became. Perhaps some tendencies had begun to emerge, but only to a minimal extent. People believed in something, there was more substance in the work, at least they were striving for something. Later, especially in the 70s and 80s, the substance of the Komsomol's work was extinguished. It is no coincidence that many of today's "democrats" are former Komsomol officials. In the 1940s and 1950s there was a different approach to the Komsomol, and the Komsomol was different. That's why we had no problem with discipline.

As far as the professors are concerned, I would say that we had a certain improvement in the level of teaching in the following years. As usual, there were different kinds of teachers. For example, we had a professor who came to the USSR as a child from democratic Spain after the civil war, his name was Mancilia. Then he became a professor of political economy. A very good teacher!

P.G. Galperin^[16] of course, made a great impression.

At that time, he was just beginning to develop as a psychologist, moving from medicine to psychological research. His was mostly lecturing on physiology. Of course, even then he had not yet formulated his theory of mental acts.

As far as the history of philosophy is concerned, we had the contributions of O. Trachtenberg and T. Oiserman. Probably some people liked this, but it seemed to me that T. Oiserman's contributions were as empty as those of O. Trachtenberg and V. Asmus. This was despite the fact that both V. Asmus and O. Trachtenberg were, of course, very erudite. As for B. Asmus, I was repelled by his naked empiricism. He may have had some theoretical perceptions, but if so, he carefully kept them hidden.

Then E.V. Ilyenkov began (his activity). When we finished our studies, he was a doctoral student. Then, in the fifth year of my studies, I read his thesis. It seems to me that it was called "Some Questions of Dialectics in the Economic Manuscripts of 1857-1858 by K. Marx". Despite the fact that he was a doctoral student, he had an influence on at least some of the students.

I remember going to one or two of his classes when he was starting his special seminar. The truth is that even then the differences in our perceptions came to the surface.

G.H.: Does this mean that you had already chosen your own way, your own approach?

V.V.: Yes, I already had. On the one hand, E.V. Ilyenkov drew our attention to the problems of dialectics in political economy. This was something unusual at that time. E.V. Ilyenkov was very different from his environment at that time. You see, at that time, philosophy was taught in such a way and was in such a state that it was not at all clear what its purpose was. At least, that's how it seemed to me, that's how I understood the situation. I cannot speak for everyone, but it seemed to me that there was nothing alive in this way of teaching. It did not show what philosophy was for. I did not feel that. Only with E.V. Ilyenkov did

I feel that philosophy was something alive.

Nevertheless, when I approached him, some doubts arose, doubts that actually developed later. I thought that (Ilyenkov) did not take into account the stage of transition from the chaotic representation about the whole, to the abstract one. The truth is that at the time I was formulating this problem in a different way. Nevertheless, I felt then, that the path followed by E.V. Ilyenkov makes it impossible to solve the questions adequately and completely enough: facts and experience were not taken into account. And this, despite the fact that, of course, I never rejected him and, in general, to this day I believe that, if we are talking about philosophers, he is one of the best philosophers of the Soviet period of our country's development.

V.K.: I would like to understand the following: he played the role of a certain sudden impulse and at the same time he was an opponent from the beginning. Was he an impulse and an opponent at the same time? Did your dialogue with him contribute to the formation of your theoretical position?

V.V.: Yes. Despite the fact that I approached him, of course, from one perspective, I only wanted one thing, I was just fascinated and nothing else. But I couldn't fully agree with his views, because, as some people said at the time, my way of thinking was representative of the natural sciences and that I should go into the natural sciences. I wanted the connection with facts, with a real object. Anyway, I wrote a master's thesis on "Capital"...

V.K.: Do you remember who your supervisor was?

V.V.: Things happened in such a way that I didn't have a supervisor. Professor Vassily Ivanovich Malchev, who was supposed to supervise my work, became ill for a long time. At that time V.I. Malchev was working on the problems of dialectics, dialectical logic, the correlation of dialectical logic and the theory of knowledge. You probably do not remember, but at that time he took an active part in all the discussions. Then he fell ill and a few days before the defence of my

thesis, D. P. Gorsky was appointed as my supervisor. He read my thesis and Professor F. I. Georgiyev (who was partly concerned with problems of dialectics and more with problems of the correlation of the physiological and the mental) was the examiner. So, I found myself de facto without a supervisor.

Something similar happened later. The supervisor of my dissertation was S.I. Popov. But since I was the first doctoral student he had supervised, and he was working on "Capital", among other things, he relied on me entirely. As a result, I had to write my thesis without a supervisor for the second time. And I am grateful to him because he did not bother me, he gave me complete freedom.

That's why I now don't bother those I supervise, since I understand that writing a thesis requires freedom. Maybe this is not true for everyone, maybe this way of doing things hurts some people, but I believe that writing requires freedom and that one should not be allowed to interfere in this process. But even in the case that some interference is necessary, then of course it should be done with great care.

V.K.: Victor Alexeyevich, can we say that from the time you were a student until now you have followed a self-sufficient, independent path of research?

V.V.: Yes, self-sufficient...

V.K.: Literally, that is, without any, even formal, supervision?

V.V.: Of course there was formal supervision.

V.K.: Excuse me, but in fact it was a self-sufficient path of development, a becoming. This is very important and has to be taken into account.

V.V.: Yes, that's how things turned out. Of course, if there had been a certain school of thought, it would have been easier, much easier to grow. If there had been such a school... But such a school did not exist and could not exist.

The school of E.V. Ilyenkov appeared much later, but things happened in such a way that I did not really fit into this school.

V.K.: Did independence begin earlier?

V.V.: Yes, independence began earlier. But if E.V. Ilyenkov had taken into account the movement from chaotic perception of the whole, from live observation to abstract thinking, if his views were not somewhat speculative in nature, I would have been in his school. As long as there were these features in his views, I disagreed with him. But as it turned out, it was not just my opinion. The same opinion became almost universal.

V.K.: Which opinion are you referring to?

V.V.: The opinion that his path was blocked by certain characteristics of his views.

This is not about wanting independence at all costs. That is not the issue. The desire for independence at any cost as an end in itself is also fruitless.

V.K.: There was a difference of principle on a very fundamental issue.

V.V.: There was a theoretical dimension, but at the same time I accepted all his other views. If the disagreement had been over some other issue, maybe our relationship would have been different. But since it turned out to be a really essential aspect, because this is where his Hegelianism manifested itself, this is one of the most fundamental, in fact, shortcomings of his conception.

So, this is not a matter of some kind of personal confrontation. On the contrary. To this day, I have nothing against him. The opposite, I have a very positive attitude towards him.

G.H.: Could you tell us in more detail what exactly motivated your interest in studying Marx's political-economic works, the logic of capital, the questions of the theory of knowledge and dialectics? In general, there was a whole direction that started with M.M. Rosenthal, etc.

V.V.: The truth is that as a theorist, M. M. Rosenthal had no influence on me. In this respect I rather bypassed M. M. Rosenthal. But he helped me later with my publication. He probably had an influence on E. V. Ilyenkov, at least in the sense that he drew his attention to these problems. It was M. M. Rosenthal

who turned out to be the figure who connected later philosophers with the writers of the 1920s and 1930s, when the problem of dialectics in the economic works of K. Marx (more precisely: the problems of the ascent from the abstract to the concrete and the problems of the historical and the logical in the introduction to the "Economic Manuscripts of 1857-1858" [Grundrisse] by K. Marx) became the most important problem in the economic works of Marx. In fact, this problem was present in many works, although mainly in the form of a quotation and paraphrase (of the passage on method) from Marx's Introduction (to the Grundrisse). In the mid and late 1950s this literature was not accessible.

It seemed then that E.V. Ilyenkov had been the first to raise these questions. It seemed that it was Ilyenkov who initiated all these questions in the first place. But it seems that Ilyenkov was exposed to all this through M. M. Rosenthal. M. M. Rosenthal turned out to be the link, and in this respect his contribution is great.

As far as my shift towards "Capital" is concerned, you see, the point is that I have always been surprised that people speak in general and vague terms without understanding what they are talking about, that there is, after all, an object, the real object of knowledge, and that "Capital" offers the possibility of analysing real thinking within cognition. And this without any general reflection on how dialectics relates to logic and the theory of knowledge. At the time, I felt that these discussions were meaningless, empty. I said that philosophy seemed useless in this way. Why was all this necessary in this form? O. Trachtenberg, for example, presented philosophy as art for art's sake. V. Asmus was concerned with the collection of mere facts. Such tendencies can be observed today. You see, I was not satisfied with this kind of approach. "Capital" was the only object that could really be studied. There was, and I think still is, no other object that lends itself to such a degree to a real categorical study. Of course you can study other things, but only Capital has reached such a degree of maturity. That

is why I literally could not pass it by. Other material simply did not exist and, by definition, does not and cannot exist...

G.H.: If we look at that time, the 60s...

V.V.: We're talking about the 50s.

G.H.: At that time, was the situation was such that not only in the USSR, but also in other countries, the majority of people showed such interests? If not the majority, then a lot of people...

V.V.: I would not say that the majority at that time were interested in the method, the logic of "Capital".

G.H.: Many people, nonetheless...

V.V.: Many? At that time, there were very few who were interested. Another thing is what happened before the war, in the first five years of the 1930s. Then there was an interest, but it did not lead to any real research. There were simply repetitions of what Marx had said. It was precisely this tradition that M. M. Rosenthal carried on. He too basically repeated what K. Marx and F. Engels and V. Lenin had said. In the 20's and the first five years of the 30's they mainly repeated the introduction of the Economic Manuscripts of 57-58. They confined themselves to repetition/ misquotation. Then they simply did not proceed to the actual study of the categorical apparatus of Capital. And here the first attempt was made by E.V. Ilyenkov as a graduate student, and who knew him then? Very few.

In the 1950s, this kind of questioning was far from widespread. His seminar, for example, was attended, it seems to me, by five people.

At that time, Marx's economic manuscripts of 1857-1858 had not yet been translated, and all this was inaccessible. So, in a way, M. M. Rosenthal played a major role here, because he carried on the tradition. E.V. Ilyenkov continued this tradition, but on a different level, of course. This is something different now: it is the beginning of a new stage.

Tradition & new approaches in the research of the method of K. Marx's

Capital. The contradictory changes brought about by the policies of N. Khrushchev.

A certain role in the growth of interest in the problems of dialectics in Capital, at least in our country, has been played by the fact that the situation has changed somewhat. But I should point out the following: the truth is that E.V. Ilyenkov and M.M. Rosenthal started before this atmosphere changed more or less noticeably. I became interested in "Capital" even before the above-mentioned change. That was in 1954. M. M. Rosenthal worked in this direction, continuing the tradition of the past. The emergence of a new stage in the study of "Capital" was influenced not only by the changing situation in the country, but also by the preservation of tradition. Now that the teaching of Marxism is being discontinued, the tradition is disappearing and it will take a long time to restore it. And it will probably be consumed by issues that have long been resolved. It will probably be necessary to go some way to restore the level of research... Again, it is unknown what paths will be taken if the transmission is interrupted.

Tradition plays an important role. In the first place, a certain preservation of tradition had a decisive influence on the rejuvenation of the study of the method of "capital", on the initiation of a new stage in its study, before the situation in the country changed substantially, before the conditions became more favourable. More favourable conditions were created after the adoption of the resolution on the "cult of personality" in 1956. The effect of this decision was that, if in the past philosophy had essentially been synonymous with propaganda, from the second half of the 1950s some problems began to be reflected upon. One of these was the problem of the unity of dialectics, logic and the theory of knowledge. A favourable climate for researchers in the field of philosophy was emerging and, to some extent, had been established. This was done, so to speak, in the same way as today, on the contrary, a negative climate

is being created towards Marxism. At that time, a more favourable climate was created for dealing with questions of a non-propagandistic nature.

But that was the general atmosphere at the time. At that time, the work of people who had been involved earlier was beginning to bear fruit. And in connection with the fact that these results began to appear, these studies began to attract more interest. And still, the fruits didn't appear immediately. E.V. Ilyenkov's book was published in 1961, but it seems to me that it was ready three years earlier.

And it was only when he was about to offer it to an Italian publisher that it was published here. M.M. Rosenthal's book was published earlier. They are the ones who started it, and they are responsible for the growing interest in the dialectical questions of Capital. As a result, it was some time before these efforts began to be noticeable by the general public.

V.K.: Victor Alexeyevich, you mentioned that at first the propagandistic tendency was dominant, and then this tendency became obsolete...

V.V.: The point is not that it became obsolete, but that it had simply loosened the prevailing rigid direction by criticising the "cult of Stalin's personality". The truth is that the criticism of Stalin's personality cult played both a positive and a negative role. In my opinion, not every ideological change should be carried out in the same way. And that is because in my opinion, they were carried out under the influence of N. Khrushchev's selfish and ignorant ideas. These changes were immediately thrown at the people without preparation and were mainly of a destructive nature. That was a miniature of the "collapse" that is taking place today. As a result, in the mid-1960s, a nihilistic attitude towards existing reality and, to a certain extent, towards Marxist philosophy was formed among the students. In this way, nihilism emerged.

V.K.: Are you referring to the psychological portrait of people in the 60s?

V.V.: My judgement is mainly focused on the

students of the Lomonosov Moscow State University. They are always a faithful reflection of the country's social climate. In the mid-60s, nihilism became the characteristic feature of the students. They were nihilists, but the nihilism of many of them had not yet reached cynicism. Nihilism tends to become cynical when everything has already been destroyed. But this nihilism was not quite cynical yet, it was a sincere nihilism. Later, cynicism became more and more noticeable.

The process of criticising Stalin's cult of personality was largely spontaneous, influenced by the self-interest and, to call a spade a spade, the ignorance of the uninformed higher-ups, including N. Khrushchev and L. Brezhnev. Along with some positive moments, the consequences were largely negative. It laid the foundations for the later turn of events.

G.H.: Not only in relation to science, but in general?

V.V.: Yes, because, for example, N. Khrushchev's self-interest and ignorance are not only manifested in his criticism of Stalin's cult of personality. It was manifested, for example, in the attempt to change economic policy in a certain way. You see, every one of our new leaders tries to change economic policy in order to leave his name in history. In contrast and in opposition to the economic policy of I. Stalin, they began to look for the content of the new policy in the works of bourgeois economists. At the end of the 1950s, they turned to bourgeois political economy and tried to find answers there as to what they should do. They knew nothing else and were incapable of doing anything other than using solutions borrowed from those already available. In the conditions of the dogmatic mode of thinking, N. Khrushchev's lackeys, could do nothing but borrow ideas from bourgeois economists, since they rejected the economic policy implemented by I. Stalin. This is where the ever-growing influence of bourgeois political economy began. And V. Leontiev^[17] points out the use of borrowed ideas from bourgeois political economy since the late 1950s.

At the same time, a more favourable climate was being created for dealing with fundamental problems, since this was impossible in the period of Stalin's "personality cult". Only one person was then able to deal with fundamental problems: J. V. Stalin. He would give instructions and everyone else had to accept them and carry them out. The study of the method, the logic of "Capital" constitutes fundamental research. That is why, with the development of the criticism of Stalin's personality cult, a general revival in the field of philosophy began in the 1960s, including the study of "Capital".

G.H.: How did this matter proceed in the West?

V.V.: It is difficult for me to talk about the West. I can only assume that the interest in Marxism arose, among other things, because of the Soviet Union. At that time, the Soviet Union had certain successes (the atomic weapon, satellites, space achievements, etc.). These achievements were not only related to space, but also to basic science. So, I think the influence of the Soviet Union played a certain role. Besides, when does interest in Marxism grow? Either under the influence of the example of the Soviet Union, or when social contradictions in the West actually intensified. Both causes were active at that time.

The point is that there was a peculiar interest there in the works of K. Marx. There could not have been the same interest in Marx as there was in the Soviet Union. In the West they were interested in other things. In our country, the question was more defined. Here we were not interested in some general and vague approaches to K. Marx (i.e. whether he was an existentialist or a structuralist, or how to read him). In our conditions, the more important question was: what was the dialectic of K. Marx? Because here it was about the task of building a new society, while in the capitalist world it was still about the negation of the old society. That is why, of course, it was possible to develop Marxism in its essence, so to speak, in the central direction of the artery of its development. But there [in the West] was little chance of this.

G.H.: Don't you think they wanted to arm themselves with Marx in order to criticise and distort what was happening in the Soviet Union, for example?

V.V.: Precisely with the aim of criticising and distorting what existed in the Soviet Union. I agree that this was a criticism, and a distorted one at that. But in the Soviet Union, there was objectively a need for positive development [of Marxism]. That is why it turned out that, in the end, more was done here in the field of the research of the method of "Capital", in the field of the fundamental problems of the development of Marxism, than in the West. The direction of research was different. It is a different matter if this was perhaps not so clearly felt [in the West].

Since my way of thinking was closer to the "natural sciences" from the very beginning, I sought this for my own personal reasons.

The first steps towards a Marxist perception of the process of thinking.

G.H.: Could you tell us what questions you raised in connection with your study of the logic of Marx's Capital? Which questions had been resolved and which remained open?

V.V.: It seemed to me that thinking remained unexplored from a Marxist point of view. So that was the problem I posed. Because nowhere, not even in Ilyenkov, did I find a Marxist systematic study of the structure of thinking. And as far as "Capital" is concerned, ever since writing my master's thesis, I have felt that there is a rigorous, systematic thinking in "Capital". My master's thesis was on the first chapter of Capital. The first chapter of 'Capital' was analysed from the point of view of systematic thinking. This was the main fundamental problem, which had not only not been studied from a Marxist point of view, but had not even been posed in a sufficiently thorough way. Familiarity with all the literature shows that to this day it has not been fully resolved, but neither has it been posed.

M. Dafermos: Is that when your theory of thinking

as a physical-historical process emerged?

V.V.: Yes, since I wanted to show systematically how thinking works, how it works in reality. And the work of K. Marx made this possible. The analysis of Marx's *Capital* showed in itself: "Here lies thinking." You could almost feel it in action. This gave an aesthetic satisfaction. When a man like Marx thinks, it gives an aesthetic pleasure. When you read the thesis of the young Marx, you get a wonderful sense of beauty, of harmony of thinking, even though he was an idealist at the time. When you read I. Kant's proof of the existence of God—it is also a pleasure, although he is an idealist. He writes things that are completely unacceptable, but you can read them with pleasure.

V.K.: Is it because you can feel the developing process of thinking?

V.V.: You can feel that the man is really thinking. Whereas when I had to read papers on the connection between dialectics, logic and the theory of knowledge, on the subject of dialectical logic, I didn't feel, I wasn't seeing living thinking.

Key points on totalitarianism. The absurdity of the pseudo-dilemma: absolute control vs. absolute arbitrariness.

G.H.: One of the key concepts of the theory is that of the organic whole. What do you mean by this concept? I ask you this because in the West, the theoretical approach from the perspective of the whole, of wholeness, of totality, is associated with the totalitarian forms of political practice of fascism and Stalinism. Stalinism is seen as an attempt at universal statehood, as a quest for the subordination of society to a single ideology, to a single mental life, and so on. What do you think of such perceptions?

V.V.: Please tell me, can the direction that the brain gives to its organism be considered fascist? The brain directs the body as a single organism and yet each hand lives relatively independently while there is also the autonomic nervous system, there is the lymphatic system and other systems, organs, tissues, cells and they live relatively independently. They don't

complain. So, is the brain fascist?

In society there is always, to one degree or another, an internal mutual cohesion of sides, spheres, people. People are always, to one degree or another, internally interconnected. They cannot live in complete self-isolation, in complete solitude. The question of totalitarianism is raised with particular intensity by individualists. But individualism is above all connected with private property, it is connected with the mutual isolation of people. And isolation has a certain material foundation, a certain material basis. That is why these people in the USA, for example, put absolute individual freedom in the foreground. There is no such freedom in society, nor can there be, but still, they want absolute individual freedom.

Yet, the pursuit of absolute individual freedom is the pursuit of arbitrariness, not freedom. Human freedom always implies responsibility. Human freedom is always freedom under certain conditions. Human freedom is always freedom of choice, but always in relation to something. It is not an arbitrary choice, but a choice in accordance with values, in accordance with ideals, therefore [it is a choice] in accordance with something social.

Man chooses freely, but he always chooses within certain conditions, in accordance with something that is external to him. If he is truly a man, he subordinates his life to something that is external to him. The question of totalitarianism arises in contrast to the assumption of man's inclusion within the organic whole, in the case where man is totally deprived of freedom of choice, where he has no independence. Totalitarianism is the total subordination of man to society. The organic whole presupposes that its parts, although internally unified, are at the same time also relatively independent. Therefore, with regard to society, this means that man within society, which constitutes an organic whole, is internally interlinked with society, with other people, and at the same time is relatively independent, autonomous, and retains freedom of choice within the framework

of his relative independence. Totalitarianism, from a methodological point of view, is the denial of man's relative independence in relation to society, the denial of freedom of choice. He does not have arbitrary choices, but he is not deprived of freedom of choice.

Man cannot be absolutely free in society; he cannot act in an absolutely arbitrary way. In his relationship with nature as well, man cannot act absolutely arbitrarily. Absolute arbitrariness is incompatible with what is human in man, as is absolute control of behaviour. The understanding of society as an organic whole excludes both of them. On the one hand, it provides the methodological basis for affirming that man does not behave with complete arbitrariness, but is internally linked to the whole of society. On the other hand, it affirms that man is a distinct being, a special, specific element, but at the same time, one that is intrinsically linked to all other elements.

Precisely because of this, the understanding of the object as an organic whole does not constitute totalitarianism, but neither is it the basis for complete arbitrariness, for complete individualism. It is neither one nor the other. It is the sublation of both. Neither is communist society totalitarianism, nor is it absolute individualism, neither absolute freedom, nor absolute arbitrariness.

G.H.: Do you generally accept the concept of totalitarianism to describe fascism and Stalinism?

V.V.: Totalitarianism as a concept reflects only the form and not the content of the phenomenon. Totalitarianism can exist in a slave-owning society, it can exist under feudalism and under capitalism... Totalitarianism is also similar to barracks communism, that is, to that form of communism which K. Marx considered petty-bourgeois. Totalitarianism is a form that must always be considered in conjunction with its content, because it is in relation to its content that the consequences of totalitarianism and its effect on those who live under its regime can be vastly different. There is a big difference between the consequences of slave-owning totalitarianism and fascist-style

totalitarianism. These types of totalitarianism exist in different times and are born out of different circumstances. They are different processes. Totalitarianism is only their external similarity. Man has two ears. A paranoid man has two ears, and so does Hegel. But can the similarity of their ears prove the "equal value" of their words? For example, Hegel may have had large ears, but so does a donkey. Does this mean that Hegel is a donkey?

That is why all discussions that are limited only or primarily to totalitarianism are inadequate. They detach the whole process from its content and thus lead the investigation into a dead end. Form must be considered in its unity with content. Otherwise, fundamentally different things may be equated. Of course, totalitarianism is unacceptable, although in some historical circumstances it is inevitable. We may see it as something negative, but in some historical circumstances it may be unavoidable. For example, in a time of war, when it is necessary to call upon all the forces of a country, totalitarianism arises. People may submit voluntarily, but they submit to a certain totalitarian structure. And within that structure they are forced to act in a strictly compulsory way. All in all, if we speak abstractly, our relationship to totalitarianism can only be negative. But if we look at totalitarianism in terms of its content, there is also obligatory totalitarianism, which is necessary for the people who suffer under it as well. But in principle, as an ideal, we must get rid of it, we must fight it as soon as the opportunity presents itself.

The communism that Marx and Engels wrote about as the aim of the communist movement is neither barracks communism nor totalitarian communism. The totalitarian barracks communism is inherently petty-bourgeois.

The dialectical process of knowledge and the connection between truth & delusion

G.H.: How does the shift in the focus of your research from the logic of "Capital", i.e. from the mature Marx

to the young Marx, relate with the development of Marx's method of scientific research, and how does your position differ from the contrast between the young and the mature Marx established in the West? To what extent was your relative work understood? What was its novelty and what prospects did it open up for understanding the mechanism of future development?

V.V.: My turn to the young Marx is linked above all to the fact that "Capital" is the end result. And for a deeper understanding of the end result, it is necessary to know the process that led to it. But here I wanted to go further. And in particular, the study of the process leads to the revelation of the law-governed role of delusion, i.e. the fact that people, through the cognitive process always come to know the truth in its unity with delusion. This is well known (F. Engels and many others have written about it). But the question is to examine the structure of delusions, their necessity, and to reveal the law-governed replacement of some delusions with others. Truth is always associated with delusion. And if we know which delusions are associated with the truth at each level of knowledge, we will be able to confront them more consciously, we will be able to predict which delusions will appear at each level of the comprehension of the truth. From this point of view, my work has remained completely incomprehensible, it wasn't even noticed. This work has both an anti-dogmatic and an anti-relativistic character, since it attempts to show the relevance of the law-governed true process of knowledge to the equally law-governed process of delusion, to the process of certain concessions and falsifications of the truth. In this way, an attempt is made to distinguish the stages, the structure of delusions in relation to the true mastery of the object. And here, moreover, it is shown that a certain sequence of the movement of thought, a categorical structure of the movement of thought, the true movement of thought, determines not only the result [of the process of thinking], but also the process itself. There is a categorical structure

in the result of thinking, but there is also a categorical structure in the process of thinking.

Now, as far as my relationship to the young and mature Marx is concerned, [it must be borne in mind that] in the West there were other aims for the study of Marx. I have a positive aim, which lies in the need to reveal the problem of the correlation of the results and processes of the law-governed categorical structure of human thinking. Human thinking has a law-governed categorical structure. Of course, not every human being possesses the whole of this structure of categories, but humanity in general possesses such a structure of categories of thinking, and the process by which humanity comes to know reality is governed by laws.

At the same time, in the West, they were concerned with other things, and that is why, it seems, they were not concerned there with specific studies of the work of K. Marx. The question of whether or not there was a gap between the young and the mature Marx arises from other concerns, from other interests.

For me, for example, the very posing of the problem of the "break" between the young and mature Marx is itself anti-dialectical. Only people who do not understand dialectics, people of non-Marxist thinking, people who do not reflect on processes, can pose the question in this way. In Marx there was no such thing as a break, but there also could not be such a break. In Marx exist both unity and qualitative difference. There was no phase in which a qualitative break suddenly occurred and a completely new phase appeared out of nowhere. Such a thing cannot exist, it does not exist in nature. Of course, this was already proven by Epicurus. Therefore, in my opinion, these are wrong questions. Why these questions arise is another matter. These questions arise in an alienated society. And people who are in the realm of alienation think that there are such divisions, such breaks between people. This is the method of these people. It is figuratively a patchwork method, or more precisely a fragmentary method. The fragmentary method of

thinking is characteristic of the society of alienation and of the person whose position does not transcend the framework of this society.

From the point of view of the dialectical method, the problem of the break between the young and the mature Marx is a pseudo-problem, or a problem explained by psychological and social causes, rather than from the point of view of the truly rigorous scientific method of thinking. A great deal of energy is, of course, expended there, on exploring this question, but I do not think that this can lead to any substantial positive results in the study of Marx's views. I have always been interested in the development of K. Marx's ideas, because Marxism can only exist as a developing set of concepts. If it does not develop, it means that it is no longer Marxism. If no new tasks are raised before the people who are engaged in the research of Marx's concepts, then they are no longer Marxists.

G.H.: What perspectives has the understanding of the mechanisms of the development of science opened up for the determination of the new direction of your research, in particular the research of the global historical process?

V.V.: The revelation of what Marx did, allows us to see what he did not do and the historical limitation of what he did. It is impossible to reveal the historical limitation of a scientist without understanding his concepts in their development. There is no other way.

And since one can only remain a Marxist by developing Marxism, this is a necessary relationship to Marxism. Now another thing is the fact that for a long time Marxism did not develop, but was dogmatised and thus turned into its opposite.

The revelation of the logic of "Capital" is at the same time the revelation of a certain historical stage of human thinking, of the categorical apparatus that humanity possesses. Not only of a specific subject, but of the categorical wealth that exists in humanity. This was already done by Hegel in his own way. In Hegel, the categorical apparatus of humanity was already

revealed. Not of an individual person, because an individual person may or may not possess this apparatus in its entirety, and indeed the majority of individuals do not possess it. K. Marx himself moved from the study of capital to the study of the history of society. The truth is that not everyone admits this. Many people believe that in his chronological notes K. Marx dealt with some individual questions. In my opinion, K. Marx was led to the necessity of studying human society by the very process of studying capital. This is because the question of the decisive role of economic life in society could not otherwise be fully resolved in Marxism at the time of the writing of Capital. Therefore, when E. Bernstein criticised Marx, he had certain reasons for this criticism. No matter if E. Bernstein not only did not solve the problem in question, but did not even raise it correctly. But nevertheless, he felt a real deficiency in what K. Marx did.

Only by studying the history of humanity as a whole can the other spheres of social life be deduced from the economic life of society. I could prove this here, but the proof that this is necessary is a separate discussion. First of all, I would like to point out that, in my opinion, the direct continuation of "Capital" by K. Marx should proceed in this direction. After all, the specific study of the method of human thinking meant in itself that it was necessary, so to speak, to examine this basis, i.e. also the method of human cognition, in the context of human society as a whole. Moreover, as Marx has already shown, communism is the result of the development of the whole of humanity, it is the product of world history. And since it is the product of world history, it follows that its process [of birth] must be studied.

The probabilistic nature of historical laws as tendencies. The importance of method in understanding the unity of multiplicity.

G.H.: Western philosophy of history today is dominated by the renunciation of claims to a

scientific understanding of history as a process of development in a particular direction. How did you arrive at the necessity of studying and revealing the logic of history, and what was your aim in selecting this logic for study?

V.V.: I would like to begin with the Western perspective. The position of abandoning research of the historical process according to objective laws is inevitable when people remain within the limits of capitalist society and consider this society to be eternal, whereas in fact it is historically transient, and at the same time abandon the possibility of a scientific conception of this society, its essence and the process that led to its formation.

G.H.: The abandonment of the scientific understanding of history as a process of development with a certain direction is probably due to the fact that history at the end of the twentieth century appears so multidimensional, so complex and multifaceted that...

V.V.: I understand. But I would like to stress once again that a certain initial position now predetermines the results. With regard to the multiplicity and complexity of the historical process, I have the following to say. The existence of diversity in the object of science does not prove that it [the object in question] is not governed by laws; an object can be complex, it can be very complex, it can be very diverse and very complicated, very confusing. But this cannot in any way be taken as proof that there is no law, there is no unity, there is no necessity. The ever-increasing diversity cannot in itself be a reason to deny unity. Science reveals the laws that govern objects of increasing complexity and distance from direct human experience. And yet the natural sciences discern certain laws. They even identify laws governing statistical probabilities in the course of events. There is, of course, the theory of probability, the law of probability, the law of eventuality and chance.

So, the mere existence of probabilistic events is not

an insurmountable barrier to the understanding of laws. In society, too, events are of probabilistic nature, and all laws in society are laws/tendencies, not absolute laws. That is to say, these laws are not absolute, but are constituted by the interweaving of a multitude of contradictory contingencies. Therefore, the existence of multiplicity and the complexity of this multiplicity cannot be a reason for denying the existence of laws and for denying unity. So where does the question lie? In the ability or the desire to discover this unity.

Even in terms of discovering laws, the historical process is varied. Within the historical process there is always an abundance of possibilities. However, within the historical process, it is possible (again depending on the desire or ability) to distinguish certain dominant tendencies. In my opinion, one of the foundations of the view that there are no laws of history today is that humanity has reached such a level of possibilities that, from the point of view of the apologists of capitalist society, humanity is presented only as destructive, as self-destructive. What kind of law can emerge from self-destruction? They have reached an impasse, they are destroying themselves, they are ready to commit suicide. What kind of law can there be? But in the sense of what I was saying earlier, there are laws here, there is an alternative. Man (even the individual) is capable of committing suicide when he realises himself as a human being. The animal, as a rule, does not commit suicide, in fact I think that no animal ever does. Only man can kill himself. But why can he kill himself? Because he has realised himself as a human being. So, what does it depend on? It depends on man's level of development. His capacity for self-consciousness constitutes a high level of his development, which at the same time is linked to the ability to voluntarily deny his own existence. It is exactly the same with humanity. Here lies its destruction. The history of humanity is a very diverse process. But with destruction there is also progress, with diversity there is also unity. And this

unity is not monotony. Unity in the dialectical sense is not a monotonous uniformity, it is not a similarity, but the coherence of the different. It is the unity of the distinct, not an external similarity. But for people who deny this unity (and this view is necessary for people who take the stance of assuming the eternal nature of the status quo), the unity of history appears only as the uniformity of the historical process. The more homogeneous the historical process is, the more law-governed it seems to them, i.e. the more beautiful, the more monotonous, the more law-governed it seems. Homogeneity is projected as a manifestation of being law-governed. But from the point of view of dialectics, law is not uniformity, it is not the similarity (homogeneity) of processes—e.g. in different countries—but the mutual coherence of processes, the inner connection of processes. That is what unity is. That is the law: the coherence of the internal and the coherence of the different. Therefore, in this respect, it does not matter whether there are five, ten or a thousand variations. In general, this is a matter that is completely irrelevant to our subject. From the dialectical point of view, any appeal to diversity is simply irrelevant and meaningless. The point here is that people who deny the historical process and say that it is not governed by laws have no method for scientifically grasping such laws. Their method is either superficial or non-existent. In any case, they have no method that would enable them to grasp the unity of multiplicity. And since they do not have such a method, they will naturally deny the possibility of grasping the laws of history, which they certainly cannot discern with the method they have. The fact that you cannot dig down to the oil field with a shovel does not mean that there is no oil. So let them first replace the shovel with modern drilling systems and then decide whether there is oil in the depths of the earth or not. Otherwise, they get into discussions that are irrelevant to the essence of the matter. Therefore, in order to understand these laws, we need the appropriate method of thinking, while

the vast majority of Western scientists, in practice I would say perhaps all of them without exception, do not possess the dialectical method. Natural scientists, of course, but also social scientists.

That is how I would answer the question.

On the emergence of the new society, a spiral of the great helix of human history

G.H.: According to your understanding, the use of the method of ascending from the abstract to the concrete presupposes the maturity of the object of research. To what extent is it legitimate to use this approach to study the historical development of humanity and society at a time when it is not yet mature?

V.V.: It is indeed a complex issue. Society is not yet at the mature stage [of its development]. But I would not say that there is a complete absence of features and aspects of the mature stage.

In principle, the preconditions for this society do exist. And then, even if we are dealing with a barracks communism, and this barracks communism, even if it is petty-bourgeois in nature, is nevertheless a certain stage of the emergence of the new society. What [I am saying] may even seem repulsive: this barracks communism, totalitarianism, etc.—[it is suddenly called] a new society. But we must also approach this question dialectically. It is a contradictory society. If we take the human embryo, for example, [we will see that] at a certain stage of its development it has gills. But that does not mean that were we to look at it at that stage of development, we would have to decide that it will never become a human being. We can, of course, terminate the existence of the human embryo, seeing that it has gills. The same applies to barracks communism. It is a transition to the new society, although it has [its own] “gills”, i.e. characteristics of a much lower stage of social development. I believe that the new stage has now emerged. It may have emerged with “gills”, but it has emerged nonetheless, and this fact gives us a certain degree of foresight. A

more accurate and more far-reaching prognosis than the one made in Marx's time, taking into account, of course, the "gills". That is why it cannot be said that the object [mature society] is completely absent. The object exists to a certain extent, and even in a more developed form than during Marx's time, a time during which certain preconditions of this object [of a mature, communist society] already existed. So even then, it was possible to talk about it and to study society from this point of view. Therefore, it is no coincidence that certain conceptions of communist society emerge in Marx that have a qualitatively different content from the theories and teachings that emerged at a time when these preconditions did not exist at all. But now we have some experience—good or bad, but experience nonetheless. And the potential of the method of cognition plays an important role in the way we make sense of the experience we have gained. Of course, our ideas about the society of the future will in many ways be hypothetical. However, if we examine the natural-historical process of the development of science in relation to the object, we can predict what is hypothetical in our positions, where there are weak points that we will have to correct, supplement, develop in the future, i.e. we can now make further predictions. Knowledge about communist society is also a process that has not yet been completed with what we currently know about communist society. But as long as the preconditions for communism are already largely in place on a global historical level, there is a great potential for research into this society.

G.H.: What conditions do you foresee? Which ones seem to have the most potential?

V.V.: One of the preconditions is the social character of production. We can also classify the whole of the present "part" of the spiral of the spiral development of human history as part of these preconditions. The end of this spiral is visible to us on the basis of the previous development. That is, the negation of the negation of this spiral lies in the realm of our

visibility. In general terms, this is self-evident. We can say: 1) that the end of this spiral will come to pass if humanity survives, and 2) what the general features of this future are, in a valid [reliable] way. The degree of thoroughness [of our perception], even the change of the interpretation of certain separate general features, can be given later with the development of this society itself. But we can certainly draw two conclusions: 1) about the necessity of the communist stage, and 2) about its general characteristics. This is precisely what we can talk about scientifically—not in the form of utopias and hypotheses. Of course, foresight plays an important role here. Forecasting plays an important role in any science, let alone historical science. The way in which this prediction is developed and refined is, of course, a subject for further discussion.

We will not be able to avoid the problem of the incomplete formation of the object. Here the situation is contradictory, but to some extent manageable. Of course, it can only be fully resolved when humanity ceases to exist... or when it is transformed into something else. I am now referring to the great spiral of the helix, which encompasses all of humanity's past and modern history. In the last "part" of this spiral now lies human society. But I am not referring to the distant future, although the distant future can be predicted even now. That is another subject for discussion that will take us into a more distant field.

G.H.: Recently, there have been widespread views that explain the death of the socialist system by the action of subjective and external factors. Others see socialism as an attempt to abandon the so-called fundamental path of human civilisation, an attempt that is naturally doomed to death. In your opinion, what are the objective and internal causes of the apparent unsustainability of this type of socialist relations? Is it possible to transcend the development of the previous type [of socialism] through dialectical sublation?

V.V.: Your question touches on the problem of the

“fundamental path of humanity”. It goes without saying that the supporters of capitalism consider capitalism to be the “fundamental path”. I think that in reality, this is not the case. No matter what they say, the decisive role in capitalist society is not limited to the large-scale production of the major enterprises, the multinational corporations, to the exclusion of small enterprises. It also increases the power of large associations, multinationals, etc. But this means that the “fundamental path of humanity” is going down the path of expansion, consolidation, socialisation of production. You see, the very fact of the multinationalisation of companies is in and of itself a unification of production. But thinking that there will be no union other than that of the multinationals, that the development of humanity has come to a standstill, is in principle contradictory to modern facts. Unification, socialisation, continues. That is why the fundamental path of humanity leads in exactly the opposite direction to what the “democrats”^[18] and the followers of “Catastroika”^[19] in our country think.

The essential contradiction of the global imperialist system in the monopoly stage. Level of development and the rise of revolutions and counter-revolutions.

From the point of view of the development of society, these events were of global historical significance. The modern economy was formed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the global economic system of capitalism. Therefore, the processes taking place in a single country must be viewed from the perspective of the global economic system. But there are a number of essential contradictions in the global economic system. First of all, there is the uneven development of different countries. Of course, this has always existed. But since the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, this inequality has been re-established within the framework of a single system. From then on, the unequal development

of a number of countries affected the entire global economic system of capitalism.

The contradiction between economically developed countries and less developed countries is one of the most essential contradictions of the whole global economic system of capitalism. And the relations of exploitation of the less developed countries by the more developed countries (mainly through unequal exchange) is the most important of the mutual international relations. In this way, exploitation transcends national contexts and acquires a global character.

Resistance to exploitation can arise in the countries that are being exploited in the first place.

Socialist revolutions cannot, as a rule, break out first in the developed countries. They take place primarily in the less developed countries, i.e. the countries which are exploited by the more developed countries. But in the less developed countries, industry is less developed, production as a whole is less developed, the social character of production is less developed. As we can see, a contradictory situation is created: the conditions for carrying out a socialist revolution may be more favourable in the exploited countries, but production in these countries is less developed than in the exploiting countries.

In conditions where the developed capitalist countries dominate the world, oppression is not limited to the economy, but extends to ideology, military and political relations. That is why a less developed country falls into less favourable conditions from the very beginning.

This is linked to the fact that after the victory of the socialist revolution in these countries, the restoration of capitalism is not unlikely. As you can see, the internal conditions there are worse than in the developed capitalist countries. In this way, if the divide is not bridged quickly, the possibility of the restoration of capitalism increases. In this sense,

Lenin's fears of the death of the country were it unable to surpass the developed capitalist countries in labour productivity proved prophetic.

If the economic setbacks caused by the developed capitalist countries are not overcome quickly enough, then, in Marx's words, "all the old filthy business would necessarily be reproduced"^[20]. And indeed, this process is, of course, contradictory. On the one hand, the socialist revolution takes place, the shoots of the new society (e.g. the right to work, free education, health care, etc.) spring up. On the other hand, economic underdevelopment and the still insufficient development of production for the new society create the conditions for the rebirth of "all the old filth". And the more backward the country, the more likely it is, all other terms and condition remain unchanged, that the "old filth" will triumph. In this case, much depends on the subjective factor, which is also contradictory. There is no other way for the new society. This path is necessary, but necessarily contradictory and complex. In Russia, for example, the revolution took place, but to this day manual labour accounts in average for 40% of the national economy. Manual labour is the basis of class society, the society of private property. So, the very basis of the new society has long been contradictory. In some respects, it was right for the new society, in others it was not.

On the one hand, there is a large proportion of manual labour, and on the other, there are developed sectors of production (e.g. space, defence industry).

From what I have said so far, I think it follows that the first socialist revolutions are likely to be accompanied by counter-revolutions.

Socialist countries have appeared and will appear mainly on the periphery of global capitalism. But socialist revolutions are also inevitable in the other capitalist countries. In a given historical period, socialist revolutions may be defeated and succeeded by counter-revolutions. But they will always rise from the ashes, until they triumph, finally and forever.

Even when the capitalist counter-revolution wins, it does not succeed in completely poisoning, destroying what the socialist revolutions have done. Could the counter-revolution in our country destroy all that was achieved during the years of Soviet power? A daily example: look how much difficulty, how much friction it takes to replace the socialist address "comrade" with the exploitative address "mister".

The counter-revolution has partly won. But with many victims (including the victims of the international conflicts and the victims of the catastrophically increased crime rate and the sharp drop in the birth rate, the predominance of mortality over the birth rate, the mental corruption of the people, etc.). There are already many victims. But there will be many more. And yet the possibilities of preventing the restoration of capitalism are not completely exhausted.

Resistance to the capitalist counter-revolution and the prospects of the future. The progressive character of Soviet society.

G.H.: What possibilities are there?

V.V.: Resistance to capitalist counter-revolution is likely to grow as the destruction of the economy continues. The majority of the people, I think, have not yet understood the processes that are under way. The majority of the people, against whom the capitalist counter-revolution is actually directed, are trapped in the fantasies of a luxurious life under capitalism. And indeed, people believe that [our] country will join the group of developed capitalist countries. The majority is passive. Now the perception is spreading more and more: "I don't believe anyone, neither the communists nor the democrats".

In this way, the question of the possibility of abolishing the counter-revolution will depend on the rates of growth, whether the economy is destroyed, whether growth is achieved, whether the difficulties of the population are overcome, how the authorities are able to maneuver. We have to admit that they are learning from their mistakes. But we will be

able to judge with certainty in every respect the first substantial results in the economy and the prospects of capitalist counter-revolution in the autumn and winter of 1992-1993^[21].

V.K.: Victor Alexeyevich, could you briefly mention the social trends that will be dominant in the near future?

V.V.: First of all, it is not unlikely that nationalist, national-patriotic feelings will be strengthened and the role of the de facto awakening national forces will be enhanced. We must admit that there are a number of subjectively honest people among the representatives of these elements, who wish the country well. But the national-patriotic forces are extremely heterogenous. It is not unlikely that B. Yeltsin will also use the national-patriotic “card”. Then it would not be unlikely that the extreme right wing (in the true sense of the word) of the “democrats” (“democrats” of the type of Moscow Mayor G. Popov), whose aspirations in my opinion are far from being at odds with those of Yeltsin, would be strengthened.

V.K.: The validity of your predictions so far has not been contradicted by the course of human history. But effective prediction is only possible if it is based on a developing theory. In this respect, could you tell us what you are currently working on?

V.V.: In the epilogue to *The Logic of History*, an attempt is made to dialectically sublimate Marxism. This [sublimation] can be achieved through the research of world history, through the dialectical sublimation of the existing historical form of the Marxist method of research. The idea that Marxism divides eras into formations on an unchanging basis must be sublated. The very basis of this division changes with the historical process, i.e. the most general concepts are not isolated from the specific, the most general categories of human thinking are historical. I will start with a more accessible example. Historical materialism is a theory that appears historically and is historically transient. But it is not transient in the way that the bourgeois point of view claims, which is

that historical materialism has had its day and must be replaced by the bourgeois mode of thinking.

The fundamental question of philosophy appears with the emergence of the real division of labour, that is, the division between intellectual and physical labour. This question changes, and loses its meaning for humanity with the transcendence of the actual division of labour.

Let us now move on to something less self-evident.

The very general characteristics of production, distribution, exchange and consumption change historically. But Marx does not take this into account. The materialist conception of history itself is presented in him as historically unchanging. Such a conception must be “sublated”. Moreover, the interaction between man as a natural being and man as a social being is not systematically studied in Marx.

In this way, it is necessary to speak of dialectically “sublating” the existing historical form of Marxism, of transcending it.

The shortcomings mentioned above are not so much due to the limitations, the incomplete nature of Marx’s research, but due to the specificity of the period during which Marx lived and worked. When they criticise Marxism, they do not take into account the fact that Marx did not solve all the problems (that need to be solved!). But in K. Marx there is a way of solving these problems, there is a certain direction. In fact, he examines society primarily from the position of the negation of the prehistory of humanity (which includes today’s capitalism). But even from the position of the negation of prehistory, the investigations are only in their initial stage. Meanwhile, the possibility of investigation from a higher position [perspective] has appeared. If research has been carried out mainly from the positions of the negation of capitalism, in our time the conditions have appeared for research from the positions of the creation of something new, from the positions of the existence of socialism, even if it has “gills”. Our approach is radically different from that

of E. Bernstein.

E. Bernstein criticised Marxism by denying, for example, the idea of the decisive role of the economic sphere in the life of society. Probably sensing that Marx had not completed the substantiation of his thesis on the determining role of the economy in the life of society, he essentially denied the validity of this position. In fact, Marx did not complete his substantiation. Such a substantiation is a process with stages. Marx solved the problem to a certain extent and stopped at a certain stage. In particular, Marx basically followed the path of subordinating [reducing] the other spheres of life to the economic sphere and began to study the economic sphere without (because he simply did not have the time) taking the reverse path. Marx himself wrote in *Capital*: “Subordination is Feuerbach’s way”. And Marx himself had only just begun to work in the reverse path.

G.H.: What do you think about contemporary Western Marxists? To what extent do they “sublate” or “continue” Marx’s work? Or do they remain unknown in the USSR?

V.V.: Here we must clarify a matter of principle: the posing of the problem. If humanity follows the path of unification, then wherever there are studies (of problem posing and problem solving), there will be some commonalities. But the question may also be: to what extent have the problems and the ways of solving them been consciously grasped? And this depends, among other things, on the positions taken. If there is a certain relationship to reality, the problem is solved according to this relationship. And the question of perspective is always resolved by certain positions: what is a perspective for one person is a lack of perspective for another.

As far as Western Marxists are concerned, they have been very much contaminated by bourgeois thinking. A lot is borrowed from Marxism by bourgeois thinkers, but they borrow it in a fragmented way. And there are many examples. From a methodological

point of view, Western Marxists use “minor tools” of Marxism. Of course, they also produce useful results. But Marxism offers many more possibilities that are inaccessible from the outset to researchers who stand by the positions of capitalist society.

Western Marxists, at best, take the position of negating the existing capitalist society. But their negation has as its [point of reference] the society that is being negated. This is a fundamental limitation, not personal but historical. Western readers and Western scholars may not understand this.

Max Weber, starting from K. Marx, grasped the problem and, like Bernstein, grasped the shortcomings of Marxism, but in a distorted form, and twisted them. In general, we can say that Western thinkers make a certain contribution to the development of Marxism. However, as a rule, they do not take the position of a fairly consistent negation of capitalism. Moreover, again as a rule, they are not sufficiently familiar with the objective processes that were taking place in the USSR. The study of these processes is as important for the understanding of socialism as the study of England in the middle of the 10th century was for the study of capitalism.

Whatever “gills” Soviet society may have had, it is impossible to see Marxism and the future of humanity objectively enough without admitting and understanding its progressive nature in comparison with capitalist society.

Notes

[1] Bulat Shalvovich Okudzhava (1924-1997) was a Soviet poet and singer/songwriter. A favourite of anti-Soviet dissidents before and during the counter-revolution in the USSR. During Yeltsin’s 1993 coup and subsequent assault against the Supreme Soviet, Okudzhava along with other artists and writers supported the Yeltsin regime in quelling the remnants of Soviet power.

[2] Anatoly Ivanovich Lukyanov (1930-2019) was a Soviet politician and Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR between 15 March 1990 and 4 September 1991. He was one of the founders of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF) in 1993. Lukyanov was an early political ally of Mikhail Gorbachev, but from 1987-1988 he turned against Gorbachev, correctly foreseeing that his policies would lead to the collapse of the Soviet Union. He published books of poetry under his own name

and pseudonyms.

[3] Markus Johannes Wolf (1923-2006), was an East German spy who served as the head of the Main Directorate for Reconnaissance the foreign intelligence service of East Germany's Ministry for State Security. After his retirement, he continued the work of his late brother Konrad in writing the story of their upbringing in Moscow in the 1930s in the book *Troika*.

[4] *The Gadfly*, a novel by Irish-born British writer Ethel Voynich, published in 1897, set in 1840s Italy under the dominance of Austria, is about a time of revolutions and of revolutionaries.

[5] Rakhmetov is a fictional character from the 1863 novel "What Is to Be Done?" by Nikolay Chernyshevsky. He is the most popular character because he inspired many Russian revolutionaries, including V. I. Lenin.

[6] Korchagin is the main character in the novel *How the Steel Was Tempered*, considered one of the most influential works of communist literature. Nikolai Alekseyevich Ostrovsky (1904-1936) was a great Soviet socialist realist writer. He was a worker who became a passionate revolutionary Bolshevik, a member of the Communist Youth, a soldier in the Red Army who fought for the socialist revolution with self-denial and at the cost of his health and life. Korchagin condenses many of the author's autobiographical elements.

[7] "Who Can Be Happy and Free in Russia?", is a large-scale epic poem by N. Nekrasov, which shows his gift for vigorous realistic satire. Nikolay Alexeyevich Nekrasov (1821-1878) was a Russian poet, writer, critic and publisher, a hero of liberal and radical circles in the Russian intelligentsia of the mid-nineteenth century, particularly as represented by Vissarion Belinsky and Nikolay Chernyshevsky.

[8] Nikolay Gavrilovich Chernyshevsky (1828 -1889) was a Russian literary and social critic, journalist, novelist, democrat, and socialist philosopher, a utopian socialist and leading theoretician of Russian Narodniks. He was the dominant intellectual figure of the 1860s revolutionary democratic movement in Russia, despite spending much of his later life in exile to Siberia, and was later highly praised by Karl Marx, Georgi Plekhanov, and V.I. Lenin.

[9] Nikolay Alexandrovich Dobrolyubov (1836-1861) was a Russian poet, literary critic, journalist, and prominent figure of the Russian revolutionary movement, representative of "revolutionary democracy". He was a literary hero to both K. Marx and Lenin.

[10] Revolutionary democracy - an ideological current of democracy, which assumes the creation of a socially just society through mass revolution in the spirit of utopian socialism, having the character of anti-feudal struggle.

[11] *Chapaev* is a 1934 Soviet biographical war film about the hero of the Russian Civil war and Red Army commander Vasily Ivanovich Chapayev, directed by the Vasilyev brothers for Lenfilm. It is based on the novel of the same name by Dmitri Furmanov, a Russian writer and Bolshevik commissar who fought together with Chapayev.

[12] (1868-1918), the last emperor of Russia (1894-1917), son of Alexander III

[13] Stolypin Pyotr Arkadyevich (1862-1911) Russian politician, Minister of the Interior and, from 1906, Prime Minister of the reactionary tsarist government after the defeat of the 1905-1907 revolution. He introduced

agrarian reforms. He was mortally wounded by D. G. Bogrov.

[14] Tatiana Ivanovna Leshchenko-Sukhomlina (1903-1998) was a Russian singer, actress, writer translator and poet. In 1947 she was arrested on the charge of anti-Soviet agitation. She was sent to Vorkuta, where, as an actress, she joined the Vorkuta camp theatre. In 1954 she was released with the right to live with her mother in Ordzhonikidze.

[15] "The Young Guard" was a heroic Krasnodon underground organisation, which operated in Nazi-occupied territory, many members of which were exterminated by the Nazis. In 1946 a historical novel about "The Young Guard" was published by A. Fadeyev. Alexander Alexandrovich Fadeyev (1901-1956) was a Soviet writer, one of the co-founders of the Union of Soviet Writers and its chairman (1946-1954).

[16] Pyotr Yakovlevich Galperin (1902-1988), an eminent Soviet psychologist, a student of L. Vygotsky. He formulated the theory of the gradual formation of mental acts.

[17] This is the Russian economist V. Leontiev (b. 1906), who is regarded as the founder of the 'input-output' method of economic analysis, although it was developed by Soviet economists under P.I. Popov between 1924 and 1928. He emigrated to the United States in 1931.

[18] A term used by supporters of capitalist restoration in the former USSR. It gradually acquired an offensive connotation.

[19] A term introduced by A. Zinoviev to emphasise the destructive role of the perestroika and the reforms.

[20] K. Marx, F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, Part 1, A.

[21] Vaziulin's prediction turned out to be very accurate. The uprising against Boris Yeltsin's constitutional coup, which developed into an armed uprising and culminated in the "Black October" massacre in Moscow in 1993 (1993.10.3.-4.), proves the existence of an active popular movement against bourgeois counter-revolution and capitalist regression, which, however, was not able to overturn the counter-revolutionary process.

Imperialism is the era of revolution

Communist Party of the Peoples of Spain (PCPE)

Previous considerations

This, like every contribution that the PCPE makes, has the intention of clearly orienting itself to situate the necessary theoretical framework for the indispensable intervention in the political struggle. We understand that this should be the reason and pretension of the communist parties and of the revolutionary forces as a whole.

The Marxist-Leninist organizations must correct the error of carrying out our analysis exclusively on the economic elements. It is necessary to go further, and take the analysis to the complex relations, and changing in time, between the economic base and the superstructure. Understanding both as components of the same dialectical unity, as a coherent and articulated totality, where their internal contradictions constitute the factors of their weakness, where revolutionary action must strike.

The most degraded version of this absurdity is the simplism and schematization in the theorization carried out by the promoters of the so-called “imperialist pyramid” which presupposes that at present all social formations are imperialist, a position of simplistic cretinism that is only defended in an endogamic sphere, provoking the propagation by its emulators and distracted currents that intoxicate the International communist movement.

Lenin himself, in the Prologue to *Imperialism*, superior phase of capitalism, states that due to the tsarist censorship he was “forced to limit himself strictly to an exclusively theoretical analysis—above all economic—, but that he also had to formulate the indispensable and not very numerous political observations with the greatest prudence” and that “we will not dwell, however much it deserves it, on the non-economic aspect of the problem”. Consequently, to limit the analysis of Imperialism to a strictly economic question and to neglect the rest

of the political, social and cultural aspects it has is a mistake.

It is impossible to speak of Imperialism without considering that from its material reality, which fully obeys the laws of development of capitalism, we speak of “a civilization with its particular ways of thinking, acting and relating to other humans and the cosmos^[1]”, which has imposed itself with extreme genocidal violence over more than five centuries, generating an extraordinary and incalculable accumulation of capital in the West, by genocidal dispossession of the rest of the peoples and cultures of the planet.

It corresponds to Marxist-Leninists, to revolutionary thought, to make a global analysis for revolutionary political action. This means to look at reality situating the main categories of analysis, and to place before the working and popular masses a program for the Social Revolution.

Outline on imperialism

Imperialism is the “superior phase of capitalism”. Therefore it must be analyzed as a historical development of a mode of production in its advanced phase, not initial and not of maturity, a stage of decomposition. This advanced development has weakened (cornered) its initial free competition, concentrating all economic power in the hands of the monopolies. The dictatorship of capital is already the dictatorship of the power of the monopolies, the dictatorship of their governments, of their political parties, of their state institutions, of their instruments of repression and violence, of their lifestyles, of their models of consumption. It is this highly developed process of growth and concentration of capital that gives rise to new needs of the system of capitalist domination. Let us analyze this question, as imperative needs, product of its degree of development, and also

of the internal difficulties (contradictions) generated by this same degree of historical development.

It appears, in this transit, the imperious need for the “export of capital”. The national sphere has long since fallen short to valorize capital, and has advanced to a higher stage, where new circuits of valorization are opened through the export of these capitals to other countries. In order to guarantee the stability/permanence of these new circuits, political control of these countries, and also of the routes to these countries, is necessary. Therefore, the inescapable need for political control of the countries to which these capitals are exported is implicit.

The overwhelming advance of scientific-technical development creates new conditions for the valorization of capital, not only because of its degree of concentration and centralization, but also because for the production of any commodity imperialist capitalism needs to exploit the world working class. This has nothing to do with colonialism which was “limited” to extracting products and productions subjecting and exploiting a concrete working class of a certain place; we are in another later/superior phase.

It is necessary to analyze what oppressions (violence) capital needs to establish in this imperialist phase to try to give stability to this process of reproduction of capital. A system of limited sovereignties, ideological control, the tutelage of local powers, an adequate international order, ...; all this ensured with the military organization operating in all corners of the planet.

This same scientific-technical advance (anthropocene) leads to the concurrence of diverse imperialist powers competing with the same objectives of capital export in the same places and in the same circuits (value chains, lately). Thus we arrive at the destruction of the ecological niche necessary for the continuity of life of the human species, in a fierce competition for the same resources between powers. The leap in scientific knowledge, and the development of the productive forces associated with it, endows the imperialist formation with

extraordinary capacities to intervene/alter/modify almost any natural resource or element known to mankind. These capacities, within the logic of capital accumulation, become a systemic risk for everything. For life, for social stability, for ecosystems, for the very internal coherence of the human species. It is a necessity, of the first order, that the elaborations of the revolutionary field broaden their visual focus to a reality in permanent accelerated change.

Due to the high degree of concentration of capital, competition is fiercer every day (oligarchic fractions compete internally in each country, and oligarchies of different countries compete among themselves) and also compete for the growing scarcity of resources necessary for the production of goods; then war appears as a determining factor in the process of reproduction of capital and competition between imperialist powers. But we must understand that we are already facing a war that has nothing to do with what we have known so far in our history. The current war, with the most impressive technological advances, weapons of a lethality never known, hypersonic missiles, lasers, various nuclear weapons, electronic communications interference, environmental pollution, destruction of large infrastructures, etc., come to place the war in a frightening new dimension, and also systemic. The main promoter of war on a planetary scale is the collective West, with the USA at the head in its desperation to avoid its decline as the world’s leading power. NATO is the world terrorist organization that puts at risk the entire humanity.

The working class, in this scenario, becomes exploited as a whole as a single world unit, with a previously unknown explicit dimension. Let us analyze the situation of the working class in the central powers, how it is subdued and exploited as a function of the world totality, and how its value depreciates and its living conditions deteriorate. The price of labor power, even in this central capitalism, is situated in a dimension inferior to its reproductive value. There are no longer colonies in the classical sense, but there is a well differentiated situation between the imperialist center and the subjugated

areas of the peripheries of the system, an international system of limited sovereignties, which is a direct inheritance of the old colonial system. This factor allows a differential between the circuit of production and the realization of surplus value, which gives a respite to the straitjacket that is the tendential fall of the rate of profit.

Let us analyze the contradictions within the bourgeoisie. World oligarchy is a category that needs to be analyzed and dimensioned. Oligopolies and transnationals. Dependence and fragility of this system of giants. The national (state) realities are losing their capacity to maintain their stability in the face of the fierce struggle of the oligarchic factions themselves, which jeopardize the continuity of these same state formations when they become obstacles to solve the difficulties of some of the warring factions. In the next stage, profound crises will develop that will affect the stability of state formations, calling into question the limits and capacities of nation-states to contain these extreme contradictions. And which will be used as a pretext by the major powers for their intervention on the sovereignty of these countries, opening the way to a new international order that will advance in the subjugation of many countries to the central powers. We are seeing this scenario with the EU, under the pretext of the war in Ukraine.

Let us now go on to outline how the processes of social transformation must take place, let us define subjects, relations and transitions. Only organized masses, under revolutionary political leadership, will be able to give an answer to this current situation.

This system (economic order) does not admit two heads, but its tendency is to impose a single head and this will not be resolved, in essence, in the economic field, but will be resolved in the field of war. We must review our enthusiasm for multipolarity, perhaps we are distracted from the main thing and we convert the tactical framework and temporary, limited and punctual alliances, as a priority, as opposed to the strategic and really determining one of the class struggle and the struggle for Socialism.

If there is a power that has the disposition to

dominate the world on the basis of its military capabilities—the USA—the only possible game will be that of war. If we are wrong in this we will be left without capabilities for intervention in the class struggle.

In capitalism the necessary material basis for the beginning of socialist construction has already been created. This has to be a powerful weapon in the hands of the revolutionary vanguard. It is necessary to give it development and discourse for practical intervention in the concrete class struggles. To outline how is the revolutionary process that has to be given for the beginning of socialist construction. This will be the most effective way to fight against the warmongering development imposed today by the dictatorship of capital. We insist little on this, and we do not do pedagogy; we are losing precious time that later will be very difficult to recover.

To make some conclusions for the definition of the vanguard Party that corresponds today, with the forms of struggle, on the tactics, on the phases and the accumulation of forces, ... If we do not arrive until here we go very orphaned. In the current difficult scenario of the ICM, the definition of the political proposal of intervention is an urgent necessity. Political in essence, understanding that this political concreteness is the concrete expression of an ideological position defined with the coordinates outlined here.

The World Anti-imperialist Front (FMA)—theoretical nomination of the PCPE since its foundation in 1984—is a determining question, and there is the need to materialize it urgently. But it cannot be understood today as a prolonged process of accumulation of forces, but as the need for a launching-ultimatum that must be put on the table by a revolutionary vanguard determined to assume its historical responsibilities before the present.

The bet of the PCPE for the concretion of the FMA goes through a concentric development that advances from the communist coordination for the effective intervention against the III GM (NATO, bases), blockades and sanctions, defense of sovereignty

against the interventionism of the IMF, WB, WTO ... in short, in defense of life against imperialist destruction, that places Socialism as the possible alternative for the working class and the peoples of the world. A second circle is the one in which we intervene coordinately in a tactical framework of alliances that, always pushing in the sense of denouncing war, interference and the destruction of the ecological niche, has a tactical foundation exclusively based on specific political agreements. But all this determined by a totalizing vision of the extreme coordinates of the world class struggle.

In summary, this question must be approached with the understanding that the communist parties are facing a scenario of the development of capitalism in which we face the need to change our formulations, which correspond to previous phases of the sharpening of the internal contradictions of capitalism, and that today we are facing a new reality to which it is necessary to respond in concrete and updated terms to the degree of confrontation, degradation and extreme violence, faced by Humanity. As part of this new scenario, the vanguard has to formulate a hypothesis of how the transition to socialist society can take place, to concretize a proposal, a process of accumulation of forces, some alliances, a tactic to strike at the contradictions of the current capitalist formation and through this to advance the forces of social change, of social revolution.

Some ideas to finish situating the framework of praxis

To speak of Imperialism—the superior phase of capitalism—disregarding aspects or ignoring in its totality the history of colonial domination is a grave error. It is even more so if the practical and theoretical revolutionary accumulation of the struggle against colonial and anti-imperialist domination is not taken into account.

Modernity, which is the secular historical episode on which Western domination and the development of capitalism is based, is once again in a profound crisis. The greatest crisis it suffered was undoubtedly

the consolidation of October and the advance of the USSR, but also decolonization and the development of the project initiated at the Bandung Summit. With different characteristics, undoubtedly, the other is today. A reality determined by the general structural crisis of capitalist development and the articulation of a new scenario, each day with greater economic, political and military potential, which is the Multipolar World or Space.

The historical episode of the New World Order (NWO), imposed by the USA and NATO after the defeat of the USSR, can only be sustained on the basis of the absolute hegemony of the USA and its allies. The economic loss of this position vis-à-vis China, makes it extreme its degree of violence and desperately seeks confrontation. To date, Pax Americana has left a trail of millions of dead and destroyed countries (Iraq, Yugoslavia, Syria, Yemen, Afghanistan, Panama, Libya... with the Indonesian precedent of what has been called the “Jakarta method”), but resists doing so without further violence, and even without ruling out the nuclear option.

This NWO has not only confirmed all Lenin’s economic analyses, but has also confirmed:

- * The contempt for International Law and the supranational institutions generated after WW II, for questioning its absolute hegemony and domination.
- * The exacerbation of each and every one of the characteristics of imperialism that Lenin described in his pamphlet: monopoly as a consequence of the concentration of production, union of industrial and banking capital, development of interventionist (colonialist) policies, parasitism....

The NWO is the zenith of supremacist modernity which expresses itself in all its development and generates all its contradictions. Faced with this, and constituting an alternative to the domination of the USA and NATO, a new international scenario emerges which continues to be situated in the capitalist context and, logically, maintains the same tendencies and contradictions of capitalist development. However, there are differential factors that cannot be ignored: state planning of the economy in many

of its main economies—mainly China—, greater productive capacity—less parasitic—, demographic capacity, extractive economic potential, less debt and dependence on monetarism... that build a different scenario to the fully mature and decadent capitalism represented by the bloc led by the USA and nucleated around NATO.

Along with these economic differences, there is the national and sovereignty element that no Leninist can ignore. All the countries which, in a very complex diplomatic architecture woven mainly by Chinese and Russian diplomacy over the last decade, confront or question the absolute hegemony of the West and its role of unilateral sheriff of international relations, base their claims on the defense of their national sovereignty and respect for their culture and values. For them, the existence of UN-type international consensus institutions and respect for international law is the only guarantee for recovering the margins of sovereignty that the Bretton Woods institutions and financial capital almost absolutely deny them.

The unreserved denunciation of colonialism and neocolonialism is a line of connection, at least formally, of the revolutionary camp with the Multipolar space from which to make a tactical intervention and weave alliances.

The evidence of the falsity of bourgeois representative democracy as a true democracy and, even more, as a model of universal democracy, breaks the fallacious argument of the defense of “freedom and democracy” of Western imperialism against all peoples who do not accept its absolute domination.

Today, at the international level, a new stage is opening up for the development of the class struggle which, in the last analysis, is where all social development is decided. Only if there is a decisive intervention in favor of Socialism by the revolutionary forces, this new reality can have a favorable development for the interests of the working class, in particular and of the peoples, in general, who continue to suffer the threatening boot of imperialism in its resolute and criminal coup disposition. To correctly combine tactical flexibility

with strategy and principles, is the only guarantee for, from class independence, developing correct alliances and facilitating processes of accumulation of forces.

The struggle for peace is fully connected to the struggle for Socialism. The revolutionary forces must make a banner of the struggle for Peace and turn it into a space of mass struggle for the definitive liberation from capitalist exploitation. The alternative to the “dictatorship of Capital” is not the “democracy of Capital”, it is the liberation from capitalism.

It will be a double grave error to consider:

1) The inevitability of nuclear war.

2) To consider that the new multipolar scenario can defeat Western imperialism and destroy its hegemony without its recourse to violence and war.

Anti-imperialist work requires diverse scenarios in which the most diverse alliances are built. On the one hand, open spaces in which to develop initiatives based on political agreements with the most diverse actors. On the other hand, frameworks of the International Communist Movement which, likewise, must advance on political agreements that allow to make relevant for the development of the class struggle the slogans and agreements adopted. An ICM that has to recover its historical signs of identity with the leadership of the PPCC that conquered power and have at their disposal the experiences of the liberation struggles they victoriously achieved.

The consideration of NATO as the main enemy of Humanity is the basis on which to work the alliances. As a proposal on which to work the political agreements, the following points are worth mentioning:

- The rejection of the domination of the USA and the international presence of its military bases.
- Active opposition to NATO and its warmongering policies.
- The consideration of the EU as an imperialist interstate union.
- Denouncing Zionism and its genocidal policies.
- Opposition to trade blockades and sanctions.
- The fight against fascism and Nazism.

- The identification of the INTERNATIONALIST Solidarity with the anti-imperialist position.

Finally, some considerations and assessments to illuminate the antagonisms in the practices of the economy in China and the USA. Some of them are incorporated in the wording of this contribution, but we must further emphasize that:

The greatest threat to Imperialism is not the People's Republic of China, but Peace.

The USA has been configured, since its foundation, from the wars in which it has participated and promoted, where, after more than 250 years, only 5 of them have been without wars.

Therefore, their economy is based on the empowerment of the industrial military sector, which is the one that generates so many jobs. At the moment that peace prevails over war, the construction of ships, planes, missiles and other military equipment will become useless material, impossible to impose even on their allies, behaving as obsolete, disposable and ruined sectors. Unemployment, begging and violence will prevail in a society built under the signs of the most antisocial individualism.

The People's Republic of China is the largest factory in the world, where the Marxist theory of value operates in a much more resounding way, where only labor, that is, the productive forces, generate surplus value through the material amount of time socially necessary to convert the product into merchandise.

Consequently, capitalism is configured, beyond its warlike production, in an anarchic economy that, attending to its famous law of Supply and Demand, provokes the anticipated obsolescence of products of goods and services that do not find satisfaction even with the fetishistic appendix with which the consumer's desires are usually invaded. For this reason, the pocket of poverty in the capitalist countries continues to increase without any possibility of being stopped.

On the contrary, the socialist economy is based on planning, that is to say, on producing according to the needs to be covered collectively, giving priority to vital elements such as food. After the constitution of the

People's Republic of China in 1949, the first objective was to eradicate hunger and the government, under the guidance of the Communist Party, set itself to this goal.

In short, imperialism (the USA) needs war. The People's Republic of China needs peace.

The confrontation for world hegemony is related to antagonisms impossible to eradicate. The organizations that emerged from Breton Woods, managed by US imperialism (IMF, WB, WTO, etc.) are now being questioned by many states that were helped under their protection and subjugation. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization, created in 2001, continues to receive requests to join an organization that will have its own Bank and currency for transactions carried out within the framework of its member states. Trade, Finance, Currency will radically alter a false balance imposed by imperialism that threatens the sovereignty of states and governments.

Notes

[1] Quote by Ramon Grosfoguel from the book "From the sociology of decolonization to the new decolonial anti-imperialism".

On the Launching of the American Communist Party

Carlos L. Garrido | American Communist Party

All around the country normal working-class Americans are asking themselves one question: why? Why is it that I am struggling to make ends meet at the end of the month? Why is the price I paid for the same groceries a couple years ago doubled today, while my wage or salary has stagnated? Why is it that I was forced to go into drowning debt for getting sick, daring to get an education, wanting a home for my family? Why are the politicians on my screens so keen on waging war on half the world with our tax dollars, but so averse to investing any money on the people and the country's decaying infrastructure? Why is my day pervaded by stress when I drop my children off at school, not knowing whether they can be the next victim of the horrendous shootings all too common in our country? Why do none of the people who govern the country seem to care about the desperate and deteriorating conditions of those like my family, neighbors, and co-workers?

Poor, indebted, and desperate, the American working class has begun to organically question the assumptions of the ruling capitalist order. While they have been generationally fed the idea that America is the greatest country on earth, where freedom, democracy, and equality reign, today the desperation they experience in their everyday lives has made critical reflection necessary, spontaneous though it might still be. Can there be any real equality between those in their class and those that benefit from their toil, indebtedness, and instability? Can there be any freedom for the men and women enchained for life to a debt they owe a major bank? Can there be freedom and equality for the millions of children going to sleep hungry every night in America, or the 600 thousand homeless wandering around in a country with 33 times more empty homes than homeless people? Can there be any democracy in a system where the people who control the major corporations, banks,

and investment firms hold power over the state, using it to enforce their will, I.e., the accumulation of capital, as the bottom line and most supreme value in all social relations?

What has emerged, then, is a serious crisis of legitimacy. Faith in the ruling institutions of the capitalist class is rapidly diminishing. Only 11 percent of the American public trusts the mainstream media, the main ideological institutions of the capitalist ruling class. The politicians which enforce the interests of the owners of big capital aren't doing much better, with just 19 percent of Americans holding that their elected representatives actually represent them. It is clear to the American people, albeit in a form that is still abstract and embryonic, that the media is simply there to manipulate them into consenting to the agenda of the ruling class—twisting facts, lying, and removing context to invert reality on ongoing world events. It is evident to them that their so-called representatives are in reality the representatives of their exploiters, oppressors, and parasitic creditors.

Out of this general and spontaneous rejection of the current state of affairs has arisen various different forms of dissent in the American working class. Some were mobilized by the Bernie Sanders movement in 2016 and 2020, seeing in it the potential for a genuine political, although not social, revolution which could guarantee the basic rights afforded in social democracies but absent in our country. In the same years, some were captivated by Donald Trump and his call to Make America Great Again (MAGA), which for many working-class folks in the country signified a striving to return to an age long gone, where their parents and grandparents could secure comfort in life and a high standard of living with a normal working-class job. Others have taken various apolitical routes, showing antipathy in the face of a political arena

where they rightly observe that, as of right now, they have no ability to change anything.

While others are certainly present, these three have been the major channels for working people to express their discontent in the ruling order. Many, many flaws are evidently present in each route. But they all share a common rational kernel—the rejection of the status quo, and in the first two, the faith and willingness to work towards changing it. As it currently exists, however, one route leads to paralysis in the face of the task of constructing something new, while the other two have led to fake prophets being elevated as embodying the interests of the people, while they, in reality, have merely expressed more novel and disguised ways of upholding the same ruling order. We are in the period where it becomes evident that the hopes of 8 years ago are hollow, that a new way of framing and articulating discontent must be sought.

For us, only a communist party can live up to this task. A communist party is, after all, fundamentally the vehicle for the most advanced detachment of the working class to win the faith of the critical mass and guide their struggles to the finish line—the conquest of political power. It is a communist party which has the potential of giving these different forms of dissent some coherence, unity, and direction. Coherence arises out of the systematic understanding of the ills individuals face—ills which are not individual moral failings but systemic in character. Unity is premised on this coherence, on the understanding of our commonality of interests and our shared source of discontent. And direction arises out of the previous two—only when we can coherently understand the social order upon which our troubles are based can we see that in its own contradictions there's a way forward. In the correct understanding of the problem, we find the premises through which the solution can be sought. When the decaying capitalist system we have before us is comprehended so too is the fact that working people—the producers of all value in society—have it within their power, as a class, to build a world anew in their own image. Once this recognition of our shared fundamental reality is

achieved and the varied forms of dissent unified, then the steps forward will show themselves in the process of a struggle clear about its direction.

Lamentably, the historical communist party in our nation has shown itself incapable of living up to the task of the organization which bears that name. It has sought class collaboration in the era where class struggle is an imminent reality. It has sided, under the cynical auspices of 'fighting fascism,' with the Democratic Party whilst such organization has sent hundreds of billions in U.S. taxpayer money to neo-Nazis in Ukraine for a proxy war against Russia. It has supported this party through its murderous funding and equipping of the Zionist entity's genocide in Palestine. It is a "communist" party which objectively has supported fascism and class collaboration under the justification of fighting that which they precisely support. Fascism, for them, is simply the social conservatives who disagree with the more liberal social values recently accepted by the forces of hegemony. For them the fascist threat emanates from our conservative co-workers and not the capitalist state that uses both parties to fund war and genocide. But what can be more fascist than supporting, financing, and equipping a genocide carried out by a white supremacist apartheid state?

The "communist" party USA spits on the legacy of Stalin, Dimitrov, and the great anti-fascist fighters of the world communist movement when it cites them tongue in cheek to support the fascistic American state. It forgets that, as Michael Parenti wrote "the fascist threat comes not from the Christian right or the militias or this or that grouplet of skinheads but from the national security state itself, the police state within the state."^[1] These are the forces which enforce the "open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinistic and most imperialist elements of finance capital," central to the Marxist understanding of fascism, elaborated in the brilliant work of Georgi Dimitrov.^[2] The "communist" party USA operates, therefore, with an idealist and anti-Marxist understanding of fascism when it ignores the role of fascism as a form of capitalist governance in

periods of crisis. It reduces fascism to a problem of ideas in the mind, and it's unable to see how, as a form of capitalist governance in crisis, it's been present here in both parties all along. The basic understanding of the spurious dialectic of Democrats and Republicans, of the unending and performative back-and-forth used to mask the continuity of the imperialist state and serve its continual reproduction, is completely lost on these "communists." They side with one side of the capitalists, imperialists, and fascists. In doing so they don't actually fight against the 'fascist threat' they so often invoke but reinforce it. They feed into the spectacle of American politicking; they become complicit in its operations.

But errors in party lines are amendable when the operational method of a communist party is upheld. Democratic centralism, when actually present, gives the party the potential to rectify—to improve its understanding of the situation and its failings. It allows the slippages into social chauvinism, opportunism, and ultraleftism (so evident in the cpUSA) to be reeled in and corrected. But here too, the "Communist" Party USA has completely violated its obligations. Ample evidence has shown that at the 32nd National Convention party democracy was thwarted, and democratic centralism tossed out the window.^[3] And when those courageous cadres sought to rectify this usurping of the party—this coup of the American working class's historic organization by a small clique of lifelong bureaucrats—through constitutional means stood up to share a petition requesting the democratic consultation thwarted at the convention, all real communists were purged, often expelling whole clubs themselves. The evidence has been documented and made public. As was made evident, the ruling clique of the cpUSA, then, has completely destroyed party democracy in order to defend its support for class collaboration with a party that supports Nazis and carries out genocidal wars on native peoples.

But no amount of fettering the class struggle would achieve their desired stoppage of the movement of history. An organization of the working class,

grounded not in middle class professionals and bureaucrats but in the working class itself, guided by Marxism-Leninism and not the purity fetish, was bound to arise. On July 7th of 2024 this organization was born. It's birth, as Executive Chairman Haz Al-Din noted, was itself a triumph in deed, not merely in word.^[4] It brought together a broad group of different communist forces, stemming from those which were unconstitutionally purged by the cpUSA, to carry forth the struggle together, to reconstitute the American Communist Party our people so desperately need. It is bounded not by abstract and pure doctrines, but by the living science of Marxism-Leninism, which sees truth in the deed, in practical results and organizational achievements. Our standard of success will not be the construction of theory built off of the purest abstract ideas. Our standard of success will be our capacity to fulfill the role history has assigned to the American Communist Party, namely, to provide the coherence, unity, and direction that can get our people out of the perpetual crises which have pervaded our decaying capitalist mode of life, and establish in its place a society of, by, and for working people—Socialism.

Notes

[1] Michael Parenti, *America Besieged* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1998), 119.

[2] Georgi Dimitrov, *Against Fascism and War* (New York: International Publishers, 1986), 2.

[3] Our Institute has a whole playlist discussing the 32nd National Convention and interviewing around a dozen purged members. You can watch the six videos in that playlist here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wk7JuLxXsW8&list=PLxhlh6ux6zSnGUbwuHGusdJTTYkNie_C&pp=gAQBiAQB

[4] First address to the public from Executive Chairman Haz Al-Din:
<https://x.com/ACPMMain/status/1815807197806248215>

The Western Pacific War

Stephen Cho | Coordinator of the Korean International Forum

The storm of World War 3, unleashed by imperialism, is attacking the Western Pacific by way of Eastern Europe and West Asia (Middle East). In World War 3, one front, called the anti-imperialist front, has formed in three distinct theaters, the Eastern European theater, including Ukraine; West Asian theater, including Palestine; and the East Asian theater, including the “Republic of Korea (ROK)” and Taiwan. However, the East Asian theater is being expanded to the Western Pacific theater. Adding Australia and New Zealand to East Asia gives the Western Pacific.

Today, the Eastern theater of Asia is not confined to the “ROK” and Taiwan. The US has never concealed its plan that if war begins in the “ROK” or Taiwan, the US would escalate it into the East Asian War and, by extension, into a Western Pacific War. It would expand the theater to include the “first island chain,” centered around Japan and connected to the Philippines via Taiwan, and to the “second island chain,” extending from Japan to Papua New Guinea via Guam, and finally to Australia and New Zealand beyond the “second island chain.”

At the US-Japan foreign and defense ministers’ talks on July 28, it was decided to create the Joint Operations Command of Japan’s Ground, Maritime, and Air Self-Defense Forces Joint Operations Command and a unified command within the US Forces Japan (USFJ) by the beginning of next year. This means that, in the near future, Japan’s Self-Defense Forces (JSDF), which are incapable of engaging in war, will become the Japanese military capable of engaging in war, and that the operational command authority of the USFJ will be transferred from the US Indo-Pacific Command to the USFJ. In other words, the possibility of war has increased in East Asia, including Northeast

Asia and, by extension, the Western Pacific. With 55,000 personnel, the USFJ is the main force of the US forces in the Indo-Pacific.

“(Northeast) Asian NATO” including the US, Japan, and the “ROK,” led by the US, was manipulated by agreeing with the NATO way of “Principle of Collective Defense” at the Camp David summit in August 2023, exercised real-time missile warning data sharing system in December, and conducted war games named “Freedom Edge,” which is the NATO way of a multi-domain joint military exercise in this June. With the Philippines joining in place of India, which did not attend the NATO summit in Washington, the so-called “SQUAD” of the US, Japan, Australia, and the Philippines was formed, thus, war exercises against China have been fiercely waged in Philippine waters. Also, there is “AUKUS” comprised of the US, Britain (the UK), and Australia.

“Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC) 2024”, more expanded than during the Cold War, was conducted on the largest scale, with 40 ships, three submarines, 150 aircraft, and 25,000 troops from 29 participating countries. NATO member countries joined the “Pacific Skies” exercise in the Pacific region such as Australia from mid-June to mid-August. Germany also participated in the joint air exercises held in Japan, which was one of the “Pacific Skies.” That is under the NATO umbrella, Germany and Japan, which were all war criminal countries and fascist states during World War 2 are carrying out joint military exercises.

The US has adopted the “Nuclear Posture Review,” “Washington Declaration,” “Nuclear Consultative Group,” and “Guidelines on Nuclear Strategy Planning and Operation” and is putting a policy of nuclear confrontation with DPRK into action. Compared

with 2022, the frequency of US nuclear submarine sightings increased seven times, and the frequency of fighter and bomber sightings increased four times on the Korean Peninsula and its surrounding waters in 2023. In addition, nuclear aircraft carriers have continued to be deployed, and advanced military equipment from the US, such as F-35 stealth fighters and SM-6 ship-to-air interceptor missiles, are being brought in on a large scale. Regarding the “Ulchi Freedom Shield (UFS),” which is held from August 19th to 29th, the outside maneuver training will be conducted 48 times, which is ten more than last year, and the brigade-level exercises will be carried out 17 times, which is four times more than last year, and have evolved into provocative war drills such as “Occupation of Pyongyang” and “Decapitation Operation.”

On July 28, the US-Japan-“ROK” Defense Ministers’ Meeting signed the “Memorandum of Cooperation on the Trilateral Security Cooperation Framework” and agreed to regularly and systematically conduct multi-domain trilateral exercises, including meetings among the three Defense Ministers and meetings among the three Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Yoon Suk-yeol administration of the “ROK” has condoned the historical distortion regarding the Japanese invasion, and the sophistry surrounding Dokdo’s sovereignty by the Japanese Fumio Kishida government. It also agreed for Japan to acquire the “enemy base strike capability” and to purchase of US Tomahawk missiles. From these facts, it revealed itself to be a pro-US and pro-Japanese traitor, as well as a fascist warmonger. US imperialism completed its job of organizing the “ROK” fascist regime under Japanese militarism, and the Japanese militarist gangs are frenzied with their ambition of reinvasion by conducting joint military exercises with the “ROK,” the Philippines, and other countries.

Various exercises to invade other countries operated and led by the US are being carried out hastily. First, let’s list the imperialist military exercises

directly related to the “ROK” from June to August this summer: US Air Force reconnaissance aircraft RC-135W “Rivet Joint” flew a reconnaissance flight over the West Sea on June 4; US Strategic Bomber B1B were mobilized for joint air exercises with the “ROK” on June 5; US Air Force reconnaissance aircraft “Rivet Joints” flew a reconnaissance flight on June 6; loudspeaker broadcasts against North Korea resumed on June 9; US military heavily armed aircraft “Ghostrider” deployed to participate in special warfare exercises on June 12; US Air Force reconnaissance aircraft RC-135S “Cobra Ball” flew over the East Sea on June 14; Theodore Roosevelt Nuclear Carrier Strike Group entered the operational base in Busan on June 22; “ROK” resumed the live-fire artillery drills near the northwestern maritime border in seven years on June 26; US-Japan-“ROK” Multi-Domain Joint Exercise “Freedom Edge” with Roosevelt nuclear carrier participation from June 27 to 29; “ROK” resumed frontline artillery firing drills for the first time in six years on July 2; during the “RIMPAC”, the “ROK” conducted SM2 anti-ship missile launching drills on July 9; US-“ROK” special operations air descent drills from July 15 to 31; US Air Force reconnaissance aircraft “Rivet Joint” flew over the Korean Peninsula from July 17 to 18; daily propaganda broadcasts against North Korea from July 19; US-“ROK” integrated firepower drills from July 22 to August 3; US-“ROK” held joint air exercises July 23 to August 8; US-“ROK” CNI (Conventional-Nuclear Integration)-TTX (Naval Integration Tabletop Exercise) “Iron Mace 2024” from July 30 to August 1; US and “ROK” Marines held joint maritime exercises in Pohang, the “ROK,” from August 12; US and “ROK” held crisis management exercises which are preliminary drills for the US-“ROK”’s UFS from August 13 to 16; US-“ROK” conducted UFS from August 19 to 29, etc.

Next, we can list noteworthy exercises in other countries: the annual joint US-Philippines exercise “Marine Aviation Support Activity 2024” from June

3 to 21; the first participation of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces in the US-France-Japan-Canada multinational field training exercise “Valiant Shield” from June 7 to 18; two US-Philippines live-fire exercises on June 15; the US-Canada-Japan-Philippines “Maritime Cooperative Activity” on June 17; the France-Germany-Spain-Japan joint air exercise “Pacific Skies” from mid-June to mid-August; the “RIMPAC” exercise hosted by the US Third Fleet, in which 25,000 troops from 29 countries and nine NATO member states participated from June 27 to August 1; an entry of the US Navy Seventh Fleet’s USS Blue Ridge into Cam Rahn Port in central Vietnam on July 8; the multinational joint air exercise “Pitch Black,” hosted by Australia, involving 140 aircraft and 4,000 troops from 20 countries from July 12 to August 2; the bilateral US-Philippine Coast Guards search and rescue exercise in the South China Sea on July 16; the US-UK-Australia-Philippines joint live-fire exercise “Predator’s Run” in northern Australia from July 17 to August 8; the US-Japan-France joint air exercise “Pegase 24,” hosted by France, on July 19; the France-Germany-Spain-Japan joint air exercise in Japan’s mainland from July 19 to 25; a deployment of US strategic bomber B1B to air space between Japan and the “ROK” as the US-Japan joint war exercise on August 2; the first bilateral maritime exercise between the Philippine Navy and the Japan Maritime “Self-Defense Force” in the Philippines’ exclusive economic zone on August 2; and the US-Canada-Australia-Philippines joint maritime exercise near sea of the Philippines from August 7 to 8.

The 2024 NATO Summit, held in Washington from July 9 to 11, elevated Japan, the “ROK,” Australia, and New Zealand to the status of important partners, calling them “IP4.” They are practically NATO members. In fact, they participated in the multinational joint maritime exercise “RIMPAC 2024,” held from June 26 to August 2 this year. It is no coincidence that Yoon Suk-yeol of the “ROK” visited the US Indo-Pacific Command in Honolulu on July 9,

where the “RIMPAC” exercise was ongoing, to deliver a puppet speech as the US wished, in the presence of US military generals and that he participated in the 2024 NATO Summit just before its start. It can be said that the “Pacification of NATO” was completed with the NATO Summit process in which Japan and the “ROK” participated steadily from the summits in Madrid, Spain, in 2022 through Vilnius, Lithuania, in 2023, and to Washington, the US, in 2024, and with the “RIMPAC 2024,” in which the largest ever number of NATO members participated this year and conducted multinational and multidomain joint military exercises.

In late August, the US-“ROK” joint war drill “UFS” reflected a “nuclear operation” scenario that included a preemptive nuclear strike on the DPRK. The Korean Peninsula is already in a state of “low-intensity war,” and US imperialism and its war puppet Yoon Suk-yeol are desperate to provoke a war in the “ROK.” The war in the “ROK” will be the war in East Asia and lead to a wider war in the Western Pacific.

