

Current trends in capitalism: economic, social and political impact. The communists' alternative

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[PART TWO]



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Towards a conjunction of peoples and nations

COMMUNIST PARTY OF ARGENTINA

JUAN CARLOS SORBELLINI

➔ **INTRODUCTION.** The era of globalization, in any of the political-social systems- be it capitalism or socialism- throughout the planet, will be the context to decide the fate of the world, which will be for socialism.

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For that to happen, it will be essential to accomplish the central task of isolating North American hawks. Important sectors of the United States people play and will increasingly have a part on that, in contrast with Nazi Germany.

Likewise, right in the heart of North American capitalism is growing a sector known as the “real politic”, which has grasped that a nuclear confrontation with China and other nuclear power countries could make mankind vanish. It would be a relapse to World War II alliances, known as the allies. They, those of the “real politic” for capitalism and us, those for socialism, work to keep the world living.

TOWARDS THE END OF US UNIPOLARITY.

It was August 1945, when North American General Mc Arthur was discussing with the Japanese Army delegation, the terms of their surrender. In those days, two United States aircraft, one each, dropped atomic bombs over Hiroshima (8/6) and Nagasaki (8/9), leaving 256,000 persons burned to ashes, not to mention persisting consequences.

According to Eric Hosbawn in his *History of the 20th Century*, “only the alliance –unwanted and temporal – of liberal capitalism to face that challenge, allowed to save democracy, as the victory over Hitler’s Germany was essentially (it couldn’t happen any other way) the victory of the Red Army”. Also CNN, “on the celebration of the 60th Anniversary for the

- 4 defeat of fascism, admits that 85% of the costs and the success, in military terms, fell over the USSR.

This leads to the question: if the Japanese Army was already defeated, why the greatest holocaust and State terrorism known to that date? The subliminal message was addressed to the Soviet Union, the meaning being found in Churchill's famous statement back to the 1917 Revolution: "The child must be smothered in the cradle". That is the beginning of the Cold War, that would last 45 years, with United States-USSR polarity ending in favor of the first. A new era begins, that of unipolarity in the hands of Yanqui imperialism.

Today, 15 years since that defeat, under tremendously adverse conditions to our ideals, alarmed voices from our class enemy are beginning to rise. Let's go over the opinions of two relevant figures of Yanqui imperialism. Henry Kissinger¹ sustains that "when the history of this time is written, it could very well be that the headlines of the moment –Iraq and the controversies around it- will pale in face of other international Teutonic movements characterizing this period. As a paradox, the United States structural estrangement from Europe, is taking place in a moment when the center of gravity of international policy is moving towards Asia."

A year later, Kissinger himself, will state:² "nevertheless, suddenly, ambivalence reappeared. Different officers, Congress members as well as the media, are condemning Chinese policies –from

the currency rate of exchange to military escalate- in an overall tone implying that somehow, Chine is being tested. Many consider China's progress to be the most important challenge to United States security. China's –and Asia's- rise is going to generate in the next decades, a substantial reordering of the international system. The center of gravity of international affairs is moving from the Atlantic, where it concentrated for the last 3 centuries, to the Pacific".

Timothy Garson, goes further than Kissinger by stating³: United States is shaking, just like Great Britain did after the Anglo-Boer War". He also asserts that now, "the United States, is that worn out titan" (...) but we can't tell if the 'American Century' which started in 1945, will last until 2045, 2035, or just up to 2005, though the end of it, is already a glimpse on the horizon. Nevertheless, it's not the time to rejoice with your neighbour's sorrow, it's a time of sound solidarity. In Washington, some far-sighted people are beginning to work on a long-range strategy, trying to build an international order to protect the interests of liberal democracies, even after the United States superpower starts to decline and are trying to get the new powers like China and India to agree on keeping such order.

To make it short, Henry Kissinger agrees with other renowned figures on locating in Asia the gravity center for international policy, and one year later, admits that the United States and China's only choice is to cooperate. And Timothy

Garton Ash adds “the United States, the worn out titan” (...) its downfall glimpses in the horizon”. Those assertions combine with the hawks’ (Bush, Rundfield, Rice, Cheney and others that will replace them), while Kissinger, sides with the real politic group, next to Timothy Garton Ash, Carter, Madelaine Albright and others.

Energy is the main challenge and confrontation.

OIL'S TERMINAL CRISIS. “Today, we’re facing an unprecedented energy crisis, with a dangerous combination of unstoppable energy expense, incapacity to raise the hydrocarbon offer and the perspective of a reduction of the proven reserve of fossil fuel. Oil is beginning to wear out. By 2020, the daily demand of oil will be 120 millions of barrels, which, even without considering future increases, will be the expense in 20 years of an amount similar to all the oil used by mankind to this date, meaning by that, an unavoidable increase in carbon-dioxide emissions, well known to increase our planet’s temperature⁴.

I believe that Hugo Chavez forecast is based on two components of the energy expense: annual growth of the world’s GDP, estimated in 3% and the greatest expense due to the population increase. The most accepted calculations indicate that the present 6.396,000 figure will rise to 9,276,000, by 2050.

KING HUBBERT’S GRAPH. Chavez coincides with what’s known as King Hubbert’s

graph, the prominent North American geologist, a Shell’s officer and University of California professor. Hubbert’s designed a mathematical model applied to known and not-yet discovered oil reserves. It shows the trends in important findings, with the top reached in 1960 and the decrease thereafter. Since 2003, none relevant oil beds have been found and Hubbert forecasts that top production rate will be reached between 2008-2012⁵.

What are the answers to the energy crisis? Endless and clean hydrogen will only be sustainable by 2050. It’s interesting to watch international organizations give false data on the energy situation, while, on the other hand, they broadcast well-intentioned suggestions to solve the energy crisis, such as sun’s energy, eolic energy, biodiesel, bitumen and its derivatives: asphalt or schist demanding large amounts of energy and solid matter to get modest results. What’s the solution to this huge oil jam and the serious problems it will bring? We’ve already witnessed disasters brought to mankind by the rise in the planet’s temperature due to carbon dioxide emissions, hurricanes and cyclones, tsunamis in Asia, droughts on one hand and flows on the other, poles shrinkage, etc.

Faced with this serious planet scale problem, two strongly opposed alternatives emerge: the Yanqui imperialism option and that of the People’s Republic of China. One, already put into action by the United States, in application of its Military Doctrine, decreed in 2002 after the attack

- 6 against the Twin Towers, targeted Iraq as its first victim and now has Iran, the second oil producer in the world, as their next invasion project.

The United States seeks to seize the largest amount of oil possible, in order to fully control world's economy. Even more, when different capitalist studies assure that in the next 10 to 15 years the People's Republic of China will reach and surpass North America's GDP. The nature of imperialism, as shown by its objective laws, leads straight into a conflict: Either to submit China or destroy it. Anything to the contrary, will mean the beginning of the end for imperialism.

The United States intends to carry out what is known as "Manifest Destiny": to be the owners of the world, by God's legacy. They started with a small group of 13 English colonies on the Atlantic Coast –winning their freedom in 1776- covering one-tenth of their actual territory, to become the present American World Empire.

The Chinese option lies on two axis regarding energy: to accumulate all possible oil, increase to the top hydraulic energy sources (disregarding carbon due to its high contaminant power) and build ten atomic plants, two of which are operating already. It will allow them to surpass 350.000 megawatts by 2020, when they'll be putting out from 800,000 to 900,000 megawatts.

The Latin America's and Caribbean Energy Worker's Forum, was hosted by Mexico, DF, 10/09/2005, with a coming edition in Caracas (Venezuela), on May

2006. It issued a document declaring that, "besides being a viable technology, the nuclear option, presents advantages in terms of economy, environment preservation and safety as it goes beyond energy applications; we also see its use in health, agriculture, industry, dangerous waste materials handling and other fields".

TOWARDS A CONJUNCTION of people's and nations. As pointed out by Fidel, on April 25, 2003, in a statement made for Cuban TV networks, "someday, the joint peoples struggle will place a straightjacket on those who need it, before they can put an end to life in the planet". As I see it, this will happen through a tactical alliance between China, Russia and India, which, though having different political-economic and social systems, are strengthening common agreements. We should remember that altogether, they add up to 30 millions km² and 2.6 millions inhabitants. On August 28, 2005, Argenpress reported on joint Russia-China military exercises along the Shandong Peninsula. Add to it the end of the border conflict that led to more than few armed clashes. Another example worth mentioning is that the Uzbekistan Parliament, unanimously, told United States to withdraw its forces from its territory, where the first had leased them an army base after the disappearance of the USSR. The decision stems from Uzbekistan joining Shanghai's Group of the Five, now Six: China, Russia and four Central Asia nations.

Going back to Fidel and the straight-jacket, I think this will be a joint peoples and nations action, just like the Anti-War Movement in the USA, –with a heavy load and a fast unfolding, mucho larger than the Viet Nam anti-war movement– the World’s Social Forum and different social and political forces. This conjunction will build the straitjacket so the world can go on whirling towards progress and socialism. A better multipolar and multi-lateral world is possible, with peace and progress which will demand the end of mass destruction weapons (nuclear, bacteriological and chemical), as reflected in the overwhelming response to the aggression against Iraq expressed by North American citizens before the White House, on December 24, 2005. There, 100,000 voices demanded to “Bring home the Iraq troops”. That shows the sharp difference between Nazi Germany, backed by its people and a large part of the United States people, opposed to their country’s imperialism. We should also mention the big anti-war marches in London, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, Florence, Rome, Paris and Moscow.

The sum of this multiple antiwar activities, advances to pick up the legacy from previous anti-fascist struggles to oppose it to the new fascism.

1. *Clarín*, August 5, 2005, Article “The poles of power are moving” 7
2. *Clarín*, July 5, 2005, Article “United States and China’s only choice is to cooperate”
3. *Clarín*, September 29, 2005, Article “A meanest dog will come”
4. *Hugo Chavez speech at the UN General Assembly, September 2005*
5. *Enfoques alternativos*, October - November 2004.

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Unity
is key

**DEMOCRATIC PROGRESSIVE TRIBUNE,
BAHRAIN**

HAMEED ISMAEL

→ **CAPITALISM**, the predominant modern socio-economic system in today's world, is passing through its highest stage-imperialism. It is faced with a structural and objective crisis that has no cure. Eventually this last exploitative system in human history (though it may last for a longer time or a shorter time than we may think) will be forced to surrender and give way to a fair, better, and humanitarian system, which is no other than socialism! But, obviously, this historically progressive process will not happen overnight, automatically or without the price of struggle to be paid.

Those revolutionaries who are in hurry, grabbing the process of reality, coercively, from its harmonic context, following their personal hopes and desires in favour of subjective factors, with their petty-bourgeois tendencies, are being unfair to their scientific theory; Marxism! They stand with the determinist camp among extremists and ultra-leftists. And those who are quite relaxed or well off, having a luxurious life, harping an evolutionary song, are standing with social-democrats, opportunists and centrists (centre-leftists), awaiting the baby of socialism from the womb of capitalism!

Few of today's revolutionaries have remained who are trying their best to hold the delicate balance in the complicated relations between objective and subjective factors. But this camp, unfortunately, is not always immune to swinging or fluctuation to the left or to the right when it comes to analysing the events of today's complicated contemporary world and the effort of the capitalist system to adjust, dominate, rearrange and restructure the situation according to its own interest and agenda, providing that imperialism is not capable of changing the direction or process of history! It never did, simply

because the march of history is according to objective needs, not to the subjective wishes of human beings!

Therefore, I think it is possible at some stage of history or in some geographical area, that capitalism shall be forced objectively to make some arrangement that may have a sort of progressive development, for its own interest and benefit, which coincides with a socio-economic-cultural improvement; precisely in developing and under-developing countries where the feudalistic and pre-capitalistic culture are spread and decisive, thus the historical necessity and obligation of cooperation between two antagonist ideology of socialism and liberalism to combat against the legacy of feudalism in the Middle East!

On this issue I expect from our dear comrades that they will look thoroughly and deeply when they discuss and analyse the unprecedented situation in the Middle East, the Arab and Islamic countries. Accordingly, comrades from that region are obliged to explain and analyse the deep-rooted problems of their area; the real hindrance or obstacles that really stop the advance of this important region-not just a ready-made theory of the conspiracy of imperialism and Zionism but also the feudalistic heritage and culture that dominate all aspects of people's life. It is noticeable here very clearly how the ruling class and the authorities in the Arab world are embracing the ideology of feudalism and reaction (Islamism and nationalism), and vice versa!

For instance, the Palestinian extreme-rightist fundamentalist forces, together with ultra-Arab leftists, are poking the fire in the face of rational peace forces, aiding Zionist extremists in destroying any effort towards a practical solution to the chronic crisis of the Middle East, in Israel and in the withdrawn territories, helping them in expanding their ground! Are they not two sides of one coin? What is really very painful here is to observe that some communists, who abandoned internationalist principles a long time ago, having swapped it for Arab-nationalist sentimentalism, are competing with those extremists in their nihilistic slogans!

ANOTHER EXAMPLE FROM THE NEW IRAQ

(after Saddam's tyrannical regime), which is emerging from the ashes, with difficulty, painfulness and tragedies! Where is the genuine international solidarity with the Iraqi people? -Especially progressive forces, specifically the Iraqi Communist Party, which is functioning in a very tricky, extraordinary situation, with its heroic struggle against blind terrorism, for settling and easing the dangerous and unsecured circumstances, towards establishing civil society and maintaining basic civil security for the people firstly, then combating the western occupation and neighbour-countries' interference, so there would not be any excuses for foreign occupation to stay longer on the soil of Iraq!

THE TENSION IN SYRIA. I would rather not comment, giving a chance to our two fra-

10 ternal delegations to contribute. But would they please excuse me in saying one thing from my heart! In Syria, as we all know, there was always a quite strong tradition of genuine, dedicated communists. But today they are scattered in three, four or five parties. Frankly speaking, in Syria today there are nearly thirty thousand communists; but more than half of them belong to the “abandoned party”! They preferred to stay away! So can we imagine, dear comrades, if only Syrian communists utilized and mobilized their capabilities! I’m very aware of the historical, theoretical and objective factors; but the talk is about subjective and personal disputes! Why am I bringing up this example, which could apply in some other countries as well? It is only because I am proud of their heroic past. And some repair should be done the sooner the better.

FINALLY, A QUICK TRIP to my little island, without repeating the events of the recent years that you all know already. The very fresh news is the battle to obtain a moderate-not even “modern”-rule or law for family and personal affairs. All the fundamentalists (Shi’a and Sunni), who are almost dominant in our society, are grouping against such regulation, because of the concessions they receive from the reactionary forces in the state and also because of the weakness in the camp of modernist and progressive forces, and their hesitancy. Meanwhile the western powers, specifically the Americans, are siding with modern and

civil society, as well as prominent figures in the ruling family. One thing is certain: that the battle towards modernisation will not be an easy task. Bahrain is only a small place; certainly the surroundings will be having an important impact on the further development of the island. But of course the internal co-ordination between modernist and progressive forces, however small they are today, will play a quite tangible role in a very near future.

In conclusion, it is needless to state from this historic tribune that the unity of progressive and modernist forces, precisely the unity within our international movement, beside understanding the characteristic of our era, is the core of any expected progressive improvement, globally, regionally, or in each country, to stop or at least to slow down the domination and expanding military imperialism and to defeat reaction and reactionary backwardness.

Building the party in Belarus

COMMUNIST PARTY OF BELARUS

T.G. COLUBIOV

→ I would like, on behalf of the Communist Party of Belarus, to express our appreciation for this meeting that will contribute to unite our parties in the struggle against the aggressive intentions of certain imperialist states that, from a position of military force, have in the last few years claimed the right to impose upon other independent and sovereign states the way in which they should live and design their internal and external policies.

This is how the United States of America behaves, establishing a unipolar world, after the disintegration of the USSR. Shielded in the watchword of "democratizing the countries," they cynically and shamelessly make use of military force, organize wars and subject millions of people to suffering. It was so when the US interfered in the affairs of Yugoslavia, during the bombing of that country. And now, in tormented Iraq, where US mothers lose their children and where hundreds of thousands of Iraqi civilians die.

THE US ADMINISTRATION, shielded in the watchword of "democratizing," sends its soldiers to die in Iraq for the sake of the interests of the oil and military monopolies and the increase of their fabulous earnings. The voracity of US imperialists is growing and they are already aiming at using force against other states. They are economically and militarily threatening Syria and Iran. They are trying to crystallize such purposes through a UN agreement.

The United States accuses our country of violating democracy and has leveled direct threats against Belarus. Ideological work is being done with the US people. The idea is being instilled that all seems to indicate that in Belarus there is no

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12 democracy and that the United States should intervene in order to help the Belarus opposition to depose the genuine power elected by the people and to impose upon us their way of life, offering us what they understand by "democracy." Court decisions that constitute a threat to Belarus are being ruled. Funds are being allocated for the opposition designed to promote the so-called "orange" revolution, whose objective is to buy that opposition that will be bought by the western capital. With the help of those foreign financial injections paid by the taxpayers, they seek to deceive and confuse the citizens of Belarus.

Their objective is one: to create the conditions so that the rich and super rich oligarchs can take possession of the state property and obtain super profits by mercilessly exploiting humble beings.

BUT THE PEOPLE OF BELARUS will not let anyone deceive them. They are absolutely ready to defend their rights, support the policy of socio-economic development and of a strong and prosperous Belarus that the president of the Republic of Belarus, Alexandr Grigorevich Lukashenko, is conducting. In Belarus exists a normal democratic society; our citizens enjoy the same democratic rights and freedoms that exist in other European countries. And I turn to you, colleagues, so that you support and expose those that seek to confuse the peoples of Europe. Our party shares and supports the domestic, foreign and social-orientation policy pursued by the country

under the President's leadership. This policy, like the national socio-economic development programs, coincides in many respects with the party's program. We collaborate with the power and support its activity, since it responds to the workers' aspirations and is geared to improve the workers' lives.

We are proud to say that only in Belarus have many of the conquests of the Great October been preserved. In Belarus is guaranteed the difference with other CIS countries in the most important respect, which is the population's standard of living. And this happens in a Republic that does not receive foreign credits or loans, that lacks energy sources and raw materials own of its own, which are more expensive than in Russia, besides carrying the weight of the tragedy of Chernobyl, which absorbs up to one-fourth of the state budget. This only reaffirms the extent of the success.

The foundation is an appropriate economic and social policy, the non admission of a plundering privatization and, within acceptable limits, the state regulation of the economy. This has ensured the achievement of a rapid and sustained growth of the gross domestic product, which grows incomparably faster than in the CIS and Eastern European countries. Logically, the volume of the material and spiritual benefits that the society has been able to benefit from has also experienced a greater growth.

WE BELIEVE OUR COMMUNIST PARTIES should be better informed about the state

of affairs in our countries and should spare no effort in offering one another appropriate political support, and exposing the tricks of the imperialist circles that conceal their actual intentions and objectives.

We have duly met not only in our forum with the objective of exchanging opinions on the international situation, the state of affairs in our countries, the lives of the workers and the working class in the current period of globalization. Our task is not only to know the working experience of the patriotic Left parties, but also to develop measures to oppose the dangerous claims the aggressive circles of some western countries have about independent and sovereign states. We should not only collectively discuss these issues, but also, as far as possible, to coordinate the organized and political activity of our parties, taking in consideration the internal characteristics of each country. I believe our meeting will also contribute to guide the communist parties' efforts to cope with the anti-popular regimes in defense of the workers masses.

I have listened with interest to the report and the presentations of the colleagues that represent the communist and workers' parties, and I share many of the expressed positions, since they have made a genuine, critical and unambiguous analysis of the situation in the world, in their countries; they have made an appraisal of the activity of the internal and external policy of the communist parties and they have presented proposals to

consolidate the communist parties' positions, to improve their tactics and strategy for the next period.

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THIS MEETING WILL let us have not only a deeper knowledge of the political and socio-economic situation the European states are going through, but also the experience of the communist parties' activity under the extremely complex conditions of our days, their positions, the partisan and political work do in the period of parliamentary and presidential elections.

By knowing this information, one will be able to participate more actively and have an impact on the international situation, consolidate peace and mutual understanding amongst peoples, and improve economic cooperation amongst countries. This will help us coordinate the tasks common to all the parties in terms of the international activity, the defense of the interests of each country, to better visualize theoretical and practical problems well, as well as the particularities characteristic of the activity of each party.

Let us say plainly that the conditions in which the communist and workers parties do their work differ greatly.

Some parties are forced to be in deep opposition with the government in power, calling strikes, walkouts, manifestations, pickets and protests in defense of the genuine interests of their country and of

- 14 the ordinary man; others, in contrast, support the sound state policy adopted by the governments and heads of State; others are persecuted and work underground. We deem it correct for the parties to keep in mind the existing situation in the country and act accordingly.

FOR THE BELARUS COMMUNISTS, it is important to make a new evaluation of the situation of the party and of the changes that are taking place in the country, rejuvenate the ranks of the party and its leadership. It is very important to create partisan and grass-roots structures in every region and city in the country. These problems, in our opinion, characterize all our parties. We deem it necessary to pursue a comprehension of the party's theoretical thought, its societal idea, and the acceptance and active support of these by the different layers of the population - above all by youth-as well as an improvement of the psychological medium in which the party works.

Because it is no secret that in the last 15 years, television, radio, several newspapers, magazines, books, cinema -this refers mainly to the media of neighboring countries- and also the liberal parties, have intensely engaged in anticommunism and anti-Sovietism. It is necessary to be honest and acknowledge that they largely managed to discredit communist and socialist ideas among young people. The Belarus right-wing liberal parties, mainly, the Popular Front of Belarus and United Civil Party, to which was added the leadership of the Belarus Communist

Party, proclaim western democracy and the paradisiacal life of the western countries. On the other hand, they make every effort to degrade and brazenly distort the situation in Belarus.

Our opponents, who are not supported by the people and do not enjoy their respect, are betting on having outside support and interference in our internal affairs. They claim that civil rights and freedoms are violated in Belarus, that there is no democracy, and accuse the President of the Republic of Belarus, A. G. Lukashenko, of such "sins". And it is not true.

That way, they are trying to create a negative image of Belarus and its President. I want to reaffirm that our party is prepared to face up to any pseudorevolution, be it orange, of the roses, white, velvet, of the birches or of other, exported and financed by the United States Hence the special importance acquired by ideological work. I want to say that the dissidents' calls for the West to impose an economic blockade on our country will not succeed. The opposition and its media do not and will not find support among the people. To this end, they thoroughly publicize the abuses and violations of human rights in the USSR in the 30's and 40's.

WHAT SHOULD BE OUR ANSWER? We explain the mistakes made in the past and show the great conquests attained by the country under socialism, in education as well as in science and culture. It is also a task for all us to strengthen the party's information and organizational resources.

Belarus, unlike other countries, keeps the state's ownership over the most powerful companies and those that contribute greater benefits, on the natural resources, the subsoil and the farmlands. It is, above all, the very lucrative petrochemical area and the most important automobile and tractor factories.

The legislative rules on State disownment and the privatization of State property, as well as the Law "On objects to be owned by the State only", keep those that want to "privatize" from achieving their goal. The country is carrying out privatization in a restrained manner, with no rush and favoring the workers.

In Belarus most of the people's property remains in the State's hands. The revenues deriving from it are dedicated to solve social problems: free medical care, education, welfare for disabled people, veterans and families with many children.

What has been stated above does not mean that we do not have private property or a business sector. Belarus is seeing a boom of small and medium business. Recently, the Head of State passed an ordinance that improves conditions for business. There is a reduced rent for business people on state-owned property.

None of this means that our party is not finding barriers in its work. There are problems, serious problems. We will do our utmost to strengthen the party's ranks and increase its reputation. We are going to respond operationally to the problems that concern people.

Our activity is geared to reinforce the

unity of the people and the patriotic education of the workers. The party's program takes into account the realities of the society's current development stage. Communist Party of Belarus recognizes the various forms of ownership existing in the economy, in conformity with the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus.

THE MEMBERS OF THE PARTY advocate a widening participation in the implementation of the programs for the economic and social development of Belarus. In the last years we have attained the highest gross domestic product growth among the CIS countries. We already have a surplus in the country's state budget. Wages, pensions and subsidies are constantly growing and paid.

In their ideological work, the communists pursue the objective of explaining the essence of the internal and external policy undertaken, which is geared to promote a strong and prosperous country, instill moral values, patriotism; ensure the continuity of national traditions, safeguard the principal values of the family, the household, the State and of a worthy attitude toward work. We pay special attention to youth, because the future of the State depends on young people.

The Communist Party of Belarus, as a party that defends and reflects the interests of salaried workers, tries to undertake ideological work among the people who work not only in the state sector's companies and establishments, but also in non state structures. Its primary objectives are the people's power, to reinforce

16 the Belarus state system and to build a society of social justice based on the principles of collectivism, freedom and justice. In our country nobody harasses the communists. We hold good positions in Parliament and also have fellow communists among the deputies that are not members of our party.

The Communist Party of Belarus makes up a coalition with social organizations and with associations, whose activity has a Left patriotic orientation. During the referendum, the elections to Parliament and to the local deputy Councils, the party supported the Head of State's policy geared, mainly, to improve the lives of the citizens.

As is well known, in the early 90's, after the cessation of the activity of the CP-SU and the CPB, the party went through a difficult stage. It only renewed its activity on November 2 of 1996. In that period the division of the party also took place and the Belarus Party of the Communists was created, which was more and more inclined to oppose the policy of the country's leadership and Government, adopted the course of confrontation and coordinates its actions with the parties that act against their own people.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Belarus attaches great importance to the work of explaining and exposing the misguided and disunionist policy of the current leadership of that the policy, which affects the State's policy. In the final analysis, we will be able to shape a single Communist Party that assumes the platform of the Communist Party of Belarus.

The party can and should do a lot in the ideological and propagandistic work in light of next year's presidential elections. We recently held an extraordinary congress, where we analyzed the issue of the position to be adopted by the party at the upcoming Head of State election and asked the current President, A. G. Lukashenko, to propose his candidacy for this election. We are positive that the people will fully support our party's position on the upcoming presidential elections. The party has ample experience; many are the working methods that we will uninterruptedly refine.

In conclusion, may I wish the participants in this meeting success in the solution of the complex partisan tasks, faith in victory, and a creative and effective collaboration among communist and workers parties.

The reinstatement of capitalism in Bulgaria

COMMUNIST PARTY OF BULGARIA

LUDMIL KOSTADINOV

→ **IN THE 20TH CENTURY**, our party lived a long time in an environment of socialism and capitalism. So we have already accumulated enough practical experience to compare those two social systems.

In the late 1980's, the principal argument for reinstating capitalism was that socialism had led the country to economic backwardness. The Bulgarian people were then told that capitalism or –as it was called then—the “free-market economy” would rapidly allow them to diminish backwardness and to reach and surpass the rich western countries. The only thing that keeps us from doing it is socialism. They would say and write that in the past, in the 1930's, capitalist Bulgaria was successfully developing and held one of the major places in Europe. Then it was not easy to check the way Bulgaria was developing 50 years back. Few of the people who remembered that time were still around, and most of them voted later against reinstatement, but the others, those that only knew socialism, had to go to libraries, get informed, make comparisons, etc., to persuade themselves that the propaganda was deceiving them, that in the period prior to the socialist revolution, Bulgaria held an important place in Europe only in terms of poverty and backwardness, and that 80% of the population was then engaged in primitive agriculture. As Georgi Dimitrov rightly remarked, then we were lagging 50 to 100 years behind the developed countries. In 1939, the best year before the war, capitalist Bulgaria's GDP per capita was five or six times smaller than that of the capitalist developed countries. Capitalism was overthrown in 1944 and the construction of socialism was started. The first 16 years after 1944 were years of an unusually fast economic

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18 growth. In 1948, the national economy had completely recovered and in 1960, just after two five-year periods, the GDP was already three times larger, and life expectancy was 16 years higher than in 1939, capitalist Bulgaria's best year. In the 1980's, the GDP per capita was only 1.5 to 2 times smaller than in the developed capitalist countries.

Late in 1989, socialism was overthrown and the reinstatement of capitalism began. What is the balance today, 16 years after this new change of system? What successes have we attained with capitalism and how have we reduced our backwardness regarding the major capitalist countries? If one gives credit to the official statistics, the gross domestic product (GDP) reached in 2004 the level of 1989, the last year before the overthrow of socialism.

Since in all these years the world has not stopped changing, it is obvious that backwardness could only increase rather than decrease. At the time of socialism, the economic gap from developed countries decreased 1.5 to 2 times. It has now increased again three to four times. But that is not all. The GDP's absolute value in 2004 reached 38 billion *leva* in current prices and the rate of all the goods and services prices in the 1989-2004 period increased more than two-fold, according to the same official statistics. As in 1989

the value of the GDP in the current prices was 40 billion *leva*, one can come to the conclusion that judging by the actual purchasing power, Bulgaria's GDP today, after 16 years of capitalism, is not more than 50% of its GDP in the last year of socialism. This is the economic result of the substitution of socialism by capitalism.

The difference is significant. Sixteen years after the victory of socialism, the GDP increased three-fold, and 16 years after the reinstatement of capitalism, it dwindled two-fold.

IN THOSE 16 YEARS, practically nothing new has been built and there can be no question that under capitalism we will return, sooner or later, to the place the country held before 1944 and we will have a five- to six-fold lag that is 50 to 100 years behind developed countries. So capitalism in Bulgaria, in the first half of the 20th century and today, at the turn of the 20th century and beginning of the 21st, means, above all, poverty and backwardness, destruction of the productive forces, a true economic calamity.

If the national income is smaller and the earnings of an insignificant minority grew much more, the greatest losers are the majority of the population, the workers that suffer unemployment, poverty and insecurity about tomorrow. In 1989 there was practically no unemployment in Bulgaria, but nowadays it is over 15%; in addition, not less than 15% of the population fit for work has left the country in search of jobs all over the world. Public health, science, culture, education and

social security (pensions and subsidies) suffered a hard blow.

Year by year the UN estimates the economic development index for all the countries of the world. That index includes data about the GDP per capita in connection with the purchasing power, as well as life expectancy, infant mortality, etc. The development index has been conceived as a typical indicator of development in each country. Logically, one cannot think that the UN raises the socialist countries' indicators. At the time of socialism in the 1970's and 1980's, Bulgaria held more or less the 30th place in terms of the human development index. After the reinstatement of capitalism, it plummeted to the 55th to 60th place. Cuba, which preserved socialism, is now ahead of Bulgaria in spite of the economic blockade.

Our experience in the 20th century indicates that even our imperfect socialism, with all its shortcomings, was incomparably better for our country than capitalism in terms of the economy, technological progress, science, culture, education and improvement of the working and living conditions of our people.

TODAY THEY DREAM about the EC. We have the experience of having participated in the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), made up of a number of socialist countries. The experience of the economic collaboration and assistance of the socialist countries showed that that collaboration was based on the genuine desire of helping each other and

achieving a common economic boom. The CMEA meant for Bulgaria an extremely moderate contribution and a virtually unlimited market for our goods. There was no room for the absurdity of limiting production to quotas. The general trend was to produce as much as possible. It was a form of collaboration with which all the peoples of the socialist countries won.

As for the expansion of the EC, I will point out, above all, that our party declares itself against Bulgaria's entry into that Organization. We believe that our people, just like the peoples of all the European countries do not win anything, they only lose with being members of the EC. The conditions for Bulgaria's entry are incomparably worse than those they demanded of the countries that entered before, when the USSR and the CMEA existed. A large part of the resources that our country receives today from the EC returns to the European firms. The local capital also receives its part. The rest is used to create new bureaucratic structures for the needs of the EC, for the propaganda of the Organization's policies, etc. According to the most modest estimates, our country has already suffered economic losses over twice higher than the earnings from the so-called integration funds. We believe that with our integration in the EC the losses will increase much faster than the earnings. For the resources coming from the Euro-funds, the Bulgarian people are already paying a high price due to the increased prices and unemployment. Naturally, all the European peoples pay a

20 high price for the expansion of the EC. The expansion policy responds only to the interests of the European capital, which receives cheap labor and takes possession of the new markets.

At other times, before the socialist revolution, the history of Bulgaria was one of wars and national catastrophes. Bulgaria participated in World War I as a satellite of the Kaiser's Germany and suffered a severe defeat. In the World War II years, the Bulgarian bourgeoisie turned the country into a satellite of Fascist Germany. The political alliance with the criminal Hitlerites, in the latter's struggle over the world's supremacy, led the country to a total international isolation and to the brink of a new national catastrophe. The popular revolution of September 9, 1944 allowed the aversion catastrophe at the last minute.

The period of socialism covered 45 years of peaceful development, the longest in our 20th-century history. In that period, our people's republic joined in the Warsaw Treaty organization. If one makes a current assessment of the role of the socialist countries' military bloc, one must recognize that in the period when the bloc existed it would not have been possible to bomb Yugoslavia or to occupy Iraq.

AFTER THE OVERTHROW OF SOCIALISM, the new Bulgarian bourgeoisie hurried to turn the country again into a satellite, this time of the United States, and into a member of the imperialist aggressive military NATO bloc. Once again, Bulgaria's fate is linked to the most aggressive imperialist

force that has embarked on unleashing wars over world supremacy. During the bombings of Yugoslavia, the Bulgarian government opened the country's airspace to the aggressor's aviation, but, once the conflict was over, it did not allow it to be crossed by Russia's peace-keeping forces. Today Bulgaria has an active participation in the occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq. In the latter country, there is a Bulgarian battalion engaged in repressing the Iraqi people's liberation struggle. Thirteen Bulgarian troops already lost their lives in Iraq and, as battalion expenses more than a billion leva have been lost. Negotiations on the installation of American military bases in our country are being carried out. NATO's expansion toward the East, the installation of American bases near Russia's border, the gross interference of the USA, the EC and NATO in the internal affairs of the Ukraine, Belarus and other former Soviet republics, the open support to separatism in Russia, is all a dangerous game with fire that may lead to war in Europe.

The alliance with the United States and the entry into NATO will be more and more expensive for our people and may wind up in another unprecedented national catastrophe.

All these facts are proof that socialism is peace and capitalism war.

A comparison of socialism and capitalism in Bulgaria shows the undisputed advantages of socialism. And when one says that socialism suffered a defeat in our country, I think it is not exactly so. We do

not say that mathematics suffers a defeat when a student could not solve the problems. It was not socialism that suffered a defeat in our country, but our party and our people when they allowed capitalism to be reinstated.

Our socialism had many deficiencies indeed. Anyway, that was the first attempt to create a new society without exploitation. We made lots of mistakes. I think our principal and fatal mistake lies in that our party and people allowed a reinstatement of capitalism. We could have done it much better. However, that imperfect socialism that we created, with all its errors, gave samples, anyway, of being incomparably better and more human than capitalism. Today that cannot be denied.

TO CONCLUDE, I would like to say that the struggle against imperialism can have no future if the union of the communist movement is not somehow supported. Such union will translate as support and vanguard of a wider anti-imperialist movement.

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A unified international communist presence

COMMUNIST PARTY OF CANADA

SAMUEL FRANK HAMMOND

→ **THE MAIN DIRECTION** of the current century continues to be that of the transition from capitalism to socialism. The appearance of the first socialist state, the struggles and gains of the working class and its allies, the achievements of socialism, the spread of revolutionary ideology and the defeat of European fascism were monumental accomplishments of the past century. The overthrow of the USSR, the resiliency of imperialism and its counter-offensive, which has intensified the struggle and won imperialism a temporary advantage, does not alter the fact that we are in transition to socialism even though we have not yet regained the initiative.

We believe that the imperialist offensive which attempts to force the nations of the world into a "submit, join" program of imperialist domination is the main danger to humanity. If not combated and eventually defeated, imperialism will threaten the existence of humanity and the natural environment necessary for sustaining human life. The hegemonic plans of imperialism are carried out politically through neoliberal policies and militarily through acts of aggression committed by individual imperialist states or by alliances that are transient and reflect the competition between imperialist states in their drive for world domination. The arms race today is characterized by the development of hi-tech weapons of terror to subdue resistance of the peoples and also to prepare for inter-imperialist wars of supremacy. The most powerful imperialist state, the USA, continues to expand its nuclear monopoly, threatening first-use and the possible annihilation of humanity.

THE AGENDAS OF THE TRANSNATIONAL
and global corporations, based primarily

in the leading imperialist states, are aggressively imposing their neo-liberal political programs onto all sovereign states. The neoliberal agenda delivers the people's wealth, social institutions, sovereignty, culture and resources into the hands of the global corporations whose "profit and plunder" agenda destroys the quality of life, impoverishes the vast majority of working people and creates famine, disease, desperation and state repression.

«Neoliberalism seeks to destroy the sovereignty of nations and their cultural-political ability to resist. It seeks to put nations into conflict as a means of "divide and control" and also as a means of internally destabilizing multi-national states.»

It seeks to impose "free trade" deals and other corporate globalisation schemes on all national economies, forcing them to integrate into one imperialist cartel or another. It uses economic sanctions and penetration by international financial institutions like the IMF and the World Bank, as well as overt military threats to bully states that resist and insist on developing national programs that favour their people and their sovereignty. The Cuban, Korean, Venezuelan and other peoples daring to challenge the global capitalist neoliberal agenda are coming under increasing attack.

At the same time capitalism, in its imperialist stage, is having difficulties cop-

ing with its intrinsic contradictions, global "relative" over-production, spiralling debt, impoverishment, shrinking markets, and the intensification of inter-imperialist rivalries. The plunder and impoverishment of the peoples in the third world and the attacks on democracy and living standards in the industrial states have given rise to resistance and fight-back movements that in turn require more and more repressive laws and responses to control.

One of the features of this period may be a tendency, even among some communists, to view phenomena in absolute terms rather than as part of a dialectical process. There have appeared, even in our movement, tendencies of adaptation and assimilation, born of despondency and the inability to foresee the defeat of the neoliberal agenda and ultimately imperialism. This gives an extended life to reformism and social democracy even though it is not able to provide the ideological and practical leadership the working class needs. At the same time, the resistance and fightback movements have not matured to the point where anti-imperialism has become their main feature and they reach for revolutionary ideology.

This is expressed in the trade union movement, to greater or lesser degree in different countries, as a turmoil, a disorientation, dissatisfaction with leadership and yet, at the same time, a fear of changing it. In Canada we have been going through a period where the trade union leadership weakens or sells out long be-

24 fore the workers have exhausted their ability to fight. Despite this weak and essentially collaborationist leadership however, workers are increasingly prepared to fight. A major victory, for instance, was won in October by a militant strike of school teachers – broadly supported by both public and private sector workers – who defied a government imposed contract, court injunctions and the threatened seizure of their union assets. Ultimately, the government was forced to make a tactical retreat and negotiate a settlement.

THE RESISTANCE TO NEOLIBERALISM is growing universally. Thousands upon thousands of workers are moving into direct conflict with it, and even though the real class-political enemy is not always fully understood or identified, class consciousness is continuing to develop, the nature of the capitalist state more clearly understood and the international imperialist character of globalisation and neoliberalism more fully exposed.

In this period of developing resistance, of fermentation, of transition, of the inability of imperialism to impose its full hegemony, the demand for revolutionary ideology and its ability to connect the past with the future, and provide practical leadership, becomes more important with each passing day.

THE NEED FOR THE COMMUNIST PARTIES to demonstrate a unified international presence in the struggle cannot be stressed enough. If we advise the masses of peo-

ple all over this world that their struggle must mature into a united anti-imperialist front, then can we demand anything less of ourselves? We already have a common ideology, we already have a general class position, and we already have a legacy, having dealt numerous defeats to imperialism, and having provided the ideology and leadership for the proletariat to establish socialism in first one, and then a number of states.

Whatever obstacles stand in the way of greater coordination of the Communist and Workers parties must be overcome. Whatever levels we have achieved over these past years must be accelerated. Collectivity is one of the things that define us; should we not see its expression in our relations between parties as well as within them? The form can be as broad and flexible as necessary; autonomy, equality and non-interference can be guaranteed.

«The failure to raise our presence to a higher level in the international struggle will allow a political vacuum that will be filled by reformist, collaborationist, anarchist or fifth column imperialists. Can we allow this to happen?»

The message I carry to you from my party is a message of complete support for joint efforts directed at strengthening coordination which are already underway. We strongly urge that this work be carried forward with renewed determination.

Finally, we also wish to inform all parties that the World Peace Forum 2006 will be held in Vancouver this coming June 23 – 28th.

In conjunction with this important gathering, our party will organize an international seminar focussing on the political economy of militarism, aggression and war in the world today, and the urgency of building an international democratic, ant-imperialist front.

We will be circulating a special letter of invitation to all parties shortly, and hope many will be able to participate next June in Vancouver.

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Socialism is our alternative proposal

**THE PROGRESSIVE PARTY OF THE
WORKING PEOPLE (AKEL), CYPRUS**

YANNOS VALANIDIS

→ **THE TOPIC OF OUR DISCUSSION** today is contemporary trends in capitalism, which is acting in an essentially monopolistic world, within the framework of the new world order, which is being shaped and delineated by the hegemonistic behaviour of the USA, entrenched by force of arms and the use of military power.

The late eighties- early nineties of the 20th century were strongly marked by the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the socialist system in the countries of Europe. Without going into how and why this came about, we would note simply that whatever explanation one may give for these events and from whichever point of view one examines them, the essence remains the same: the events that transpired in 1989-1990 constitute a regression in history and a victory for the counter-revolution on a global scale (however temporary this may be). It is a regression that marks developments on the international, regional and national levels and that -at least in the present stage in the struggle- has upset the balance of power between the two basic social classes: the bourgeois class and the working class, to the detriment of the latter.

Without wishing to underestimate a number of historical stages in the progress of the revolutionary labour movement, we would consider that the two main milestones before the aforesaid events were:

- the revolutions of 1848 in Europe and the Paris Commune, in which the working class became a class acting for itself and demanding power and
- the Great October Socialist Revolution of 1917, in which the working class became the ruling party and threw itself into the struggle to build socialism.

- These two milestones, each in its own way, marked entire periods in history, the first with the revolutionary workers' movement becoming a mass movement under the banner of Marxism and the second in translating the concept of socialism into practice and in establishing the socialist community.

EVERY PERIOD in history can be broken down into sub-periods, each having its own particularities and features, without, however, the main direction of social development being altered. We must merely note once again that the first period is marked by pre-monopoly capitalism, and the second by monopoly capitalism which gradually turns into state monopoly capitalism.

The problems faced by socialism while it is being built and implemented are well-known and difficult. The omissions and mistakes that appeared during this process are under discussion and study. Likewise well-known, however, are the achievements and successes of socialism on both the national and global scales. These have moved society ahead and improved it, obliging even capitalism to evolve and transform itself, to change, to use social welfare as a method to blunt its disparities, all this under the pressure exerted by the socialist example and the working people's struggle.

However bitter and indignant we may feel over the tragic events of the last decade of the twentieth century and however more distant the fulfilment of

the vision of socialism may have become, these events have helped to disperse a number of illusions propagandised at that time by the bourgeois ruling class of the west regarding the supposed end to the class struggle. The various bourgeois theories pushed by belated apologists for capitalism, such as the theories concerning "industrial societies" and "post-industrial society", as well as that of "convergence" and other such theories that sought to show that society is moving of its own accord and along various paths towards a unified socio-economic system have now been left in the sidelines of human thought.

With the opportunity offered it, multinational capital has contributed decisively and catalytically to the restoration of capitalism in the countries that had a socialist system. It is a savage and inhumane capitalism which seeks to dissolve everything in its path, to impoverish the popular masses, to extinguish the memory of socialism, to distort history and to punish a number of peoples because they have had the historical audacity to contest capitalism's omnipotence and to fight for a better, more humane society.

We are passing through the first years of the twenty-first century and are just fifteen years from the changes that marked the course of our society. The revolutionary workers' and communist movement takes a critical stance as regards its own historical course, but at the same time must focus its attention on the mutations of capitalism. Our revolutionary experience teaches us that the changes taking

28 place within the very make-up of capitalism alter, and must alter, our revolutionary approach to it as well.

We know that under conditions of pre-monopoly capitalism and its upward evolutionary development, Marx expounded his position that the revolution would be victorious nearly simultaneously in the most highly developed capitalist countries at that time.

THE QUALITATIVE DIFFERENTIATION of capitalism and its mutation into monopoly capitalism and imperialism with its widespread unequal development led V.I. Lenin to work out a new theory of socialist revolution, according to which under certain prerequisites the latter could be victorious in one specific given country, which would be the one that was the weak link in the imperialist chain.

We consider that the changes that have taken place in the capitalist system from the beginning of the twentieth century until the present are such that they oblige us to take a fresh critical stance towards it that would go beyond the traditional approach we have taken up to now. We are living in the time of the internationalization of capital and of production with the multinational companies turning into colossal monopoly complexes that control entire sectors of the economy and place the means of production under their control, as they dominate in the financial sphere and the stock exchange as well as in international trade.

The increasingly profound internationalization of multinational capital and

the constant concentration of activity expressed through globalization are nothing other than the attempt to unify humanity in order to serve of the interests of multinational companies for the sake of supposedly free competition and the unhindered operation of the international market. The unleashing of the globalization of the multinationals is based on the so-called new world order to impose geostrategic interests, and not this alone.

It remains an undeniable fact, however, that the essence, the quintessence, of capitalism (in its most barbaric to its most refined and from its most primitive to its most modern forms) remains the same, that is, the exploitation of human labour and the pursuit of profit at the cost of the impoverishment of millions of people. Capitalism will stop at nothing to achieve these objectives, especially now without the counterweight that for decades had restrained and curbed the most reactionary forces of imperialism, monopoly capitalism and the multinationals. However capitalism may modernise, it cannot change its exploitative and inhumane nature, which concentrates wealth in the hands of the few and brings misery to the many. It is this nature which generates war and destruction, threatens life itself on our planet and becomes the cause of all injustice, oppression and the enslavement of billions of people.

FOR THE FIRST TIME in human history, anything can be made anywhere and sold anywhere. In capitalist economies this means that each component is made and

each activity carried out in the part of the world where it will be the cheapest, and the resulting products and services sold where the prices and profits will be the highest. The minimalization of cost and the maximalization of revenue mean the maximalization of profit, which constitutes the heart of capitalism. This is the cynical position taken by the ideologues of capitalist imperialist globalization, which shows that the grain of capital has not in any way changed since the time it appeared.

The predominance, then, of capitalism is, unfortunately, taking on global dimensions in our time and is not directed only against the poor peoples in certain regions, who are paying a heavy social, economic and political price. It is also directed against the working people and generally the peoples living in the metropolises of capitalism, who are subject to a merciless offensive against their civil rights and their socio-economic gains.

The war supposedly against terrorism (which has been created by the capitalist system itself) is directed against countries that do not kowtow to the dictates of the most reactionary forces of imperialism and the multinationals. It is also directed against the peoples of those countries with the curtailment of their civil rights through the various counter-terrorism laws.

Mankind is moving backward towards barbarity and a political Middle Ages, with all the negative consequences this entails in the economic, social and political spheres. The primary duty and con-

cern of every communist today is to fight in an organized way on the national, regional and global levels to bar the way leading back to the Middle Ages and barbarity.

COMMUNISTS have an alternative proposal, which has been submitted to society. It is a proposal based on the abundant experience of the international communist movement and the struggle of the revolutionary labour movement. The example of the building of socialism in European countries, beginning with the storming of the Winter Palace in the Red October of 1917 is a source of inspiration. AKEL and more generally the movement of the Left in Cyprus unreservedly condemn the nullification –whoever the source of it may be- of the seventy years of socialist progress.

It is understandable when this nullification comes from the world of capital, from the class and ideological adversaries of socialism. But when it comes from people who until yesterday were in the ranks of the socialist movement, it shows that they were unable to comprehend the historical phenomena in question. These are people who have become disenchanted with and demobilized by the difficulties. They are people who have compromised with the class enemy and nullify socialism so as to relieve their guilty consciences.

In refusing the nullification of the seventy- year history of socialism, it would, we believe, be a big mistake to go to the other extreme of idealizing it. Because,

30 comrades, such an approach also reveals an ideological gap. Thus, enriched by the experience –both positive and negative– of the course of socialism, with the lessons learned from the mistakes and shortcomings, inspired by the self-sacrifice of millions of communists and mindful of their example in withstanding difficulties and clashing with the class enemy, we continue their struggle under today’s truly difficult conditions. Thus, in this time of the imperialist world order and of the globalization of the multinationals, communists the world over are called on to stand at the side of all progressive people and movements to promote our alternative proposal through common struggles.

After 1990, some hastened to say that socialism and the concept of communism were dead and buried. Even today, many view us as fossils of another era. What is certain is that we are not seeking some utopia. The beacon that guides us is the flame of that idea which has sprung from life itself and which life itself and reality do not just keep alive but make more timely than ever. Socialism is our alternative proposal, a socialism that will come not by itself but demanding a constant, uninterrupted daily struggle to safeguard the rights and gains of the working people and the people more broadly, to educate and raise people’s consciousness and to overthrow the inhumane, exploitative system. This is not an easy undertaking, but history teaches us that communists are prepared to face tough situations.

Socialism is necessary

**COMMUNIST PARTY OF BOHEMIA AND
MORAVIA**

ZDENEK STEFEK

→ **SINCE 1989**, the world has been shaken by economic storms. The victory of the counter-revolution in Eastern Europe and the USSR has led further to an aggressive drive for imperialist “globalisation”. But this “globalisation”, called in many cases “an economic miracle” brought economic crisis many times in last 15 years.

Mexico in 1994 had to devalue the peso after financial crisis. In 1997, the Asian financial crisis completely destroyed the illusion created by the economic success of the four Asian “Dragons”. During the Asian financial crisis, 90 % of the population became poorer. The whole economic and political system was shaken and paths were opened up for revolutionaries. In the summer of 1998, it was Russia’s turn to expose its economic rottenness under the impact of the Asian crisis. Life expectancy decreased.

In September 1998, Brazil suffered a currency outflow of one billion dollars every day. The biggest Latin American country fell victim to speculation fever. It received billions from the IMF and the United States to avoid the contagion. In return, it had to reduce its budget deficits by cutting back on social expenditures and devaluating its currency, the real. The country was bled dry. The economic crisis led to a political crisis.

AND THE UNITED STATES? At the start of the decade, the United States had entered a new phase, that of the “new economy”. According to this model capitalism itself would be replaced by a new social form, the post-industrial society.

Since then, a spectacular collapse has shown that these concepts were not based on any reality. The so-called “new economy” functions just like the old and

32 starts a crisis of overproduction, as in the purest capitalist mode.

The US economy had been propelled by enormous speculation on the financial markets. Since 1982, the level of US production has increased more than 2.5 times, while that of the financial markets increased tenfold. This system is also based on the ever more dominant position of the US dollar on the international scene. Social inequalities increase. And financial development only increases this social injustice. At Enron, with the company bankrupt, the managers go home with compensation payments of several hundreds of millions of dollars, while the workers lose not only their job, but also their savings plans, which were placed in company funds. This shows that the so-called “new economy” is and remains capitalist in nature.

We all know the factors that generated the crisis of 1929; we are now in similar position, and all these factors are present today on a much larger scale. “Globalisation” has reinforced all the contradictions of the system. The elements of destabilization have grown. The problems are accumulating and worsening.

- Monopolisation: only a few companies per economic sector have survived on a world scale; companies invest by acquiring other companies to eliminate competition, not to develop the productive forces;
- Inequality: the gap between the imperialist countries and the Third World is growing; within the imperialist countries, the most important capital-

ists see their proceeds growing; how could there be an unlimited expansion, if in 100 countries the per capita income is lower than it was 15 years ago?

- Debts: the debts of the Third World amount to 2,500 billion dollars; from 1970 to 2000, it has paid more than 4,000 billion in debt service. This is financial plunder; the South is financing the North and not the other way round.
- Overheating of the financial markets: 1,100 billion dollars of foreign currency change hands every day; the stock exchanges are overvalued, exceeding the GDP of their respective countries; a crash is threatening; but at the same time, the financial markets impose profitability on companies, which, as a consequence, increase the exploitation of the workers.
- Instability of the world situation: the United States has positioned itself as a service economy (production in the Third World) and a debtor; this can hold only if the dollar is accepted everywhere as international currency and that in its turn depends strongly on the American supremacy in all areas. But since the fall of the socialist countries, the competition between the imperialist blocs has sharpened strongly and the European Union is asserting its superpower ambitions. At the same time, European imperialists want to win their own part of the world. And the building-up of European Union with a constitution, militarization, and

enlargement is one part of this project.

- Contradictions are not only between south and north, but between rich capitalist countries too and inside all capitalist countries... For example other faces in the project of European imperialism are social cuts, growing unemployment, increasing work flexibility and short-term work, increasing of the gap between rich and poor. We can see today social conflicts in France and Belgium. And it is only beginning. Conditions are building up for a crisis to break out, more serious and more destructive than that of 1929. To head off the crisis, the IMF had to intervene. It has had to remit billions dollars to Mexico, Thailand Indonesia, South Korea and Brazil. But all these interventions are not enough to solve the crisis of capitalism.

There are practically no more than two major solutions for capitalism in the present situation: either the road of a new world war, provoked by the aggravation of all contradictions of the system and itself pushed forward by the current economic crisis; or the overthrow of capitalism and its replacement by socialism.

THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION has pushed massive military production. It has increased military orders and the defense budget will be increased.

September 11 has been used as the pretext for wars and aggressions against any country or movement that opposes imperialist domination and for further fascisation of the political regimes of the

West. The United States, followed by the other imperialist powers, has launched a campaign of "anti-terrorist struggle". But it is clearly meant to suppress all forms of people's resistance and all attempts at anti-imperialist sovereignty. With the war in Afghanistan, the declaration of war against the "rogue states", the United States clearly affirms its will to dominate the world. In the first place, it aims at the Middle East, East Asia and Latin America.

THE EUROPEAN COMMUNIST and radical left-wing anti-imperialist movement is organizationally and ideologically fragmented and it is still experiencing a crisis. The struggle between revolutionary principled communist viewpoints and reformist, opportunist, capitalist system compatible ones continues within the European communist movement and within many communist parties, including our party. The fact that there are also left-wing principled communist streams within the parties that have an opportunist leadership or an opportunist majority should not be forgotten. The last case of reformism has been recently concentrated in the Party of the European Left that is connected with integration into the structures of the EU; on the contrary it brings division to the left in Europe. Thus the starting point for building a European anti-imperialist front should be an agreement that the EU is a part of Euro-Atlantic imperialism, against which it is necessary to concentrate forces. On this ground it is essential to build the anti-imperialist front, that would not be limited to the

34 area of the EU and that would on this ground unite, and not divide the radical Left. This way it is vital to build a union that would not expel the communist forces, which should constitute its backbone.

I see some positive results for anti-imperialist movement:

- The beginning of regular cooperation between communist, workers and anti-capitalist radical left parties in the form of seminars, conferences or meetings, for example here in Athens, in Brussels, in Prague, or in Latin America etc.
- Some positive trends in the anti-imperialist struggles in Europe. Especially the unprecedented anti-war mobilization and popular refusal of the European Constitution Draft.
- Building of new alliances against imperialism, capitalism, social cuts and finding of new partners. And these cases are very good school for our international movement: patriotic front in Turkey, PAME in Greece, Bolivarian revolution in Venezuela, Cuban revolution etc.

I think that our work must be based on these goals:

- Solidarity - We have to support the socialist countries like Cuba and other progressive countries like Venezuela and we have to support the anti-imperialist movement like the Iraqi resistance. We have to work actively in the anti-war movement - not only against US military adventures, but against EU militarisation too.

- We have to fight against social cuts and against destroying our rights and freedoms, in education, work, the social system, health care, public services.
- Very important is the fight against reformism, opportunism and social democracy. We have to oppose all these tendencies, not only ideologically, but practically too. Our goal is not just a temporary taming of imperialist forces. Our task is a complex defeat of imperialism on ideological and military fronts.

Socialism has demonstrated its vitality!

COMMUNIST PARTY OF ESTONIA

YURI MISHIN

→ **IMPERIALISM** has entered a new phase of its development: the phase of the internationalization of capital and production. The fight for the supremacy in the market and for the establishment of a new world order has intensified. The United States, which already behaves like a world dictator, a gendarme, aspires to the hegemonic role. The United States reduces the development of the production that affects health and seeks to partially transfer this kind of production toward other countries where the work force is cheaper. The United States is an exploitative country, a consumer country, a financial oligarch.

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The last few decades of the 20th century saw the beginning of the so-called globalization: the process of conformation of a global financial and information space on the basis of new computer technologies. In globalization the most important thing is the change of conscience, so that the peoples surrender national, economic and state independence for the sake of changing the system of collective and individual values, so that the principal symbol of individual "well-being" is money. Take all that life offers you! A consumerist man is created. The individual comes first. Man's rights are replaced by the owner's rights. In the world economy prevail transnationals, which are not subject to state control and regulations, which destroy the economy and reduce the population of sovereign states. In 1999, Estonia had 1,372,000 inhabitants. Starting from 1989, the population decreased practically by 200,000 (195,610), the rest left the country, died or did not get to be born. In 1989, Estonia had nearly 122,000 children up to 4 years old, and in 2005 only 61,000. Global monopolies are destroying the traditional

36 educational systems. A less educated person is easier to handle. Higher education can only be afforded by the rich. These processes are ongoing.

From the struggle against the forces of evil, which come chiefly from the United States, arose the antiglobalization movement, which the international communist movement has joined. Youth accounts for most of the globalization opponents. In the antiglobalization movement participate diverse social organizations, movements and groups: workers, peasants, intellectuals, environmentalists, communists, religious people and many radical layers of the population.

The antiglobalization activists declare themselves in favor of the independence and true sovereignty of states, against the enemies of humankind, such as the WTO, the IMF, transnationals and the World Bank, immersed in the globalization process.

THE 21ST CENTURY was characterized by new shocks related to the provocation of September 11, 2001. The United States offered all nations an option: they are with the United States or they are with the terrorists. It is "freedom of choice" the American way. Now, the United States, taking advantage of the tragedy, is once again trying to make decisions on the fringes of the UN Security Council and to pass the responsibility on to the others. The United States seeks to turn the war on terror into a war on the countries that they describe as rogue nations, which they do not include in the category of

"civilized nations" or "civilized humanity." With the pretext of fighting terrorism, the Americans occupy the Soviet military bases in the former republics of the disintegrated Soviet Union.

The United States' closest ally is England. In the words of the United States' main friend, Tony Blair, the prime minister of Great Britain, terrorists "don't care for human life." As if in Iraq and Yugoslavia, the Americans, together with their NATO accomplices, in bombarding those sovereign states were not cutting short human lives. The United States financed and provided the weaponry to the Taliban, pushing them toward a confrontation with the Soviet troops, and afterward helped the so-called "northern alliance" to fight with the Taliban. The United States financed and armed the Albanians, antagonizing them with the Serbs, and protected the members of the Chechen bands, appealing to human rights. When admitting the Baltic countries into the EC and NATO, they did not realize that some 700,000 permanent residents whom the bourgeois régimes deprived of citizenship were left defenseless and without rights. The leaders of the so-called world's leading countries have always been characterized by their double-standard policies.

Terrorists exist in every country of the world, including the United States and Great Britain. Nobody knows where the centers of terrorism lie. The role of the United States, as well as generally NATO's, where the United States does as it pleases, has turned them into interna-

tional terrorists. This role has for long belonged to the United States: Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Vietnam, Iraq, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan... The American youth protests and takes to the street with slogans of: "Stop the war" and "The actual terrorist lives in the White House."

Every State—for the sake of its people, without breaching international legislation or the rules of international law—must define its stance in the fight against terrorism without servility to the United States amid the new world order that is emerging, communists are faced with new tasks.

THE FIGHT IN THE WORLD ARENA is not waged between civilizations or between "civilized" and "uncivilized" humankind. The fight between capitalism and socialism temporarily ended with the victory of the imperialist forces. The opposition is still valid, though. The confrontation line passes, like before, between owners and most waged workers, who lack livelihoods. [*Wage-Labor and Capital* (K. Marx)].

The fundamental principle of socialism-communism is the principle of social justice, which envisages people's equality, social ownership over the country's wealth and the property created by the workers, equal rights for all regarding freedom and the use of the country's wealth, the equality of all the men and everyone's right to work; and there is no other system that can offer another alternative.

The international situation in the 20th century 1990's was characterized, above

all, by the aspiration of the United States, as a superpower, to subdue different countries that previously, when there was the USSR counterbalance, could maintain an independent policy. By increasingly subjecting NATO and the UN, using the IMF, the United States of America imposes its ideology and policy on many countries. The Middle East and the Balkans, Eastern Europe, the former republics of the USSR are targets of American expansion. The United States also ambition to subject the Republic of Estonia, seizing control over the key branches of the economy, such as energy and transport. Those who control energy and transport will impose on the country their game rules. Economic dependency on foreign capital is always accompanied by the destruction of industries, a result of which is mass unemployment, followed by decay in agriculture. "In the country, people suffer from the lack of money, unemployment and insecurity about the future" (Arnold Ruutel, President of the Republic of Estonia). The social sphere was destroyed. Numerous monster-banks emerged that deformed the aspect of Tallinn, the capital of Estonia. The national colors of Estonia have been affected by the huge amount of sloppy propaganda. Estonia's language was filled with Americanisms.

The loss of the socialist conquests of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Estonia relates to the disintegration of the USSR, with the antipopular forces' yearning to strengthen the positions of capital. Add to this the weakening of the international communist movement and the wild anti-

38 communism, which led to the revitalization of neo-Nazi forces and Zionist reactionary circles. Not long ago, for the 3rd time around, a monument was built to the SS troops, and the government provided the money for the realization of the monument.

ESTONIA IS becoming more and more dependent on foreign capital, has excessive foreign debts, and seeks to adhere to the European Union and NATO against the will of most of the population. The burden upon the workers' shoulders is greater every time. Security guarantees have been lost.

The circles supported from abroad and part of the former leadership of the Communist Party of Estonia, which betrayed the workers' interests, are those that today spread anti-Sovietism and anticommunism, and those that started to take possession of the socialist property, to get rich under the slogans of a mythical economic and political independence, imposing a cruel capitalist exploitation.

The proclaimed slogan of "freedom" meant that, from now on, the State does not commit to defending the interests of the working people; that everyone has, by themselves and with their own effort, to come out of the crisis that the society is going through. The blow landed, above all, on the working class: the big companies were closed down, unemployment took hold of the workers, mainly the blue-collar workers and especially women; the social guarantees offered by the Soviet Constitution were abolished. The great

and prosperous mechanized agriculture, achieved at the cost of tremendous efforts and sacrifices, was destroyed. Peasants are doomed to return to natural agriculture or become peons. Wild sales with the objective of obtaining rapid earnings instead of creating new physical and spiritual assets became customary. As a result, the process of disqualification and removal of the labor class and of broad layers of the intelligentsia began to gain momentum.

In Estonian society, three sets of contradictions took shape: between the ruling pro-American elite that seized power and the broad layers of the population; between the speculative "bourgeoisie" that consolidates its economic and political control, and the working masses; between the chauvinist forces in power and the Russian and Russian-speaking population, among whom there are also Estonians.

The ruling forces carry out their low policy under chauvinist slogans, leading the dissatisfaction of the masses toward the Russian population of Estonia. To this end were created conditions that forced part of the Estonia's non native population to leave the country, and those that stayed were subjected to rigorous laws regarding citizenship, language and education, which displaced Russians to the lowest levels of the social scale. On admitting the Baltic countries into the EC and NATO, Europe and the United States "did not notice" the nearly 700,000 permanent residents that the bourgeois régimes of Latvia and Estonia had stripped of their citizenship.

Under these conditions the opposition forces of the left are extremely dispersed, poorly organized, often trying to make compromises with the establishment at the expense of the workers. Most of the media are in the hands of foreign capital and of the forces of the right, and only partly, in the hands of the state; the left forces practically do not get to the readers, listeners and television viewers. Contradictions become worse in the Republic. Timidly, unions try to speak out; teachers, doctors, tenants, peasants and pensioners actively demonstrate for their rights.

Estonia's subordination to foreign capital -within which US capital holds one of the first places- and, consequently, to its policy can be seen; the increasing number of loans that will have to be paid; the mounting burden of taxes relating to the growth of the bureaucratic apparatus (especially as Estonia joins NATO and the European Union) make contradictions inside the country even worse. The economic dependence on foreign capital is inevitably accompanied by a proportional growth of political dependence. It is already difficult to see Estonia as a sovereign State. Sovereignty means independence and self-sufficiency in the development of one's own economy. The Republic sees a growing unemployment, and the standard of living of the large majority is low. There is an exodus of the country's population, especially of young people.

With the help of the media, a broad offensive was carried out on the ideological

front: the long-standing coexistence of Estonians with other peoples of Russia during whose process were established organic economic, productive, cultural and demographic bonds, as well as countless human relationships; the memory of the joint heroic fight against the common enemy is replaced by the defamatory concepts of "colonization" and "occupation" and "exploitation" of the people of Estonia by the Russians; along with chauvinist, antisocialist and anticommunist ideas, they began to spread mysticism, violence, sex and the aestheticization of crime. The principal source of the aforementioned is American movies, which took hold of the cinema and television screens. Estonia's national culture is endangered in the context of globalization, which takes on the form of a cosmopolitan Americanization.

THE ACTIVITY OF THE Communist Party of Estonia under these conditions has become difficult, first, because of the betrayal of communist morale and ideology by the leadership the former Central Committee of the Communist Party of Estonia and, later on, the yearning of a sizeable part of the partisan membership to join in business. All this led to a majority of the members of the communist party leaving its ranks, to the cessation of the activity of the organs of the party, to the prohibition, under the law, of the activity of party cells in companies and institutions.

Under these conditions, the Communist Party of Estonia sets itself two groups

40 of objectives: general goals, with prospects; and concrete goals, relating to current times.

In its work, the Communist Party of Estonia creatively applies the theory of scientific socialism, considering the new phenomena that constantly arise in society and in the unfolding world. The party starts from the decisive significance of material conditions in the life of the society, as well as from the exceptional role of the subjective factor, of the role of consciousness and of social ideas. And here it is difficult to overvalue the role of communist parties in the antiglobalization movement and their participation in other organizations and social movements and in patriotic orientation actions.

The Communist Party of Estonia bases its work on the historical necessity of replacing capitalist social relations by socialist ones, which will be preceded by a long period of transition. In the transition period, it will be inevitable to admit elements of the small and medium business sector under state control. The peasants alone will decide on how and with what methods, the great cooperative agricultural production will be restored.

In the course of this process, the Communist Party of Estonia will support all the political and social forces that contribute to progress, and will reject antidemocratic and antisocialist ideas, the ideas of neo-Nazism, chauvinism and cosmopolitanism in all its variants. The party pursues the task of helping the masses, especially the working class, peasants and intelligentsia to understand the

ephemeral nature of the bourgeois and petty bourgeois illusions. But this is only possible through a concrete struggle for the vital rights of workers.

SINCE ESTONIA is between the East and the West, its future development will largely depend on a concrete correlation of forces. NATO and the United States will do their best for Estonia to fail to develop toward socialism and be hostile to Russia. The possibility to create NATO bases in Estonia also represents a great danger for Estonia as a nation. The ultimate outcome will depend, decisively, on the success that is achieved in the restoration of socialism in the Russian Federation and in the other republics of the USSR, including Estonia. The USSR is the guarantor of the socialist achievements. The socialist course for development and the restoration of lawfulness are the key conditions to re-establish the Soviet Union.

Among the principal achievements of socialism -the guaranteed right to employment, housing, free education and medicine, personal security, child and family care- a special place is held by national equality of rights, since the Soviet society was a multinational society. The nationality issue always held an important place among party programs. However, the policy of belligerent anti-communism was always related with the promotion of enmity between the nationalities. The Communist Party of Estonia favors a solution to the problems on the basis of a multifaceted exercise of the rights of man and of the citizen for all the inhab-

itants of Estonia, regardless of their nationality. Under the current conditions, the party demands equality of rights for all the inhabitants of Estonia, in the area of economic relations, ownership rights, etc., as well as in the political area, namely: citizenship, voting and press rights; the right to obtain reliable information, and also in the social, spiritual and cultural area.

Demanding cultural autonomy – which constrains all the rights just to the sphere of culture or which sees integration only in the command of the Estonian language by every inhabitant – and ignoring the distinctive territorial features, are unacceptable in the eyes of the Communist Party of Estonia, because it would mean that those people that do not possess the Estonian citizenship would become servants, slaves of the ruling nationality, that is the establishment of an order that has nothing in common with the elementary ideas of democracy and justice.

It has been a long time since there have been no ethnically “pure” territories in the world. The vast majority are territories where representatives of different ethnic groups have coexisted shoulder to shoulder for centuries.

THE ESTONIANS AND THE RUSSIANS are united by secular state relations and cultural traditions. Therefore, the Russian and Russian-speaking population of Estonia has the human and civic right to a non-discriminatory and socially fair participation in the social and political life of

the republic. At present, the Russian population does not possess these basic rights. On forcibly losing the Soviet citizenship (the Soviet peoples were violently separated by the disintegration of the State), the Russian population, in most cases, does not possess the citizenship of Estonia. In a wink of an eye, they were ripped of the ability to use their native language, and it has been announced that the schools where classes are taught in the Russian language will soon be closed. The authorities do their best to stir up hostility among the nationalities, they force Estonia’s non-native population to leave the republic and assimilate those that stay, calling this integration.

In the concrete situation of the Republic, the immediate task of the Communist Party of Estonia is to offer assistance to the broad layers of the population in the work of defeating chauvinism and pro-American unpatriotism, to strengthen the workers’ participation in the defense of their rights, in the defense and development of the democratic foundation of the society and of the state régime. The fundamental condition for this is the Left political forces’ seizing power. The Communist Party of Estonia believes it necessary to act for changes in the constitutional postulates that limit the rights and freedoms of broad layers of the Republic of Estonia’s population. In particular, it is necessary to modify the electoral system, to establish, by law, the deputies’ responsibility before the electors, including the substitution or repeal of deputies that have failed to keep the

42 promises made to the electors. To grant all the permanent residents the right to run for deputy.

It is necessary that officials assume responsibility and render accounts to the democratically elected bodies of power. To authorize the right of social organizations (unions, veterans' associations, pensioners' and women's organizations) to participate in the work of the commissions of the local and central power bodies when problems concerning the respective layers of the population are analyzed.

It is necessary to annul the postulates of the laws that discriminate against Estonia's non native population on citizenship, language and different human rights issues.

To legalize the Communist Party of Estonia, the prohibition must be rescinded for people without citizenship and permanent residence permit to belong to political parties and movements.

The Communist Party of Estonia favors granting the political parties the right to create its organizations in the labor communities. Starting from the practice of European countries, the Communist Party of Estonia intends to procure the derogation of the Estonian government's provision regarding the suspended activity of the Communist Party of Estonia.

For the country to return to the path of historical development, socialism, it needs to solve the aforementioned problems.

THE ANTIPOPULAR POLICY of the ruling elite seeks to antagonize the peoples in

order to stay in power. The return of the country to the path of socialist development is an objective regularity. It is the dream and aspiration of the popular masses of every nationality that suffer the authorities' outrages, such as poverty, unemployment, the lack of elementary human and civil rights, and insecurity on the future. The peoples have not yet forgotten the advantages and social rights indeed guaranteed by the Constitution of the USSR. Most of us continue to be Soviet: because of our world outlook, our psychology, our attachment to the socialist moral principles and values. The victory of the reaction is temporary.

The reaction did not manage to annihilate all the forces of socialism. The conquests of socialism are preserved in Cuba, in the People's Republic of China, in North Korea and in Vietnam. Those in favor of socialist and communist ideas continue to close ranks and in a number of European countries the working masses are intensifying the struggle against globalization and the big capital.

In Russia, the opposition to the ruling régime, headed by the communists, is becoming a decisive political force.

The Communist Party of Estonia starts from the analysis of the current conditions, of the distribution of forces and, as a major task, intends to contribute to the cohesion of all the national patriotic forces opposing the ruling régime, since, after the dissolution of the party, we cannot make it alone.

To achieve these goals, we have established close relations with the Communist

Party of the Soviet Union, headed by O. S. Shenin, with the international committee "For Unity and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union." We participated in the communist and workers parties' meetings held in Athens, Brussels and Prague.

The reestablishment of the Soviet Union, the Soviets and the return to the socialist path of development are the three goals, for one single purpose, of communist parties.

SOCIALISM EMBODIES THE HIGHEST VALUES:

it reaffirms the dignity of man, of his personality, of the Homeland, respect for the national values and, at the same time, fraternal relations among the peoples, equality, comradeship and love, the value of work as the basis of man's material and spiritual development. Only socialism is really able to stop the monstrous growth of individualism, selfishness, national alienation and hostility, and to prevent the moral barbarism of society. The principles ratified by socialism respond to the ideals that have been reflected in man's dreams for centuries and which, one way or another, have been sanctified in his beliefs and works of spiritual culture. Only the socialist society, which develops in a conscious and planned manner, has the ability to successfully fight terrorism, to ensure the security of the State, of the society and of people, and to prevent the threat of an ecological catastrophe that weighs upon all of humankind.

Socialism has demonstrated its vitality!

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Open the road to another Europe

COMMUNIST PARTY OF FINLAND

TEUVO JUNKKA

➔ **DEPRESSION.** Over the last 15 years neo-liberal economic policy has been applied to Finland and the first serious consequences became obvious already in the very beginning, during the years 1990–1993: The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) decreased by almost 14 percent. At the same time 450,000 jobs were lost and the number of unemployed increased by 325,000. These are big figures in a small country of 5 million inhabitants. The unemployment rate went up from 3 percent in 1989 to 17 percent in 1993. (At present the unemployment rate remains high in Finland, around 9 percent).

In terms of losses in production and jobs, this depression in the beginning of the 1990's was worse than the depression during the 1930's.

The background of the depression was the deregulation of the financial markets inspired by neo-liberal ideologies starting from the midst of the 1980's. This led to the overheating of the economy at the end of the decade followed by the implosion of the stock exchange bubble, which plunged Finland's bank system into a deep crisis. The banks were saved from bankruptcy by means of billions of State aid, which did not help thousands of small entrepreneurs from falling into bankruptcy. As a consequence, the unemployment rate skyrocketed in an unprecedented way.

CUTS IN PUBLIC SPENDING. One of the reasons for the economic depression or at least one of the aggravating factors was Finland's preparation for adhere to the EMU (Economic and Monetary Union). In order to meet the convergence criteria, Finland started to deliberately reduce the public sector as from 1992. The EU even gave direct orders to reduce government

and municipal expenditures if Finland wanted to be eligible for the EMU. During that period public spending at State and municipal levels was reduced to the extent that today they are 10 billions lower than they would have been without those cost cuts. This amounts to 7 percent of the GDP.

In Finland, public welfare services such as social and health services as well as education are basically the responsibility of local authorities. In order to provide those services public authorities used to receive funds by means of municipal taxation and State subsidies. During the last 15 years the State heavily reduced state subsidies for municipalities to the extent that today the municipalities receive yearly five billions Euros less than they would receive without the implementation of those neo-liberal cuts. As a result those community services were substantially weakened creating immense difficulties for the unemployed, the people with low income, ill people, students and retired persons.

To justify those cuts in public spending the authorities referred to the economic depression saying that available funds were not sufficient to provide all services. However in Finland the depression ended already in 1994, but those cuts have not been cancelled.

INCREASED INCOME DIFFERENTIALS. During the post-depression period income differentials have drastically grown in Finland. This is true both at the level of the functional income distribution and the

distribution of income among households. 45

Prior to the recession in 1989, private enterprise profit amounted to 24 percent of the gross added value and manpower cost amounted to 57 percent. In 2004 profits represented 33 percent and labour costs 49 percent of the gross added value of the private sector. In 1994 the share of the decile of households with the lowest income amounted to 4,9 percent, in 2003 it was only 4,2 percent. And correspondingly, the share of the decile of households with the highest income represented 19,1 percent in 1994 and 22,3 percent in 2003. This is a significant change because in the past those shares had remained unchanged. This income differential is particularly due to the increase of dividend income and other forms of capital income. As a consequence of the cuts in public expenditures, the compensating impact of the transfers of income diminished from 48 percent before the depression to 44 percent today.

The substantial increase of profits and capital income is first and foremost due to the fact that in Finland wage increases have been modest compared to the rise of productivity of labour. But there is also a clear link with neo-liberalism and EMU ambitions. It was known that the adhesion to the EMU would reduce the margin for national economic policymaking. To compensate for this loss the trade union movement was made to accept "salary restraint", in order to strengthen corporate profits and balance sheet values. All

46 this was accompanied by the argument that it would help to safeguard jobs in Finland.

But the opposite happened. Profits went up, but they were not used to create additional jobs in Finland. They were distributed as dividends to the shareholders, among them a significant number of foreign investors and speculators. If profits were invested, then they were to a growing extent exported abroad as capital movements.

CAPITAL DRAIN FROM FINLAND. In the spirit of neo-liberal policies capital movements were deregulated in the beginning of the 1990's, even before Finland joined the EU. The population was told that this would attract large flows of foreign capital to Finland and generate jobs in Finland. This never happened. What really happened was a growing amount of capital being invested out of Finland and Finnish companies moved jobs abroad. This is the main reason why unemployment remains a mass phenomenon in Finland today.

PRIVATISATION. Following the neo-liberal doctrine, state-owned companies were privatised at an increased pace, State and municipal institutions were corporatized and then sold to private investors, State and community tasks were outsourced, in other words they were given to the private sector, which becomes the provider of those services to the public authorities. Of course, those measures provoked resistance. But labour union campaigns

have been hampered by the fact that the Social-Democratic party is part of the governmental coalition implementing neo-liberal policies. The Left-wing Alliance participated in this policy in the previous two governments and is aspiring to enter government again, practically without any real precondition, even together with the Right Wing.

The Communist Party of Finland considers that a clear alternative to the neo-liberal model is needed. The capitalistic logic of development must be questioned. This means also an alternative to the aims pursued by the Bolkenstein Directive and the WTO GATS-agreement to privatise public services. The government of Finland, which will assume the EU presidency next fall, continues to support the approval of the EU Constitution. Safeguarding Finland's military nonalignment and rejecting Finland's adherence to NATO demanded for by the political Right are among the burning questions of the upcoming presidential elections next January.

This alternative has been developed and put forward by the CPF in the main policy document of its Congress in 2004 entitled "Another kind of globalisation and the prospects for socialism" (see www.skp.fi/english): Here some of the main theses:

- The Communist Party of Finland works towards a more just distribution of the fruits of new technology and new work. We want to eliminate poverty, unemployment and social exclusion. Workers and the unemployed cannot

defend their interests by competing against the workers of other countries by offering to do the same job cheaper. In each country there has to be a struggle against the power of capital; the power of labour has to be united internationally. Defending and developing job security, public services and social security is an important part of the international struggle for a more just world. This is especially important in the liberation of women from subordinate positions. The increase in the productivity of labour has created a possibility of shortening general working hours without reducing wages. This would also help decrease unemployment.

- The Communist Party of Finland works towards the sustainable reconciliation of economic development with the capacities and diversity of nature. We oppose the economic model of global capitalism, which wastes energy and natural resources, destroys local means of livelihood and transfers products needlessly around the world. From an economy of wasteful expendability we have to move to an economy based on recycling and principally renewable sources of energy, the development of which is more and more dependent on a proportional increase in information-related, service-related and other non-manual work.

Climate change is an alarming sign of the urgency of structural change in the ecology. The implementation of the

Kyoto Protocol and even more extensive treaties is not to be delayed because of the reactionary stance of the United States and of big business. We have to help give developing countries a chance to improve the conditions of living of their peoples in a way that simultaneously takes the road of ecologically sustainable development.

- The Communist Party of Finland is part of the wide movement against war, militarism and racism. We are opposed to NATO and the militarization of the EU. To us, security is co-operation towards a more just world and towards the guaranteeing of human rights for all. We demand that the Finnish government disassociate itself from the "war against terrorism" declared by the United States, from the European army and from NATO projects, and that it returns to a non-aligned stance. By military non-alignment, Finland can keep away from wars, avoid the threats of international terrorism and decrease military spending.
- The Communist Party of Finland wants to open a road to another kind of Europe by rejecting the constitutional agreement of the EU and by withdrawing from the EU. We are against the adoption of the constitution and are working on behalf of a democratic, peaceful Europe based on equality between citizens and peoples. Europe is larger than the EU, and the well-being of human beings and nature is more important than the freedom of capital

48 and competition. We don't want a fortress-Europe.

We oppose the subordination of employment, public services and social security to the power of the EU and the World Trade Organization. We want to build an Europe which is a forerunner in the development of public services and which adopts measures such as the Tobin tax, which rein in speculation and direct funds for use in furthering employment and the general welfare and in helping developing countries.

This campaign requires still closer co-operation of Communist and other Left-wing parties not only in the framework of the EU but on all-European and global levels. Likewise, it requires broadening cooperation between Left-wing forces, the trade union movement and social movements against neo-liberalism and imperialism.

Imperialist globalization and war

**UNIFIED COMMUNIST PARTY OF
GEORGIA
SAMUSHIA SOPIA**

➔ **AFTER THE DISSOLUTION** of the USSR and the socialist camp, a qualitatively new situation and rapidly changing international conditions make a regular exchange of experience and information between communist parties most urgent.

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The current main tendencies of capitalism are frequently called globalization. Around globalization important discussions between communist parties are developed. The development of an approach to changes common for all communist parties, which occur at the present stage in industrial relations and the social structure of society, and especially from the point of view of centralization and internationalization of productive forces, is one of our main tasks.

The current process of globalization is identified with a so-called "American globalization" which means an objective process of general integration in the channels necessary for global capital. The American «New World order» has already assumed perpetual domination of capital on a new, up-to-date level, where several transnational corporations have acted on the scene, aspiring to operate in all spheres of public life on a planetary scale. It is necessary to separate globalization, as an objective process of general integration, from capitalist globalization.

Globalization, from the one side, is a comprehensive process of creating a uniform world. Its general purpose is integration in all spheres of public life and, first of all, in the economic sphere.

The integration and internationalization of productive forces today has taken on an unprecedented scope. Globalization is observed in the economic structure of society and at the level of political processes.

50 Both here and there, globalization has acquired a rather inconsistent character. By virtue of the disintegration of the socialist camp, globalization is mainly a process occurring in the world of the capital, means and processes proceeding in frameworks of bourgeois production relations. The situation is aggravated by the frankly aggressive behavior of American capital, whose political tool is the powerful state machinery of the USA.

To differentiate globalization in general from today's form, we shall assign the known term - «capitalist globalization». Under «capitalist globalization» we understand imperialist policy as the interests of several transnational corporations under conditions of internationalization of the advanced productive forces, when class contradictions are on a different level and take on an international character. The basic contradiction of capital - the contradiction between work and capital still remains in force. This contradiction exists inside the advanced western countries too, but it finds a new form as well: an opposition "gold billions - the rest of the world". Capitalist globalization is a process of globalization, ruled by the most powerful international capital for the formation of a unified world economic system with a certain structure appropriate to the interests of the largest international capital and achievement of conditions of its unified regulation in the interests of the same international capital.

REJECTING GLOBALIZATION as "American", communists do not reject objectivity and

the inevitability of integration processes at all. On the contrary, the communist party should act for all-round integration - integration on the basis of socialism. We think in this, all communist parties are unified. But all globalization difficulties consist in understanding the concrete conditions of integration.

"American" globalization, acting in Georgia, demands it to become a reliable transport corridor for transferring natural riches of the Caspian Sea from east to west in the interests of the transnational corporations of the USA and England. But Georgia, by virtue of a major geopolitical arrangement is allocated also the role of «the main squeezer» of Russia from the Caucasian region with strengthening influence of the USA and NATO there. All this is fraught with dangerous consequences both for Georgia, and for Russia. And it is possible to predict these consequences, precisely. Therefore, a unified communist party of Georgia acts for the integration of Georgia into a Union of Belarus and Russia. This concrete situation forces us to reject the slogan « at first socialism, then integration ». Communist parties working in the territory of the former USSR realize that the further integration of the republics of CIS will not result in automatic restoration of the unified socialist state, but:

- it will be a large step in this direction
- it practically will bring to nothing the attempts at NATO entrenching itself in our area.

IN ONE WORD, the complexity and discrepancies of today's processes determine the complexity of the tasks facing us and the change the decision-making process.

State sovereignty and self-efficiency plays a role of a sole and reliable shield against "American" globalization under known conditions (Cuba, North Korea, Belarus, Venezuela and so on). But when we are confronted with the task of overthrowing pro-NATO, comprador governments with the purpose of removing our countries from the claws of capitalist globalization, the slogans about «national independence» and the discussions about "national liberation struggle" can result in known unilateralism.

We quite agree with a position presented to this tribune two years ago by a representative of the Portuguese CP, comrade Nunes, that the dialectics of the national and the international under conditions of globalization takes on special importance and a precisely formulated answer of communists given the process of globalization becomes very urgent at the international level. In this context it would be desirable to pay attention to one aspect of understanding globalization.

Many comrades represent globalization as war and there is a reason for this: these two phenomena in some general features are very similar. Both phenomena have technological and economic aspects and political parties play an important role. The main aspects of both phenomena are developed by economic in-

terests. In the materials from various Athens meetings, it is possible to find sets of judgments about globalization as well as about a possible third world war. World war and globalization are similar in terms of their planetary scale.

There is a similarity between the concept "war" and the policy of the USA called «globalization» as there is between imperialist war and its policy. War is an episode (it can be a necessary stage) and needs a colossal military power - one condition, guaranteeing the realization of capitalist globalization. World capital, carrying out globalization according to its interests, parallelly to most of the civil forms, political and economic levers, also applies a non-peaceful form of compulsion, that is the direct military intervention.

In one word, strictly according to the scientific point of view, war is not a synonym of globalization. Though the known philosopher and man with a most interesting lively way - Zinoviev - asserts the complete opposite: «... Actually globalization is a new world war - a war of a new type. We have got used to considering war traditionally: soldiers, armies, gun shooting, planes throwing bombs. The war which occurs now is war of a new type. It fundamentally differs from all wars of the past, though if to understand war as such phenomenon, which is planned, is organized will be carried out, has destruction of forces of the opponent for a reason, destruction of material resources, capture etc., then what is occurring is a war, exactly, in the strict sense of

52 the word. In this war, all means, including means of hot war are applied-bombs, guns and planes are used. To prove it now there is no necessity. It is a world war, which is named also as globalization. I consider that these are synonyms...»

The business «globalization - American» is really based on violence that quite often is displayed in a similar way to wars. Whereas, authentic globalization, which objectively cannot be stopped, and which has no relationship to violence at all, and with war - in particular, is based on a voluntary principle. This form of globalization supposes a formation not knowing of wars and crises, social contradictions and antagonisms. It supposes a unified world with a uniform information centre, uniform planning and management, which is possible only under conditions of socialism.

We quite agree with the comrade Hannah Middleton, representative of the Communist Party of Australia, that «... more operative information and analytical clauses illuminating modern questions and events... is necessary. Our purpose is to build, proceeding from what has already been made, and to ensure the translation of a lot of reports and theoretical documents. »



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A revolution- ary strategy for socialism

COMMUNIST PARTY OF GREECE

ALEKA PAPARIGA

→ **FIRST I** would like to welcome you to Athens and to thank you for taking part in the international meeting that our Party has hosted every year since 1999. We note with satisfaction that, since the time when international meetings of this type were first established, the number of parties attending increases from one year to the next. There are also parties that have declared their desire to participate for the first time, which we have to discuss using the well-known procedure that has been established for these meetings. On this occasion, we would like to address our thanks to the CP of Vietnam for its comradely internationalist contribution to the publishing of the "Information Bulletin"; to the CP of Cuba for its help with the Spanish edition; and to the CP of the Russian Federation and to the Communist Workers' Party of Russia-Party of Russian Communists for translating and printing the texts in the Russian language.

NEED FOR COORDINATION and common action. We believe that the impact of these international meetings is based on objective needs that we in all parties are aware of; the even greater need for coordination and common action, the need to work out as far as possible a common strategy towards our common problems arising from contemporary imperialist barbarity. The need for internationalist solidarity is even more urgent today. To describe the current problems, to paint them in the blackest colours is not nearly enough to achieve the mass mobilisation of all the peoples on earth. Without abandoning the policy of revealing all the crimes that are being committed today, we must expand our discussion and common action to include the issue of the communist alternative and the prospect of

socialism. This does not mean in the least that we are abandoning action on urgent problems, especially when the people's standard of living keeps dropping, when war and state repression, poverty and hunger are growing. Today's major problems cannot be eased; and even less can they be solved without a movement that disputes the capitalist system as a whole.

We are, of course, well aware that there are particularities and special features from one region to another, from one country to another, and even on the same continent; and that movements and communist parties operate under different conditions from one country to another; that there are ideological and political differences; and that every party, every movement is responsible for studying its own national conditions in order to fine-tune its political line. But this does not eliminate the need for a united strategy, or the need to work out and project a common alternative, which can only be socialism. The more visible this alternative road to the development and progress of society is to the peoples, the better able the movement will be to extract concessions and gains today.

AN INTERNATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY strategy. We start out from the basic position that all capitalist states, irrespective of

the level of their economic development, irrespective of whether they still retain forms of pre-capitalist relations, or whether they are members of interstate imperialist associations owing to internal particularities, they are ultimately, in one form or another, part of the imperialist system. The modern imperialist system, despite the sharp conflicts that split it, has a single strategy in defending the system, in attacking the labour movement, in attacking the peoples. We are fully aware of the accelerating rates of capitalist globalisation, of the rapid increase in the volume of global trade and in the export of capital, and the role played by interstate agreements in shaping domestic conditions in each country. We are fully conscious of the fact that there are greater possibilities today for exporting counter-revolution, and for imperialist interventions and wars in order to prevent the emancipation of the labour and popular movement more generally. But all this does not eliminate the need for an international revolutionary strategy that will be specialised in each country: a single revolutionary strategy that will serve the cause of socialism.

This does not mean that rallying and alliance on a national and international level must take place everywhere in a uniform way, in one line of struggle for socialism, with exclusively socialist slogans. Because in this way we would be overlooking the fact that the need for and maturity of socialism is not identical with the maturity of the socialist revolution; we would be underestimating the need for al-

56 liances with the petit bourgeois poor strata of the people who, because of their position in the social class structure, regard the socialist economy with misgivings.

Moreover, the history of social revolutions in the 20th century showed that the labour and revolutionary movement more generally opened the road, inspired the mobilisation of the popular masses, and their willingness to make sacrifices around a nexus of goals and demands that, at some particular phase or moment, reflected the dispositions and acute problems of the peoples. The demands and goals of the struggle at the same time helped people to acquire political experience and to desire change at the level of power.

In our opinion, the anti-imperialist, anti-monopolist struggle today is linked more organically than in the past with the struggle for socialism. The clash with the monopolies and imperialism can unite the working class with other strata of the people, according to the social class structure of the society. Behind this line, there is assimilation into a line of struggle that is insignificant for imperialism, and that can be easily exploited and manoeuvred.

As we see it, the key to the alternative that communists must put forward is analysis of three

basic issues: First, the nature and character of modern imperialist strategy, and of the measures taken by called neo-liberal policy or neo-liberalism. Second, the imperialist nature of interstate associations such as the EU, and other unions with a less developed character. Third, the attitude towards the socialism we knew, in conjunction with scientific study to arrive at a critical assessment of it, and the theoretical generalisation of new experience.

CAPITALISM MAKES NO CONCESSIONS.

Today, it is not enough to criticise imperialism; what is required is a clear-cut answer on the following issues: We believe that the combined measures that are being implemented today throughout the capitalist world, apart from their particularities from one country to another, irrespective of the rates at which they are being pushed forward, irrespective of whether they are being promoted by centre-right or centre-left governments, by liberal or social democratic parties, express something much more profound than an austerity policy and the reactionary redistribution of wealth. They are measures that are absolutely necessary to enable the capitalist system to deal with an internal and inherent problem, which is the difficulty of reproducing its social capital in the same way and with the same ease that it had before. Precisely because it knows or feels its contradic-

tions and paradoxes, the capitalist system is seeking to consolidate and expand the victory it scored in the late 1980s with the reversal of the socialist system as we knew it in the 20th century. Its policy is thus simultaneously a policy of preventing a new cycle of social revolutions. And this is why it is becoming more barbarous. This is why capitalism everywhere has become rigid; it makes no manoeuvres or concessions to the working people, even when popular displeasure has flared up dangerously. It does not apply the policy of the carrot and stick in the same way that it used to in the past to gain time to spread delusions.

The identification of liberal parties with social democracy and socialist parties in the policy of capitalist restructurings is, in our view, further strong and irrefutable testimony to the fact that the so-called neo-liberal policy, the contemporary policy of the new world order, is not just a political choice generated solely by the change in the correlation of forces, but a dire internal need of the capitalist system. This is why a number of political forces have been trying to turn the clock back, to return to the period when capitalism made some concessions under pressure from the people. These forces, irrespective of their intentions, are evolving into forces that support or, in the best possible case, tolerate the system. We emphasised previously that capitalism cannot use the carrot and the stick in the same way it has in the past when faced with demands of the people and the working class. However, it has not

stopped using the carrot and stick on the political level, and in its stance towards parties and the movement. We would like to share with you our experience of the European Union.

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THE EUROPEAN UNION, as an interstate grouping with institutions and executive bodies, is charting a very systematic policy in order to assimilate political and social forces. It does not hesitate to provide direct and indirect support to political forces and movements that confine themselves to demanding insignificant reforms and eventually a different management policy, but always within the capitalist system, as long as they do not dispute the course of European capitalist unification and enlargement. Using various political and economic methods, even extortion, it tries to shape a political system on the national and European level that will eventually serve its strategy with even greater stability and better prospects. The centre-left, for example, was an alternative choice for EU capital and still is today. It does not fear the multi-party system as it did in the past. The EU decision to impose European parties was part of its plan to control the political system in the member states. This is why we declared our position publicly and criticised the foundation of the Party of the European Left, especially when the initiative of doing so was taken by parties that regard coordination and common action by communist parties in negative terms. A centre has thus been created, based on structures and general princi-

58 ples that are provided for or tolerated by the EU, which objectively hinders parties' independence and unity of action in an anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly direction.

The EU must be perceived in the minds of the popular masses as an interstate capitalist association, in which there is no room for artificial separation as an objectively progressive phenomenon that takes on an anti-popular character owing to the political correlation of forces at the level of governance. The capitalist system cannot be transformed; it can only be overthrown. The prestige and credibility of the EU has declined greatly in relation to what it was early in the 1990s. The French and Dutch referendums are one proof. Despite this, a lot of work is still required for discontent to take on anti-capitalist content and not to be diffused by the various manoeuvres taking place.

WE CRITICIZE THE POLITICAL FORCES that present themselves as adversaries of neo-liberalism, but limit their criticism to the supposed prevalence of certain doctrinaire views that give priority to the market and do not combine the market with social policy. Or they attribute the modern strategy, e.g. of the EU, simply to slavish submission to US pressures, to the lack of desire or to the inability to be emancipated from the US. Our greatest difference with these views is that they see neo-liberalism as a deviation from a supposedly "healthy and humanitarian capitalism", which combines the laws of the market with policy for the people. For

us, a critical issue is the enlargement of the EU. The more the EU expands, the greater will be the disparity and inequality, the stronger its relations of hegemony and oppression, and the more of an effort it will make to influence movements and transform them into supports for their own bourgeois class. This does not, of course, mean that the enlargement of the EU will inevitably lead to the death of movements. We believe that the line of breaking with EU policy, in conjunction with the experience gained by the peoples, will give the lie to all those who believe that the EU is invincible. But on one condition: that the line of breaking with this imperialist association gains ground within the movement and that any illusions about its progressive transformation are eliminated.

Our criticism of the creation of the various social forums was aimed at their general line, and at the fact that they established uniform, single structures for the incorporation of movements on the international and regional level in the name of unity and common action. Their structures in Europe, for example, are dominated by political forces and views that lead to the confrontation between the so-called new movements and the communist and workers' movement, plainly seeking to hinder in various ways, even to win over, a movement that is seeking the radical overthrow of the present conditions.

INTRA-IMPERIALIST CONFLICTS. The use of reformism and opportunism, both right

and “left” one, is also an objective of state and management policy on a national level, as well as of overall EU policy, not solely to crush the movement, but for one additional reason as well: to manage the intra-imperialist conflicts within the EU and, above all, on the international stage. The differences on international issues between European and North American imperialism are clearly dictated by intra-imperialist conflicts and not by the differing nature of the EU and the USA. Moreover, on matters related to economic and social policy, they move in precisely the same direction as they did on the policy of the distribution of markets, using war, pressure and other military, political and economic means of intervention as weapons.

Of course the working class movement, the anti-imperialist anti-monopoly movement on the national level, must take intra-imperialist conflicts into account and exploit them, for they are strong even where communist parties are in power. We must exploit these conflicts to strengthen the movement and not to support the policy of the bourgeois class in our country. We likewise do not agree with the view that, from the moment socialism was overthrown, it would be unable to survive, or that it had to be abandoned or remain a dream for the distant future. The necessity of the passage to socialism arises from objective conditions, from the historical limits of capitalism, and not from the correlation of forces that has come into being in recent years. The correlation of forces plays a role in the

tactic of rallying and gathering forces together. 59

THE RESTORATION OF CAPITALISM, especially in Europe, certainly raises new problems. We cannot possibly speak of an alternative with the prospect of socialism without providing answers to the peoples about the building of socialism in the 20th century.

We must incorporate into our theory of socialism and into the strategy of the socialist revolution and structure all our experience arising from the socialism we knew, both the undoubtedly positive experience of it as well as the problems that arose and led to the known developments. To speak of socialism as though nothing had happened in the course of building it is a mistake. But it is also a tragic mistake to nullify it.

All parties every day are facing many problems in our own countries, and in the region our country is located in. It is our obligation to give everything in our power to strengthen the class struggle, to sharpen the class struggle, to disengage popular forces from defeatism, self-delusion, confusion and fear. However, at the same time we must step up our joint efforts to study the issues of socialism, to draw conclusions, and to speak the language of truth, in terms of examining the problem scientifically. On this basis, the

60 peoples will gain confidence in communists; they will be better able to see the importance of struggles being linked to the prospect for change at the level of power. The issue is not how much we can criticise socialism or how much publicity we can give to its achievements, but to speak objectively, scientifically. We must give new thrust and development to the theory of scientific socialism, to the Marxist-Leninist ideology.

MULTIPLE-OFFENSIVES. At this time, we are facing the US plan for the so-called democratisation of the Arab countries and the countries of the “broader Middle East”, a plan which, despite the partial differentiations that exist, has in essence been adopted by G8, NATO and the EU, and is visible in the planned change of borders in the Balkans, focused on making Kosovo independent, in the offensive being prepared against Lebanon, Syria and Iran, and in the continuing criminal intervention of the Israeli government against the Palestinian people. There is also the multiple offensive of the US and the EU against Africa, the new US plan aimed at socialist Cuba that the EU has adopted, and the efforts to undermine President Chavez and the policies he is implementing in Venezuela. The initiatives developed by Cuba and Venezuela in creating ALBA in opposition to FTAA or ALCA, which is being promoted by the USA, has sharpened conflicts in the region and the efforts to destabilise it. It is particularly important to support the effort being made by Venezuela and other

countries in Latin America to confront the aggressiveness of the US and the monopolies, which are seeking full domination of oil and other resources.

THE ANTI-COMMUNIST OFFENSIVE has also been stepped up on the pretext of the Council of Europe’s proposal to denounce the so-called crimes of communism, which provoked opposition which must continue and be intensified. We include here the intention of closing the Lenin mausoleum, which is accompanied by increasing attacks against communists. And finally, there are very serious developments taking place in the UN, with the amendment of its Founding Charter in accordance with the new imperialist world order. It is a front of struggle that we can confront in a coordinated way and with common initiatives. Indicatively, I would like to mention a number of initiatives, which in our view, we can develop with coordinated intervention and action.

- Common resolution and coordinated global campaign for the liberation of the five Cuban patriots and for the Carilles case. To organise a mission of MPs, trade unionists and other public figures to visit the five patriots.
- To send international brigades of members of our parties to Cuba and Venezuela.
- Common resolution on the anti-communist memorandum issued at the Council of Europe. A signature campaign and protests in our countries.

- Campaign to promote the timeliness of socialism on the occasion of the 90th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution in 2007.
 - For May Day 2006, a campaign against poverty, unemployment, sackings, for reduction of working hours, in defense of the right to social security and in favour of labour rights.
 - Meeting of communist teachers and educators from European countries to discuss the effects of capitalist restructuring and the Lisbon strategy on education. Creation of a group to monitor developments systematically.
 - European campaign against the EU anti-terrorist measures up to the summit meeting of 15.12.2005.
 - Systematic monitoring of issues related to persecutions of communist parties and other anti-imperialist forces. Keeping track of related trials and imprisonments. Creation of a working group to follow these issues and develop solidarity.
 - Active support for regional meetings of CPs, such as the Latin American meeting of CPs and in other regions.
 - Meeting of European parties in December on the occasion of the EU summit meeting to assess it and to evaluate the movements against the EU.
 - For the Balkans, meetings of CPs and movements against the change of borders, and against imperialist interventions by NATO, the US and the EU.
 - Campaigns against foreign military bases in our countries.
- To send a joint solidarity delegation of representatives of the CPs to Lebanon, Syria, Palestine and Israel.
 - Initiatives around the situation in Africa and Asia.

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A war of the rich against the poor

COMMUNIST PARTY OF IRELAND

JOE BOWERS

→ **IF CAPITALISM** can be said to have a single purpose or theme in the 21st Century it is to create a single, integrated, unified world economy. This was always the project of capitalism. Marx and Engel's pointed out in the *Communist manifesto* that capitalism must, of its very nature, penetrate every possible nook and cranny of the world and subject all human activity, wherever possible, to the laws of the market; it must reduce everything in the world to the callous cash nexus.

Until recent years, it was never really been possible to achieve this. Large areas of the world remained outside the capitalist market system because they were too remote, or still engaged in subsistence agriculture, or because economic and political barriers were erected which prevented the free flow of capital, labour and goods across all markets. For most of the 20th century, a third of humanity was cut off from capitalist markets by the existence of the socialist world, dominated by the USSR and the Peoples Republic of China.

Another barrier to unfettered capitalism is the modern state. The welfare state kept the private market out of huge areas of activity - health, education and all public services. In addition, state regulation in areas such as labour market standards, environmental and health & safety controls, licensing systems, etc. made it difficult for the private market to function in many areas, and in areas where they did; their profits and market power were constrained in the interests of society as a whole.

Finally, trade barriers between different countries, although they usually served the interests of local capitalists or farmers, prevented the emergence of integrated global markets.

The most striking feature of modern capitalism is that all of these barriers are now being removed in one form or another virtually everywhere in the world.

AFTER THE SOVIET UNION. The collapse of the Soviet system and the growing integration of China into the global capitalist system mean that capitalism now has access to almost all the world's markets and almost all the world's resources. The next round of trade liberalisation in the World Trade Organisation, due in 2007, will make a significant contribution to lowering barriers still further and increasing the volume of world trade in all goods and services.

With free trade comes free movement of capital. A great deal of basic manufacturing industry has already been outsourced from the US and Europe to India and China. Many services industries are following. This process will continue for several decades.

Politically the various centres of power in the world are trying to manage the process of globalisation in their own interests. The United States is trying to circumvent the WTO global system of tariff reduction by doing special preferential deals with poorer countries where it can impose conditions preferable to US capital. They are trying to control the hemisphere through the existing North American Free Trade Association and by setting up another regional trading bloc between the US and the South American countries, again on US terms.

THE EU is also a regional bloc attempting to compete with both the US and the rising economies of the east. They are trying to create a unified European economy, which will in turn give the dominant forces in Europe greater power in the new global economy. This is a large and difficult project for European capital. It faces many obstacles.

Firstly, it is still very fractured, compared to the US. There are, e.g., 20 different stock exchanges in Europe; they have still not achieved integration in financial services; there is still no integrated energy market; there are 25 different legal systems with 25 different systems of taxation; 25 different labour markets, etc. etc. All of this makes European capital less efficient and therefore less profitable than the US and so there is along way to go before the leaders of EU Capital feel equipped to cope with the emerging new world. Many of the things they have tried to date have failed:

The Lisbon agenda was designed to make the EU the most competitive and technologically advanced economic region in the world by 2010. This was meant to be achieved by deregulation, privatisation and undermining the welfare state as well as weakening the legal rights of workers. It failed dismally and EU leaders now accept that the targets cannot be met.

The Draft EU Constitution, designed to make the EU function more efficiently as a political entity supporting European capital, also failed. The Bolkestein Directive, designed to reduce the market for cross

64 border services to the lowest existing standards for health, safety, consumer protection, etc in the EU, had to be recalled and is being revised.

An even bigger problem for European capital is the power and popularity of the welfare state.

«A unified world economy means far greater levels of competition than ever before. Greater competition means lower prices and lower prices mean lower profits unless costs can be reduced at least as much as prices. The big problem for European capital is labour costs.»

They are high because of the historic power of trade unions but also because of the 'non-wage costs'. Non-wage costs are a high proportion of total labour costs in most of the western EU member states, except Ireland and Britain. Non-wage labour costs include pension and other social solidarity contributions by the employer.

To significantly reduce these costs, social programmes must be savaged. In addition of course, core wages also must be reduced "in order to compete with low wage economies". This is happening within the EU and between the EU and the rest of the world. Relocation of some companies from countries like Ireland to Poland has taken place and in other cases immigrant labour from the new accession states is being used, legally and illegally,

to undermine wages and conditions in areas like the building industry in Southern Sweden to the shipping-ferry business in Ireland.

Attempts to dismantle the welfare state, as well as using competition to undermine established wages and conditions, are being added to the Lisbon Agenda of rolling back workers' legal rights, privatisation and deregulation: the is the agenda of capitalism in Europe and will remain so.

The important thing to remember is that, so far, they have largely failed in this agenda because of the huge resistance of ordinary people, not just organisations of the left.

«As a result of the development of a unified world economy trade unions in developed capitalist countries face a loss of market power principally due to the impossibility of competing with, for example, India and China in so many areas of activity. The demand for better wages and conditions which reflect the growing productivity of these economies must be part of a strategy to defend the influence of the organised working class.»

While a more unified world economy leads to reductions in prices of consumer goods and services, due to intense competition, it also leads to increased prices for oil and other raw materials because a growing world economy will have more

demands for resources which are limited in supply.

For the foreseeable future, energy and other commodity prices will increase. This is good for the oil and gas producing countries but the biggest consumers and importers of these commodities are the US, the EU and China. The struggle to control these resources leads to tensions between the competing centres of economic power in the world and between them and the energy producing countries.

The first great resource war of the 21st Century has already begun. We do not yet know the precise details of how it will finish but we can say at this stage that it is not going according to the plan laid out by Washington. The people of Iran and Venezuela are asserting their rights over their own resources.

Capitalist states are still carving out spheres of influence in a world where there is no non-capitalist bloc to constrain them. There are similarities with the conditions which preceded the First World War but Capitalism has over-reached itself in the first war it has sparked off this century. The consequences will be far-reaching and profound. The international forces for peace should press the advantage to maximise opposition to capitalist states ever go to war against each other again.

RESISTANCE. The real war in this era of globalisation is the war of the rich against the poor. It is fought in many guises but is to be found all over the world:

The war of rich countries against poor or weak ones: e.g. the US against Iraq threats against Syria and many other countries.

The war of the rich against the poor, which is most acute within developing countries.

The war of those who do well out of the current system against those who “cost” money in taxation - i.e. elderly, poor, unemployed, the sick dependent on public health.

The war against the public service and all public services, especially in the richest countries being waged by those who stand to make huge gains by unlocking the resources tied up in public services: private companies who want contracts to run prisons; financial corporations in the US who want to abolish Social Security there so that the tens of billions of dollars locked up in these public funds will be released into private funds controlled by them.

Those who stand to make a lot of money through the privatisation of public utilities like electricity companies – at the expense of workers and communities, especially the poor.

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Current developments in capitalism require a radical response

WORKERS' PARTY OF IRELAND

HALLIGAN JOHN

➔ **BEFORE I BEGIN** to address the main theme of this meeting I must first bring to your attention recent developments in respect of our Party. As many of you may already know the President of our Party, Comrade Sean Garland, was arrested, while attending our Party's Annual Delegate Conference in Northern Ireland, at the request of the government of the United States of America with the active collaboration of the British authorities. Comrade Garland has not been charged with any criminal offence but the US government wishes to extradite him to the US to face US "justice". The attack on Comrade Sean Garland is based on anti-communist propaganda and forms part of a long-standing right wing assault on the integrity of the Workers' Party, the internationalist communist movement and the socialist states.

The Central Executive Committee of the Workers' Party of Ireland condemned this provocative and politically motivated arrest. Comrade Garland, is a long-standing and respected member of the Workers' Party who has consistently worked for peace and democracy in Northern Ireland and for the unity of the Irish working-class. He has been a consistent and vocal critic of US imperialism in its quest for global hegemony, mostly recently in opposition to the war on Iraq.

The request for the extradition of Sean Garland by the US government to a country which has a long record of repression of socialists and progressives, both at home and abroad, and where no political opponent can expect a fair trial is a blatant attempt to interfere in the affairs of a democratic political party and to intimidate those who oppose US imperial interests. The Workers' Party has made clear that it shall not be intimidated and

that it shall oppose, by every means at its disposal, all attempts to extradite Sean Garland from his homeland to a US prison.

The Workers' Party has appealed to all progressive forces throughout the world - particularly those people who have worked closely with our Party in the past, to oppose this persecution of a political activist with a long history of selfless work for his Party, his country and his class. The Workers' Party thanks all those parties and individuals who have sent messages of solidarity or organised demonstrations in support of our campaign. Our Party wishes to applaud in particular the constant efforts of our comrades in the Communist Party of Greece in support of our campaign to prevent the extradition of Sean Garland to the United States.

The Worker's Party will not be intimidated by the US and commits itself to its continuing struggle against US imperialism and for the victory of peace and socialism.

HUMANKIND HAS CREATED immense productive forces. The developments in science and technology opened the possibility of improving the lives and living standards of millions throughout the world. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights which was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10 December 1948 proclaimed that everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and to the realisation of the economic, social and cultur-

al rights indispensable for that person's dignity and the free development of his or her personality. The reality for the peoples of the world is very different. The conflict between the productive forces and production relations is the primary mechanism of historical development and provides the economic basis of social change leading to the transition from one mode of production to another. There is an irreconcilable contradiction between the social character of production and the private mode of the appropriation of products. Capitalism creates a fundamental division between the class whose wealth derives from its ownership of the means of production and that class which depends for its existence on its labour.

Exploitation takes a number of forms. The greed for profit results in the movement of capital towards "low-wage" economies. Powerful transnational corporations continue to evade social responsibility or democratic control. Capitalist methods of production cause massive environmental damage and exploitation, driving millions of people into poverty and despair.

THE IMF is deeply ideologically committed to the capitalist project. It sees the "free" market as the solution to economic problems and it is deeply hostile to the public sector and public spending. The neo-liberal agenda of the IMF and World Bank requires that as a precondition of receiving funds the nations seeking assistance must liberalise their economies. This requires nations to reduce the role of

68 the state, privatise industry, devalue currencies, increase interest rates, reduce labour regulations and introduce greater "flexibility" into employment practices. These policies have had a devastating effect on the developing world. It forces down the prices of commodities from developing countries, decreases the income, standards of living and services available to workers in those countries and compels those countries and peoples ever deeper into a vicious circle of poverty and dependency.

DEVELOPED COUNTRIES increase their wealth by selling capital intensive products for a high price and purchasing labour intensive products on the cheap. The gap between low prices for raw materials and high prices for industrial goods results in heavy losses for the developing countries. This imbalance of trade increases and maintains the ever-widening gulf between rich and poor. The search for private profit also causes immense damage to the environment. Rivers, lakes, oceans and the air itself are polluted with toxic filth yet those responsible for creating these conditions refuse to acknowledge responsibility much less contribute to making available the means required to preserve and protect the natural environment and the resources of the world.

In 2003 Uganda was offered \$52 million in aid to fight TB, AIDS and malaria. This was rejected by Uganda on the grounds that it was concerned at upsetting the IMF. Honduras was suspended

from Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) status because it spent money received under the Education For All initiative because it spent the money on teachers' pay. In order to qualify for loans key sectors of the economy have to be privatised, workers' wages have to be kept low, funding of public education, housing and health has to be reduced and countries are not permitted to spend money on assisting and protecting the poorest, most vulnerable and most exploited. It is this fundamental lack of humanity that lies at the soul of capitalism.

INTERNATIONAL MONOPOLIES continue to exploit the natural resources of other countries, depriving those peoples of the income from those valuable resources. The loss of expertise characterised by the "brain drain" from developing countries reduces the number of scientists, engineers and health care specialists who could otherwise provide valuable services to their own people.

These policies, followed in many parts of the developing world, have led to the sharp growth in the balance of trade deficit and have had a catastrophic effect on national economies. Transnational corporations have taken up key positions in national economies purchasing vital national enterprises. International banking monopolies have increased their influence at the expense of national banks. Much of the state sector in many countries has been bought by foreign capital. Structural adjustment policies imposed by the IMF and World Bank continue to

force developing countries to reduce or abandon spending on housing, health, education and development.

Imperialism seeks to use debt as a means of increasing economic exploitation and establishing control over national economies. International bank capital has resisted a meaningful solution to the debt crisis. Capitalism advocates greater austerity measures on developing countries which results in greater poverty amongst the poor of the world.

THE HEADLINES in the bourgeois press at the time of this year's G8 summit sought to create the impression that the leaders of the Group of Eight industrialised countries had adopted a radical solution to the problems of world debt. This ideological subterfuge, while ignoring the reality of the G8 approach to world debt, simultaneously neglects the essential nature of the capitalist mode of production. The object of the capitalist project is, and has always been, to maximise profit. It has never been the aim of capitalism to provide for social need.

The G8 proposal is a self-serving political confidence trick.

First, the proponents of neo-liberalism realise from the experience of Latin America that if they do not appear to take action to address world poverty more areas of the world will turn to the revolt against capitalism.

Secondly, the bourgeois press fails to point out that it is a condition of the G8 proposals for Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) debt cancellation that

debt relief will only be granted to those countries which can demonstrate that they are "adjusting" their gross assistance flows by the amount given. This means that aid will be reduced by the same amount as the debt relief.

Thirdly, many charities estimate that only a \$1 billion will be available next year.

The G8 proposals also provide that developing countries must increase private sector development and ensure "the elimination of impediments to private investment, both domestic and foreign". At a time when Africa and developing countries need greater spending on public health, education and housing to tackle poverty the G8 proposals which, in fact offer very little in the way of real debt relief, promote and reinforce the ideology of neo-liberalism and the "free market". The underlying message of liberalism and neo-liberalism is that the poor are to blame for their own condition, that social inequality is an acceptable fact of life, that all problems can be solved by the market, that state intervention in the economy should be severely limited and that the most powerful are entitled to the untrammelled, uninhibited pursuit of wealth.

The essence of capitalism is based on inequality, expropriation and exploitation. Capital accumulation in the US and Europe was built on the expropriation of land and raw materials from Africa, Asia and Latin America and on the exploitation of labour at home and abroad. Capitalism, far from presenting the solution, is the problem.

A UNICEF REPORT "*The State of the World's Children 2005*" has indicated that more than half of the world's children are suffering extreme deprivation without access to adequate shelter, sanitation, safe water, health care services, education and food.

500 African children die every hour. In sub-Saharan Africa there are 2.3 million deaths a year from AIDS related illness. 3,000 people die of malaria every day. 50% of Africans live on less than \$1 per day. Average life expectancy in sub-Saharan Africa is 46. Throughout Africa the rural poor are migrating to pestilent urban slums. Yet Africa is also a continent of immense wealth in terms of its natural resources. Africa exports 3.8 million barrels of oil per day. The product and the profits are exported and the money which might be used to fund public health, education, housing and jobs is commandeered by the oil companies and their corrupt local allies. Meanwhile the poor continue to suffer and the land is polluted and damaged by environmental disaster.

Capitalism is incapable of solving the problems of the developing countries. The G8 represents the most powerful capitalist nations in the world. Many of these are the same countries that subjected Africa to centuries of slavery, colonialism, neo-colonialism and imperialist exploitation. Those countries continue to accumulate wealth from the exploitation of the millions of people who reside in the developing countries and the expropriation of their natural resources. The prob-

lems of Africa will not be solved by charity. Poverty will only be made history under socialism. The first step towards solving the problems of the developing countries requires the establishment of a new international economic order in which is based on fair and equal trade relations. The 2004 Report of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development noted that Africa received some \$540 billion in loans and paid back some \$550 billion in principal and interest between 1970 and 2002 - yet remained with a debt stock of \$295 billion.

Economic developments in individual countries cannot be isolated from international developments. In mid September 2005 a United Nations World Summit was organised to review progress since the Millennium Declaration adopted in 2000. The goals of that Declaration included a commitment to halve world poverty, attain universal primary education, achieve reductions in mother and child mortality, a fairer global trading system and the reversal of the spreads of HIV/AIDS by 2015.

In the lead up to the summit the US has sought to retreat from the goals of the Millennium Declaration; to remove provisions in the Summit draft that call for action to halt climate change; to eliminate new pledges of aid; to remove the words "corporate responsibility and accountability" from the discussion on fighting corruption and to remove a reference to providing the UN with sufficient resources to fully implement its mandate. To that effect the US submitted

in excess of 750 amendments with the intention of destroying those commitments. Leaked documents from the World Bank suggest that its development committee may seek to impose even more stringent conditions on developing countries before they are approved for debt cancellation.

At the same time as it attempts to limit global action to prevent harm to the environment and to reduce international commitment to the reduction of poverty the US Ambassador to the UN has objected to language which urges nations to observe a moratorium on nuclear testing and to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. While subjecting developing countries to economic pressures the US is simultaneously and aggressively building up its military forces and presence throughout the world.

The US military budget request for the fiscal year 2006 is \$4,416 billion. The current US military budget is almost as much as the rest of the world combined. The US and its allies account for between two thirds to three quarters of all military spending. By contrast the United Nations and all its agencies and funds spend approximately \$10 billion every year. This is miniscule in comparison with US military spending. Meanwhile the United Nations has faced a financial crisis which has forced it to cut vital programmes and which has inhibited its work. In 1997, for example, half of the US aid was military related. When the tsunami struck South Asia US Secretary of State, Colin Powell, stated that aid to the region was part of

the US "global war on terror". The unceasing expansion of US military power is an integral part of the global capitalist project.

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THE DEVELOPMENTS in the European Union also reflect the ideology of capitalism. The European Council set out its "Lisbon Strategy" in March 2000. The broad aim of the strategy was to make "the EU the world's most dynamic and competitive economy" by 2010. For more than a decade the EU has been moving in a neo-liberal direction. The object of competitiveness was to be achieved by cutting public services and increasing the trend towards privatisation. International experience dictates that this will be achieved by lower wages, cutting taxes, reducing regulation and lowering or removing protection for workers' rights and the environment. The EU is simultaneously attempting to reduce the state's responsibility for pension provision. The Stability Pact requires EU member states that have adopted the euro as the unit of currency not to incur an annual deficit of more than 3% or a total debt of more than 60% of the budget. This will have the effect of limiting state spending on health, education, housing and social security.

The European Commission has the task of furthering the Lisbon process by forcing member states to deregulate labour markets, open essential services to private control and reduce social welfare commitments.

Although it has long been a principle endorsed by the United Nations General

72 Assembly that “all people have the right to self-determination; by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development” the Lisbon process which commits member states to the neo-liberal political agenda cannot be changed by the voters of any member state. It is fundamentally undemocratic that the peoples of Europe are subjected to a right-wing political, social and economic programme over which they have no control.

Similarly, the unelected European Central Bank dictates vital monetary policy. Article 105 of the Treaty states: “The primary objective of the European System of Central Banks shall be to maintain price stability. Without prejudice to the objective of price stability, the ESCB shall support the general economic policies in the Community with a view to contributing to the achievement of the objectives of the Community as laid down in Article 2 of the TEC.”

Although Article 2 identifies community tasks as including a high level of employment and social protection the ESCB has considerable independence. The EU has, accordingly, transferred vital decision making powers, not to a transparent, accountable, democratic institution but to a group of bankers who are unaccountable, wholly undemocratic and fundamentally and inherently hostile to a socialist agenda.

Euro zone countries can no longer take individual decisions on the monetary policies they should pursue since the

Euro zone has common monetary policies which are determined through the zone’s own structures and which must be closely aligned.

These arrangements expose the difficulties of creating a “social Europe” when the system is based on policies and institutions which are not amenable to democratic control and which accept, unchallenged, the philosophy and ideology of capitalism.

THE WORKERS’ PARTY subscribes to a vision of a different world based on a genuine internationalism, peace, equality, solidarity, dignity, social progress and workers’ rights, a respect for and defence of the environment and the value of all living things over private profit and corporate greed. We are committed to a world where war, misery, exploitation, oppression and inequality have been consigned to history and where the dictatorship of capital has disappeared from the face of the earth.

The current developments in capitalism require a radical and articulate response. It is necessary to expose at an ideological level the fetishism of the market and the myth that there is no alternative. It is also necessary to form new alliances around the consequences of the current trends in capitalism. The Communist and Workers’ parties are aware that at times of sharpening class confrontation the capitalist ruling class is willing to disregard civil liberties and human rights. The implementation of a programme of severely repressive legisla-

tion in both the US and Britain under the pretence of “the war against terror” is evidence of this. The battle for democracy is a fundamental part of our struggle. Capitalism is the antithesis of democracy and the process of socialist renewal can be grounded in that struggle. Communist and Workers’ parties can use this to broaden the social front against capital, to expose its inconsistencies and contradictions and to involve broad democratic and progressive forces in the process to effect the radical transformation of the society and world in which we live.

Nonetheless we must always be sure of our own position and aware of all attempts, whether national or international, to rewrite our history. It is only by a firm commitment to our own socialist revolutionary principles that we can effectively engage in broader struggles. While we must recognise the changes that have taken place in capitalist society we must be ever vigilant for all those influences from whatever source which seek to dilute our socialist identity and purpose, which seek to convince us that class conflict is no longer relevant or that there is no alternative to capitalism. The building of socialism implies the dismantling of capitalism.

The Communist and Workers’ parties must establish themselves as the most influential force with the broad labour movement. While a significant section of the working class remain within the influence of social democratic parties it remains the task of the Communist and Workers’ parties to pursue a programme

of work within the working class movement to create conditions for unity of action based on the principles of class solidarity.

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European capitalism and the labour market

SOCIALIST PARTY OF LATVIA

ALEXANDER GOLUBOV

➔ **THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF LATVIA** is a Marxist-Leninist Party. Make no mistake about the name of our Party! In our country the activity of the Communist Party is forbidden; therefore, all those that value Marxist-Leninist ideals were forced to found a Socialist Party.

I must point out that despite all obstacles, our ideas have a great impact on the souls of people, proof of which is the fact that during the whole post-Soviet period, we have been represented in our Parliament, the Diet. I started my presentation with this aspect because when we name our Party, we start to be judged from a European perspective, where socialists are conformist.

SPEAKING OF THE TRENDS in European capitalism, we cannot ignore that the essence of capitalism has not changed. It was and continues to be exploitative. Exploitative to all workers, I wouldn't say to the "proletarians", because they exploit everything that moves on the labour market. Amid conditions where capital accumulation has crossed the borders of one country, in other words, transnational corporations have been created that try to place all those who have a job in a really forced position, forcing them to conform to unique unacceptable conditions; but under conditions where there is a huge army of jobless people, exploiters continue to have a trump card in their hands: if you won't work under those conditions, there will always be another worker who will. This is particularly so in the post-Soviet space, where in the recent past there was no need to fear losing one's job. Here we have lost our habit of fighting for our rights, both individually and as organized unions.

I must point out that after the EU expanded, transnational corporations began to broaden their activity toward new arrivals. Under conditions when entry into the EU was critical for the new countries, according to the ruling majority in these countries, governments deceived their peoples, depicting the living conditions in the EU as wonderful, without warning them of the unemployment level, or the possibility for third countries' citizens to flock into the newly admitted countries, as one of the variants to free the old EU member-countries of unwanted extremist representatives. On the other hand, on evaluating the result of the Latvia's entry into the EU, we can make the following conclusions: What we had said before it entered is happening. Latvia, the least developed and economically most backward country, on entering the EU, has already begun to feel the impact of EU prices and of domestic prices, under conditions where our national currency (the lat was roughly equal to US\$ 2) tied up to the new European currency, began to lose its buying power, prices swell. The conditions for its entry into the EU, when the social sphere, the State's domestic wages sphere was subordinated to national laws, we can see that our population's standard of living has dropped. If we take for instance that the minimum cost of living is of 107 lat (US\$ 200), the average retirement pension is a little more than US\$ 130 and the minimum wage 90 lat, that is, roughly US\$ 150, which constitutes a considerably smaller amount than even the unem-

ployment subsidy in any EU country. 75
Where are the workers headed for?

We see that in Latvia there is a flow of the work capable population toward other countries, toward the more developed EU countries. Because of this, we are losing the best-trained, middle-aged population sector. We are losing people that are supposed to ensure our children's, the pensioners' well-being, but they are contributing to an economic boom abroad. As we observe this trend, we can come to the conclusion that we will soon become an appendage of the European developed countries, whereas much more developed States, without making any additional investment in education, will have qualified workers. Workers that can be paid considerably lower wages than the workers of those countries, thus creating competition on the labor market all across Europe. An imbalance was created in Europe's labor market with a considerable amount of professionally qualified workers and yet a job shortage. The importation of work force, the entry into Europe of professionally qualified people from the post-Soviet space, creates competition in the labor market and reduces the social guarantees for workers in developed countries. This brings capital additional super profits. Isn't this capitalist exploitation?

Also, the entry of additional labor from the post-Soviet space undermines the unity of the European proletarian forces. Unions, created through hard and long work, don't accept newcomers in their ranks; they try to fight against them,

76 because they create additional competition in the labor market, while the new arrivals try to make money rapidly without thinking of their future; they live from hand to mouth. Isn't it the main task of our left movement to get these people back to reality? They are outside of politics; they live, I repeat, from hand to mouth. Isn't it time to take measures so that unions are truly international?

On the other hand, capitalist society tries, by all means possible, to divert the population's attention from social problems, substituting concepts: they present the national problems in the foreground, and we can see it in a number of States. Some nationalist forces have been able to burst into the European Parliament. We can see that ethnic struggles in multinational countries replace public priorities. Well-being, employment, etc., are pushed into the background. It is high time that we, the left forces, really began to work on the internationalist education of our peoples; it is necessary to make a real reorientation from nationalism to socialism. Capital needs nationalism to be able to explain all its actions, super profits and exploitation.

At the same time, capital sees the possibility to divert workers from their essential needs by imposing "democratization" in Iraq, Afghanistan.

MY COUNTRY, LATVIA, instead of allocating budgetary resources to creating new jobs, raising pensions and wages, that is, getting them closer to the European level, uses the money to support the contin-

gent of troops occupying Iraq. It explains all this by the European and world integrationist processes, by the accomplishment of their democratizing mission.

IN REFERRING to the political tendencies of capitalist society, we can observe that the whole policy of European capital is geared to radicalizing the nationalist movements. Proof of this is the elections to the European Parliament. We cannot get caught up in this. We need to understand that without the development of the Marxist theory, we won't be able to move on. But to that end, it is necessary to create a single development center, where all the individual conditions of each State are kept in mind, because the world is not static. It is necessary to come closer to the unions, to unite them according to the creation pattern of transnational corporations, with a view to defending every worker, regardless of their nationality or citizenship. And above all this must be our center for the development of Marxist thought, putting together requirements and action methods unique for everybody, keeping in mind the particularities of each State.

[We need the center
Together we are a force]

Let's integrate our struggle against imperialist globalization

LEBANESE COMMUNIST PARTY

KHALED HADADAH

→ **OUR COUNTRY ALONG** with the whole Arab region is going through a severe crisis which took place as a result of a combination of both domestic and international factors that constitute the US aggression against our region. In our country and in the region as a whole there is a discrepancy in opinion, as well as among leftist forces, about the reasons for this crisis and ways for its resolution.

What we call US aggression against our region appears to be the project of the region's decolonization, confiscation of natural resources and goods and reforming of its geopolitical map – The Greater Middle East. However, others consider it an international project that aims at spreading democracy in the region for the sake of future regional integration in the world's economy, liquidation of dictatorship regimes in order to put into practice political and economic reforms that would ensure eradication of poverty. But at the same time they ignore the presence of American military bases in the region.

I think that such debates about globalization and its perspectives are taking place in all countries among all political forces as well among leftist forces. There is a certain general ideological vagueness and ambiguity that was caused by the crisis of the world socialist system and manipulation of consciousness by the class enemy.

IN THIS CONTEXT our meeting and dialogue has acquired a paramount importance. Our objective is to analyze new tendencies within the capitalist system, work out a unified position and to eradicate the break-up within leftist forces and to equip revolutionary forces with new knowledge about capitalist reality.

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I think that the central issue in our dialogue is "What changes has globalization caused in the capitalist system, which in its turn led to ideological uncertainty? Has the nature of capitalism changed as some people claim? Have the main contradictions been resolved? Have favorable conditions been created for the integration of the third-world countries within the world economic system, and for overcoming their backwardness?"

There is no doubt that imperialist globalization has created more favorable conditions for building a globalized capitalism where the whole world tends to be the field of its action. This transnational capitalism has transnational capital and transnational oligarchy. This capitalism gives an opportunity for the laws of capitalism to be realized in full. It has ensured capital with a new breath for realization as a social relation, the content of which is alienation. It is a fact that globalization has injected new tendencies: the process of capital reproduction and the laws of the capitalist system has acquired a new global character. The globalization of capital reproduction implies the exit of the reproduction process, formation of production proportions and surplus value production outside of national frontiers to the entire world.

The most hazardous tendency that the globalization of capital reproduction has produced is not only the centralization and concentration but globalization of the public life and monopolization of the conditions of this production by means of the market that identifies who has the right to

live. We are facing a new social Darwinism which creates conditions for a new fascism. We can look through the new tendencies in brief.

Realization of the main law of capitalism the law of surplus value and profit production- has become global. Globalization eliminates the national frontiers which limit the process of exploitation, and equips transnational capital with new opportunities to increase this exploitation represented in the form of money – globalization offers capital additional surplus value when the production is transferred to developing countries which ensure cheap production factors which in turn can assist capital to limit the action of the law of the tendency of the profit norm to decrease, and ensure the conditions in the capitalist centers to get rid of the welfare state that can help to decrease the part of profit allotted for work force reproduction.

■ In the conditions of complete domination of capital, the law of value tends to be almost deactivated. At least, this law is placed under the full control of capital where the relation between price and value tends to be disconnected. Anyway, this law acts in favor of capitalist centers which monopolize all conditions of this law's action: monopolization of capital, technology, the environment, the media, and weapons of mass destruction. The mechanisms of this law encourage direct foreign investments to the capitalist centers which in turn limits the opportunities for other economies to make use of these in-

vestments along with the integration in globalized capitalism.

- As a result of the globalization of the general law of capitalist accumulation there is a process of expropriation of super profits not only in capitalism centers but in peripheral ones as well which are not able to take advantage of these surplus. In the periphery, not only the expropriation of surplus labour but also the confiscation of necessary labor takes place. We are witnessing the realization of this law in the level of the whole world where there is a concentration of treasures on one side and poverty on the other one. At the same time, the reserve army of unemployed has spread to all five continents which are experiencing new kind of absolute and relative ways of impoverishment.
- It seems that the action of the law of tendency of profit norm to decrease becomes the stimulus for globalization of capitalism as a means of counteraction in question. The transfer of production abroad along with the permanent increase in the organic structure of capital and reduction of the part of capital allotted for purchase of new labor has two main consequences: first, it hits the working movement in capitalist centers, supports capital to get rid of expenses of the working force; second, it is used with the purpose to put into practice three ways of producing surplus value – absolute, relative, and extra by means of liberating capital from all ob-

stacles that ensures the widest reserve army of unemployed.

- It would not be an exaggeration to say that imposed policies for third world countries (policies of economic stabilization and structural reforms) have turned into a new mechanism of initial capital accumulation. The process of confiscation of the property of these countries is going on by global capital by means of mechanisms of debts, privatization and interest and currency rates. This law appears to be an additional proof of the uselessness of integration of third world countries into global capitalism.

In spite of all profits that capitalism has gained as a result of globalization, its crisis is being globalized. As soon as a crisis starts in one of the countries, it rapidly spreads in other countries. What is the most hazardous in this relation is that ‘wandering’ capital is not satisfied with an ‘invisible hand’ for self-development but it demands an ‘invisible fist’ (the navy, nuclear weapons, etc.) for its defense.

CAPITALISM not only got rid of its notorious features but its parasitism and decay has deepened considerably. It is acquiring a destructive character in relation to the environment and society, and transferring into a mechanism for robbing the people.

In addition, it is a must to correct the statement according to which globalized capitalism eliminates the role of the state. Capital can not exist without a state.

80 There is a new fact that capital does not want to have a state as a partner but wants to impose its will on the state in order to put into practice the policy and measures which support its goals.

What have developing countries gained from globalization of capitalism?

- These countries have turned into a field for experiments, for putting into practice the recommendations and rules of 'Washington's' consensuses. Privatization has had a certain impact not only on production industries but also on production of public services. The process of mechanization has touched upon everything including sovereignty. The liberation of all economic activities has taken place. These countries have been transformed into objects of robbery on behalf of globalized capital and victims of the price scissors.
- What is the most hazardous in this connection is that these countries are forced to take part in a competition for obtaining direct and foreign investments among themselves, and later among other countries. However, investments are allotted in case if the most appropriate conditions for them are ensured.
- But the most dangerous tendency is the desire of globalized capital to confiscate natural resources. These countries are facing a dilemma to accept the imposed on them the policy of globalized capital or to be subjected to aggression and war in case of refusal and opposition.

All the aforementioned highlight is the essence of new imperialistic attack against our countries. The Greater Middle East Project seems to be nothing else but a mechanism of confiscation of treasures of the region, in particular, oil. All the arguments that are used to justify the war in Iraq tend to be utter lies. The aggression against Iraq took place after the regimes in Arab countries had been put under control of 'The Briton-Woods' organization.

In spite of everything we have experienced in Lebanon in the course of the recent decade as a result of new-liberal experiments as well as a result of the policy of monetary stabilization which forced the country into the crisis of debt of \$45 billion and sharpened the problem of unemployment and immigration, new imperialistic attack in our region forced our country into a new stage of insecurity and violence starting with the assassination of the former Premier Minister Rafick Hariri and ending with the assassination of the former Secretary General of our party Comrade George Hawi. These events have been used as the pretext for direct interference in our country's domestic affairs. Our country has liberated itself from Syrian custody and substituted it by an American-French one. Americans are trying to force Lebanon to change its position towards American attack on the region from direct opposition to support.

Under the pretext the investigation of Hariri's assassination, which is the right thing to do, life in Lebanon has been slowed down and completely stagnated.

This crisis has clearly identified deep disagreement among the Lebanese at the domestic and international levels. This disagreement is the result of the confessional basis of the political regime in Lebanon which provokes political crises.

OUR PARTY has made a number of proposals in order to overcome the present deadlock situation in Lebanon. We proposed a program of struggle at the level of Arab countries which includes:

- To oppose and to resist imperialistic attack. Failure of American attack in our region, in Iraq, in particular, would have a paramount importance for the whole world
- Introduction of political reforms and spreading of democracy as an indispensable condition for participation of people in the resistance movement
- Acceptance of the strategy of social and economic development that would ensure independent economic development and would prevent confiscation of natural resources.
- Revival of the slogan of Arab Unity, and gradual social and economic integration

At the level of Lebanon, our program presupposes construction of a democratic regime as an alternative to the present confessional regime by means of establishment of a political union of those forces that suffer from this regime. At the same time we are trying to safeguard civil peace in the country at all costs, trying to prevent a new civil war in the country, make dramatic amendments in the elec-

tion law, and put into practice political and social reforms. We are following this course of action because the present government is planning to introduce new liberal experiments in our country.

Comrades, capitalism has produced all the material conditions for the resolution of all problems of mankind but the logic of capital excludes such an opportunity. Capitalism has produced the most dangerous phenomenon which is terrorism. It places our peoples in the face of a dilemma - either the terrorism of Bush or the terrorism of Ben Laden. Capitalist countries spend money on space projects in search of new planets in order to transport people to these destinations instead of paying more attention to our planet. Globalized capitalism has widened the circle of those who suffer which in turn has initiated the antiglobalization movement. It was a long time ago that capitalism turned into the system that has to be overcome. Capitalism has become globalized and it has globalized exploitation but the opposition and struggle against capitalism appears to be disintegrated. Let's integrate our struggle against imperialist globalization.

Pursuing the socialist idea

SOCIALIST PARTY OF LITHUANIA

GIEDRIUS PETRUZIS

→ **IF SOCIALISTS** want to disappear from the historical scenario, we should undertake scientific discussions. For this, it is quite enough to engage in debates, let us say, on the idea of the “billion of gold”, in connection with which, on the basis of the example of the brilliant Bill Gates, there is talk about the disappearance of the class structure of society^[1]. It is as if the talented proletarian overcame, through his intellect, every class barrier and, without exploiting anybody, occupied a social high position. Here, minor everyday details are added: a simple computer design specialist, without any class struggle, who neither exploits anybody nor has a job, even in the household sense, or a table, or a seat provided by the employer, occupies higher positions in the income scale. Not even do the revenue agencies see him, which means that the State doesn't need him. Or, economically speaking, the intellectual capital growth is directly linked to the growth of the individual's civilized consumption and to the high degree of man's social mobility. The aforementioned repeats the thesis of the early 20th century Russian economist, S. Bulgakov, according to whom labor in the new economic era is a creative factor of the cosmogonic world^[2]. Here, Bulgakov contradicts K. Marx's well-known statement in his preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, that there is not, nor can there be any link between economic progress and cultural development.

Condoleezza Rice argues that as the State develops, the differentiation of social functions and the unification process will increase, which should be balanced through the division of society into classes, layers and professional groups. Such processes also take place at an interstate

level, and globalization does not annul national interests. Nevertheless, "national interests" are supposedly displaced by "humanitarian interests" or the interests of the "world community" [quote according to ³]. This is followed by the deep reasoning that all this cannot boil down to the "totalitarianism-democracy" dichotomy, since society continues to depend on a great number of people, that there is no need for the formation of the ideological foundation from pragmatic positions and that, in general, it is enough to be satisfied with the political technologies. I am convinced that all the major dichotomies are contained in the first verse of the proletariat's anthem, that is, in the words on a world of starving prisoners. This dichotomy is to be found in the same contradiction of the ruling forces and the forces that are outside of the system. For the Roman "establishment", slaves were marginalized from the system. It is true that they didn't starve. Adam Smith deemed Jesus Christ as an express misfit outside of the system, the first socialist. Nor was the proletariat included in the capitalist structures of the 19th century. Even as it was subjected to a similar level of exploitation as that of the slaves, their feeding was not guaranteed.

I promised not to theorize I will just recall that V. I. Lenin saw that by the side of the proletariat were all those that opposed the system, that is, the Polish separatists, mainly the noblemen and landowners, the Hebrew petty-bourgeois nationalists and even the sectarian-multi-millionaires that were outside the sys-

tem, such as Savva Morozov. History has demonstrated that he was basically right. At the moment, the system is much stronger and tougher that it was in the 19th century. But it is even more merciless to all the leading players that are outside the system. A case in point is the incident with the repressed Russian multimillionaire Jodarkovski.

Perhaps the postulate of post-Marxian historical materialism that I will quote now is not a conclusive true, but it is hard to deny that it describes in an amazingly accurate way the social practice of the new members of the Sole Europe, and it represents an affordable operative model for ethnic-social research, since it enhances the fact that the structures are both a means and a product of the practices that compose social systems. Thus: "The dialectical nature of social contemporary life evolves in a retrospective, genetic, toward-the-historical-past manner and projection: its ambivalence implies a degree of ease, an opening toward an uncertain future. The dual contemporaneity nature on the perspective plane is summed up as the interrelation of the 'chances and risks' of man's actions" ^[4].

PEOPLE WITH NO CHANCES to overcome the system's resistance are its natural opponents and, naturally, adopt left positions, even against their convictions. In the words of Lenin's works, these are "fellow travelers." At present, people with no chances like these are, sometimes temporarily, the huge masses of people, that is, youth, the elderly, work-

84 ers of the decaying specialties, owners outside of the system, etc. If their fear of the risks is not socially channeled, they will become dangerous not only for the ruling elites, but also for the society as a whole. The radical position of the left, adopted in jail by the above-mentioned Jodarkovski, is an instance of this.

Giving marginal movements a degree of socialization has been, since time immemorial, our natural task as parliamentary parties that ensure in fact the interests of the members of society that represent the “poor of the world.” Young are an example of spontaneous dissidents, who have opposed the powers that be since time out of mind. As the risk of turning into a shapeless mass outside the system increases, youth actively oppose power. It happened at the time of the nihilists; it was so at the time of juvenile revolts during the 60’s. In Russia, this is already manifested as the sinister skin-head movement. For the ethnocentric Baltic countries, this is the reaction of the population of other origins to national oppression.

As confirmed with satisfaction by Z. Brzezinski, Marxism-Leninism underestimated the role of ethnic groups and nationalism, as a result of which national conflicts shocked him. To that effect, an ideologist of the Cold War victory pointed out that the nationalist parties that succeeded during the disintegration of the Empire may, in the future, turn into the institutions that create a dictatorship and thereby block democratic processes.

One cannot say that those statements have been completely groundless. A politician’s ability to make educated decisions is always constrained by the politician’s own set of ideas on the behavioral mechanisms of human communities, on the nature of the *volens nolens* phenomena. The great ethnologist Lev Gumilev showed that the unwillingness of the structures of power over decades to consider the particularities of national cultures and mentality led to an outburst of centrifugal forces in all countries. The “parade of sovereignties” was not programmed during the ethnogenesis.

It could have been avoided altogether had it not been for the “party line” carried out by the communist government. This line ignored in a completely conscious manner the very existence in the country of different ethnic groups with their traditions and behavioral stereotypes, thereby encouraging those peoples to separation. Today the disintegration process has become, it seems, irreversible and it is not possible to undo what has been done^[5].

The narrow antihuman nationalism is related with the demand of granting civil rights to only one nationality, which is a form of ethnic mobilization with the application of the most primitive political technologies. Extremely political régimes, similar to the structural apartheid that exists in Latvia, are not corrected by parliamentary technologies. The ethnic parties in this country, which violates man’s fundamental rights, represent a form of national liberation movement.

IN MY COUNTRY the situation is quite different. The absence of national conflicts in Lithuania is one of the few positive aspects in the life of the new Russian exile. In the Lithuanian society, national ideas in extreme manifestations have also been the core of the movement for a national state system. But after reaching independence, a systematic extinction of the extreme manifestations of ethnocentrism can be seen, which can be described as a socio-cultural stabilization with obvious features of restitution of tolerance inherent to the Lithuanian people in the relations between nationalities. For Lithuania, also, where the national minorities are the remains of great peoples, assimilation for force is completely excluded and is destructive. One cannot forget that the society's stability as far as ethnic factors does not yet mean that the national card is not going to be played. These methods of influence are attractive to politicians that have nothing to say, since are distinguished for their trifles (in the direct and indirect sense), efficiency and operability.

The position of the ethnic minorities in a democratic State cannot be indifferent. There are two possible paths for these population groups take up a position: their unification into ethnic parties that oppose right-wing nationalist parties, that is, a structural conflict like in the Basque country or their structuring into the existing state parties.

As an ethnologist I was professionally devoted only to the Russian community of Lithuania. Without delving into history, I will just say that although our peoples

have coexisted for more than 800 years, the Russian community is in a state of permanent rotation with the metropolis, and most of the citizens of Slav-oriental origin live in the country not more than two to three generations. The Russians gained little with the political freedoms reached in any forms of activity-from the work place to political will. They hardly participate in the political life and they have also been isolated from the regional economic processes. This position is marginal, but its cause doesn't lie in the national conflicts, but it's rather due to strictly political and economic reasons, since at present many cannot find their place within current socio-political realities.

THE RUSSIANS' POSITION regarding ethnic parties depends on their expectations as to discrimination and responds to their disdained rights and to the development of domestic nationalism.

Thus, the Russian ethnic parties were very active during the first few years of independence, when there was domestic tension between the nationalities in the country and a nationalist extremism at level of the parliamentary and political parties. Due to the extraordinary tolerance in Lithuanian law and to the acceptable level reached by relations among nationalities, the Russian parties never carried out activities that violated the stability among nationalities. For the same token, Lithuania's Russian parties did not grow to be especially numerous, and virtually didn't reach the representation quotas in parliament.

86 The concept of “Homeland”, “native country,” which represented one of the focuses of socialized patriotism, was the concept least affected in the 90’s by the inflation of values, keeping for the Russians its lofty significance, while at present it includes two States: Lithuania and Russia. It was to expect another outcome in a situation where the patriotic features and symbols was not in conflict with the actual policy. It is great that at the moment the political situation doesn’t pose to the Russians the need to choose between two prevailing values, but they will remain that way in their minds during no less than two generations.

This dual identity constitutes the foundation of political and socio-cultural self-determination for the community and for the choice on the geopolitical and foreign-policy benchmarks. The sociological analysis thus attests to the fact that the Russians have a quite appropriate outlook of the normative model of democracy and of its main features, only they do not fully unveil democracy in their daily activity, above all, because of the economic realities of the new Lithuania and of the non realization of the proclaimed political rights^[4]. It is taken for granted that these points of view will weaken as the Baltic countries’ legislation comes closer –in terms of the Russian diaspora– to the living standards of the other citizens of the European Union; but the forecast for a near prospect is not completely favorable. The EU’s reserved reaction to the apartheid régime, in my opinion, can

be explained by the wish to change the demographic situation in Latvia and Estonia, so as to reduce Russia’s influence on the situation in the region^[6,7,8].

Sociological studies confirm prevalence in the Russians’ social consciousness of a perception of the world characteristic of the values of an advanced Soviet society^[9]. This attests to the attraction socialist ideas have for them, on condition that they are expressed by non radical political players. Without engaging in analyzing the advantages of the socialist ideal, we can see that no one denies the fact that communist States have achieved a lot in the spheres of social security and education [¹⁰, pp. 267, 277]. After the communist régime was left behind, salaried workers valued the level reached during those years in terms of social protection of the ordinary citizens. One cannot forget the integrative importance of social solidarity, even as far as ethnic parameters^[11].

In Lithuania, the Russian citizens’ stratification into classes is now less current than the dismembering into subcultures, considering the integrative importance of the national determinant. This is explained by the negligible dispersion of the income level of salaried and small-business people, by the great importance of ethnic-cultural factors common to every stratum in daily life, that is, access to education and the media in the Russian language and opposition to the bureaucracy represented mainly by the nation in power, for fear that the atmosphere of relations between the nationalities in the

country gets worse, due to a closer selection of the professional activity spheres and to the importance of the bonds with the metropolis.

THE SCANDINAVIAN MODEL OF SOCIALISM, adopted by all the socialist parties of Lithuania as the objective sought for in the new state system, is not only the acceptable political program for the Russians, but one that might become the ethnic-cultural program. The ideology of the moderate social-democracy is satisfied by its basic principles, that is, integrative democracy, the elimination of worker lumpenization and the absence of unboundedly rich elites, the elimination of social and cultural barriers among citizens, the combination of equality and economic efficiency and the society's control of market economy^[12].

The task of the communist-oriented parties in Central Europe is to ensure comprehensive human rights and development for the civil society. They advocate the compatibility of a stable market economy, a strong social policy and a stability of the State institutes. The skepticism on the socialist notion is inherent to the Russians both due to the sad historical experience and to the understanding that, because of Lithuania' size, such radical reconstructions under any political situation are neither real nor likely, due to the ethnic-cultural orientation of the Lithuanian people. Even so, the prospect of a political action at a whole-State level, in the course of a social democracy for the Russians, is more attractive in compari-

son with the programs of liberal orientation, conservative or Christian-democratic parties^[13].

The presented results of the socio-political analysis enabled the Social-Democratic Party of Lithuania (SDPL) to move on to the application of an active national policy at all levels of the representative power, when it became apparent that the party alone could not achieve a simple or qualified majority (at the different stages) in the Diet (Assembly). The ethnic-political premises of the election were:

- The Russian citizens' clearly expressed preference for a party with a socialist ideology.
- The programs, in socialist essence, of most Russian parties and unions, the international points of the SDPL statutes.
- The natural electorate's support to the Russian parties, which ranges around the parliamentary barrier of the minimum amount of votes, Russian ethnic parties' dispersion and poor prestige, unpreparedness for the unification of all national minority parties into a single bloc.

Hence, applying this resource, the SDPL created a coalition with those Russian parties and social unions that agreed to undertake combined actions. It is noteworthy that the socialists, as a structural parliamentary party, are freer than the ethnic parties as to choosing the mechanisms to influence the ruling structures, as to the form of the ethnic-cultural work and as to the selection of political

88 slogans, so their political work is considerably effective. Lithuania's most radical socialist parties proclaim the principle of protection of the country's whole cultural patrimony, regardless of political, national and religious aspects, become aware of the value of Lithuania's precisely integrated culture, which includes ethnic and civilized culture, and its Lithuanian, Polish, Russian, Byelorussian and Hebrew components^[14]. The used scheme considerably diminished ethnic conflicts in the country, practically reduced to zero the sporadic outbursts of nationalism that had been seen before, linked to electoral campaigns at all levels. Hence, it was possible to immediately fulfill the minimum task outlined before the parliamentary technologies, both the Diet level and at the level of the self-management agencies. As far as the whole-State ethnic-cultural and social processes, a major outcome of the applied political technique was a remarkable reduction of conflicts among nationalities, which was the utmost task of the chosen political technique. From pragmatic positions, the SD-PL was directly interested in the making of the peace among the nationalities during the electoral campaign and in the future. What happens is that the right-wing conservative parties activated their electorate with waves of nationalist actions, frequently using direct methods to stir up Russophobia and anti-Polish feelings. In turn, as they are major parliamentary parties, they were forced to soften their position on the question of nationalities in the period between elections, clarifying

citizens on the need to keep the national peace and reconciliation among all citizens in the country. Hence, when the main enemy of the right forces, socialists, remarked precisely national tolerance as one of the bases of their political platform, the right and center-right parties just couldn't simply continue to openly defend the opposite position without deeming certain officials as completely irresponsible. Subsequently, well into the electoral campaign, the ethnic rhetoric of confrontation that had inevitably increased earlier during the political actions was totally suspended.

As a result of the analysis of the methods used to reduce tension among nationalities and to increase the level of protection of specific interests of the Russian community, the model of the political representation of the national minorities can be proposed, with which their main ethnic-cultural problems are resolved at a level affordable for the political parties' activity mechanisms. According to this model, if the ethnic party does not pursue the objective of serving as a permanent center for the emergence and support of national conflicts, it must unite with the whole-State parties whose ideology conforms to a greater degree with the interests not only of the ethnic group it represents, but also of a wide range of ethnic communities with a close culture.

Again, I don't believe that reasoning is a positive feature exclusively of the politician, but also of the ordinary man. But I am absolutely convinced that, by relying on scientific theories foreign to pol-

itics, on specialists of Gumilev's level, you can build this logical chain on any stratum that objectively opposes the state or transnational system, and go through them with these traveling companions to that part of the road mutually advantageous. If pursuing the socialist idea is useful for most of the society, it will be a socialist choice, after which no isolated scientific theories can be prepared, but a theory of socialism at the current historical development stage.

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Unity is paramount

COMMUNIST PARTY OF MALTA

V.DEGIOVANNI.

→ **THE CURRENT STRUCTURE** of capitalist development had its beginnings in the 1980's with the Reagan and Thatcher administrations in the United States and Britain, who ushered in the policies of Neo Liberalism. These new trends have led to policies of globalisation, which will give US imperialism control practically everywhere. Capitalism in these new modes of production, has brought about new rounds of attacks on the working conditions of the working people everywhere. Not just encroachment on the workers right is on the agenda.

The goals set by these neo liberal policies of a free market economy with maximum profits at all cost is creating mass unemployment all around the globe. Workers today are struggling to keep their jobs. The fight to keep their hard gained conditions, in many cases, has already been lost. Trade Unions are finding it hard to overcome these obstacles as in many cases, like in Malta for example, workers are given the choice either to accept the new conditions or the factory or enterprise will go bankrupt, which means they will be out of jobs. Thus the unions stand helpless and the capitalists use this situation to their advantage.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the Socialist community. The then socio-political balance was lost, resulting in US imperialism finding a free hand to impose these policies. Furthermore, since the events of 9/11/2001 we have witnessed new imperialist aggressions, under the very convenient excuse of combating terrorism. The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are an example. Threats being made to Syria and Iran indicate that they are the next stage of this illegal war. These aggressions are naked attempts by imperialism to steal and control the natural resources of

other countries, snubbing all norms and ethics of international legality. Nobody stands safe today from the hawks in the Whitehouse and Whitehall. In these tragic events, hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians perished under the firepower of the strike forces of US military and its allies, mainly Great Britain and Australia. These illegal aggressions have in turn helped to aggravate the real problem of terrorism, which is now being aimed at the populations and not the ruling classes. This was mostly the case in the incidents of Bali, Madrid and London, where the victims in their vast majority were workers.

UNDER THESE DIFFICULT CONDITIONS, we communists have to strive to find urgent solutions to the many problems that beset the working class today especially mass unemployment. We must inspire the working classes everywhere to become militant again as they were in the 1940's and 1950's. Today capitalists in the US and the EU aim to reduce the working conditions of the working populations of the west so they would be able to compete with Asian capitalists for the world Market. In Asia in countries like Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, and others the exploitation of the working classes is still rampant. The working conditions in these countries are non-existent leaving the workers at a very poor subsistence level. We must support the parties from the Asian continent in their struggle for worker rights and democracy, which is certainly lacking in the majority of the countries in that continent.

One can say that we will be helping the capitalists in the west with these tactics, but also we as communists will be defending from exploitation the working classes everywhere.

If we are to defeat imperialism, it is imperative that we continue to increase our efforts in the never-ending struggle for world peace, as we have always done. We must also keep up the support we give to Peace movements everywhere. We must unite with other political forces that support the peace struggle

Unity amongst political forces of the left is of paramount importance. This is not an easy task. The political opportunism of social democrats with their swing towards the centre under the banner of New Labour are making this task a more difficult one. One hopes that the left wing within these parties will overcome this trend.

If one looks at the right wing parties, they have their differences, yet they manage to unite their forces, whenever their interests stand threatened. I am not saying that we should be like them; we do not base our political arguments on personal interests, but on the collective interests of the working class. We communists must look for that; that what unites us with the other left wing progressive forces. We must leave our disagreements in the background for now and let us agree to disagree on matters we don't agree on. We must unite to fight the trend towards globalisation, neo liberalism and a free market economy. This struggle is a long one and requires great perseverance, but in the end we shall prevail.

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The communist alternative is humanity's alternative...

PARTY OF THE COMMUNISTS, MEXICO

PAVEL BLANCO CABRERA

→ **THE SUBJECT IS OF GREAT NEED** as the characterization of capitalism has consequences on the actions taken by our movement. What is the nature of capitalism crisis? Have there been any changes in the concentration phase of monopolist capitalism? Have we entered the super-imperialism or the "empire", as held by multi-published anti-Leninist propagandists? Maybe inter-imperialists contradictions have reached their end?

The crisis of capitalism is too evident everywhere; rebellion bursts out in the very metropolis. The flares from Paris automobiles are symptoms of the increasing insubmission, the questioning of injustice and exploitation, of racism, unemployment and repression. After the French NO, and the picketing evenings, who dares defend the Europe of Maastricht, the constitution, the EU project?

AFTER MAR DEL PLATA, who can go on scorning the leading role played by peoples as makers of history? Who can go on denying the capital vs. labour contradiction, refuting class struggle?

The traits of current capitalism confirm the Leninist contribution, which pointed out the predominance of monopoly capital, its parasitic and decaying nature, with a material base on the level reached by production and capital concentration. This concentration was accelerated by the so called "globalization" or the increasing speed in the internationalization of capital, specially financial capital, going hand in hand with the destruction of the welfare state. The welfare state started with the capitalist reconstruction process launched during the 70's and was quickened after the setback suffered by the peoples as a consequence of the self-

imposed counterrevolution in Europe's socialist countries, and the dismantling of the USSR. This process de-nationalizes the economies of the countries, while it transnationalizes them, and at the same time privatizes everything public and hands it to monopolies. Their 500 monopolies control bank and industry's world markets, and, for instance, in the year 2000, their sales were equivalent to 45% of the world's internal gross product. Financial speculation expresses the decay of capitalism with its permanent financial crisis shaking entire countries, dooming them to chaos and misery.

For instance, from 1990 to 2000, in the oil industry, due to mergers, bankruptcy or acquisitions resulting from privatization of state enterprises, the number of super-monopolies went from 54 to 33.

AFTER THE CANCELLATION of the socialist transition in the USSR and other European countries, imperialist centers are scrambling to gain control over emerging markets, thus, drawing a new layout of the world.

Once shattered the balance- imposed by the socialist block to the capitalist system- that quickened decolonization and the irruption of new nations thus altering the map of colonialism and allowing the "non capitalist development path", re-colonization's imposed itself. This new division of the world does not happen without setbacks; as with other inter-imperialist disputes; it goes through violent thrusts, with the use of military force.

SINCE 1991, North-American imperialism, supported by its military strength, takes actions aimed at market expansion, conquering nations that will grant them total control over natural resources, specially energy, to assure an hegemonic nature. It has built more military basis, it increases military budgets, paid for by plundering underdeveloped countries. All this, under the excuse of the "free trade" discourse, the fight against "terrorism" and the constant threat of war. First, with the North American Free Trade Agreement, NAFTA, later with CAFTA, FTA for Latin America, with the Puebla-Panama Project and through Plan Colombia, North American imperialism seeks to secure an exclusive market, a vein with natural resources, oil, gas, uranium, water and a relevant percentage of the world's flora and fauna. The European Union has a similar behaviour in its area of influence.

Due to its monopolist traits, imperialism is moving towards a military solution of conflicts. If the world's order emerging after World War II, underwent changes, the emergence of a new one, it's been pre-figured by imperialist centers, today in diplomatic settings, tomorrow, by using other means to pursue their policy. Today, through trade and tariff disputes, later, by regional wars.

Another foreseen trait is the crisis in the system's structure, with open expressions. The overall capitalist system is in agony but before passing away, it can bring disastrous consequences to humanity, now faced with the threat of extinction unless it forwards the socialist

94 revolutionary alternative, the communist project. Environmental destruction, contempt of races, women's discrimination, disrespect of life as proved by IWO statistics with 5000 workers dying every day, 270 million suffering employment injuries and 160 million enduring professional illness; the destruction capacity of weapon storehouses, is the worst threat in the entire history of mankind.

The labour-capital contradiction is key in this historical process. Truly important too, are independence and sovereignty vs. imperialist plundering and re-colonization, as nation-states are forced to open their borders and to abandon all protective barriers for their industry and agriculture, the present trend in monopolist capital is to dissolve the nation-state form as an arrangement of production and exchange relationships. That's a result of merging international consortiums, becoming super-monopolies in order to gain market control.

PEOPLE'S RESISTANCE and the offensive from revolutionary forces. Imperialist centers are urged to expand and increase their control in order to assure market supremacy, which will allow the metropolis to stand the crisis through the over exploitation of peripheral countries by means of the expropriation of their natural resources, labour over-exploitation and the colonial tax known as external debt.

In the deideologization context, the capitalist project's goals have gone a long way, as resistance was weak and

poorly organized. In the last few years, resistances have grown, have spread out, and carry out joint actions. They have increased and are taking the offensive. Latin American peoples are waging a true rebellion against neo-liberalism with a belligerent response to capitalism and imperialism. In many cases, the working class assumes leadership of the international class struggle against monopolies and capitalism.

The heroic people of Iraq are thwarting the purposes of the 2003 imperialist invasion.

The ruling strategies, however, put on new faces. The capital intends to rearrange its political hegemony by relaunching "progressiveness", that is, governments emerging as an outcome from anti-neoliberal mass struggles that won't alter the essence of the system, honor their obligations with IMF, endorse privatization of public properties while clipping conquests achieved by the worker's movement. Through his assistance-aimed discourse, "progressiveness" performs the task of containing popular rebellion, leading it to draw back subjectively, despoiling it of their trust in transformations, though it all happens because there is no clear break-away from the system position, that is, the communist alternative.

"La Otra Campaña" ("The Other Campaign") will take place in Mexico, in this context, as a result of gathering resistance, shaping new forms of extra-parliament struggles and one-pole-clustering of class and radical forces. This initia-

tive comes from the meetings held at Lacandona forests in Chiapas by left wing political organizations, social movements, organized workers, Indian peoples, intellectuals, etc. with the Zapata's Liberation Army after they issued their 'VI La Selva Lacandona Statement'.

"La Otra Campaña", shows a very clear definition: it is a left-wing and anti-capitalist arrangement, aimed to draft a nation wide plan for struggle and a new constitution, thus drastically questioning bourgeoisie democracy, phoney representation and domination re-production mechanisms.

Its first stage will be lunched the 1st of January to June 24, 2006, with Insurgence Commandant, Marcos, travelling throughout the country. The EZLN (Zapatist National Liberation Army) and the -Party of the Communists, have agreed to establish bilateral links.

The Congress of the Party of the Communists will take place March 18-19, right in the midst of The Other Campaign, and the bourgeoisie election process, and its main agenda will be focused on discussion and approval of the strategy and tactics draft already in the hands of our cells. This document is based on considering mass mobilizations as the main form of struggle against the system, according to last years experience as well as the application and assessment of joint and "frontist" experiences.

ONLY UNDER SOCIALISM, is a different world possible! We've already expressed our agreement with Friedrich Engels po-

sition, summarized by Rosa Luxemburg in "junius pamphlet": Socialism or Barbarity. The communist alternative is humanity's alternative to existence, to social development and it demands from revolutionary forces to take the offensive. Strengthening our international movement as well as each party is a matter of life or death for the victory of this alternative.

That's why solidarity among revolutionaries must increase. Several communist parties have been underground for many years, some, in the very European Union, making its democratic preaching sheer demagogy. Solidarity with these communist parties and their cadres can never be enough. The same goes for dynamic responses to anti-communist campaigns wherever they take place, unfolding the initiative of our own parties.

The same idea applies to urgent actions in favour of all those imprisoned; for Simon Trinidad, Oliverio Medina, Sonia, Rodrigo Granda of FARC-EP (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army), with Sean Garland of The Worker's Party of Ireland; with the Five Cuban patriots; with all those who resist. Just as we can't lower our guard before Imperialist militarist campaign or threats against socialist countries, Cuba and the Democratic Republic of Korea. Our solidarity with the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela must rise.

The struggle against super-monopolies, a common enemy of all people, requires more coordinated actions between our parties; we have to implement

96 the proper mechanisms for them. This is an international struggle. The Party of the Communists is a modest detachment. Still, we're deeply certain of the need to push the rupture by increasing class struggles as well as anti-imperialists and anti-capitalists unity. We'll never sacrifice strategy to tactics, principles to the occasion.

The liquidating-reformist wave pretending to get rid of communist parties reached Mexico too early. In 1981, the historical Mexican Communist Party, founded in 1919, was dissolved by the decision of its leading nucleus; they assumed to be acting ahead of the perestroika. For years, we strived to build a Marxist-Leninist Party of the working class with a strong and un-relinquished communist affiliation. Today, we are more confident in the future, more aware of our responsibilities, we believe in the triumph of socialism as long as the principles of scientific socialisms are matched by a revolutionary behaviour of permanent action within the working class and the masses.

Today, we count on new and more favourable conditions to advance, socialism is again established as a world debate: it's time to take the offensive.

Struggle for the second and final independ- ence

POPULAR SOCIALIST PARTY OF MEXICO

WRITTEN CONTRIBUTION

→ **THE CAPITALIST REGIME** maintains the essential traits unravelled by Marx in “*Capital*” and enhanced by Lenin with new elements, in “*Imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism*”. Through almost 90 years, following the presentation of Lenin’s book, new elements have emerged in the heart of imperialism, not to refuse, rather to confirm, the typical traits in the core of the capitalist system revealed by Marx, just like those defining imperialism discovered by Lenin.

The late half of the 20th Century has seen an increased speed in processes such as internationalization of economic links, presently at an advanced stage, referred to as globalization by pro-imperialist advocates. The phenomena made financial capital stronger, while securing economic and political control over the remaining classes and social strata inside imperialist powers. This went along with a phase of neo-colonial subordination and plundering from these powers over the rest of the world.

At the same time, capitalist economic integration supported by financial capital, monopolies and States of the imperialist nations, advanced as a process of enclosing national economies to favour a new division of the world. This was renamed by the ideologists serving imperialism as regionalization, establishing “three regional blocks”, one in Asia, another, the European Union and the block headed by the United States.

Both events, referred to as globalization and regionalization, translate into a wider and deeper connection among monopolies in order to expand their markets, agree on prices and merge, yielding new entities – their predecessors were named super monopolies by Lenin, how-

98 ever, today's concentrate more economy power than ever.

All these mechanisms have contributed to increase productivity, lower costs and increase the volume of merchandises, "still" allowing the capital system to "sort out –not to solve"–, its main intrinsic contradiction, the one between development of productive forces and production relationships. On the contrary, this contradiction's getting sharper, pushing the capitalist regime faster and faster into its final crisis.

ONE OF THE INDICATORS, among several, of the acute nature of this crisis is the endless profit rate decrease. The other, is the brutal wealth and incomes concentration. United Nations sources, announced that 54 countries are now notoriously poorer than they were in 1990; 80% of the entire planet's wealth belongs to 20% of the population; in 1960, 20% of the world population living in the wealthiest countries had 30 times the income of the poorest 20% and by 1997, this rate became 74 times higher. In the middle of the crisis, the UN's agreement for the so called Summit of the Millennium intended to eliminate poverty and its results, failed miserably, bringing into the open, its hypocrite nature since the beginning, as it was meant to cover the rapacious behaviour of the imperialist powers.

The different crisis expressions within the capitalist system have increased former contradictions: the contradiction between the entire capitalist regime and the entire working class; the one between

imperialism and the peoples of the world fighting for their liberation and the different inter-imperialist contradictions, among others.

THE BRUTALLY AGGRESSIVE policy of George W. Bush Administration, overrides international law, and, due to their weapons mass destructive capacity, is placing humanity under the greatest danger in history. This, as a terrorist answer from the most reactionary and imperialist components of the financial and corporate capital in the United States, which, faced by the capitalist crisis throughout the world, reflect their desperate quest for an outlet that will favour them.

Seeking to strengthen their position in the world scenery, nourish their crisis-sinking economy, assure the energy supplies, and strengthen their war policy, Yanqui financial corporate capital and the administration at its service, go all the way to strengthen their exclusive political and economical control over Latin America and the Caribbean. This encompasses taking over our major production and exchange resources: seizing and overexploiting our natural resources. Now, –besides energy resources, first in their ambition ranks–they're taking over our water, oxygen and biodiversity, among others. It also means the over-exploitation of our labour force, as well; the integration of our economies into theirs, in terms of subordination; in the political field, it means despoiling our peoples of the practice of their sovereignty and self-determination.

Yanqui imperialism applies different tools to subordinate and plunder Latin America and Caribbean nations.

- supranational agencies under imperialist control: WTO, World Bank and International Financial Fund, among others;
- investment flows;
- external debt;
- “free trade agreements”, including continental, sub-regional and bilateral options;
- the “representative democracy” masquerade -full of mercantilist perversion devices which result in handcuffed governments, -almost all of them, without any real possibility of independent fulfilment of their tasks.
- They also resort to clear-cut interventionist and military mechanisms, such as Plan Colombia, Plan Puebla Panama and many others, besides the proliferation of bases and army drills.

AS TO MEXICO, the different imperialism-engineered devices have caused us, in the last 25 years, a big set-back in the conquests achieved by the working class and other popular strata, through their historical struggles. Among them: loss of national sovereignty; growing economic and political dependence; unemployment; reduction and even cancellation of social rights, as well as the instauration of phoney “democracy” with some rivalry and taking turns between bourgeois parties, giving the idea that things can change in order to fool the people and cover their true sense, which is the iron-

fist dictatorship by foreign financial and corporate capital and the elements serving it.

Under the stated conditions, the main contradiction, in our region –and of course in Mexico- still is today more than ever, the contradiction between Yanqui imperialism and the peoples and nations of Latin American and the Caribbean as a whole.

THEREFORE, THE TASK OF COMMUNIST and workers’ parties in our region –naturally, including Mexico- as viewed by our Party is to gather its own strength, while gathering joint forces opposing imperialism. That of being the engine to drive on the common struggle against imperialism is every party’s essential task today. The task of nourishing and encouraging the struggle for the second and final independence in Our America. All those brutalized by imperialism are our natural allies in this struggle. It reaches a wide variety of social strata. Their heterogeneity, conditions the diversity of their behaviour. Our task is to contribute in welding their union and raise their awareness.

Now, through the year since the last International Meeting of Communist and Workers’ Parties, here in Athens, the correlation of forces in Latin America has shown a sustained tendency to change in favour of the peoples and against imperialist interests, in the midst of difficult but encouraging struggles.

That is also the case with Mexico. Anti-imperialist forces grow stronger and gain positions, though this process is still

100 beginning in our country. The anti-neoliberal and anti-imperialist mass movement in Mexico, has successfully waged important battles, but it still won't consolidate itself as a solid nor permanent force; as a matter of fact, the coming election process threatens to lessen its cohesion, to scatter and paralyze it, at least temporarily.

WE, COMMUNISTS, have taken steps to coordinate our actions along a path pointing towards to unification. However, to be honest, we must admit that in both aspects, the mass front and the union among communists, we still have a long way to go. Nevertheless, we're certain that, in the long run, the Mexican people, like all peoples in this region, will achieve our second and final independence to install a people's democracy, not a phoney bourgeois democracy. That will open the gate to a socialist society, free from exploiters and exploited.

The peoples of the world will overcome imperialism and with it, we will destroy the capitalist regime.

The illusion of capital

NEW COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE NETHERLANDS

WIL VAN DER KLIFT

➔ **POLITICAL REALITY.** The present crisis of capitalism produces new and sharpening antagonisms. Also within the capitalist camp, where the development and implementation of a neo liberal policy by the capitalist economists and theorists are seen as a way out of the crisis. This however will only sharpen further mutual contradictions between capitalist blocks, because in Europe that policy is motivated by the wish to compete the US economically and to defeat the Asian competitors or at least to neutralise them.

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At the same time this policy will sharpen the antagonisms between the capitalist class and the workers, by demolition of the social achievements and security provisions and the privatisation of public services. This results in deterioration of the labour agreements of the workers and the quality of services.

Since the 'fall of the wall' the contradictions between the capitalist and socialist camp have been drastically modified. The fall of the Soviet Union and its European allies means a terrible loss for the working class all over the world. However, Cuba has succeeded in overcoming the enormous economic problems due to the disappearance of the socialist trade partners and the continuing blockade of the USA. The Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea has maintained itself as a socialist state, trying to find solutions for its problems in its own manner. Vietnam is maintaining and growing by developing an open-door-policy. Also Laos knows well how to maintain and develop.

CHINA has developed itself as an economic power, where the big capital and its political representatives worldwide

102 can no longer go round about. Until recently the Western investment capital quivered to invest in the Chinese market and make use of the cheap and well-educated and trained workers and search markets for their products. Recent developments indicate large Chinese successes to enter the Western markets themselves, sometimes as joint venture companies, frequently also as pure Chinese companies. For this reason the country stands under the large political, economic and ideological pressure of imperialism. China 'replaces' more and more the international role, which the Soviet Union played in the past. Of eminent importance therefore is the question if the Chinese course is a socialist one, as indicates the CP of China itself.

THE NEO COLONIAL NORTH SOUTH proportions exist undiminished, with as most striking and bitter example the peoples pursued by famine and epidemics in Africa. However, parallel to the sharpening of these antagonisms and in interaction with that the resistance is growing. In Latin America this has taken the form of popular movements, which want to make an end to the plundering of raw materials and demand improvement of the life conditions to require. These movements have led to new left orientated governments in Brazil, Venezuela, Uruguay and Argentina, which open up new perspectives for the whole continent. In the short term there will be a very sense political situation in Bolivia. In Central Asia resistance against the US

dominance leads to a growing alliance between Russia, Belarus (and other republics of the former Soviet Union), with India, Iran, China and recently also Pakistan.

[Plunder is the only medicine for the capital]

SEATTLE. In 1999 in Seattle a meeting took place of the world trade organisation (WTO). During that meeting the breach GATS-Treaty (General agreement on Trade in services) was signed by the there present countries. This treaty provided international legitimacy to the already worldwide in pace process of privatisation of public services, by ratifying the free trade in these services and makes that enforceable. The privatisation and subjection to the laws of the capitalism of public services and the therein piled up community money were considered by the economists as a remedy to give new impetus to the got bogged down capitalist economy, that came to a deadlock.

LISBON AGENDA and European Constitution. In Europe the GATS Treaty has been translated into the 'Lisbon agenda', which by the European leaders and European representatives of NGO's, as well as entrepreneurs and trade unions has been signed during the euro top in March 2000 in Lisbon. This 'Lisbon strategy' should have let European capitalists pass the USA economically in 10 years. After five years that objective did not appear to be realized, which led to numer-

ous new, mostly harder, neo liberal plans. The design for a European Constitution is completely penetrated with this new neo liberal ideology, which hides behind the GATS Treaty and Lisbon agenda.

It is for this reason not at all astonishing that the Dutch government of prime minister Balkenende, faithful and hard working partisan of this ideology, already has told the media that the design for the European Constitution, concerning them, not at all has been shelved. The dissenting voters against the Constitution, more or less clearly conscious of the fact that this neo liberal policy is an enormous attack on their life, therefore were doubly right. Right, because they have voted against the neo liberal constitution, and right, because their vote against the government has brought difficulties for the government in their efforts to mislead the people.

No better service or lower tariffs, but shameless amassing of wealth. The people were promised lower tariffs and better services, as a result of the free market and competition. Gradually the population will realise however that as a rule public services and public utilities by privatisation and competition have not become cheaper and no improvement in service has taken place. On the contrary the citizens are faced – in the interest of cost saving - with worse service (mail services have been closed, costs for the so-called unprofitable line of public transport have been raised, energy companies have become inaccessible by screening with so called ‘call centres’) and by killing

cut-throat competition services and tariffs of telecom-companies have become completely non-transparent. Also, the population in all countries, where this deforestation has been carried out in services that were once controlled and checked by the community, has become witness to scandals and public debates concerning the shameless top salaries, which are granted the management of the privatised companies.

If it is up to the Dutch capitalist economists, ideologists and their political representatives, this process of demolition and robbery of community supplies is not coming to an end for a long time. Drinking water must still be privatised, the privatisation of the public transport is not yet round off, an important step has been taken in the privatisation of health-care on January 1st 2006, the privatisation of gas, radio and television must get settled definitely (replacing its seizure), the privatisation of pension funds must be round off and education must be further privatised.

In the Netherlands the proposal of the government for, again, drastic changes in the organisation of the media, means a next step towards the definite end to public broadcasting. That will complete the control of the media by the representatives of the dominating class. A critical voice, which brings up the discussion on the foundations of the capitalist society, gets no serious opportunity for expression on radio and TV. And if it is up to the ruling class, driven into a corner, that will not be the end. The EPP (European

104 Peoples Party: the European Christian democrats and conservatives) have submitted a proposal at the Commission for Human Rights of the Euro Parliament, to take sanctions against parties and organisations, which advocate terms such as 'Class Struggle' and 'Dictatorship of the Proletariat'. A straight, openly attack on communist parties and organisations.

STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS OF CAPITALISM.

To fight this process, which tears to pieces human societies all over the world and prepares them to be ready for the jungle of capitalist exploitation and enrichment, it must be understood that the process originates from the strength as well as from the weakness of the capitalist economic system.

From strength, because the neo liberal instructions of the capitalist think tanks are followed almost worldwide and the enrichment of the capitalist class and its household can be continued unbridled. From strength because the political resistance of the Soviet Union and its allies was broken and the capitalists got, temporarily, the possibility to carry through their plans.

From weakness, because capitalism as a economic and social system has been burned out, no longer able, in large parts of the world even, to satisfy the elementary needs of the world population. As a bloodless vampire capitalism, after the plundering and exploitation of the colonies, now needs the enormous blood transfusion of the community money piled up in public services and has to

strengthen the attacks on the population in their own country.

WAR AS AN EXPEDIENT FOR PROBLEMS

capitalism. Capitalism, however, is already much in trouble. The 'fall of the wall' has temporarily created new markets and new motives for capitalist entrepreneurs and multinationals. But at the same time it becomes more and more clear that the capitalist system is not able to satisfy the needs and demands of the people who live in the former socialist countries. These populations are increasingly confronted with oppression by the capitalist class and their lackeys, who are formed in these states, and divided among themselves, are seizing power.

The economic expansion of capitalism and the ideological weakness in the countries of the real existing socialism, which made the fall of the wall possible, revealed the differing interests of the various capitalist groups and caused conflict between them. This dominated the international relations after the 'fall of the wall', together with the creation of new enemies, what was necessary for the arms manufacturers to secure their profits. The first and second Golf War; the bloody game of the division into parts of Yugoslavia; the attack on the World Trade Centre; the panic hunting on terrorists mostly 'fabricated' by themselves; the intervention in Afghanistan, these are the 'feat of arms' of neo-liberal capitalism.

ILLUSION AND REALITY. The idle gossip and illusions, spread day in - day out by

the ideologists and advocates of capitalism, appear to be accepted by a large majority of the populations, particularly in the richer Western countries and the countries which have only just recently to do with capitalism and have still many expectations of it. Although with a growing cynicism, under the external appearance of resignation and nearly without insight in or a view of the possibility of another society. The socialist ideal often still has been too much damaged. It must be stated that - under these conditions - we also do not succeed to make use of the gap, which exists between the illusions of the capitalist ideologists and the reality daily experienced by the people, to win them to our points of view. Capitalism has won the battle for 'ideology' brilliantly.

That is due especially to the nearly complete mastering of the media. The mentioning of stock reports in each news broadcasting, annoying advertisement breaks on all TV-stations and an abundance of soap-operas and documentary programmes, which inspire individualism and the need of individual survival, provide daily proof for this. Particularly young people are open to the sparkling fake world of Coca Cola. At this moment Capitalism, always busy to divide and rule, tries to shape the natural antagonisms between young people and the elderly to its own advantage.

But that also is the consequence of the failing to reach people with communist points of view and of the reality to that we are dealing with a floating population, instead of a static one. Even if, in a certain

situation, in a certain period of time, on a certain spot, we were successful in reaching people, a year later that same situation has changed and many of the people who were there a year ago have moved somewhere else. In that context they are no longer or at least attainable with much more difficulty for the communist movement, which has started the rebuilding. Therefore we must search for the circumstances that change with the migrating and mobile population. That is an important difference between the situation before and after the Second World War. Before that war the working population was less mobile, permanent labour contracts were the standard and the legal status and cultural situation of people were comparable (in the Netherlands). The current objective situation of a mobile population, with flexible labour contracts, ideological has taken the form of individualism and the individual fight for existence. Solidarity and class struggle are called conservative and harmful terms. But this is nothing new. The Communist Manifesto already described the fight between the necessarily uniting 'dependents on wage' and the in mutual competition divided bourgeois, with at the same time a middle class, which is becoming proletarian. And if the population nevertheless is open to solidarity and class struggle, capitalism tries to eliminate 'physical' the advocates of that ideas.

Based on the above analysis of the developments on world scale and the impact of them in the Netherlands, the international communist movement must

106 succeed in reinforcing unity: both ideological and practical.

PROPOSALS:

- The analysis that the capitalist, imperialistic ideology masters the media entirely must be discussed and common answers must be found.
- Find out which common possibilities there are to make 'breaches' in that ideological supremacy, on the bases of the insight that the spread ideology is always at odds with reality, as the people do find out sooner or later.
- Particularly the role of the improvement of the joint distribution of relevant information comes up for discussion. With good reasons for it:

The lines seem clear: capitalism, with all its social and international ramifications and acceptance, seems supreme at the moment. However, the analytical and operational instruments that scientific socialism has produced show also the weaknesses of this apparently supreme economic and social system. Weaknesses that are an acute, serious threat for humanity. Weaknesses, which underline the urgency of another, more humane social system: socialism, a system for which people can be won.

CONCERNING REAR-GUARD and advanced guard. The communist movement stands for the task to disprove the aggressive bourgeois ideology, which claims that fights against privatisation, against the blessings of the free market, are fights of the rear-guard. The communist parties must

bring arguments and successful experiences that will make clear that this fights in fact are forefront fights: forerunners of a new, humane society. That means, however, that the fight does not have mechanical be put up to 'preserve what is there' or 'to go back to how it used to be'.

The fight against privatisation and demolition of public services must be placed within the framework of the need for a democratic and public management of public services. A management, which is completely opposed to the corruption, which appears, in the meanwhile privatised services and which can be concluded from the recent scandals concerning the top salaries of the management of those services. These scandals also provide an insight into the selection mechanisms for 'modern' management, where professional knowledge, professional pride and having a 'heart for the matter' are nothing, but where efficiency, cost saving and making maximum profits are the guiding principles, and these 'mercenaries' are purchased with the blessing that they are allowed to fill their pockets.

It is our task to show the workers in the world that another society is necessary, and especially that it is possible. A society in which the standard is not to fill your own pockets and be 'a made man' on your fortieth. But a society in which everyone makes a contribution to social production or reproduction and is respected for that and get decently paid. It is our task to magnify the weaknesses of capitalism, make them visible and translate them into perspectives to act.

As soon as possible a 10 point program has to be made, which can serve as a leading guide, at least in all European countries, for joint action and to stimulate the consciousness of the working population. In this program a politic view in the socialist direction must be elaborated. For example:

- “Bring back the public services and supplies to community hands”
- “Determine maximum - and minimum income”
- “No participation of Western troops in so-called peace missions”
- “Enlarging service and public security by creating more jobs in the public sector”
- The “Right to education for everyone”
- “For a democratically controlled, developing broadcasting system that, in the most wide sense, serves the interests of the working class “ etc...

SOCIAL POSITION STIPULATES CONSCIENCE.

But how do we get these demands spread within the population? How are those demands realised? How and with whom do we act together? These are the tasks the communist movement worldwide stands for. Of course there is an interaction between these questions. The question about ‘how?’ is of course also determined by the question of ‘whom?’ For understanding and acting in the economic and social reality the development of class conscience is of overriding importance.

The roots for this class conscience are found in the economic and social reality of the concerning working class member.

And that reality can differ within the, by capitalist production dominated, society. That reality for a civil servant within the government, who always is more openly subservient to the capital, is different from the reality for a worker in a sophisticated production apparatus or an illegal, immigrant worker in horticulture.

It is the communist party, which is the guardian and developer of scientific socialism, the theoretical foundation for analysis and development of class conscience. Therefore the question of how to bring the demands under the population, how to prick the ‘false conscience’ created by the media, has to be seen in consistency with the question of how to organise and reinforce the communist parties.

Globalisation movement, European left and the advancement of a powerful communist movement based on the Marxism-Leninism

THE RESISTANCE AGAINST IMPERIALISM

takes place in several manners and from several points of view. The efficiency of the different forms of resistance is open for discussion, as well as the degree and manner of mutual cooperation. From a Marxist-Leninist point of view one can question a range of initiatives. The NCPN regrets the developments, which must lead to a European Left Party. We reject the foundations and moreover consider it not necessary for our party to participate as an observer. At the same time we con-

108 sider it incorrect to avoid bilateral contacts with parties, which do take part in this process or have been involved as an observer in the process. The NCPN rejects the movement for the European Left party for principal reasons, but wants to keep open all contacts with parties, which take part or have an observer status. The restoration of the communist movement has only started recently.

The NCPN is going for the advancement of a strong communist movement based on Marxism-Leninism. We strive for additional smaller, but actual and practical working, concrete international forms of cooperation between communist parties, whereby we moreover are looking for affiliation to the trade-union movement in the countries concerned. The NCPN considers the strengthening of the communist influence in trade unionism of decisive importance, but the party does not escape from the participation in the various social forums. The NCPN give primacy to the advancement of the communist world movement, but that cannot hinder contacts with and in WSF and other anti-globalisation movements.

The NCPN rejects the attacks by right-wing parties in the European Parliament on communist parties. However, that attack offers also new chances for the communist movement, to debate with progressives and others parts of the population and to show them the growing ideological similarity in the bourgeois and fascist ideologies. We have to convince the working class that only socialism will change the world.