

18TH Congress of KKE
1st Subject

Closing Remarks

*by Aleka Pappariga, General Secretary of the outgoing Central Committee of
KKE*

Dear comrades,

Over the last 4 years we have made a step forward but not in the moderate sense that the word "step" indicates. It has been a vital, decisive step for the progress of the Party and the movement in the next years.

We dealt with the main shortcoming stressed in the previous Congress, which is our weakness to assimilate our strategy and act according to it, our relatively reduced ability to adjust and specify our activity in each area, branch, sector, at the level of each Party Base Organisation (PBO), in our activity within the movement.

Furthermore, there is a noticeable improvement concerning the main duty set by the 17th Congress: the orientation of our work towards the working class and young people. The conditions for targeted activity of the Party among young people have improved. At the same time, KNE has also made progress. We have developed our tactics concerning the mobilisations, the mass movement nationwide in order to rally and mobilise the workers' and people's masses around demands and goals of struggle, to strengthen the anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly line and consciousness; to promote the struggle for another path of development, for the people to realise that we need a change at the level of state power and not the alternation of the two partners or the coalition governments which manage the system.

The strategy can not be cut into pieces; the question "do we bring forward our strategy as a whole or merely a part of it?" has no basis. The awareness of our strategy can ensure the elaboration of the correct tactics. A confused perception about it reduces the ability to elaborate a correct tactic. Tactics are developed according to the strategy.

When we talk about tactics and strategy we do not take into consideration the level of the masses generally and abstractly but also the activity of the other forces that participate actively in the movement. ND intends to convince the people that the problem is the "scorched earth" inherited by PASOK. PASOK on the other hand, promotes the position that ND demolished the Welfare State built by PASOK. During the peasants' mobilisations, for instance, PASOK was talking about the abuse of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) by ND and ND was talking about the responsibilities of PASOK. The line of KKE expressed through the statement of the Political Bureau has been against the CAP, ND, PASOK and EU.

This issue is both vital and crucial. The confrontation and separation between tactics and strategy as well as their merging together under the influence of

deviations or intense ideological pressure constitute a setback for a communist Party; it has been proved that they damage the movement and even when they bring some benefits these are short-term.

Party's upward course

Over the last four years the Party has grown mature; it has elaborated new positions and had an upward course which is evaluated according to its activity. This is expressed mainly in the party bodies and requires much more work at the level of PBO.

How we got to this point:

The self-criticism of the CC and the whole Party in the 17th Congress has helped a lot as in the following period we dealt with our shortcomings. We have not concealed them nor do we in the Theses of the CC. We organised a "march to the people" through which we popularised our political proposal. In the last electoral battles we brought forward our strategy and at the same time we explained why those who do not agree with our strategy can trust us.

The elaboration of positions for social issues and international developments according to each work branch, each sector of economy has also helped us. Likewise, the study of problems in each area; the meetings in each sector, the organisational meetings, the nationwide conferences that contribute to the common assimilation and above all to the common understanding concerning guidance issues; the effort to find a common line of struggle for the working class, the peasantry and the self-employed; the pan-Hellenic conference for the Youth, the nationwide meeting for the women; the position that the big majority of the problems constitute an expression of the general problem; the study for the documents for the 90th anniversary of the Party, the 60th anniversary of the Democratic Army of Greece and WW II, the research on socialism and the study of the Party's history that will be completed after the 18th Congress.

The research on socialism and the study of the Party's history prove that we have no fear or hesitation to defend and criticise at the same time.

Of course, all these do not work automatically. Every day, every hour we should be vigilant. In addition there are several issues that have not been solved yet as they should. We have work to do but now we can be more demanding. We can be sure that we will be more effective in the future.

We focus on:

The outbreak of the economic crisis sets us the duty to work in order to accelerate the change of the masses stance towards the parties in power, the monopolies. We do not take for granted that the rise of the class consciousness and the will to join the battle will come about automatically and spontaneously. The impact of the crisis on the workers' and people's consciousness has a contradictory character. The responsibilities of the Party

increase incredibly and therefore the improvement of our activity should be as quick as possible. We do not restrict ourselves to the position that there can be a setback of the people's movement. We stress it only in order to put emphasis on the other possibility, namely the rise of the labour movement. And at the same time we prepare for both possibilities.

Therefore we should put emphasis on the preparation of the movements' rise. We should take into consideration that the intensification of the problems brings about the outburst, the will to take revenge. New masses without experience will come to the forefront. These masses may wish to go ahead, but it is not sure that their political consciousness will develop quickly and in a mass way.

We can exert a positive influence on a wave of masses like these, that are not prepared to sacrifice or they are reluctant to. The level of their maturation is not the only issue. We should also take into account the intervention of the bourgeoisie, its mechanisms, the parties in power, the reformists and opportunists. They will use the carrot and the stick method in view of the rise of the masses' activity. The political support of the forces hindering the rise of the movement is taken for granted. We should get prepared for the war against those forces, which do not consist only of SYN/SYRIZA. Let us see how capitalism activates and utilises the anti-authoritarian forces. Let us think about the role of the non-governmental organisations, the role of the newspapers and the radio stations that in cooperation with the allegedly non governmental organisations try to organise segments of the people in various forms of volunteering.

We should not exclude new forms of organisation of the masses that will join suddenly the struggle regarding them as "a safety net" for the system. We should get prepared, without wasting time, starting from the CC, the leading bodies of the cities and regional organisations to the PBOS. Furthermore, we should contribute to the vigilance of the mass movement as long as it is our responsibility. The trade unions, the movements, the various associations should be able to rally and "absorb" the protest and indignation. We should be aware of the situation in each area. We should achieve readiness and urge the friends and supporters of the Party as well as other people who are coming close to the Party in workplaces, neighbourhoods, n universities and TEI, schools, villages to be also prepared. We should find new forms for struggle such as "Struggle Committees" etc.

It is also possible for petty bourgeois forces, well paid segments of the working class etc. to join the action more dynamically in a mass way. This prospect is combined with the well-known calls for "uprising" by the social-democrat oriented media. The Party should be prepared. It should focus on the working class in the private sector as well as to the poorest segments of the unemployed in order to strengthen their voice. At the same time it should not lose contact with the upper segments of the working class.

Bourgeoisie does everything it can in order to put obstacles not only through its action in the movement but also through the promotion of pseudo-revolutionary, pseudo-left ideological positions. It is not a matter of conspiracy or provocation; it is a matter of strategy. They support all "-ism"

ideologies except scientific socialism- communism, every form of dictatorship except the dictatorship of the proletariat, every form of democracy except socialist democracy.

In view of the crisis there are two options visible "to the naked eye": the line of class collaboration – submission and the line of class struggle. Therefore, we should immediately develop intense propaganda for the following:

- The labour movement should not support the monopolies and generally capital to overcome the difficulties regarding its reproduction. The working people should not give up their demands in order to avoid dismissals.
- Capital, the monopolies are the ones who should pay for the crisis. The parties representing them should sustain losses both at a social and political level.
- Thus, we can exert more pressure and improve our defence. No matter what gains will be achieved, the strengthening of the will to counterattack for the overthrow is very important. We should convince new masses through the struggle for another policy, another path of development that serves the people's needs and not the monopolies.
- Intensification of activity among the immigrants, measures against racism
- Our activity should be based on the assessment that the crisis brings about a new attack on the democratic freedoms and resurgence of the flashpoints of war.

Strategy and tactics serving the character and the duties of the Party

For a strategy and tactics responding to the character and the duties of the Party we should focus on:

1) targeted action among the working class, from the CC to the PBO, the role of sectoral and territorial organisations that should work for the same goals despite their differences and particularities. We should deal with the one-sided approach of the organisations. The territorial organisations should adjust to the common goals despite their particularities. We work in a unified way for common demands and a common front of struggle.

2) arrangement of the cadres according to the orientation in sectors, workplaces etc. Constant studying and generalising of experience; the importance of the initiatives of the working class for the self-employed and the peasantry; specifying the work in women and youth. No more excuses for neglecting the women's issue. The party building and the social composition can safeguard the character of the Party. In the congress the reflection concerning these issues has been insufficient. The party building is not merely some plans audited by the accountant each month, but a complex, multifaceted work.

3) the action of each PBO in order to reflect the maturation of the Party; likewise, the guidance of the PBOs. The CC, the leading bodies should generalise the experience as they can collect the experience more easily. At

the same time they should draw conclusions. On the other hand, the PBOs are in direct contact with all currents, tendencies and particularities. Therefore, we should improve their guidance in order for them to specify their action, without eclecticism, and support the general planning of the Party. The PBO and the policy of the social alliance is a difficult issue. In the next Congress the main criterion, among others, will be the progress concerning the functioning and the activity of the PBO as well as its links to the working class and the youth.

4) the improvement of our activity in the mass movement. Our experience and ability so far is not sufficient. All the party organisations should discuss and review our activity, the activity of our representatives in the mass movement. Only in that way can we solve the problems and not by taking hasty actions or hindering the process of politicisation. We should overcome the casualness and amateurism concerning the guidance of the party groups. We need a planned work regarding our actions and their context. Namely, we should not just count how many mobilisations and placard protests we organise but also the demands and ideas essentially assimilated by the movement. Our planning should be long-term; we should not cancel it as it is a long-term goal; we should adjust it to the developments and utilise the developments for the long-term program. Nowadays, the workers tend to struggle merely for the problems of their own work-branch around management and defensive demands. The ideological conflict plays a more important role. Of course it is not possible for the people to adopt our ideology as a whole through the ideological conflict. However, it helps us to promote our political proposal. The trade unions struggle for employment, higher salaries, against dismissals, for free education and healthcare. In that way they struggle against the monopolies, the strategy of the capitalist restructuring, against capitalism itself without having realised it. Our ideological activity therefore contributes to the formation of a radical progressive consciousness, to the elaboration of experience. Of course a trade union cannot adopt a program for political power but it can exert influence on the workers through its action. Consciousness becomes mature under revolutionary conditions. However, we do not want merely anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly struggles; we intend to strengthen the consciousness of the people the anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly struggle. When we say we "want" we mean that we work in order these goals to be realised. Because, people should start realising what radical change means even if they do not use the term "political power". The ideological-political platform of the struggle is very important but it is not identified with the Party. For that reason the trade union movement is a school, and the lessons should be more advanced than in the early period of the trade unions' action. If it was previously a primary school, now it should be a high school. Amateurism does not offer any prospect. Our propaganda needs to be improved, in the social movements and above all in the working class. The working class should take initiatives for the social alliance. Our work in the various movements e.g. the movement for democratic freedoms, peace movement etc. has particular difficulties. This is also proved by the small number of these movements.

5)Promotion of cadres from the working class and KNE. The assumption of responsibilities within the trade union movement is not enough for the overall development of the cadres; in a manner of speaking it is one-sided approach as well. The party work as a whole is placed above the trade union work.

6)Propagation of the theses on socialism without time limit but according to a time frame.

7)The duties of the Party become more and more complex and this affects also KNE. KNE has a special responsibility for the activity among the youth but we should also take into account the responsibilities of the Party. KNE can fulfil its role if the Party undertakes its responsibilities towards the youth, without substituting the activity of KNE. We should focus on the assistance to the Base Organisations and the systematic development and promotion of cadres from the working class. The Party should realise the transitional stages in the life of young people and therefore increase the educational work. The assimilation of the new members is vital for the Party and KNE. The education of KNE through personal example is also a special issue. Likewise, the Marxist Leninist education of cadres and members of KNE as well as the development of cultural and educational trend within KNE .

8)The circulation of "Rizospastis", "Communist Review" and Marxist books is a criterion for the progress of the Party. It's not merely the eighth issue; it is a basic component of our work as a whole. There is not any concern for this issue.

9)Ideological political vigilance, noncompliance with the demands of the system. The state repression will continue and intensify and therefore we need to protect our struggles and appeal widely to the people. We should deal with every tendency of slackness and liberal attitudes within the Party.

Anti-imperialist, Anti-monopoly Democratic Front (A-A-D Front)

The A-A-D Front is a social and political front emerging from the intensification of the class struggle, the social alliance, the alliance with political forces that agree with the anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly direction of the struggle and the People's Power and Economy.

The work for the Front through various movements is different from the Front itself that should have its own view and positions for political power.

The term "social-political" does not refer merely to the identity of the social and political forces, movements and groups that participate in the Front but also to its direction, context, objectives, forms and character.

In the process of the formation of the Front we place emphasis on the social level and this refers above all to the social forces that constitute the basis of the Front. The reason is not the absence of political forces that can reach an agreement at nationwide level. Even if those forces existed, the social level would have been prior as the social forces, the class struggle and coalition constitute the stable basis that determines the correlation of forces and can contribute to the elimination of the hesitations of petty bourgeois political forces.

The social forces express themselves, to some extent, through their

movements and not generally through all trade-unions and bodies. The class struggle is not promoted only through trade-unions; the Party and its positions for the movement constitute a determining factor. When we talk about social movements within the A-A-D Front we do not mean the common movements that restrict themselves to direct demands. We mean social movements struggling in anti-imperialist, antimonopoly direction and aiming at the overthrow of the monopolies power. In other words, these movements promote political objectives without losing their character as movements; they have reached the highest stage of politicisation. Of course they do not constitute political bodies and none of them can substitute the Party.

The form of the Front and the co-operation of the social organisations and the parties is an issue that needs to be further studied and not prejudged.

The progress of the Front up today: We have placed emphasis on the various fronts. At the same time there has been progress concerning the roots of PAME, PASY, and the efforts for rallying the self-employed. We still have a lot of work to do. We do not exclude the possibility of a rapid maturing of the conditions.

The expansion and strengthening of the above mentioned roots are a vital and crucial point.

Struggle against the bourgeois, reformist- opportunist contrived notions

1. a large part of the people is used to the idea that coalition is merely an issue of the parties that seek some convergent points aiming at the governmental alternation. This proves the impact of parliamentary illusions. We need to do a lot of work in order for the people to understand that the policy of coalitions is not something simple but is a goal to be attained through realignments caused by the class struggle. The goal of the Front is not the governmental change but the change at the level of political power. This change will be an issue of a big part of the working people headed by the labour movement which does not consist simply of the trade union movement and PAME but also includes the Party itself as a vanguard of the working class. It won't be just a parliamentary process. Even in case that a parliamentary process brings about a positive change, this should go beyond the parliamentary illusions and mobilise peoples masses to defeat the power of the monopolies also outside the Parliament in order to trigger of a process of rupture and overthrow. Remember Allende in Chile, the Carnation Revolution in Portugal, the developments in Venezuela and Bolivia.

2. We should help the people understand that the general political issue manifests itself in every problem. The low prices of agricultural products that drive the peasants to despair are neither an issue of the peasants nor an issue of management. When we say that the local or special problems emanate from the general ones we should avoid absolutisation and vulgarisation. The bourgeois political system can solve a problem as long as this does not cancel its strategy e.g. construction of local public works. The delays are caused by the reduction of the public expenditures, the

deficits or the fear that people will exert pressure for the solution of other problems as well.

3. We do not spread illusions that life in capitalism can be improved. At the same time, we should not set limits to the class struggle and ignore the fact that according to the progress of class struggle people can achieve some gains. However, these gains will be below the needs of the working class and short-term. We need a front against SYNASPISMOS (Coalition of the Left). Opportunism is not merely a current hindering the radicalism of the people; in difficult times it promotes compromise and even betrayal.

4. We need systematic work to reveal the character of the crisis, the deceptive management regulations and various management forms according to the stages of capitalism as well as the myths concerning the constant development of capitalism, competition and productivity that will benefit both the monopolies and the people. In addition, we should stress the difficulties regarding the reproduction of social capital as well as the possibility of a sudden intensification of contradictions that might bring forward the issue of power

5. The separation of economy from politics constitutes the basis of all bourgeois, reformist, opportunist views. Likewise, the separation of the parties in power from the bourgeois power as a whole. The governmental alternation does not entail the change of the ruling class.

6. We should deal with the people's fear towards the weakened stability of the bourgeois party system. The bourgeois political system may be weakened and then reconstructed; its weakening can be a first step for its overthrow. The reduction of bipartisan forces does not entail the weakening of the system as long as it is not followed by the strengthening of the will for rupture and overthrow. ND should definitely receive a blow; it cannot preserve its power when the life of the people goes from bad to worse.

7. The defeat of ND is not enough. Its strategy, choices, should also be defeated and this will happen only if PASOK will not benefit from this defeat. The electoral battle is definitely not the "battle of the battles" but it should be utilised for the strengthening of the Party and the movement. It should be a response to the intention of the system to reduce the influence of the Party.

High standards- our internationalist duty!

We should break the records in overcoming our shortcomings. The 21st century will be the century of the radical progressive movements, the socialist revolutions and therefore we should make a new start from the basis we have formed so far; a new start with a vision, optimism, conscious of the difficulties and willing to confront them.