



CURRENT ISSUES OF THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT

COLLECTION OF ARTICLES AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Communist Party of Greece

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**COLLECTION OF ARTICLES
AND CONTRIBUTIONS
ON CURRENT ISSUES
OF THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT**

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Dear reader,

In the “Collection of articles and contributions” you can get acquainted with the positions and analyses of KKE on current issues of the international communist movement.

In the first chapter titled “The situation of the international communist movement” you can find two articles on the situation of the international communist movement and the ideological and political problems it faces. The articles also include the assessments of KKE on the course of the international communist movement and the International Meetings of Communist and Workers’ Parties as well as the perception of KKE on the formation of a communist pole by the communist parties that defend Marxism-Leninism, the necessity of the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and the timeliness of socialism.

In the second chapter titled “On current international issues” you can read the positions of KKE on current issues e.g. the 20th anniversary since the fall of Berlin Wall; likewise the positions of KKE on the capitalist crisis as they were formulated in the 11th Meeting of Communist and Workers’ Parties in India, the evaluation of international interstate relations under the conditions of imperialism and the stance of the communists towards interstate organizations like the UN.

In the third chapter you can find articles by cadres of KKE on the situation in the European communist movement, on the initiatives of KKE as well as on its stance towards the EU.

The fourth chapter includes assessments of KKE on the change of the correlation of forces in Latin America and on the opportunist theory of socialism of the 21st century.

The fifth and sixth chapters include contributions of KKE at the meetings of the communist parties in Middle East and Balkans that highlight issues about the developments and the activity of the communists in the region.

Ultimately, the seventh chapter includes two informational articles by the International Section of the CC about the 18th Congress of KKE and the results of the recent national elections.

The journal also includes photos from the action of the communists in the previous year.

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The situation in the International communist movement

The international communist movement nowadays and the stance of KKE*

by **Giorgos Marinos**

Member of the Politburo of the CC of KKE

Introduction

KKE makes efforts to contribute to the development of the international communist movement. These efforts constitute a permanent and firm duty which has marked its historical course. This has an objective basis; it emanates from the very internationalist character of our Party as well as of each communist party that as the vanguard of the working class constitutes a part of the international communist movement and is judged by its combined action at a national and international level, by its contribution to the common task of communists, with faith and dedication to the Marxist principle “proletarians of all countries unite”.

Capital is an international force; hence class struggle unfolds at an international level. It requires the development of the working class into an international power. This presupposes a unified revolutionary strategy, the joint action of communist parties, the joint elaboration of policies for the alliance with the poor popular strata in an anti-imperialist anti-monopoly direction.

The international struggle of the communist parties has come a long way since the foundation of the First International, the opportunist bankruptcy of the Second International, the historical foundation of the Third (Communist) International and other forms of coordination that followed. We examine critically all this valuable crystallized experience so as to continue our efforts in the new conditions formed after the counterrevolution and the deep crisis of the communist movement.

* Article published in the 6th issue of the theoretical journal of the KKE “Communist Review”, in 2009.

This long historical course is characterized by the constant conflict over theoretical and strategic issues between the revolutionary current and opportunism, by the influence of bourgeois ideology and policy on the labor movement which has affected the unity and the effectiveness of the action of the communist movement throughout its course. KKE studies the historical experience of the communist movement and draws valuable experience. The 18th Congress stressed among others:

*“Developments within the international communist movement and the issues of its strategy played an important role in the worldwide class struggle and in the configuration of the correlation of forces. Problems of ideological and strategic unity were expressed during the entire course of the Communist International (CI), regarding the character of the revolution, the nature of the coming war following the rise of fascism in Germany and the attitude vis-a-vis Social democracy”*¹.

In our theses we focus on the loosening in the functioning of the CI as a unitary centre many years before its self-dissolution (1943). We believe that the dissolution of the C.I despite the problems of unity it had and irrespective of whether it could be retained or not, deprived the international communist movement of the centre and the capacity for the coordinated elaboration of a revolutionary strategy for the transformation of the struggle against imperialist war or foreign occupation into a struggle for state-power, in the conditions of the Second World War.

As it is noted in the resolution of the 18th Congress of KKE *“the strategy of the communist movement did not utilise the fact that the contradiction between capital and labour was an integral component of the antifascist-national liberation character of the armed struggle in a number of countries, in order to raise the question of state-power, since socialism and the prospect of communism are the only alternative solution to capitalist barbarity”*².

The communist movement did not manage to correctly assess the correlation of forces formed after the Second World War, to see the reshufflings in the alliances. It did not manage to form a unified independent strategy against the strategy of international imperialism.

1. Resolution of the 18th Congress of KKE: “Assessments and Conclusions on Socialist Construction During the 20th Century, Focusing on the USSR. KKE’s Perception on Socialism”, publication of the CC of KKE, pp 72-73.

2. Resolution of the 18th Congress of KKE: Assessments and Conclusions on Socialist Construction During the 20th Century, Focusing on the USSR. KKE’s Perception on Socialism”, publication of the CC of KKE, “page 75.

At the resolution of the 20th Congress of the CPSU (February 1956) revisionist social democrat views on the possibility of “peaceful coexistence” of capitalism and socialism and the possibility of a peaceful parliamentary transition to socialism held sway.

In addition, the strategy of the “anti-monopoly government”, as a sort of stage between socialism and capitalism, that would solve problems of “dependency” from the USA, was adopted on the basis of a mistaken analysis of the position and the power of each capitalist state in the imperialist system that regarded even countries like Great Britain and France as subordinate to the USA. It was thus that Communist Parties chose a policy of alliances that included bourgeois forces, those defined as “nationally focused” as opposed to those which were deemed as servile to foreign imperialism.

In Western Europe, in the ranks of many Communist Parties, under the pretext of the national peculiarities of each country, the opportunist current known as “Euro-communism” held sway, a current which denied the scientific laws of the socialist revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat and revolutionary struggle in general leading to the degeneration of the parties.

Thus, counterrevolution found the communist movement in capitalist countries vulnerable to the ideological offensive of the enemy sharpening its problems and initiating a new period of a deep crisis.

The character of the crisis and the conditions for its overcoming

The developments of the last twenty years present new qualitative elements. The counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries led to the dissolution and the disarmament of many communist parties. The social democrat mutation of communist parties led to their diffusion into new opportunist formations. The general retreat led to the denial of the revolutionary theory, that is, Marxism-Leninism, to the denial of the principles for the structure and the functioning of the party of a new type, to the weakening of the struggle for socialism-communism.

Of course nowadays the situation is different from that of 1991. There has been progress in the reconstruction of many communist parties, in international coordination and joint struggle. However, we should not examine this progress in a static way. We must evaluate this process according to the constantly increasing needs of the revolutionary struggle that sets new demanding tasks.

The crisis continues. Therefore, the assessment of the 18th Congress of KKE stressing that *“the communist movement remains organisationally and ideologically fragmented”* is of great significance. *“As long as the situation does not improve, as long as it remains stable, the dangers for a new back-sliding increase”*³.

Developments are in progress, the aggressiveness of the monopolies and imperialism intensifies, the opportunist forces methodically intervene exerting influence on the Communist Parties. The communist movement loses valuable time and possibilities as long as its reconstruction in a revolutionary direction is prolonged. It cannot intervene in a unified way at national, regional and international level, it cannot enlighten the working class, the popular strata, the youth, it cannot organise the anti-monopoly anti-imperialist struggle effectively calling into question the exploitative system, rallying and preparing forces for its overthrow, for the socialist revolution.

KKE has accumulated significant experience. Our party has managed to reconstruct itself due to its steadfast dedication to the class struggle and the goal for the overthrow of capitalism, the socialist perspective. It elaborated a modern strategy and an anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly line of struggle and rallying of forces. Nowadays, it continues developing under difficult conditions according to this very line; it increases its reputation and its influence which is a thorn in the side of plutocracy, imperialists and the supporters of capitalism.

We have many shortcomings but it is clear for us what the main duty of a communist party should be, a communist party that recognises its responsibilities, honours its title and its history, a party that draws lessons from its experience and mistakes.

We do not underestimate the difficulties which have been accumulated at the international level. The situation is complex and complicated while the enemy's attack is severe and well organised.

It is under these conditions that the leaderships, the leading bodies and communists in general are tested, conscious of the fact that there is no unchangeable situation, that there can be a more substantial progress, that we can overcome obstacles and gain ground above all at the national level and on this basis develop the internationalist contribution and activity.

We should gain ground in the propagation of the communist ideology and policy, in the development of the class struggle, in forging links with the work-

3. Report of the CC of KKE at the 18th Congress On the First Subject, Communist Review, 2/2009 p. 51.

ing class and the popular strata, in the strengthening of the ranks of communist parties.

This development requires recognizing the causes of the crisis which affect the communist movement so as to take decisive steps for the eradication of these causes.

The crisis of the international communist movement has an ideological-political content. It expresses the long-standing and deep influence of the opportunist and social democrat positions on the communist parties. It expresses problems in the assimilation of our strategy, in the Marxist- Leninist analysis of contemporary issues, in the elaboration of a modern strategy that serves the socialist perspective on the basis of our ideological principles and the historical experience from the class struggle.

As it is noted in the Resolution of the 17th Congress of KKE on the situation in the international communist movement, the struggle between revolutionary communist viewpoints and reformist, opportunist ones continues within the ranks of the communist movement. This struggle focuses on:

the attitude towards the socialism that we have known and the causes of its overthrow; the relevance of Marxism – Leninism; the need to develop the revolutionary theory in the current conditions; the character of the Communist Party; the character of imperialism; the relation of the struggle on national and international level; the policy of alliances; the attitude towards social democracy; the stance of communists in the mass movements; their stance in relation to the capitalist crisis, the inter-imperialist contradictions and the imperialist wars; the policy towards interstate imperialist regional and international unions; the historical role of the working class; the laws of socialist revolution and construction; the proletarian internationalism.

The communist movement can better deal with these problems as long as it realizes these factors and tackles them.

KKE respects the independence of the communist parties. As a part of the international communist movement it wants to contribute to this reflection and bring forward its positions on several crucial problems of the communist movement that might evolve into factors that intensify the crisis if they are not dealt with in time.

The existence of communist parties of a new type is necessary

Nowadays, under the conditions of counterrevolution, there is a need to found from the beginning Marxist-Leninist Communist Parties in a series of countries; in other countries the parties must be reconstructed on a revolutionary basis, while the building of communist parties is necessary in all countries. The need for an independent communist organisation is more mature than ever, that is the existence of parties of a new type that express the merging of revolutionary theory with the labour movement, *are based on the working class, the vanguard force of the society and express its interests dedicated to its historical task.*

Communists' struggle must be led by the Leninist position that the party constitutes the superior form of a class-based organisation of the proletariat; that it forms its revolutionary programme and a tactics that correspond to its strategy based on the laws of social development. Each communist party must study the international experience and draw conclusions and lessons from it. What happened with the parties that, influenced by the bourgeois theories about the "demise of the working class", chose another subject of the social development in place of the working class which is the vanguard revolutionary force? What happened to the communist parties that denied democratic centralism and the other organisational principles of the party of a new type and were finally transformed into clubs of endless discussions, splinter groups, or electoral mechanisms?

The substitutes are dust in the wind. They cannot withstand the severe conditions of the class struggle. They weaken, they degenerate, they dissolve or evolve into social democratic parties even if they maintain the communist title.

This conclusion has not to do merely with the experience of the communist parties in France, Italy and Spain which had been the main representatives of euro-communism. *It concerns all parties in all continents which have been eroded by opportunism and revised Marxist-Leninist principles; likewise all parties that in the name of national peculiarities denied the socialist revolution, the laws of socialist construction, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the working class state power.*

The communist parties have major responsibilities towards the working class and the popular forces and hence the spread of confusions and distortions is not allowed. Such confusions are spread by forces that present parties that support capitalism and often resort to anti-communism as related to the

communist movement, due to the fact that their main cadre consists of former communists who have been mutated into social democrats. This practice mitigates the criteria. It has cost a lot to the communist movement and it will cost more in the future if we do not deal with this position that tends to be adopted by other parties as well.

According to which criteria is the stance of these parties judged as positive for the working class and the popular movement? On which basis are these parties, which are trickily presented as “left” (e.g. die Linke in Germany, the Left Bloc in Portugal) treated as allied or related forces by several communist parties?

There is a need to instigate a debate, to intensify the ideological struggle. *The character of each party is determined by its class oriented stance towards the bourgeoisie and imperialism, by the recognition of the exploitative character of capitalism and the struggle for its overthrow. The stance of these parties towards the imperialist organisations, towards the strategy of capital and therefore the adoption of the anti-imperialist struggle as a line of alliance are also criteria for their character.*

The so-called “left” parties give credentials to the bourgeoisie on a daily basis by supporting the imperialist organisations (NATO, EU etc), by aiding the ideological and political manipulation of the working class, the popular strata and the youth by the bourgeoisie. This element characterises their stance on all major issues.

There is a need to dwell more deeply into the effort of these political forces. Their intervention aims at preventing the positive developments for the reconstruction of the communist movement; at striking a blow at the movement through “friendly” attacks in the name of the unity of the left forces; at disarming the workers’ and peoples’ movement under the pretext of “class collaboration” and “social consensus” (denial of the class struggle). The promotion of the anti-neoliberal line of struggle aims at trapping the popular masses on a massive scale in the position about the “humanisation of capitalism”, in the position that people can be placed before profits while the exploitative basis that breeds profits remains; in the expectation that deep changes in favour of the people can come about without colliding with the monopolies’ power and the exploitative relations of production.

The recent developments show that the bourgeoisie methodically supports these forces so that they absorb the popular discontent that is caused by the bourgeois governments -especially under the conditions of the crisis- and channel it to in ways that do not threaten the system. At the same time they

set the basis for central-left formations that can be alternatively utilised for the management of the system.

The experience of the European Left Party is illustrative. It is a party that was founded in the framework of the EU guidelines for the foundation of unified parties which will be directly controlled by the EU. It denies everything communist, it rejects revolutionary tradition, it opposes scientific socialism, class struggle, socialist revolution. Through its action and using the “unity of the left as its vehicle it tries to infiltrate the communist parties and drag them into the logic of capitalism’s management, to social partnership. At the same time, it contributes to the slandering of the socialism constructed in the 20th century reproducing the anti-Stalin hysteria.

As a result of the dominance of such views, several communist parties participated or supported bourgeois governments. The significant historical experience from the heavy cost they paid for their choice reveals that this stance is utilized by the bourgeoisie as an alibi for the implementation of the anti-people’s policy.

The positions and the political action of SYN/SYRIZA constitute a part of this effort. Its role in the curbing of people’s radicalisation and the assimilation of the popular forces to the objectives of capital is expressed in various ways (support of the “EU one-way-road”, spread of confusions about the role of the PASOK, intention to regroup social democracy, support of yellow trade unionism in GSEE and ADEDY, special role in the anti-communist campaign etc).

The communist parties must determine their stance towards other political forces and movements according to certain class criteria. Let us remember the effort to drag communists through the anti-globalization movement and the so-called social forums in a movement along with social democracy, the yellow trade union organizations, as well as other forces (such as the non-governmental organizations) which are dedicated to capital and the imperialist organizations. This effort has not succeeded; KKE and the other communist parties had contributed to this result with their stance. The communist parties must have a clear stance against the NGOs as most of them are linked with big economic interests while at the same time they are utilized by imperialism for its intervention in the political developments, for the overthrow of governments in the framework of bourgeois and intra-imperialist contradictions.

Nowadays, however, this process is in a downward course as it caused confusion attempting to undermine the struggle and the class struggle at national level, to inflict the vanguard role of the working class.

The independent ideological, political, organizational work of the communist parties and the alliance policy that corresponds to a revolutionary political power is a fundamental principle; its violation leads to the degeneration of the communist character or to dissolution.

Firm to the principles of Marxism Leninism

The ideological-political pressure of the bourgeoisie has led even communist parties to call into question the contemporary character of Marxism-Leninism, to argue -as we read recently in the newspaper of an Arab communist party- that Marxism-Leninism is outdated.

The assimilation and the creative implementation of Marxist Leninist theory is not merely a choice among others; it is that choice that determines the revolutionary character of a party.

It has been confirmed throughout the years that "there cannot be any revolutionary action, any revolutionary movement without a revolutionary theory"; the communist movement requires a compass, a tool to study and analyse the economic and social laws, knowledge in order for the working class to understand and change the society under the leadership of its vanguard. We quote the words of Lenin: "We take our stand entirely on the Marxist theoretical position: Marxism was the first to transform socialism from a utopia into a science, to lay a firm foundation for this science, and to indicate the path that must be followed in further developing and elaborating it in all its parts".⁴

The acknowledgement of the contemporary and realistic character of socialism

The international communist movement as well as all communist parties must participate in the debate that aims at providing answers to the questions arising from the process of counterrevolution in the USSR and the other socialist countries. The report of the CC of KKE to the 18th Congress stresses: *"nowadays it is not possible for a communist party to act effectively, to have a revolutionary strategy elaborated from a scientific viewpoint, to provide an-*

4. V. I. Lenin: "Our Programme", "Selected Works", "Synchroni epochi" vol. 4 pp186-187.

swers to the big questions without utilising the positive and negative experience of the socialist revolution and construction.”⁵

However, there are several requirements for the participation in this debate:

- First of all the stance of the Communist Parties towards socialist construction in the 20th century, the encounter with the slandering attack by bourgeois and opportunist forces that join them, the critical assessment of the mistakes and the omissions that led to the counterrevolution but also the stance towards the socialist perspective

- The defence of the achievements of the great socialist October revolution, of the first historical attempt of the working class to construct its own state power and society, to abolish the exploitation of man by man through the socialisation of the means of production, central planning, the workers' and social control. To acknowledge that economic development met human needs by ensuring the right to work for all the capable of work as well as free health-care, welfare and educational system, social security rights, sports and culture. The acknowledgement of the contribution of the socialist system to the anti-imperialist struggle, to the struggle for peace for the abolition of colonialism.

- The struggle against the falsification of history, against the equation of socialism with fascism that seeks to erase from historical memory the titanic struggle of the CPSU, the Bolsheviks and the Soviet people as well as their victory over the fascist invader that caused the death of 20 million people, millions of wounded and incalculable damage. The bulwark against the “anti-Stalin hysteria” is a struggle defending the period when the basis of the socialist construction was formed.

It is clear that in this debate there is no place for *“those who in the name of “renewal” gave up these principles before the counterrevolution, but also afterwards and were finally led to the underestimation even to the rejection of the struggle for socialism”⁶. The critical examination must focus on the development and prevalence of the opportunist deviations in the governing communist parties as these deviations led to the transformation of these parties to vehicles of counterrevolution and capitalist restoration.*

5. Report of the CC of KKE at the 18th Congress on the First Subject, Communist Review, is. 2/2009.

6. Report of the CC of KKE at the 18th Congress on the First Subject, Communist Review, is. 2/2009.

The weakness in incorporating conclusions from the socialist construction in the 20th century and the course of the communist movement is obvious in the programmes and the strategy of many communist parties. Actually there are many communist parties that have not managed to adapt their strategy to the contemporary conditions, to focus on the struggle for socialism. They keep having strategic positions of previous years, positions about “intermediate stages” between socialism and capitalism, positions about “anti-monopoly” governments with management content.

This discussion is particularly crucial; the aforementioned shortcoming ignores several objective developments: capitalism has developed further, monopolies have strengthened, capitalist relations of production have expanded and been reinforced while at the same time the working class has increased even in the relatively less developed countries and thus the material conditions for the transition to socialism are now more mature than in the previous years. The integration into the imperialist system and the imperialist unions sharpens the contradictions of capitalism as well as the main contradiction and creates the conditions for its solution.

The opposition to the unequal relations within the imperialist system, to the strong presence of multinational capital in several states must obtain anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist content, rejecting positions that support the strengthening of several segments of domestic capital and the respective upgrading of their country into the imperialist system. The positions of KKE can be useful for the communist movement, for the development of discussion. As it is mentioned in the programme of the party, *“the Greek people will be liberated from the bonds and effects of capitalist exploitation, imperialist oppression and dependence when the working class and their allies bring about the socialist revolution and proceed to building socialism and communism”*⁷.

The formation of a tactic that will serve the strategy of a communist party requires the recognition of the anti-imperialist anti-monopoly democratic line of struggle as the way that leads to the change of the correlation of forces and under certain conditions to the transition to socialism.

Many parties are concerned about the relation between national and international in the class struggle. Of course the counterrevolution, the change of the correlation of forces in favour of the imperialist forces reinforced the impact of the international factors. Nevertheless, this does not reduce the im-

7. The Programme of KKE, special edition of the CC of KKE, p. 250.

portance of the internal contradictions and conditions that play the major role in the class struggle and the revolutionary process.

Uneven development creates a different level of maturation of the economic and political conditions for the transition to socialism and highlights the Leninist position about the weakest link.

Struggle against all imperialist unions

The consistent anti-imperialist struggle must turn against imperialism as a system, namely against capitalism at its higher stage. Therefore, it must turn against the imperialist unions and organisations as a whole. The strengthening of this struggle constitutes a duty of the communist movement. In particular, the communist parties in Europe must engage in the development of a movement that will struggle against the EU.

The communist movement in general, and not merely in Europe, must confront the logic that regards the EU as the lesser evil, as an organisation that opposes the USA and the NATO. *Such positions disarm the workers' and people's movement and trap them into illusions about the development of the EU allegedly in favour of the peoples, by means of changing the correlation of forces within the EU in favour of the "anti-neoliberal" forces. The communist parties that support the EU, even if they adopted this stance under the pressure of intimidation, should dwell deeper into this issue and take into account that due to the economic crisis imperialist aggression will intensify in the next period.*

The EU constitutes an advanced alliance of imperialist states. It emerged from the need of the European monopolies to expand their commercial activity in a common market, to find new fields for profit-making with conditions that enable the strengthening of their competitiveness over the American and the Japanese monopolies. The restructurings that reduce the price of the labour force and deteriorate the situation of the working class and the popular strata, the implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) that turns against the poor farmers, the institutionalized repressive measures against the labour movement, through stronger institutions for the manipulation and the assimilation of the people's movement are not choices of a specific bloc within the EU; they emanate from the very objectives of its foundation.

This strategy is served by the Treaty of Maastricht and its four freedoms. It has also been confirmed by the Lisbon strategy in 2000 and its revision in 2005 as well as by the recent European Economic Recovery Plan.

The imperialist character of the EU is also proven by the Common Foreign Policy, by the Common Security and Defence Policy, the wars and the interventions along with the USA and the NATO.

At the same time in the framework of the economic crisis the contradictions over the distribution of markets, the reshufflings in the international alliances between a series of EU countries (e.g. Germany) and the US intensify, though without changing the imperialist character of the EU.

We have to destroy the illusions of a series of communist parties, national-liberation, anti-occupation and anti-imperialist movements in other regions of the planet (Middle East, Africa, Latin America) about the role of the EU in the international affairs. The EU is neither willing nor able to contribute to the solution of a series of international issues e.g. the Palestinian and the Cyprus issue in favour of the peoples. It is an abettor of Israeli crimes as it equates the victim with the perpetrator. During the Israeli attack on the Gaza Strip early in 2009 the EU upgraded its relations with Israel. As regards the Cyprus issue, the EU supported the Anan plan that promoted the partition of Cyprus which was initiated by the Turkish invasion and occupation of a significant part of the territory of the Cypriot state.

The intervention of the 21 communist parties on the Elections for the European Parliament is particularly important; it paves our way intensifying the struggle against the forces that support the opportunist version of the “EU one-way- road”.

The root of the economic crisis lies in the capitalist relations of production

The world economic crisis and its analysis are a matter of ideological-political struggle between Marxism-Leninism on the one hand and bourgeois, reformist views on the other.

From the very first moment, KKE studied the crisis and supported that it is a capitalist crisis of overproduction. Its root lies in the main contradiction of the system, the contradiction between the social character of production and the capitalist appropriation of its results.

The supporters of capitalism, the social democrats and the opportunists have done everything to convince the people that it is neo-liberal management, the choices of each bourgeois party, the lawlessness of the banks and the executives of the financial system that caused the crisis. For that reason,

they argue about “casino capitalism”, about the “extreme free market” that violates the rules of “healthy capitalism” etc. Their aim is to conceal the fact that the crises are inevitable in the capitalist system which is characterised by the anarchy in production, uneven development, the intensification of exploitation.

Unfortunately, we realise that such bourgeois and opportunist positions exert influence on the positions of several communist parties that in fact adopt the view about the crisis of the financial system or a crisis of the neo-liberal management. This fact reflects shortcomings in the assimilation of Marxism-Leninism and above all in its creative utilization for the analysis of contemporary phenomena. Thus, the operation of the financial system is detached from the capitalist economy as a whole.

Of course this discussion is still in progress and it should delve deeper as it's not merely a theoretical problem; it has to do with the orientation and the organisation of the struggle. These positions undermine the struggle against the causes of the crisis, against the capitalist relations of production. Even more so, they trap the working and popular forces into a line that promotes the strengthening of the profit making of the industrial monopolies as a way out of the crisis in favour of the people.

The restriction of the causes to neo-liberal management facilitates the manoeuvres of the bourgeoisie that present the state interventions of the bourgeois state as an alternative policy (e.g. public investments, financing of segments of the capital, regulation of debts etc). Thus, it ignores the fact that capitalist crisis manifests itself irrespective of the mixture that the system utilises for its management each time.

The people have the right to choose the forms of struggle

Anti-communism, the pressure exerted by the bourgeois and the opportunist forces on the communist movement leads in many cases to redeployment, to retreat as regards the forms of struggle that constitute a very significant issue.

Several communist parties talk about “legal forms of struggle” taking a negative stance towards the armed struggle and resistance even in case of foreign occupation as in Palestine, Afghanistan and Iraq. Such positions restrict the class struggle within the limits of the bourgeois and imperialist legitimacy; they disarm the revolutionary, people's movement which has the right

to resist and demand its rights through all the forms of struggle in order to defeat its enemy and overthrow the dictators and oppressors.

Of course this has nothing to do with individual terrorism, with “blind” actions and provocative mechanisms linked with secret services and utilised by the monopolies’ state and the imperialist organisations against the labour movement.

Progress in the coordination of the communist parties activities

The experience accumulated so far is valuable and helps the communist and workers’ parties to continue and upgrade the initiatives, activities and the joint action. The International Meetings of Communist and Workers’ Parties initiated in Athens in 1998 play a very significant role. Over these years they consolidated their character as meetings that have the right and the obligation to study the contemporary developments and intervene without the participation of left formations that constitute structured bodies of opportunism.

Furthermore, the number of the communist and workers’ parties that participate in the meeting has increased and the representation from all the continents improved. There has been an improvement in the preparation of the discussion; the meetings include more substantial subjects while they have managed to examine significant issues that contribute to the study and the generalisation of the experience, to the development of the struggle.

The movement has gained confidence and achieved a significant level of ideological-political debate on actual different approaches and analyses on the subjects discussed at each time.

The regional meetings on the developments in Balkans, Middle East, Latin America and other regions play an important role as well.

The thematic meetings that enable a more substantial examination of significant issues such as education, the reactionary restructurings and the imperialist organisations are also particularly helpful.

In this process there has been progress in the joint action against imperialist wars, interventions and threats; against the wars launched by the American-NATO and European imperialists against Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Iraq.

The communist movement expressed its solidarity with the Palestinian people and condemned the Israeli attacks as well as the other states that

support Israel; it expressed its solidarity with the Cuban people and the Cuban revolution; it supported the Cypriot people and demanded the solution to the Cyprus issue according to the resolutions of the UN Security Council; it condemned the anti-communist resolutions of the European Parliament, the OSCE etc. with tens of Communist Parties participating in these initiatives that should be continued and linked with the activities in each country.

We acquired first-hand experience about the promotion of joint goals of struggle and the organisation of joint actions on the occasion of Worker's May Day, the Anti-fascist victory of the people etc.

We can continue in the same course and make new qualitative progress as regards the subjects of the meetings, the study of contemporary theoretical issues, the study of the socialist construction in the 20th century as well as new issues of the class struggle.

We can improve the preparation of the meetings and the joint statements strengthening in the best possible way the communist character of the meetings and their conclusions.

We are obliged to improve the joint action, being more consistent and concerned about the realisation of the decisions taken in the international, regional and thematic meetings. We must inform, enlighten and mobilise the working class, the popular strata, the youth in the countries that the communist parties act. This is a crucial goal that must be attained and we must be particularly persistent in its realisation; it has great dynamics and it will help the development of the ideological, political and mass struggle on the basis of the internationalist experience.

Nowadays the communist parties can contribute more effectively to the development and the strengthening of the international anti-imperialist organisations, namely the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), the World Peace Council (WPC), the Women International Democratic Federation (WIDF), the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY).

This is not merely a goal among others. It is a special goal; It takes priority as it will boost the class-oriented movement and the anti-imperialist movement in general, with the participation of forces that believe in the development of the class struggle, in the struggle against the imperialist unions and organisations, against class collaboration and pacifism.

WFTU has made a significant progress after its Congress in Havana. New class oriented trade union organisations have joined its ranks; coordinated action has improved; the struggle against reformism is strengthening; likewise the struggle against the International of yellow trade-unionism. The merging

of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions with the World Confederation of Labour and the founding of the International Trade Union Confederation, namely the forces that represent the interests of the capital and support capitalist restructuring and imperialist aggression, increase the duties for the WFTU.

There is a need to intensify our efforts at the national and international level; to strengthen the ideological-political struggle against these forces; to develop and strengthen the class oriented trade unions; to found new trade unions in sectors and big workplaces; to insist on the coordination of the struggle.

The international initiatives of PAME, that is the class pole in the trade union movement are also of great importance. They strengthen the movement of workers' solidarity; they support the activity of the WFTU and the class oriented regrouping of the international trade union and labour movement.

The work in the working class and the trade unions constitutes a key priority for the communist parties. The effectiveness of our work in the labour movement requires combining the ideological, political and mass struggle as well as elaborating and asserting demands that meet the modern needs of the working class, reinforce the struggle against capital and its political and trade union representatives and mature the conditions for a confrontation that will bring radical changes at the level of state power and production relations.

The unity of the working class can be forged through the development of the class struggle. Class collaboration disarms the trade unions, changes their character and aids the submission of the working class to the objectives and the strategy of the capital.

The joint action of federations, Labour Centres, trade unions, struggle committees that assert a cohesive platform of demands that serves the needs of the working people provide a valuable experience.

In many countries the trade union movement has not realised the need to promote a platform of demands against the capitalist restructuring, against the competitiveness and the profit making of the capital, a platform of demands that will include goals such as full and stable employment, reduction of the labour time, abolition of the flexible forms of employment, ban on dismissals, abolition of the taxes on public consumption goods and fuels, exclusively public and free healthcare welfare and education system, abolition of commercial activity in these fields etc. In other words the international communist movement has to realise a very crucial issue which was also highlighted by the 18th Congress of KKE. *"Today, it is not enough for the movement to set some positive partial goals. What determines the effectiveness of the movement,*

its role in a positive perspective, is the ideological and political framework that supports these goals of struggle. The «unity towards the problem» or the «struggle against problems» in general are not enough; what is important is the political framework of the demands, the ideological positions and the aim of struggle. The very challenges of the struggle require the labour movement to achieve an anti-monopoly anti-imperialist orientation, to struggle against the bourgeois ideas and contrived notions, against reformism and opportunism, on the basis of the experience from the class and mass struggles. The ideological, political and economic struggle is conducted in a single way; it cannot be divided in separate units.

The employees and the working people in general, should be oriented to an alternative path of development, opposed to the monopolies and the imperialist policies on the basis of their own experience and our intensive and targeted ideological –political activity.

We must explain the benefits that the People's Power and Economy will bring for the vast majority of the people, that it can express the interests of all those who agree with the necessity of a struggle against the power of the monopolies though may have different views about socialism.

The counterattack of the popular movement along with the vanguard of the labour movement requires the effective struggle against reformism and opportunism, the confrontation of the plans of the ruling class to utilise the so-called anarchist-autonomist and anti-authority forces, any group or political force that presents itself as “revolutionary” and “anti-capitalist”, combined with the anti-communist hysteria, with slogans and arguments taken from the arsenal of the most extreme anti-KKE campaign; likewise racist and xenophobic perceptions”.⁸

KKE continues according to the guidelines of the 18th Congress the efforts for the strengthening of the cooperation with communist and workers' parties against the presence of NATO forces in Balkans, against the utilisation of existent and non-existent minority issues. It will contribute to a better study of the situation of the working people and the youth, of the developments and the internal contradictions within the EU, of the rivalry between the US and Russia; it will bring forward the shortcomings of the communist and labour movement, the lack of coordination of the struggles at European level.

KKE will insist on the joint action in Balkans, Europe, in the Middle East and it will contribute:

8. Political Resolution of the 18th Congress of KKE, Communist Review, is. 3/2009 p. 135.

to the development of closer relations with the Communist Parties and the anti-imperialist movements in Africa; to the reinforcement of the joint initiatives of communist and workers' parties for the rights of foreign workers and their organisation in the class-oriented trade union movement; to the stabilisation of the regular meetings of Communist Parties from the countries of Middle East aiming at the development of solidarity; to the initiation of the discussion about the strengthening of the labour movement in the region, the anti-imperialist resistance to occupation and the repulse of the plans for the big Middle East and the US EU and NATO plans in general.

It will contribute to the development of cooperation with the communist and workers' parties in Latin America, to initiatives of solidarity with the peoples in the region who endure the attacks of the US as well as the efforts of the EU to intervene in developments in favour of its interests.

KKE will focus on the cooperation and the solidarity with the communist parties in the region that are determined to maintain their independent role and contribute to the deepening of the anti-imperialist struggle refusing to diffuse into coalitions.

As a conclusion KKE will continue and intensify its efforts for the regrouping of the communist movement, for its distinct presence and action, for its contribution to the anti-monopoly and anti-imperialist revolutionary struggle.

For the formation of the communist pole

Communists study every step they take; they make cautious movements examining the objective conditions and the possibilities at each time, seeking the link that will boost the struggle at national and international level. Thus, since its 16th Congress in 2000 KKE has engaged itself with the best possible coordination and the most effective joint action of the communist movement. The resolution of the congress highlights the need to form a more distinct global pole of the communist movement, a distinct form of coordination and cooperation at the international and regional level, better than that which has been established so far through the initiatives of communist and workers' parties.

Other communist parties have contributed to the debate on this position, sharing their experience in an exchange of views. This has reinforced the debate so as to make more substantial and quick progress in the distinct presence and action of the communist parties. This orientation was crystallized in

the resolution of the 17th Congress of KKE in 2005. The special resolution of the 17th Congress “on the situation in the international communist movement” notes the positive steps which have been made and underlines the continuation of the crisis. For the overcoming of the crisis KKE has set decisively the following goal:

“Our Party will intensify its international activities so that a more distinct form of cooperation with communist and workers’ parties will be shaped, the communist pole.

This distinct presence of the parties will create better conditions in order to confront the difficulties which exist. This will also facilitate the broader anti-imperialist rallying of forces.

The initiative for the creation of this pole can be triggered by communist parties which are close in their political and ideological viewpoints, which defend Marxism - Leninism, the contribution of socialism we knew, as well as the necessity of the struggle for socialism.[...]

The distinct communist pole in no case nullifies each party’s sovereignty and its responsibility in relation to the working class and the movement in their respective countries. It will assume the form of coordination of joint action, based on parity”.⁹

KKE has informed the communist parties about this position. It has discussed in bilateral meetings with many of the parties that expressed their interest in these positions. These discussions have shown that despite the difficulties there is a common basis, several prerequisites that can be further developed.

In this course, after a hard effort through the exchange of views and reflection on these positions there has been a convergence of several communist parties on a very essential issue:

The effort for the formation of the pole should continue; the communist parties must assume the responsibility to contribute collectively to the study of important theoretical issues, to the elaboration and the generalisation of the experience of the revolutionary anti-imperialist movement. This process should result in the publication of a theoretical journal in which the communist parties will express themselves through their theoretical journals or other publications.

The decision on the publication of the journal titled “International Communist Review” is based on common understanding as regards the defence

9. 17th Congress, Documents, publication of the CC of KKE, pp. 108-109.

of the principles of Marxism Leninism, of proletarian internationalism, the necessity of socialist construction, the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the construction of the socialist society.

This journal won't merely record theses and it won't be a journal for the exchange of views. Besides, this goal is served by other publications. It is a journal that develops dialogue and reflection on a specific, ideological-political basis. It is a step:

- For the defence and the scientific validation of the objective necessity for the existence of the communist party, the party of a new type, Leninist principles for its foundation and functioning against the views that promote the diffusion into wider opportunist formations in the name of the "unity of the left"

- To highlight the vanguard leading role of the working class in the class struggle for the overthrow of capitalism, social progress, socialism, against the opportunist unscientific practice that substitutes the working class for a mixture of petit bourgeois forces presented as the new revolutionary subject

- To expose imperialist barbarity and contribute to the development of the struggle against the imperialist unions such as NATO, EU, IMF, OSCE etc

- To resolutely defend the history of the communist movement and the further critical study of the historical experience that will reinforce the struggle of the communist parties against the constant, slandering anti-communist attack of the capitalist forces, the revisionists of history

We could say that the way has been paved but we are still at the beginning. There are many difficulties but the major issue is to realise the importance of this effort and the challenges it creates so as to consolidate progress so far.

Wishes are not enough. Each party that agreed to participate in the International Communist Review or will so in the future, must have a responsible stance.

Under certain conditions the international communist journal that will be issued by the end of 2009 can become an important tool for the reinforcement of the process of forming the communist pole, for the ideological and organisational regrouping of the communist movement for a unified communist strategy.

This process is not restricted to the journal. There are other ideas, proposals and reflections that can be collectively examined and contribute to this course.

KKE assumes its responsibilities and it will exhaust all possibilities in order for this effort to be successful.

Our party takes into account the hesitations expressed by several parties in bilateral meetings, their concerns whether this attempt, that is the journal and the communist pole, will contribute to the unity of the communist movement.

The 18th Congress of KKE approaches this issue responsibly and underlines:

"We do not share the fears that such a collective effort may cancel the responsibility of each Communist Party at the national level, nor that it would make more difficult the general effort to coordinate communist and workers parties that have differences amongst them concerning various anti-imperialist goals. The effort for a united revolutionary strategy against the united strategy of imperialism can strengthen and put forward even better the duties of each Communist Party in their country and its responsibilities vis-a-vis the working class, and generally the working people. In our opinion, a cooperation at a higher level should be based on the equality of parties, the respect of their independence and the particular views they may have. It's the responsibility and right of every CP to study the theoretical issues of our movement, the formulation of revolutionary strategy, to draw lessons from the front of struggle with the bourgeois views, reformism and opportunism at an international level, to prepare the Party and, generally, the class forces for the ups and downs of class struggle, for the successes but also the defeats, that occur, to provide scientific explanations, to take advantage of experience in order to prepare for a new advance forward, to drawn gains, for the final victory. At the same time, in our opinion every CP has also the responsibility and right to brief, to make those studies common to the fraternal communist and workers parties, to study their thoughts and views, in order, ultimately, through collective work to achieve all the hummers are hitting on the same direction, in the struggle for changing the correlation of forces and overthrow capitalism".¹⁰

The experience accumulated over these years confirms the positions of KKE which has shown in practice that the efforts for joint action around anti-imperialist anti-monopoly goals with the communist parties that have ideological differences continue while there is a need to intensify the struggle against views that oppose the revolutionary character of the communist party against the falsification or revision of Marxism Leninism.

10. Report of the CC of KKE at the 18th Congress on the First Subject, Communist Review, 2/2009 pp 51-52.

The situation in the international communist movement

On the International Meetings of Communist and Workers' Parties

by **Nikos Seretakis**

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The 11th International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties (IM-CWP) was held in New Delhi, in India, on 20-22 of November 2009, hosted by the CP of India and the CP of India (Marxist) to discuss: "The international capitalist crisis, the workers and peoples' struggle, the alternatives and the role of the communist and working class movement".

The meeting discussed the situation created by the capitalist crisis, the experience from workers and peoples' struggles, the goals and the role of the labour movement and the Communist Parties. A statement was issued stressing that we experience a crisis of the capitalist system that shows its historical limits and the need for its revolutionary overthrow. It underlined the responsibility of the bourgeois forces - both liberal and social-democratic - for the problems that workers face. It highlighted that the Communist and Workers' Parties will work to rally and to mobilize wide sections of popular forces. It stressed the need the labour movement to counterattack, not only to defend or to claim rights but also to struggle for a political way-out, for socialism.

The Meeting concluded on a number of goals for the joint action of the Communist and Workers' Parties:

1. Against NATO and its worldwide expansion, against the new forms of imperialist military aggression, as well as, against foreign military bases.
2. To establish November 29 as a day of solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinian people.
3. To highlight the 65th anniversary of the defeat of Fascism in year 2010.
4. To strengthen peoples' mobilizations for the defense of workers' rights in coordination with the trade unions.

5. To intensify the international solidarity for the liberation of the 5 Cuban patriots.

6. To reinforce peoples' mobilizations and the pressure exerted to governments claiming the right to work, in cooperation with youth organizations.

Finally, it was decided the 12th International Meeting to be held in 2010 in Africa, to be hosted by the South African Communist Party. From the first attempts to the 1st Meeting in Athens in 1999 and Solidnet, and later in Lisbon, Minsk, Sao Paulo and now India, we have come a long way. This article follows the course, the achievements and the problems still in existence, stresses the need for the establishment of a single revolutionary strategy of the International Communist Movement and presents the proposal of KKE.

1. After the overthrow

The wave of the counterrevolution that marked the end of the 20th century left the international communist and revolutionary movement seriously wounded, in a state of crisis and the labour and anti-imperialist movements weakened. Retreat and confusion prevailed.

After the overthrow of socialism a first wave of anticommunist persecution broke out. Practically in all of the former socialist countries a wave of persecution arose against communists. Cadres of CP were imprisoned, while in some cases measures were taken for the general banning of communist parties. After the first shock, communist forces slowly began to reappear; in a number of countries the communist parties have been re-founded or reconstructed. Nevertheless, the regroupment of parties and of the revolutionary movement has proved to be a difficult, contradictory and complex process.

The crisis of the communist movement has brought to light and intensified problems afflicting the revolutionary movement for years. The signs of impaired unity, strategic differences, the impact of opportunist deviations and trends are deep. In the conditions of counterrevolutionary victory the communist movement is even more vulnerable to the political and ideological offensive of the capital.

The spearhead of this offensive is the pressure for the diffusion of communist parties into broader "left" formations, for the renunciation of Marxism-Leninism and the historical role of the working class, for the detachment from the socialist past of the USSR and of the other socialist countries, from proletarian internationalism, for the abandonment of the goal of socialism or at best, for

its postponement to a vague distant future. The aim being to challenge and ultimately reject the communist identity in order to achieve the mutation of the communist parties. However, as expected, the same opportunist tendencies were reproduced in the international arena, the most representative example being the creation of the "Forum for the New European Left" in 1991¹.

2. The first attempts up until the 1st International Meeting

The efforts for the regroupment of communist parties were also reflected at the international level. Gradually the communication between parties was restored, especially at the bilateral level. At the same time party relations that had been interrupted or had not existed as a result of the split of the communist movement in the 1960's, as well as for other reasons, were established (CP of China, Japanese CP, CP of India (Marxist), CP of Brazil, Workers' Party of Belgium). In the first half of the 1990's the conditions were not yet ripe to make an appeal for an international meeting of communist and workers' parties. In many parties, particularly in a number of Communist Parties in Western Europe, the mistaken idea prevailed, that a particular international point of reference for communists would hinder the creation of wider anti-imperialist coalitions and fronts.

Nevertheless, this idea existed and was gaining ground. Initially, sporadic initiatives were taken, such as the international meeting in Pyongyang in April 1992 by the Korean Workers' Party, the international seminars of the CP of Nepal (unified M-L) and of the CP of India (Marxist)², the two meetings organized in Latin America by the Popular Socialist Party of Mexico, the meetings of the Balkan communist parties and parties in the eastern Mediterranean hosted by our party, as well as other initiatives. In fact, in 1993, Gus Hall, at that time president of the CP USA, proposed the convention of an International Conference of Communist Parties.

Since the mid-90's this process began to accelerate. In 1997 the Communist Workers' Party of Russia - Revolutionary Party of Communists hosted

1. NELF: The foundation meeting was held in 1991 in Madrid. The initiative was taken by the "Democratic Party of the Left" - which was created after the dissolution of the Italian Communist Party - the "United Left" of Spain and Synaspismos of Greece. The "Democratic Party of the Left" was later integrated into the Socialist International and left NELF that continued to embrace CPs and other opportunist forces in process of mutation or already mutated.

2. It took place in 1993: "Contemporary world situation and the validity of Marxism". In this meeting participated 30 parties.

in Leningrad an international meeting dedicated to the 80th anniversary of the October Revolution. A regional meeting of Communist Parties was also held in the eastern Mediterranean, while the CP of Cuba hosted an international symposium on the validity of socialism.

Further steps were made in 1998, when, on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the “Manifesto of the Communist Party” and the 80th anniversary of the foundation of KKE, our party organized an international meeting on the 22-24 of May under the title “The Communist Parties under current conditions”. The result of this meeting was very significant. The idea for the publication of the Information Bulletin was put forward and most importantly, it was jointly decided to organize an International Meeting of Communist and Workers’ Parties in view of the “Multilateral Agreement on Investment” (MAI) that was under discussion at that time in the framework of the OECD. It should be noted that in March 1998, two months before the meeting, the CP of Canada had addressed a letter to the other parties proposing the elaboration of a joint position of the Communist Parties on the agreement under discussion. This was the first attempt for an international joint position of Communist Parties after the overthrows. In fact, a committee was established by the CP of Canada, the CP of the USA and the CP of Australia for the elaboration of a draft statement.

Thus, we can affirm that the first international meeting was the result of several convergent initiatives, with the decisive and acknowledged contribution of KKE. A qualitative step forward was made with the decision for the organization in 1999 of an international meeting to discuss an important international issue, primarily because this meeting constituted a joint, multilateral responsibility of Communist Parties and not a one-party initiative. The list of guest parties was decided jointly; it was not determined on the basis of bilateral relations of one party or another. Thus, the framework of the meetings designates the commonly accepted limits of the communist movement.

The 1st International Meeting of Communist and Workers’ Parties opened a new phase in the multilateral relations of the parties. It created a point of reference for the communist movement and brought some practical results such as the creation of the internet hub for information Solidnet [www.solidnet.org] and the publication of the Information Bulletin which contains the material of the meetings. There is such a close connection between them and the international meetings that the latter have been registered by a number of parties and countries as “Solidnet meetings”.

Nevertheless, the 1st International Meeting had other political results as well. At that time the imperialist war of NATO against Yugoslavia was under

way. A Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties of Balkan countries was held on its margin. The Balkan Communist Parties concluded in a Joint Communiqué and a Joint Statement on the NATO attack against Yugoslavia. Also, the parties that participated in the meeting adopted an appeal against the NATO attack. These discussions and resolutions paved the way for the creation of the Balkan anti-NATO center the following year, which was the rallying pole of struggle against the NATO presence in the Balkans for several years.

3. An overview of the International Meetings

As can be attested by the details and the material of the meetings the internationalization of the meetings and the materialization of their multilateral, collective character constitute a progressive course. Initially, many important parties were holding a cautious stance without assuming any substantial involvement. Some other parties considered the meetings as initiatives of KKE, while others expected them to transform into an international organization of communists. In the 2nd International Meeting in Athens in 2000 it was proposed the creation of a "secretariat" for the coordination of action, a proposal which at that moment was neither mature nor feasible. Finally, a number of parties exerted pressure in order to transform them into meetings of "left parties", to change their composition and character. The latter group usually involves either parties in an advanced process of loss of their communist characteristics or those that approach the multilateral relations in a degraded and narrow way, considering them solely as a means to express solidarity, ignoring the need for joint action and coordination, and more importantly, the need for a common strategy against imperialism.

The developing process of the meetings helped to deal with some of these issues. However, some others remained and were even exacerbated or manifested more clearly, while new ones have arisen.

The first meetings (Table 1) were mainly meetings to exchange information, to discern parties' positions in key issues, as several parties were new and the communication among them was still very weak.

Since 2004, the subject matter of the meetings has been mainly oriented towards issues such as the way-out proposed by the communists and socialism. The escalation of the content has been in line with and accompanied by an increasing rate of participation which has been stabilized at high levels (table 2). This reflects the increasing validity of this process, which is also manifested in the following steps of progress:

- Tendency of internationalisation of meetings

This is expressed both in the composition of the parties that participate, as well as, in the fact that the meeting point changes [table 1]. After seven successful meetings in Athens, in 2006 for the first time the meeting travels to another country, Portugal. In 2007, in the former USSR, in 2008 in Latin America and in 2009 in Asia, while in the Middle East (Syria) was also held in 2009 an Extraordinary International Meeting. This circle will be completed in 2010 with the organization of the 12th International Meeting in the African continent which will be hosted by the South African Communist Party.

- Adoption of joint statements and materials

In 2002, a statement by the meeting was issued for the first time³ and not just by the hosting party. It was of significant importance due to the subject discussed, the world situation after September 11th. During that period intense pressure is exerted for the approval of the misleading slogan “no to war - no to terrorism”, which in fact legalizes the imperialist strategy. The statement warned that “*the imperialists denominate as terrorist any movement of resistance*” and reaffirmed the full support to the “*struggles of the peoples for their social rights and national independence*”. That meeting confirmed the need for the distinctive presence of Communist Parties as a key factor for the promotion of a policy of alliances and for the joint action with broader anti-imperialist forces.

In 2003 an organized reaction was manifested by forces that played a leading role in the creation of the “European Left Party” (ELP) against the publication of any document from the meeting that was held in Athens. It is no coincidence that during that period due to the demonstrations held in Thessalonica the conflict with the so-called “European Social Forum” which is dominated by the forces of social-democracy, was intensified.

Joint statements from the meetings have been issued continuously since the 6th International Meeting in 2004. In fact, in the meetings held in 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009 a procedure for the preparation of the statements and the other materials of the meetings was established.

- Promotion of joint actions

Along the way the International Meetings gradually manage to promote

3. Rizospastis, June 26, 2002

joint action at regional and international level. Perhaps, only a few remember today that the first international call for demonstrations against the G8 Summit in Genoa in 2001 was issued by the 3rd International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties that had been held earlier that year. The outcome of these meetings is registered in the multitude of efforts for coordination and joint action, joint communiqués and statements, reinforcement of the internationalist solidarity with communist parties and fighters who are persecuted.

The joint actions decided and promoted by the International Meetings involve international initiatives against NATO and its expansion, against the foreign bases and the occupation of countries, for the liberation of the Cuban Five and the lifting of the Cuban embargo, against the US anti-missile shield, as well as, European thematic meetings on Education, campaigns on the occasions of 160 years from the publication of The Communist Manifesto and 90 years from the Great October Revolution, actions of solidarity with the peoples of Bolivia, Venezuela, Palestine.

The coordinated European-wide campaign against the anticommunist memorandum of the Council of Europe in 2005-2006, that embraced all continents and developed with intensity and multiform struggles for 3 months, stands out. It was actually the first global communist campaign after the overthrows.

- Improvement of the collective preparation. The role of the Working Group.

In 2004, the 6th International Meeting which was held in Athens decided the creation of the Working Group that was assigned to determine the time, place and subject of the International Meetings. In the Working Group initially participated KKE, the CP of Bohemia Moravia, the CP of Spain, the CP of the Russian Federation, the Lebanese CP, the South African CP, the CP of Cuba and the CP of Brazil, while later the CP of Portugal, the CP of India and the CP of India (Marxist) were also included. The meetings of the Working Group are open to all parties that participate in the meetings.

The process of internationalization of the meetings and the reinforcement of their multilateral character is accompanied by the expansion of the function of the Working Group. The meeting held in Lisbon decided that the Working Group is not only responsible to determine the place and subject matter of the meetings but also to facilitate the preparation of the documents for the meetings, the process of inviting new parties to attend and the realization of joint actions.

The statement of the 8th International Meeting (2006) that took place in Portugal was adopted by the meeting as a proposal of the Working Group. In 2007 and 2009 the meetings were jointly organized by two parties [CP of Belarus and CP of the Russian Federation, CP of India and CP of India (Marxist)].

In February 26, 2008, the Working Group met in Lisbon and for the first time an effort was made to assess the overall process of the meetings, to systematize their methodology and report on issues open to discussion.

The Working Group assesses in its final conclusions that: *“The process of the International Meetings is today an established procedure that attracts the interest of more and more parties. It has contributed to the strengthening of our movement, to the deep awareness of the parties as regards to the reality of each country, to the development of the analysis of the international conditions, the closer relations between our parties and the promotion of our cooperation”* and notes that *“the Meeting should maintain its original characteristics, that it is a Meeting of Communist and Workers’ Parties having as a main goal to exchange information, to contribute on a joint assessment as regards the framework of the international developments that entails our action and the promotion of the cooperation aiming at the coordinated or convergent action. This process should not evolve towards the establishment of a formation.”*

Discussion is taking place on how to link this process more effectively with labour and popular struggles, as well as, with the promotion of regional initiatives in relation with the International Meetings.

The initial reservations and hesitations on the issue of joint communiqués have been overcome and the conclusions note that: *“It is important for the Meeting to produce political documents whose content will be fully approved by all the participants”*.

The meeting of the Working Group on February 16th 2008 for the first is not limited to announcing the subject matter for discussion and to dealing with the details of the International Meeting. It took position in a number of international issues, among which, the condemnation of the proclaimed “independence” of Kosovo should be highlighted.

On December 2008 and March 2009 the Working Group made proposals to communist and workers’ parties for resolutions of solidarity with the Palestinian people that were issued and were broadly supported. On April 2009 it took the initiative to issue a joint statement of communist parties on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of NATO implementing the decision taken by the 10th International Meeting on November 2008 in Sao Paulo, Brazil. The contribution of the Working Group in the Extraordinary International Meeting

of Communist and Workers' Parties that was held in Damascus on September 2009 was substantial and immediate.

4. Assessment of the contribution of the International Meetings

The International Meetings of Communist and Workers' Parties are undoubtedly a significant achievement of the Communist Movement. They have confirmed that despite the crisis, the communist movement remains a global force. They have enabled the parties to develop better relations, have facilitated their communication and the bilateral relations which are necessary for the development of the parties and the promotion of coordination and joint action; they have contributed to the resistance to the pressure exerted aiming at the diffusion of communist parties; they have enabled the emergence of new forces, the regroupment and creation of communist parties providing them an international point of reference. At the same time they have facilitated discussion and fruitful debate.

They have assisted many Communist and Workers' Parties to be better prepared in order to face imperialist aggression and to further intensify their actions against imperialist wars. Some of these parties have played leading roles in the struggles of the working class and in workers' mobilizations for their rights.

5. Problems and limits

However, the positive steps of the previous period fall short of the needs. They have neither reversed the negative situation nor overcome the ideological-political and organizational crisis of the international movement. On the contrary, in some countries, especially in powerful imperialist states, the process of opportunist erosion of communist parties and their mutation towards social-democracy continued. The establishment of the European Left Party (ELP) within the European Union signaled the organic fusion of the contemporary opportunist currents with the structures of the imperialist centre of the EU and state mechanisms of the member-states; it is a powerful tool in order to exert pressure for the further "de-communization" of the parties that participate or are affiliated with ELP.

Alongside the development of joint action, the important differences existing began to emerge. There were deviations between the communist parties that participated, particularly regarding their position towards the socialist

construction in the 20th century, the role of the CP, the stance of Communists towards imperialist organizations, as well as towards social-democracy and opportunism.

This situation has been reflected in the international meetings of Communist and Workers' Parties. It can be particularly noticed after 2001 and the new situation developed after September 11th and under conditions of increasing capitalist crisis.

Also, problems have arisen in relation with the stance towards imperialist legitimacy, which becomes quite acute in the context of the "fight against terrorism, of the attack on Iraq and Afghanistan, of their legalization by the UN".

Some parties have adopted the "rejection of terrorism" and, either deliberately or not thus have legitimized the imperialist strategy: *"War and terror, while fighting each other, nourish each other mutually in a perverse spiral causing death and destruction, and annihilating politics as a capacity for people to be main actors in determining their lives and the development of democracy. Both, war and terror, end up collapsing into the chasm of the clash of civilizations"*⁴.

The consequence of such positions is the general "condemnation of violence" and the subsequent refusal of any concept of revolutionary action.

The problem is substantial; it has a practical reflection in the direction of the struggle. Regarding the movement it is disorienting, it promotes the acceptance of the misleading slogan "no to war-no to terrorism" that has been a battering ram of the imperialist aggression after September 11th. The Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova supports this line considering that *"After the inconceivable terrorist attacks in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania which, obviously, were crimes against humankind, all countries have shown resoluteness in their efforts to bring the culprits to trial and prevent future attacks. And though division of opinion concerning the reasonableness of retaliatory military actions carried out under the guidance of the USA, as well as concerning some of the means used, was observed in various countries, certainly there was no difference as far as the aforementioned main goals were concerned"* and regards as a positive international development the rapprochement of US-Russia-EU after the attack on September 11th.⁵

4. Resolution on the Afghanistan issue, 2006, Party of the Communist Refoundation http://solidnet.org/cgi-bin/agent?parties/0450=italy,_communist_refoundation/970rifondazione21jul06.doc

5. http://solidnet.org/cgi-bin/agent?meetings/559=the_situation_in_the_world_after_september_11th_athens_21-23_06_2002/609=party_of_the_communists_of_the_republic_of_moldova

The problem of the analysis of the nature of the imperialist aggression and of the contemporary trends within the imperialist system is directly related to the orientation of the movement, with long-lasting repercussions. Today, for example, we can evaluate more clearly the position of the CP USA in 2002 that *"In the wake of the horrific terrorist attack of September 11th and its tragic consequences, we believe the great task of left, progressive, labor, peace and justice forces in our country - including the Communist Party USA and the Young Communist League - is to work together to build a labor-led people's movement large enough and broad enough to turn the policies of the Bush administration away from war, intervention, austerity, repression, anti-labor and anti-immigrant attacks and racism. To make a shift toward democracy, economic and social justice at home and in international relations will take the work of tens of millions"*.⁶

Unfortunately, although there are warnings on the nature of the conflicts of USA-EU-Russia⁷ in many parties a neutral analysis of the inter-imperialist antagonisms dominates. It is noted that erroneous views of a "unipolar world" and of a "US empire" are gaining ground.

The separation of politics and economics leads to serious mistakes and deviations with disastrous practical and political consequences for the labour movement. The fact that various CP persist in attributing the intensification of the imperialist aggression to the administration of Bush, and respectively in Europe to Berlusconi, Aznar and so on, while promoting illusions about the administration of Obama, provokes great confusion and difficulties in the development and correct orientation of the struggles. This view, in its extreme, talks of a "historic victory", that considers that "the impossible is now possible" and that "if Obama fails, we all fail" (we, the communists!)⁸.

6. 4th IMCWP 2002, contribution of CP USA http://solidnet.org/cgi-bin/agent?meetings/559=the_situation_in_the_world_after_september_11th_athens_21-23_06_2002/633=communist_party_usa

7. For example, the CP of Australia in the 4th IMCWP notes correctly that *"In presenting an analysis of the current situation, which more than ever has to be seen in its worldwide dimension, we note the growing conflict of interests between the rival imperialist blocks. This is particularly to be seen in the differing positions taken on some important questions by the US on the one hand and Europe on the other. Needless to say they are united when it comes to their common imperialist class interests do not coincide. This may not yet have become a decisive difference but the aspiration of the US imperialists for world domination inevitably conflicts with the imperialist interests of European capital"*.

http://solidnet.org/cgi-bin/agent?meetings/559=the_situation_in_the_world_after_september_11th_athens_21-23_06_2002/564=communist_party_of_australia

8. See the article of the vice president of the CP USA, Jarvis Tyner <http://www.politicalaffairs.net/article/articleview/8960/>

The US attack on Iraq in 2003, the inter-imperialist antagonisms on oil reserves, the ex post facto legitimization of the UN occupation has made such problems even more apparent. The contributions of the Iraqi CP are quite interesting. In the IMCWP in 2002 they have noted that *"Terrorism is thus confused with violence as if any violence, including the fight against occupying regimes and dictatorship, is terrorism. This only amounts to equating between the oppressor's crime and the victim's self-defense"*⁹. A year after the occupation and having participated in the occupational government, this party recognized that the Iraqi people *"have a legitimate right to resort to various forms of struggle to end the occupation and restore national sovereignty. But resisting occupation is not limited to employing violent means in struggle, but rather includes various forms of political struggle. The lessons of history teach us that peoples only resort to armed struggle when they are forced to do so after exhausting political means"*¹⁰. Later, they linked the withdrawal of the foreign occupation troops with the reconstitution (by the occupation forces) of the Iraqi armed forces and security agencies.¹¹

In March 2006 the Iraqi CP did not sign the joint statement of 64 Communist and Workers' Parties that called for the immediate withdrawal of the occupation troops and noted that *"as communist and workers' parties struggling for peace, social justice, progress and socialism, we support the legitimate right for the Iraqi people to resist occupation"*¹².

Substantial differences arise in the debate on the economic crisis and its causes. Although the prevailing view is that it is a cyclical crisis of overproduction, it is not accepted by all. The concepts of "systemic" and "structural" crisis are presented with ambiguous content. There are views that do not take into consideration or even downgrade the cause of the capitalist crisis, the basic contradiction of capitalism and refer to the failure of the "neoliberal model" or to the responsibilities of "deregulation" and "financial speculation", and there are even opinions that talk of the crisis of "long waves" according to the Kondratiev economic wave theory.

9. http://solidnet.org/cgi-bin/agent?meetings/559=the_situation_in_the_world_after_september_11th_athens_21-23_06_2002/598=iraqi_communist_party

10. Iraqi CP, 5th IMCWP, 2004 http://solidnet.org/cgi-bin/agent?meetings/483=International_Meeting_of_Communist_And_Workers_Parties,_Athens_8-10_October_2004/040=Contributions/Iraq,_Iraqi_Communist_Party/iraqi18oct04.doc

11. See the contribution to the 9th IMCWP http://solidnet.org/cgi-bin/agent?meetings/472=International_Meeting_of_Communist_And_Workers_Parties,_Minsk_03_to_05_November_2007/040=Contributions/Iraq,_Iraqi_Communist_Party

12. http://www.solidnet.org/cgi-bin/agent?parties/0350=greece,_communist_party_of_greece/532kke13mar061.doc

Thus, it is not peculiar that the communist and labour movement does not give a single response or even a response in a convergent direction. The deviations derive not simply from different assessments on major international issues but also concern matters of strategic direction of the struggle; issues concerning the Leninist theory of imperialism, the historic mission of the working class, the role of the Communist Party, the issue of resolving the question of power as a key issue of the political struggle.

Where there have been doubts on the historic role of the working class and its movement they have led in practice to the revival of positions for the “surpassing” of the communist movement. Significant the damage has been caused to a number of parties and movements by the theories of Hart and Negri, the views on the disappearance of the working class, on the “new social subjects”. The bankrupted schemes of the “new left” and Eurocommunism for a supposedly “new” revolutionary “inter-class” subject based on the “new movements” were revamped.

Some communist parties considered the social forums as the appropriate form of expression of the international solidarity and action. This, objectively, was leading towards the diffusion of communist parties and the abandonment of any idea of organization of the labour and people's movement. *“New forms of organizations and alliances are appropriate...and can be summarized in the concept of a “network”, a new political culture of cooperation among different groups. This movement against the capitalist globalization is based to a large extent on the countless groups and local citizens’ initiatives which, on the one hand, are united in a network, but on the other are certainly not under any program or central leadership”*¹³.

In terms of international relations this was translated into disenchantment with the International Meetings of Communist and Workers’ Parties¹⁴ and the undermining of initiatives addressed solely to Communist Parties. This stance was theorized through the concept of the “new internationalism”, the rejection of proletarian internationalism, the convergence in practice with social-democracy¹⁵.

13. CP of Austria in the 4th IMCWP, http://solidnet.org/cgi-bin/agent?meetings/559=the_situation_in_the_world_after_september_11th_athens_21-23_06_2002/565=communist_party_of_austria/austriaengint02.doc

14. See Table 3

15. The view of the “new internationalism” is adopted both by the Communist Refoundation (see document on the international policy – June 1997) and the French CP. This position is not new. It was launched in the early ‘80s by the Italian CP and was adopted by the Eurocommunist current. This actually means denial of the special relations between Communist Parties, distancing from the USSR and approach of social-democracy at international level.

There was no unanimous response to the issue of tackling the antisocialist – anticommunist attack either. Political parties that participate in the ELP in practice adopt and support anti-Stalinism which is the basic battering ram of the anticommunist campaign and is used as a means for the defamation of the period when important steps were made for the socialist construction and the fight back of the nazi attack against the USSR. What did the French CP state after months of silence to the anticommunist memorandum that was under discussion during 2005-2006 at the Council of Europe? That “*Stalinism is a terrible perversion of a communist ideal... The French CP was not waiting for the communist system to collapse in order to condemn the violation of freedom that for a long period of time were overriding (and at times still do) the humanistic and democratic principles that are the heart of the communist project of the society*”¹⁶ !!!

The 5th Congress of the Communist Refoundation was a precursor of these positions (or even of the very wave of the new anticommunist hysteria?). In its theses we read: “*The radical break with Stalinism found its main grounds and impetus, so far as the Italian Communist movement was concerned, in the issues of the rights of the individuals and democracy. Our radical break with Stalinism recognized and developed these in the name of Socialism, of liberation from wage slavery, of the critique of alienation, the critique of the separation between the bourgeois citizen and the State, of the revolution as an indivisible, world-wide phenomenon... Our definitive separation from Stalinism is today the necessary condition for bringing up the subject of Communism and, indeed, a permanent warning that we must free ourselves of every last trace of it in our daily practice*”¹⁷. Regarding the results of this direction the course of events in Italy speaks for itself.

The creation of the European Left Party (ELP) established a European centre of reproduction, amplification and transmission of opportunist views and anticommunism¹⁸. The discussion in the Executive Council of the ELP

16. See <http://www.pcf.fr/spip.php?article531> and Rizospastis, January 22, 2006.

17. Preparatory Paper for the 5th Congress http://solidnet.org/cgi-bin/agent?parties/0450=italy,_communist_refoundation/979italyref13n01.doc

18. The PEL is against the anticommunist memorandum adding meaningfully that “it is one thing to condemn outright the crimes of Stalinism, which contradict the basic idea of Socialism. That goes without saying.”

http://www.european-left.org/nc/english/home/news_archive/news_archive/browse/20/zurueck/news-archive/artikel/european-left-executive-board-statement-on-a-draft-resolution-on-communism-at-the-parliamentary-asse/ . It is outrageous the absence of reaction against the prosecution of the leadership of the Hungarian Communist Workers' Party in 2007 (party-member at that time of the PEL) as well as, to the threats to outlaw the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (party observer) in 2009

on 8-9 January 2005 on the occasion of the letter of the CP of Bohemia and Moravia where in the name of “Stalinism” they attack the socialism we have known, is a characteristic example. Fausto Bertinoti, president of the ELP and of the Communist Refoundation declared that “The rejection of Stalinism belongs to our political identity” and Pedro Marset from the United Left of Spain added that “It is a meaningful question to condemn Stalinism”. According to Jean-François Gau of the French CP “it would be a great blow against the future” if the “break with Stalinism” – which means “culture of barbarism” according to Stelios Papas of SYN- is removed from the ELP’s statutes. What we need to break away from is not capitalism, imperialism or even the European Union; according to the ex-communist Wolfgang Gehrcke (PDS) “the thing that we must break away from is Stalinism. If we do not do that, it would be the end of the ELP. Not only of the ELP, but also the end of the European left movement. I am convinced that only the break with Stalinism, which we must openly express, opens the door for future development”.¹⁹

Looking over the time the course of the International Communist Movement, the International Meetings, the development of the anti-imperialist movements, the 17th Congress of KKE expressed the position that *“despite the steps forward, the International Communist Movement remains organizationally and ideologically fragmented; it is still experiencing a crisis. The struggle between revolutionary communist viewpoints and reformist, opportunist ones continues within its ranks. The conflict between the line of ‘resistance-rupture’ and the line of ‘adaptation-assimilation’ into the imperialist system continues”*.²⁰

It is obvious that if we do not face these difficulties, the differences that exist and increase will hinder the development of the joint action of Communist Parties.

7. The need for a single strategy

Our Party has had a significant contribution to the initiation and consolidation of the International Meetings of Communist and Workers’ Parties and considers of great importance their continuation and upgrading. We salute the

19. See Rizospastis March 27, 2005, p. 18. <http://www1.rizospastis.gr/wwwengine/page.do?publDate=27/3/2005&pageNo=18&direction=1>

20. Resolution “Concerning the Situation in the International Communist Movement”, 17th Congress

decision for the realization of the 12th IMCWP for the first time in Africa. It is necessary that the IMCWP continue to deal with issues of the struggle against anticommunism, the evaluation of the main currents within the contemporary imperialist system, the development of resistance to the capitalist restructuring, anti-imperialist solidarity, the class oriented current in the trade unions, the struggle for peace and the other movements at national and international level.

Taking into consideration the positive and negative experience, it is necessary to take specific steps for the realization of the annual guidelines of action of the IMCWP encouraging initiatives of parties or groups of parties with the widest possible propagation and discussion. It is necessary to promote the joint action on the basis of common decisions for the coordination of action, the reinforcement of the anti-imperialist struggle, against imperialist war and intervention, against hunger and poverty, for the protection of the environment.²¹

It is necessary for the Working Group to support and assist the implementation of these guidelines while continuing its main task, which is the collective preparation of the Meetings.

The International Meetings of Communist and Workers' Parties are undoubtedly useful. It is imperative to reinforce their character as meetings of Communist and Workers' Parties which is the basis for their success and significance. However, the crisis of the International Communist Movement cannot be overcome solely through the International Meetings of Communist and Workers' Parties despite the improvement of the coordination, the methodical organization of joint action and initiatives of the parties that take part. The ideological unity of the International Communist Movement is not determined by the number of parties that sign the joint declarations, despite the positive aspects of this fact. It is determined by whether today the Communist Parties defending Marxism-Leninism will be able to respond effectively to the political and ideological struggle with capital, to anticommunism, formulating a cohesive strategy against imperialism, for socialism.

Since its 15th Congress in 1996, our Party has expressed in its Programme the position that *"The struggle against imperialism, for socialism cannot have substantial and firm successes if the communist movement is organizationally and ideologically fragmented. The regroupment of the international communist movement and the emergence from its present state of crisis and retreat,*

21. See Political Resolution of the 18th Congress http://www.kke.gr/18o_synedrio/politikh_apofash_toy_18oy_synedrioy_toy_kke?act=3&morf=1&tab=1

*the restoration of its unity on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, of the proletarian internationalism and of a single strategy, as well as its particular expression are the most urgent tasks set by the present conditions of struggle against the international unity of the capital. In this direction, coordination and common action, dialogue and discussion about its ideological identity, the strategy of the modern anti-imperialist and revolutionary struggle can and must go forward. This is a process which is absolutely linked with the resolute struggle against and refuting of the reformist and opportunist viewpoints, as well as the various theories that aim to assimilate and manipulate the working class".*²²

This position is fully confirmed by the developments and the problems that have arisen. The need for a substantial discussion is acknowledged by wider forces of the communist movement.

As long as the regroupment of the Internacional Communist Movement does not make any steps in the direction for the creation of a strong revolutionary movement capable of leading a strategic counterattack and of reviving the socialist perspective, the radical progressive popular forces and the movements that emerge will be more vulnerable to confusion and assimilation.

Our party's effort through KOME²³, through the International Communist Review in cooperation with other theoretical reviews of communist parties can be a substantial contribution to the creation of a distinctive communist pole.

The debate, the joint research, the study of new phenomena and trends, the fight against opportunism, will also facilitate the joint action with communist parties despite some fundamental ideological differences.

Today, the need to accelerate the process with specific, stable, practical steps of regroupment and consolidation of the communist pole it is even more imperative than ever; a distinctive presence of communist and workers' parties, of communist forces that work actively in the direction of a united revolutionary strategy in the international communist movement.

Such an achievement will have an overall positive effect on the wider communist movement, for the unity of its actions and the popular anti-imperialist movements. It is essential for the revival of the socialist vision, for the projection of socialism as the only timely and necessary way out for the peoples. It is the demand of our times.

22. Programme of KKE Chapter A. "The modern revolutionary and anti-imperialist movement" <http://inter.kke.gr/Documents/docprogr/docprogr3/>

23. Communist Review, theoretical organ of the CC.

Appendix

Table 1. The Meetings and subjects of discussion

Date	Subject	Place
21-23/6/1999	The capitalist crisis, globalization and the response of the labor movement.	Athens
23-25/6/2000	The experience from the struggle, the alliances and the cooperation of the Communists today	Athens
22-24/6/2001	Communists and the trade union movement.	Athens
21-23/6/2002	The new world situation after September 11, 2001.	Athens
19-20/6/2003	The movements against war and the capitalist globalization, and the Communists .	Athens
8-10/10/2004	Resistance to imperialist aggressiveness. Fronts of struggle and alternatives.	Athens
18-20/11/2005	Current trends in capitalism: economic, social and political impact. The Communists' alternative.	Athens
10-12/11/2006	Dangers and potentialities of the international situation. The imperialist strategy and the energy issue. The people's struggle and the experience of Latin America, the prospect of Socialism	Lisbon
3-5/11/2007	90 th anniversary of the October Revolution: the relevance and validity of its ideals. The communists in the struggle against imperialism, for socialism.	Minsk
21-23/11/2008	New phenomena in the international framework. Worsening national, social, environmental and inter-imperialist contradictions and problems. The struggle for peace, democracy, sovereignty, progress and socialism and unity of action of Communist and Workers' Parties.	Sao Paulo
20-22/11/2009	The international capitalist crisis, the workers' and people's struggle, the alternatives and the role of the communist and working class movement.	New Delhi

Table 2. Progress on the participation

Year	Number of parties	Countries
1998	57	50
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1999	55	46
2000	60	47
2001	54	41
2002	62	50
2003	59	47
2004	64	51
2005	73	62
2006	63	50
2007	72	59
2008	66	55
2009	57	47

Table 3. Participation in the International Meetings of Communist and Workers' Parties

Parties	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998
CP of Albania					x	x	x	x		x	x	x
PADS	mes	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
CP Azerbaijan	mes		x								mes	x
Egyptian CP					x		x	x	x	x	x	x
CP of Argentina	x	x		x	x	mes	mes	mes	x		mes	mes
CP of Armenia	mes		x				x	x	x	x	mes	mes
CP of Australia	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
CP of Austria					x	mes	x	x		x	mes	mes
CP of Venezuela		x	x		x	mes		x				
CP of Belgium								mes		x	mes	
Workers' Party of Belgium	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
CP of Vietnam	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Workers' Communist Party of Bosnia and Herzegovina				x	x	mes						
CP of Bolivia		x	x	x								
Brazilian CP	x	X		x			mes					
CP of Brazil	x	X	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		mes	mes
CP of Britain	x	X	x	x	x		x	mes	mes	x	x	x
New CP of Britain			x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x
Marxist Platform of Bulgarian Socialist Party	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	x	x	x	x
Party of the Bulgarian Communists (Georgi Dimitroff)					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
CP of Bulgaria		x	x		x	x	mes	x	x	x	x	x
French CP	x	x		o			x	mes			mes	x
German CP	x	x	x	x	x	x	mes	x		x	x	x
Unified CP of Georgia		x	x	x	x	x					x	x
People's Progressive Party of Guyana	x											
CP in Denmark	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
CP of Denmark	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
CP of Greece	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
CP of Ecuador		x				mes						
CP of Estonia					x	x						
CP USA	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Parties	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998
CP of India	x	x	x	x	mes	x	x	mes	x	x	mes	x
CP of India (m)	x	x	x	x	x	mes	x	mes	x		mes	x
Tudeh Party of Iran	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Iraqi CP	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
CP of Kurdistan-Iraq						mes			x	x	x	x
CP of Ireland	x	x	x		x	x	x					
Workers' Party of Ireland		x		x	x	x	x	x		x	x	
CP of Israel	x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Communist Refoundation Party	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Party of the Italian Communists	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	mes	x	x	x	
Japanese CP												x
Jordanian CP			x		x	x	mes		x	x	x	x
CP of Spain	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
Party of the Communists of Cataluña				x	mes					x		
CP of the Peoples of Spain	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
United Left of Spain			x			x		x	x	x	x	x
CP of Canada	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
CP of Kazakhstan			x									
CP of China	x	x	x	o	o		mes	o				x
Workers' Party of Korea	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Colombian CP		x		x		mes	x	x	x	x	mes	
FARC-EP					mes		mes	x	x	x		
CP of Cuba	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
AKEL	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cp of Kirgizia	x		x									
People's Revolutionary Party of Laos	x	x	x	x	mes	mes	mes		mes			
Socialist Party of Latvia	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
CP of Belarus		x	x		x		mes	x	x	x	x	x
Lebanese CP	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	mes
Socialist Party of Lithuania			x		x	x	mes					
CP of Luxemburg	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
Party of the Congress for the Independence of Madagascar					x							
CP of Malta				x	x	x						
Party of Communists, Mexico	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				

Parties	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998
Popular Socialist Party, Mexico				x				mes				
Popular Socialist Party of Mexico	mes		x		mes	mes	x	x	mes			x
Party of the Communists of the Republic of Moldova			x		mes	x	mes	x	mes	x	mes	mes
CP of Bangladesh	x				mes	x	mes	x				
Democratic Trend-Bahrain									x			
National Liberation Front-Bahrain	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	mes			mes	x
Democratic Progressive Tribune-Bahrain			x	x	x	x	x		x			
CP of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist)	x	x	x			mes	mes	mes	mes	x		
New Communist Party of the Netherlands	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
CP of Norway	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
South African CP	x	x		x	mes	mes			mes	x	x	
Communist Workers' Party of Hungary	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
People's Party of Panama		x										
CP of Pakistan	x	x										
Palestinian CP	x	x			x	x	mes	mes		x	x	x
Palestinian People's Party	x	x				x	mes	x				
Paraguayan CP		x										
CP of Macedonia			x	x	x				mes			
Peruvian CP	x	x			x							
CP of Peru (Patria Roja)		x		x								
CP of Poland			x		x	x	mes	x				
Portuguese CP	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	mes	x	x	x	x
Romanian CP					x	x	x		x	x	x	x
Socialist Alliance Party, Romania					x	x	mes	mes				
CP of the Russian Federation	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Russian Communist Workers' Party	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
CP of the Soviet Union		x	x		x	x		x				
Union of Communist Parties-CP of the Soviet Union			x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
New CP of Yugoslavia	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Communists Serbia										mes	mes	

Parties	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998
CP of Slovakia			x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	mes
Sudanese CP			x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
CP of Sweden		x	x		x	x	x		mes	x	mes	mes
CP of Sri Lanka	x		x					mes	mes		mes	mes
Syrian CP (Bakdash)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Syrian CP (Faisal)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
CP of Tajikistan					x		mes		mes			x
CP of Turkey	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Labor Party of Turkey (EMEP)			x	x		o	x	mes	x		x	x
CP of Bohemia and Moravia	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
CP of Ukraine		x	x		x	mes	x	x	x	x	x	mes
Union of Communists of Ukraine		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Communist Party of Uruguay		x		x			mes					mes
CP of Finland	x	x	x	x	x	mes	x	x	mes	x	x	mes
Philippine Communist Party-1930			x		x	x	mes	mes		x		
CP of Chile		x	x	x	mes	mes	mes	mes			x	mes

X = participated

mes. = sent message

O = observer

- = does not exist any more or is not invited

On current international issues

Statement on the events on the 20th anniversary since the fall of Berlin Wall

by **Aleka Papariga**

General Secretary of the CC of KKE

The newspaper "Working Russia" - organ of the Communist Workers' Party of Russia - Revolutionary Party of Communists [RKRP-RPC] - addressed to the General Secretary of the CC of KKE Aleka Papariga the following question: "In recent days, on the occasion of the 20th anniversary since the fall of Berlin Wall, we are witnessing an intensification of the anticommunist hysteria, of the attack on Communist Parties and communist ideals in Russia, as well as in other European countries. What is your comment on this development?"

Aleka Papariga gave the following answer: "These days international imperialism continues and intensifies its campaign in order to distort the great contribution of socialism as we knew it, focusing on Berlin and the anticommunist events on the fall of the Wall. At the same time the governments and the bourgeois parties as a whole make persistent and coordinated efforts to present capitalism as an eternal system, as a system that ensures freedom and democracy and meets the people's needs as well. In this framework we are witnessing the intensification of the anticommunist hysteria in Russia which has been the birthplace of the first victorious socialist revolution, the October revolution.

The anticommunist attack is launched by those who 20 years ago characterized the counterrevolution as "world-historic event", by those who declared the coming of a new era of peace, security and prosperity. The experience accumulated over this period has refuted these proclamations, and revealed their content. Let us remember what international opportunism, which still supports that capitalism can be humanised, used to say during that period.

Over these 20 years many walls have been erected in front of the people. The intensification of exploitation, the unjust wars, the capitalist economic crisis, the restriction of basic rights, unemployment, poverty, the spread of drugs and crime, the waves of immigration, the death of millions of people of thirst and diseases, are the results of the capitalist steamroller whose god is profit and not human needs. It is a huge lie to argue that the fall of Berlin Wall, the counterrevolution, united the people of Europe and brought freedom. The only freedom it brought was for the EU and NATO imperialists and all the capitalist organizations, allowing them to launch an attack against workers' and people's interests from better positions, to pass "anti-terrorist" laws and fortify their forces of repression.

It was confirmed that the socialism of the 20th century, despite the shortcomings and the mistakes that were made, was a superior social economic system; it has proved its superiority to capitalism. Workers' rights, that in capitalist conditions are just a pipe dream, were taken for granted in socialism. I refer to permanent and stable work for all, to the establishment of 8-hour and 7-hour working day for all, to free education and health-care for all, to free time, to a decent life for the elderly, to the acquisition of a high cultural level, to the huge achievements made in a very short period of time in the field of science and art, to the conquest of space. I refer to the security that young people felt for their future.

It was actually several years after the end of World War II, in 1961, when the Berlin Wall was erected by the workers' state and thousands of workers defending their gains. The existence of this time gap has its explanation and reasons. The borders between East and West Berlin, which was entirely in the territory of the German Democratic Republic (few people are actually aware of this fact), closed when NATO tanks entered the territory of the German Democratic Republic and headed towards the centre of Berlin. It was the same period that the defense minister of West Germany Franz Josef Straus declared that people should be prepared for a civil war in Germany. The same period that subversion and sabotages in the economy of German Democratic Republic intensified. It was imperialism that imposed the erection of the Wall, the conflict between capitalism and socialism.

The socialism of the 20th century, which was constructed in the USSR and the other countries of Eastern Europe, was not a society without weaknesses and shortcomings, while erroneous strategic choices made especially during the 1950s and 1960s and culminated in the following decades, brought about destructive consequences for the workers' state power.

In its 18th Congress KKE studied these mistakes and put forward its criticism, aiming to contribute to the ideological reinforcement of the communist movement and to improve its ability to wage struggles today. At the same time, it does not submit to the bourgeoisie demands requiring KKE to resign from defending the historical achievements of socialism, it does not “throw the baby out with the bathwater” as opportunists do.

We call upon the working class to search for the truth about socialism and reject the anti-communist propaganda that identifies socialism with fascism and aims to prevent the people from drawing the true conclusions. We call upon the working class to struggle along with the communists and the popular forces in towns and villages; to fight for what still makes the imperialists tremble and forces them to put communists on trials and prohibit their action in several countries; to pave the way for people's economy and power. Socialism is both timely and necessary.”





On current international issues

The international capitalist crisis, the workers' and peoples' struggle, the alternatives and the role of the communist and working class movement

(Contribution at the International Meeting communist and workers' parties in India)

by **Giorgos Marinos**

Member of the Politburo of the CC of KKE

We would like to thank the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and the Communist Party of India for hosting and organizing the Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties. The fact that the International Meeting is taking place in Asia for the first time is a very significant step. Amongst others, it underlines our solidarity with the peoples in the region that has increasingly become the target of imperialist plans and rivalries as well as our solidarity with the struggle of the communist parties that often face extremely difficult conditions, persecutions, discriminations, assassinations.

The examination of the developments regarding the capitalist crisis will enrich our experience and it will contribute to the development of the communist struggle. Communists study the capitalist crisis, its causes and its consequences, the conditions it creates for the development of the ideological, political and mass struggle. Nevertheless, the concentration of our attention on the capitalist crisis should not distract us from the capitalist development of the previous period in which the factors that led to the crisis have developed. Furthermore, the working people must treat the capitalist development in a unified way in all the stages of the economic cycle and draw conclusions as well.

Capitalism is dangerous not only in the economic recession phase of the crisis. It is dangerous as a whole. Because in all its stages it is char-

acterized by the exploitation of the labour force, by the surplus value which is created by unpaid labour, by the drive for capitalist profit which is the life and soul of the capitalist system.

Even in conditions of economic growth, of expansion of production and increase of the wealth produced by the workers, it is the big capital that appropriates the fruits of this development, increasing its profit and its power. The profits of magnates, bankers, ship-owners as well as other sectors of the plutocracy, the strengthening of monopoly capital are immense.

On the contrary, workers face the increase of unemployment, the freezing of salaries and pensions, the increase in the age of retirement, the downgrading of the right to education, healthcare, welfare, sports, culture, as well as the heavy consequences arising from privatizations and the liberation of fields and sectors of the economy.

These tendencies do not apply merely to the capitalist countries that hold an intermediate or subordinate position in the capitalist pyramid. They also apply to the US, to the EU as an interstate imperialist organisation; they apply to the capitalist world as a whole.

The preconditions of the crisis developed on this ground. Therefore, the communist parties must struggle in order to highlight the real causes of the crisis and reveal the fake allegations of social democracy and opportunism that use many pretexts in order to safeguard capitalism and conceal its irreconcilable contradictions.

There can be no retreat; the ideological-political struggle must intensify.

We must resolutely respond to the allegations of the bourgeois and opportunist forces, especially to those of the European Left Party and the party "die Linke" that play a leading role in the attempt to promote capital's positions in the working class. We must respond to the new wave of anti-communism unfolding on the occasion of the 20 years of the counterrevolution with the full support of liberal, social democratic and opportunist forces.

First: the allegation that the crisis has been caused exclusively by neo-liberal management conceals the truth, it exonerates capitalism from its responsibilities and whitewashes social democracy. Capitalism has been undergoing crises since the 19th century. With its transition to the imperialist stage, crises took on a systemic character.

All forms of management have been tested in order to prevent and avoid crises: the reinforcement of state commercial activity and the stimulation of demand according to the new Keynesian recipes; likewise the neoliberal recipes but also the mixtures of social democratic and neoliberal policies. However,

the laws of capitalism persist. Economic crises of overproduction have manifested themselves in all periods, irrespective of the form of management.

The capitalist restructurings initiated after the crisis of 1973 and spread in the 1990s have not occurred by accident. Their goal was to deal with the problems concerning the reproduction of capital and the slowdown of the capitalist development. These changes meet the internal necessity of the system for greater centralization and profit making of capital through the liberation of markets, the free movement of capital, goods, services and workforces. But even this management has lost its dynamic; it led to an economic crisis.

Second: the characterization of the crisis as a financial one and the theory of 'casino-capitalism' conceal the real causes of the crisis. Furthermore, they have been refuted by the developments as the crisis has already embraced all spheres of the economy. The history of the crises has proven that they can initially manifest themselves in the financial system but their root is the over-accumulation of capital that takes place in the sphere of production.

The bad loans granted by banks and other financial companies in the US have served a specific need: to provide a profitable way out to over-accumulated capital that included the surplus value created by the exploitation of the labour force, by unpaid labour in production; to provide a way out to over-accumulated capital and continue expanded reproduction overcoming the problems regarding the purchasing power of the workers' families by means of lending for home purchasing or the satisfaction of other needs.

The analysis of these complicated issues regarding the reproduction of social capital requires the comprehensive examination of the relationship between industrial, commercial and bank capital, taking into account that in the era of imperialism, even more so nowadays, the merging of industrial with bank capital, the formation of financial capital has taken on huge dimensions.

The real cause of the crisis is the intensification of the main contradiction of capitalism, the contradiction between the social character of production and the capitalist appropriation of its results due to the fact that the means of production are under capitalist ownership. The goal of capitalism is profit and not the satisfaction of the people's needs.

These elements prevail in the exploitative system; they constitute the basis of the anarchic, uneven development; the basis of the tendency of the rate of profit to fall which is caused by the increase of the organic composition of capital; the basis of the contradiction between production and consumption. These factors lead to the dysfunctions in the reproduction of social capital, to "outbreaks", and crises of overproduction.

We struggle so that the people realise the real causes of the crisis and we devote all our forces to the organisation of the struggle of the working class and the popular strata against the capitalist aggression and the anti-people policy that supports capital and tries to place the burden of the crisis on the peoples' shoulders. People should draw conclusions. Trillions of dollars have been allocated for the reinforcement of bankers, magnates and other capitalists strengthening the offensive against workers' and peoples' forces, the effort to make them pay for the capitalist crisis. This course is followed both in the US and the EU as well as in other capitalist countries, both by neoliberal and social democrat parties. The decision of the G20 is also in the same direction. Their contradictions reflect the rivalries between the monopoly interests they serve.

Capitalist powers fear the crisis of capital over-accumulation, over-production that includes the US, the EU, Russia, Japan, Latin America causing a slowdown in the economies of China and India. In order to mislead the people they use several contrived theories; they promote false expectations in order to check the social reactions and hinder the development of the class struggle.

The social democratic forces, the Socialist International and its cadres play a leading role in this effort.

First: they present the control of capital's movement as a way out, they talk about the democratization of the World Bank and the European Central Bank. However, it has been proven that nothing can prevent the sharpening of capitalist contradictions and that no measure can change the nature of the bank system which is a tool of capitalism. **Second:** they promote the nationalization of certain banks or other capitalist enterprises as a way out. This position is deceptive because even in that case the criterion of profit remains on the basis of a liberated market that breeds competition and aggression against the peoples.

Third: they are worried about the increase of unemployment and as a solution they promote the increase of the development rates combined with the so-called "green development". They are actually fooling the peoples. Capitalist development has never managed to ensure the right to work for all the people, and it will never do so.

The source of the evil is the fact that the means of production are in the hands of the capitalists, that profit is the criterion for development and that in any case the system is characterized by anarchy in production and the uneven development between various fields and sectors of the economy as well as geographical areas.

This fact underlines that under capitalism, workers can never be put before profits; it reveals how misleading the allegations about “rationalized”, “human” capitalism and the regulation of the market are. **Communists must decisively refute these illusions about the management of the capitalist system and tackle the difficulties in the organisation and the development of the class struggle, clarifying that there is no common interest between capital and the working class, neither in this phase of the crisis nor in the phase of the revival of capitalist development.**

Capitalists and their parties promote new anti-people’s measures in the name of climate changes, concealing the fact that they are a result of the exploitation of natural resources by capital with the aim to make profits. Energy, water, forests, waste, agricultural production, are privatized and accumulated in the hands of a few multinational corporations, now also in the name of the environment. Similar measures are promoted, to a larger or lesser extent, in all capitalist countries irrespective of the degree of capitalist development.

Furthermore, the protection of the environment is also used as a pretext for imperialist interventions. Multinational monopolies, through the powerful imperialist powers, above all the USA and the EU, promote anti-people interstate agreements in the framework of the WTO and the Doha round of negotiations with the less developed capitalist countries. Thus, they set goals e.g. for bio-fuels, that destroy vast forest areas, they promote genetically modified food and other measures as well, striking an even greater blow to workers’ income, the poor and middle peasantry.

The “Green economy”, promoted mainly by the EU, constitutes a way out for the over-accumulation of capital and the safeguarding of monopolies profits by means of intensifying the exploitation of workers and natural resources; not only does it not solve the problem of climate changes, but, on the contrary, it intensifies it. Climate and environmental problems cannot be dealt with as detached from the ownership over the concentrated means of production and the issue of political power.

Comrades,

Social concession, class collaboration is one of the most insidious and dangerous tools for the manipulation of the working class and its weakening. We are thus obliged to strengthen the ideological front and struggle against such positions, which in most cases are expressed not only by neoliberal or social democratic parties but also by parties that present themselves as “left”, namely opportunist parties. These parties try to build relationships with communist parties and exert influence on their ranks, their ideology and their policy.

Some of these so-called “left” parties do not only promote positions that serve capitalism but they also resort to open anticommunism, they slander socialism, the history of the communist movement.

The effort of the communist movement for the unity of the working class should not be based on its relationship with the so-called “left” opportunist parties; it should depend on its ability to convince, to rally and mobilise working and popular forces against monopolies and imperialism, against their open or covert supporters.

KKE believes that the clarification of this crucial issue will give an impetus to the struggle of the communist movement; it will strengthen its independent action and the recruitment of new forces in the labour movement. This issue is particularly important for the change in the correlation of forces and the effectiveness of the struggle under the conditions of the crisis but also for the future.

Furthermore we would like to stress the following:

This intense ideological-political struggle requires a greater effort to confront the developments according to a Marxist-Leninist analysis. It also requires the strengthening of the international meetings of communist and workers parties in this direction. Only in that way can the international meetings fulfil their role, respond to the complicated duties of the communists and meet the expectations of the working people. In Greece we are experiencing the difficulties of a tough battle characterised by the aggression of the EU and the social democratic government. Under the conditions of the crisis the enforcement of capitalist restructuring is accelerated, the effort to impose the so called “flexicurity” and flexible forms of employment in general is intensifying, the policy of dismantling social security rights continues, healthcare, welfare education are being further privatised while salaries and pensions are being frozen. All means are being used to reduce the price of the labour force, to increase the degree of exploitation and capitalist profit-making.

Under these conditions KKE increases its efforts for the class unity of the working class and the social alliance with the peasantry and the other oppressed popular strata. It insists on the organisation of the working class in the workplaces and the trade unions; it supports PAME, the class-oriented pole in the trade union movement that struggles against the forces of ‘yellow trade unionism’ and fights tough battles for the rights of the working class.

The strengthening and the effectiveness of the struggle of the class-pole of the movement require its orientation against the efforts to place the burden of

the crisis on people's shoulders; likewise the promotion of demands that meet the people's needs (full-stable employment, substantial increases in wages and pensions, exclusively free, public healthcare, welfare education system etc).

The trade unions that struggle through the ranks of PAME have achieved significant results. Through strikes, demonstrations, occupations and other forms of struggle they rescind dismissals; they force the employers to reinstate dismissed workers; they sign collective labour contracts that provide increases exceeding the income policy; they stave off the attacks against immigrants.

KKE along with the class oriented movement confront these difficulties and are particularly demanding regarding the strengthening of the ideological, political, mass struggle for the liberation of working-popular forces from the influence of the bourgeois policy and ideology, reformism.

In our opinion, communist parties must combine the efforts for the strengthening of the class oriented movement at a national level with the strengthening of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) which is making significant progress in its reconstruction.

We should be in a state of alertness. The capitalist crisis intensifies the intra-imperialist contradictions in a period when significant reshufflings are taking place, when the share of the US and China in the GWP is being reduced, the EU is reinforcing its presence and China, Russia, India and Brazil are being strengthened.

Working people should not have any illusions about the so-called "multipolar world", about the slogans of social democracy about the "democratisation of the UN" or the "new architecture of international relations". These slogans only intend to humanize capitalism. In fact there has never been a "unipolar world"! Intra imperialist contradictions have always existed. Nevertheless, in the past they were mitigated due to the need to confront the USSR and the other socialist countries.

Nowadays, we are witnessing a new intensification of the intra-imperialist contradictions as well as the pursuit of several rising imperialist forces and alliances to play an upgraded role in international affairs which is described through the model of the "multi polar world".

In fact, imperialism is characterised by the drive for markets and natural resources. Communists have assumed great responsibilities as regards the enlightenment and mobilisation of the peoples against imperialist wars and interventions, against imperialist occupation, as well as against all imperialist organisations and centres irrespective of their "colour", their name or the region in which they are formed.

The conflicts inside but also between the imperialist organisations such as the WTO should not entrap the working people in demands for a better or a more “fair” management of the capitalist system. The agreements concluded there reflect the correlation of forces and it is an illusion to believe that they can become fairer.

Communists are not struggling for a better position of their country in the world capitalist market or a better management of capitalism but for the overthrow of capitalism and the construction of socialism!

The working people both in developed capitalist countries and in countries with a medium and lower rate of capitalist development should respond with a unified common front against imperialists, against the efforts to divide the peoples irrespective of any class criteria in “South and North” in “rich and poor” countries.

Communists must respond to these pseudo-divisions with the elaboration of a common strategy against imperialism, with an even more distinctive unity at global level that will be forged in our coordinated struggles at national, regional and global levels in cooperation with other anti-imperialist forces.

The historical slogan of the Communist Manifest “proletarians of all countries, unite!” is still relevant.

The distance between capitalists and the working class is increasing both in the so called “developing” and “developed” countries. The social contradictions are sharpening due to the overall attack launched by big capital after the overthrow of the socialist system in Europe, against the rights and the gains of the workers around the world.

Historical experience has proven that the communist movement is strengthened to the extent that it is firmly dedicated to the line of anti-imperialist anti-monopoly struggle and to its strategic goal, namely to the struggle for the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism that is socialism, the abolition of the exploitation of man by man. In the modern era, the era of transition from capitalism to socialism the struggle should not aim at bourgeois democratic transformations but at socialist power that will overthrow the power of the monopolies and solve problems of economic backwardness, dependence etc.

The enemies of socialism and the various anti-communists, who celebrated a few days ago the fall of the Berlin Wall and the overthrow of socialism, cannot stop the course of history, no matter what they do.

Socialism has made a great historical contribution. In a few years it solved problems that capitalism has not managed to solve throughout centuries. It established the right to work, to free healthcare and edu-

cation, it developed sports and culture for the people, it abolished the exploitation of man by man, and it showed the supremacy of socialism over capitalism.

The Soviet Union was a key factor in the victory over fascism, losing 20 million of its people in the battle.

We study the shortfalls, the mistakes, the opportunist deviations that led to the overthrow of socialism; we draw lessons. Socialism of the new century constitutes an integral continuation of the heritage and the lessons of socialism of the 20th century.

Socialism is more relevant and necessary, the intensification of the main contradiction, unemployment, poverty, exploitation and the capitalist crisis show its historical limits.

The way to the satisfaction of the peoples' needs passes through the workers' power, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the socialization of the means of production and land, central planning and workers' control.

This is the beacon that lights our path.





Πάρτε πίσω το αντικομμουνιστικό μνημόνιο
του Συμβουλίου της Ευρώπης

On current international issues

Class character and struggle in international relations*

by **Elisseos VAGENAS**

Member of the CC of KKE and
Responsible of International Section of the CC

The lowering of the red flag on the Kremlin in December 1991 was the sign of one of the most tragic events of modern history. It completed the counterrevolutionary process in the USSR, the overthrow of socialism and the restoration of capitalism.

KKE had been warning that this would deprive the peoples of a fundamental support in their struggle for peace and social progress, which was the USSR. Life confirmed what the communists were saying and refuted the prophecies of all the other parties, rightwing, social-democrat and the “mutated” parties of former communists, who saw in the counterrevolution a “positive evolution” and an “avenue of peace and welfare”.

Today, almost 20 years later, international law as was known when the USSR still existed, no longer exists. It has gone to pieces! On the one hand, the international organisations cover for the USA, NATO and other imperialist forces so that they can promote their interests. On the other hand, they have been turned into a field of confrontation and provisional compromises between the big imperialist powers.

Military expenditure is continuously rising. According to published data, 2008 showed an absolute worldwide record in war expenditure, reaching 1,464 trillion dollars, which is an increase of 4% compared to 2007. Mind you, the increase in war expenditure had been 45% over the ten years preceding,

* Article published in the 6th issue of the theoretical journal of the KKE “Communist Review”, in 2009.

while the number of participants in the so-called “peace missions” and “peace operations”, that is imperialist interventions, increased by 11% in one year reaching 187.586 individuals.¹

Under the pretext of “fighting terrorism” and in spite of the expenses, which according to calculations reached 903 billion dollars (for the USA only), the USA carried out huge military operations-invasions and occupations of countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan.

NATO, the political-military machine of Euro-Atlantic imperialism, is expanding and adapting itself and is already being used for blood-thirsty plans at the cost of the working class and the poor strata of the population in many countries all over the world.

The EU, with its Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), is setting up its “euro-army” opening its own “cycle” of military interventions, often in cooperation with NATO.

With its political-military alliances (Collective Security Treaty Organisation and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation) Russia, as a powerful rising imperialist force is moving in the same direction of defending the interests of its oligarchy by any means, even military.

In all imperialist countries, from the bigger to the smaller ones, there is a tendency towards a change of the “defence doctrine”, which openly turns into an aggressive military doctrine. Thus they wage “humanitarian wars” and “wars against terrorism”.

In these conditions there are more and more “voices” calling for the “democratisation” of international relations and international organisations. According to these views a new “architecture” could help avoid war confrontations, create an atmosphere of “peace and cooperation” without affecting the foundations of the capitalist system.

A change in the correlation of forces in the imperialist pyramid

But who raises this question and why? Besides the political forces which have similar demands, it is the leaderships of imperialist forces that come forward with the need to make international relations “more democratic” and to build up their “new architecture”. Those forces consider that under to-

1. The data are of the SIPRI Institute (studies on peace problems) based in Stockholm, republished in the Russian newspaper “Nezavisimaya Gazeta” of June 9th 2009. As regards yearly war expenditure the following ten leading powers expend the following amounts: USA: 607 billion dollars, China: 84,9 billion dollars, France: 65,7 billion dollars, Britain: 65,3 billion dollars, Russia: 58,6 billion dollars, Germany : 46,8 billion dollars, Japan: 46,3 billion dollars, Italy: 40,6 billion dollars, Saudi Arabia: 38,2 billion dollars, India: 30 billion dollars.

day's circumstances their "special importance" in worldwide decision making must be "upgraded", in order to reflect their economic, political and military strength.

So, the leading circles of Russia seeking to utilise the contradictions within the EU and NATO as regards the great contradictions in energy resources and the economy, are steadily demanding a new "architecture" in Europe. According to this "new architecture", Russia will be given a role to play next to the OSCE, NATO and to the EU; likewise the Collective Security Treaty Organisation CSTO, which Russia has concluded with Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Belarus, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and other regional organisations, as for instance the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC).

Therefore Russia proposes a "new Helsinki", in which, besides the European countries, the USA and Canada, which participate in the OSCE, the imperialist organisations of NATO, EU, the OPCS, the CIS and the EEC will be participating as well.

The Russian leadership is putting forward the principle of "common security" considering that "the increase of one's security should not damage the security of the other". According to Russia, this requires the reform of the inter-state organisations of Europe.

In fact the real purpose of this vague and camouflaged..."humanitarian" position of Russia is to obstruct NATO's enlargement in a territory which it considers to be its own "sphere of influence" (Ukraine and Georgia). Moscow describes this enlargement as a "threat" to its security. In this way Russia is trying indirectly to impose its own "veto" on the accession of those countries without Russia itself being a member of NATO.

Of course, in the long term Moscow seeks to upgrade its role in European affairs by strengthening and deepening its links with NATO, EU or at least with some of the leading powers of those alliances.

Other forces as well, are making similar "appeals" for the restructuring of the international organisations. Thus, standing in the wings of the Finance Ministers Meeting of the G20 in London and with the international economic crisis in progress, the BRIC countries (Brasil, Russia, India, China) called upon the G20 to accelerate the reform of economic institutions.²

Over the last years, the discussion on the need to increase the number of permanent members in the UNO Security Council -today there are 5 per-

2. www.naftemporiki.gr, Friday September 4 2009.

manent members with the right to veto (USA, Russia, China, Great Britain and France)- is growing while there are specific proposals for the accession of Brazil, India, Japan and Germany, in order to make “its new composition reflect the existing balance of forces in the world and meet the challenges of the 21st century”.³ However, the proposal is not to render the right of veto to the new members, to which some people would like South Africa to belong as well. Other countries are often against these proposals (e.g. Pakistan is against the accession of India to the Security Council and Italy is against Germany’s accession).⁴

On the slogans of “Democratisation” and “New Architecture”

The main political parties of our country –except from KKE – participate in the efforts to beautify the imperialist world.

Today’s Prime Minister G. Papandreou, as the Chairman of PASOK and the Socialist International, declared on every occasion his support to the “new architecture” and “democratisation” of international relations: *“The recent world crisis is the result of corruption, but also of an essential lack of democratic rules or of undermining democracy. I believe that with the breakdown of the financial system, democratic institutions are actually captivated by the concentration of power, the accumulation of capital and political power in a few hands[....]In my opinion, what we need at an international level, is the democratisation of world governance”*.⁵

Papandreou himself comes forward with the slogan for *«radical and democratic reform of the world governance»*⁶ and demands *“the democratisation of the world governance system”* by upgrading the role of the EU in international affairs, *“the reform of the institutions at a world level and specifically by strengthening the UN”*.⁷ He speaks about *“humanising globalisation”*, about *“world architecture ”* in order to *“have a worldwide democratic governance”* adding that *“it will be a historical tragedy if, under the current political changes*

3. Speech of deputy foreign minister Yiannis Valinakis, “60 years Since the Foundation of the UNO Evaluation of the Summit”, Seminar at the University of Athens 24-25 October 2005, www.valinakis.gr.

4. <http://news.pathfinder.gr/world/news/529285.html>

5. «Democratization of World Governance» , speech of Giorgos Papandreou at the International Transparency Conference, Music Hall, November 2, 2008.

6. Speech of Giorgos Papandreou at the London School of Economics, on “Progressive Governance”, Greece and International Developments, April 28, 2009.

7. Speech of Giorgos Papandreou at the special session of the Parliament on the celebration of the International Day of Democracy, September 15, 2008.

*in the USA, the European Union does not manage to play an active role, an essential role in shaping governance in this new multipolar world that emerges[...]By strengthening the UN the EU should work out the restructuring of international organisations, so to play a constructive role in the development of relations based on equality, cooperation of all countries and specifically of the USA, Russia, China, India, Brazil as well as of Africa, and especially South Africa.*⁸

On the other hand, cadres of the previous government of the New Democracy Party were declaring that *“we do our best, we work together and we take initiatives to have a more democratic and more effective UN in today’s world”*).⁹

The previous Greek government of ND hosted the meeting of the OSCE Foreign Ministers in Corfu at the end of June 2009, and seemed to have a positive stance as regards relevant changes described as *“The Corfu process”* aiming at the *“beginning of a structured dialogue on the European Security Architecture”*.¹⁰ Yet the government of ND prepared a relevant text, which it presented to the other OSCE member-states. *“This text confirms the principles of the OSCE, stresses the need to take into account Russia’s concerns, reconfirms the significance of euro-Atlantic institutions like NATO and the EU, while it puts on the table all the aspects of security”*.

SYN/SYRIZA cannot help but show its worship for European and world “institutions”. It hastened to salute the OSCE Meeting in Corfu talking about an “upgrading” of the OSCE and about the “European Security Council”, which will be consolidating the “all-European security system” that will also have its “subsystems”!

SYN says: *“It is our view that the OSCE has unique features so as to become the basis to build up a new model for European security in the 21st century[...]The OSCE should be linked to the UN as a “regional security organisation” (art. 5 of the UN Charter).It should obtain the competency and the practical capacity to settle conflicts in its area of responsibility. It should be able to refer conflicts to the UN Security Council even without the consensus of those who are immediately involved.*

8. Speech of Giorgos Papandreou at the 4th Session of PASOK National Council, May 9, 2009.

9. Speech of Deputy Foreign Minister Yiannis Valinakis, “60 years since the Foundation of the UNO Evaluation of the Summit”, Seminar at the University of Athens 24-25, October 2005, www.valinakis.gr.

10. <http://www.tovima.gr/default.asp?pid=2&ct=32&artId=274580&dt=21/06/2009>

Today NATO's enlargement, especially that with Georgia and the Ukraine, creates gaps of distrust and causes new tensions in Europe. The same goes for the so-called "anti-missile shield". Consequently, an important step for European security and the fulfilling of the objectives of the OSCE would be to "freeze" those options. Any initiative in that direction should be supported by Greece too".¹¹

Some of their cadres point out: *"furthermore, the international system needs deep democratisation giving priority to the democratisation and the strengthening of the role of the UN but also to the creation of new institutions, e.g. a World Environment Organisation".¹²*

SYRIZA's program says: *"The serious reshufflings that are taking place in the world in this period pose the question of a total reorganisation of the whole system of international relations as well as the demand of its democratization".¹³*

A similar position is taken by the "European Left Party", in which SYN participates as well: "More than ever, security in Europe must be based on the principles of peace and security, disarmament and structural assault incapacity, conflict solution by political and civil means within the OSCE system, conforming to international law and to the principles of a reformed and democratised UNO system. Such a collective and cooperative European system must guarantee security and unconditioned access to energy supply, environment, human rights issues, etc".¹⁴

The chairman of the LAOS party, too, in his message to the Communist Party of China in October 2009, extols the "multipolar world", while the chairman of the SYN party, A. Tsipras, in his meeting with the outgoing Russian ambassador on November 24th 2008, esteems: *"International balances are changing. The tendency towards a multipolar world becomes more visible. Hegemonism has no future. Eradication of inequalities and international co-operation on an equal basis; that is what our time dictates."*

In fact, several political forces of different ideological orientation *recognize the new intra-imperialist contradictions* and the emerging reshuffling in the world system and describe the change tendency of the correlation of forces, as it had been shaped after the overthrow of the socialist countries and the

11. Proposals of SYN on the Greek Presidency of OSCE, www.syn.gr

12. P. Trigazis: "Why L' Aquila was not Genoa", newspaper "Avgi", July 11, 2009.

13. Programme of SYRIZA, <http://www.syn.gr/programma/a.htm>

14. European Left Party, Electoral Platform, 2009.

enlargement and intensification of the activities of the NATO and EU over the last 20 years, as the democratisation of international relations, as a “multipolar world”. This new balance of forces means the reinforcement of Germany’s armaments, but as well the strengthening of Russia, China, Iran and others.

The above mentioned proposals, such as the enlargement of the UN Security Council with other countries (ND,PASOK), or the upgrading of the role of the EU in the world (ND,PASOK, SYN, LAOS) or even that of Russia and China in international affairs, *cannot* put these developments on the right track. Because they *cannot stop the intra-imperialist contradictions, which manifest themselves in the fields of natural resources, energy and transport networks, as well as in the conflict over the market share*. Competition between monopolies leads to localized or generalized military interventions and wars. This competition unfolds with all means; it is reflected in interstate agreements, which are constantly called to question because of uneven development. That is imperialism, the source of war aggression of a smaller or wider scale.

What is being said about the “new democratic world governance”, with “transparency”, “participationism” and “social solidarity” is not just “twaddle” of the chairman of the PASOK and the Socialist International. They are attempting to beautify the new correlation of forces under capitalist imperialist barbarity in order to mislead the working people.

Even the demand to freeze NATO’s expansion to the East and cancel the building of the US anti-missile shield in Central Europe, presented by SYN as “*a significant step towards European security*” is in fact an idle hope, because imperialist NATO is already very well able to do its job even now with the so-called “*Partnership for Peace*”, *without having to register new members*. The “Partnership for Peace” counts already 23 countries, besides the 28 members of NATO.

As regards the anti-missile shield, several committees of the American Pentagon considered its installation in Central Europe to be “uneconomic” due to economic, military and political reasons and proposed its installation in other regions (Israel, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Qatar, Balkans etc.).¹⁵ The new US leadership under President Obama, is moving in this direction, as we have already noted from his related declarations at the end of September 2009.

15. <http://www.inforos.ru/?id=24919>.

A brief historical overview-conclusions

Before we proceed to issues which concern the stance of communists today, it is worthwhile to throw a glance at history; at the stance of the communist movement vis a vis the various international organisations. Since it is impossible within the framework of an article to refer to all organisations, we will focus as briefly as possible on two fundamental world organisations, which humanity knows well: the League of Nations and the United Nations, as well as on the stance of the USSR, the first socialist state in the world, as regards these organisations.

The league of nations before the accession of the USSR to it

After the end of World War I the victorious powers founded in 1919 the "League of Nations" in an effort to guarantee the "status quo" and to continue the distribution of territories and markets in their favour, but also to stop the development of the world revolutionary movement and Soviet Russia's influence on the peoples. This League was active until 1939. It was officially dissolved in 1946. Of course this League, as all imperialist unions, acted in the name of "God blessed actions", as e.g. peace-keeping, consolidation of security, the solution of differences by peaceful and diplomatic means.

In the Programme of the Russian Communist Party (bolsheviks) Lenin revealed the real reasons for the foundation of the League of Nations: *"the increasing pressure on behalf of the proletariat, and especially its victories in a series of countries strengthen the resistance of the exploiters and cause the emergence of new forms of international capitalist unions which guide their main efforts for the suppression of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat in all countries by means of organising the exploitation of all the peoples on the earth"*.¹⁶

The League of Nations soon showed its teeth to the young Soviet Democracy supporting the counterrevolution openly and of course the 14 countries that attempted to suppress the Russian revolution of the Bolsheviks by means of a military attack. Lenin with his critical style commented on this attack: *"You recently passed a resolution to the effect that the international League of Nations of the Allied powers recognised Kolchak as the only authoritative*

16. V.I. Lenin: "Programme of the R.C.P. (B), Collected Works, "Synchroni Epochi", Vol. 38, p.421.

*Russian ruler.”’ And after that nothing was seen of Kolchak but a pair of clean heels”.*¹⁷

At the same time the leader of the October Revolution savaged the social democrat forces that openly supported the League of Nations: “ *social-chauvinism was the principal and fundamental type of opportunism, i.e., support of “defence of country”, which in such a war was really equivalent to defence of the predatory interests of one’s “own” bourgeoisie. After the war, defence of the robber League of Nations, defence of direct or indirect alliances with the bourgeoisie of one’s own country against the revolutionary proletariat and the “Soviet” movement, and defence of bourgeois democracy and bourgeois parliamentarianism against “Soviet power” became the principal manifestations of those intolerable and treacherous compromises [...].*”¹⁸

Lenin saw the serious intra-imperialist contradictions that this predatory alliance carried within it even in its future stance towards Soviet Russia: “*At every step the interests of the League’s member states are patently in conflict. [...] It became plain that the League of Nations was non-existent, that the alliance of the capitalist powers is sheer fraud and that in actual fact it is an alliance of robbers, each trying to snatch something from the others*”.

¹⁹

Long before the collapse of the League of Nations Lenin had predicted the future evolution of this “great united league” of all the foremost nations of the world” as he mockingly used to call it: “*Unity of this kind is a sheer fiction, a sheer fraud, a sheer lie. And we have seen—and this was a great example—that this notorious League of Nations, which attempted to hand out mandates for the government of states, to divide up the world—that this notorious alliance proved to be a soap-bubble which burst at once because it was an alliance founded on capitalist property*”²⁰.

Under the conditions of its isolation, Soviet Russia clearly specified its main line as regards international relations. On the one hand, it sought the biggest possible commercial, economic and political cooperation with the capitalist states in order to break its isolation and on the other it sought the firm support of the revolutionary movement throughout the world.

17. V.I. Lenin: “On the Food and War Situation”, Collected Works, “Synchroni Epochi”, vol.39, p. 126.

18. V.I. Lenin: “Left-Wing Communism: an Infantile Disorder”, Collected Works, “Synchroni Epochi”, vol.41, pp 53-54.

19. V.I. Lenin: “Speech delivered at the Conference of the Chairmen of the Executive Committees”, Collected Works, “Synchroni Epochi”, vol.41, p 350.

20. V.I. Lenin: “the 9th Congress of the R.C.P. (B)”, Collected Works, “Synchroni Epochi”, vol.40, pp 241-242.

As it was demonstrated by its participation in the economic conference in Genoa (1922) Soviet Russia sought and succeeded in benefiting from the intra-imperialist contradictions about the stance towards it. In reply to the request of the foreign states-creditors to pay for the debts of the Tsarist and Provisional Government (18,5 billion gold rubles) it claimed compensation for the destruction caused by the foreign imperialist intervention (39 billion gold rubles). In addition, it maneuvered and accepted the mutual and simultaneous prescription of claims in exchange for the restoration of diplomatic and economic relations breaking in that way the "common block" against the USSR. Apart from the Genoa Conference, the USSR participated at the same time –although not a member- in several committees of the League of Nations on disarmament, and brought forward the position for complete disarmament revealing the role of the League of Nations: *"Or take, for example, the recent declarations of the Soviet delegation in Geneva on the question of genuine disarmament (and not window-dressing). What is the explanation of the fact that Comrade Litvinov's straightforward and honest declaration in favour of complete disarmament struck the League of Nations with paralysis and came as a "complete surprise" to it? Does not this fact show that the League of Nations is not an instrument of peace and disarmament, but an instrument for covering up new armaments and the preparation of new wars?"*²¹

Stalin referring to the increase in armaments (1925) characterized the imperialist peace as "armed peace" criticizing and the role of the League of Nations and the Second International: *"There you have an example of the matchless hypocrisy of bourgeois diplomacy, when by shouting and singing about peace they try to cover up preparations for a new war [...] What have the League of Nations and the Second International done to put a stop to this furious growth of armaments? Don't they know that with the growth of armaments "the guns begin to go off of their own accord"? Don't expect a reply from the League of Nations and the Second International. The point here is that the conflict of interests among the victor countries is growing and becoming more intense, that a collision among them is becoming inevitable, and, in anticipation of a new war, they are arming with might and main. I shall not be exaggerating if I say that in this case we have not a friendly peace among the victor countries, but an armed peace, a state of armed*

21. J.V. Stalin: "Political Report of the CC pf the R.C.P. at its 15th Congress", "The Growing Crisis of World Capitalism and the Foreign Policy of the U.S.S.R.", Collected Works, vol.10, pp 312-313.

*peace that is fraught with war. What is now going on in the victor countries reminds us very much of the situation that prevailed before the war of 1914 — a state of armed peace. The rulers of Europe are now trying to cover up this fact with clamour about pacifism. But I have already said what this pacifism is worth and what value should be attached to it. The Bolsheviks have been demanding disarmament ever since the time of Genoa.³ Why do not the Second International and all the others who are chattering about pacifism support our proposal?"*²²

Shortly after, referring to the Nanking massacre by the Japanese he emphasized: *"The League of Nations has been given another slap in the face. For who but lackeys of imperialism can consider it "normal" that one member of the League of Nations massacres the citizens of another member, while the League of Nations itself is compelled to keep silent and assume that the matter does not concern it?"*²³

At the same time the USSR leader explained why the USSR was not a member of the League of Nations: *"The Soviet Union is not a member of the League of Nations and does not take part in the League of Nations, firstly, because it does not want to take responsibility for the imperialist policy of the League of Nations, for the "mandates" which are handed out by the League of Nations for the exploitation and oppression of colonial countries. The Soviet Union does not take part in the League of Nations because it is opposed to imperialism, opposed to the oppression of the colonies and dependent countries. The Soviet Union does not take part in the League of Nations, secondly, because it does not want to take responsibility for the war preparations, for the growth of armaments, for the new military alliances, and so forth, which the League of Nations screens and sanctifies, and which are bound to lead to new imperialist wars. The Soviet Union does not take part in the League of Nations because it is wholly and completely opposed to imperialist wars [...] under present conditions the League of Nations is a "house of assignation" for the imperialist bosses who transact their nefarious business behind the scenes. What is said officially in the League of Nations is mere talk, designed to deceive the people. But what is done unofficially by the imperialist bosses behind the scenes in the League of Nations is real*

22. J.V. Stalin: "The 14th Congress of the C.P.S.U. (B), Political Report", 18-31 December 1925, "Collected Works", vol. 7 pp 303-309.

23. J.V. Stalin: "Speech Delivered at the Fifth-Union Conference of the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League", Collected Works, vol.9, p 224.

*imperialist action, hypocritically covered up by the grandiloquent orators of the League of Nations”.*²⁴

Stalin revealed the underlying economic causes of the contradictions within the League of Nations: *“The Economic Conference of the League of Nations in 1927, the object of which was to “unite the economic interests” of the capitalist countries, also ended in a fiasco. The peaceful road to the solution of the problem of markets remains closed to capitalism. The only “way out” left open for capitalism is a new redivision of colonies and of spheres of influence by force, by means of armed collisions, by means of new imperialist wars”.*²⁵

The foreign policy of the USSR sought to prevent the united front of the imperialists against the USSR utilizing the intra-imperialist contradictions. It noted the contradiction of interests in the camp of the imperialists; the overall interest of several countries to maintain economic relations with the USSR; the reaction of the working class in Europe; the imperialists’ fear of unleashing revolution in their own countries in the event of war against the USSR. At the same time he added that Britain would not abandon its efforts to organise a united front against the USSR, that it would not manage to organise such a front. The war threat would not cease to exist despite Britain’s temporary failures.

Stalin noted: *“We must not forget Lenin’s statement that as regards our work of construction very much depends upon whether we succeed in postponing war with the capitalist world, which is inevitable, but which can be postponed either until the moment when the proletarian revolution in Europe matures, or until the moment when the colonial revolutions have fully matured, or, lastly, until the moment when the capitalists come to blows over the division of the colonies. Therefore, the maintenance of peaceful relations with the capitalist countries is an obligatory task for us”.*²⁶

However the foreign policy of the USSR, which was characterized by the pursuit of peaceful relations with the capitalist countries, did not hinder the promotion of goals for the development of the international communist movement such as the struggle:

24. J.V. Stalin: “Interview with Foreign Workers’ Delegations”, November 5 1927, Collected Works, vol. 10, pp231-232.

25. J.V. Stalin: “Political Report of the CC of the R.C.P. at its 15th Congress”, “The Growing Crisis of World Capitalism and the Foreign Policy of the U.S.S.R.”, Collected Works, vol.10, pp 308-309.

26. J.V. Stalin: “Political Report of the CC of the R.C.P. at its 15th Congress”, “The Growing Crisis of World Capitalism and the Foreign Policy of the U.S.S.R.”, Collected Works, vol.10, pp 312-313

- a) for the development of the Communist Parties throughout the world;
- b) for the strengthening of the revolutionary trade unions and the workers' united front against the capitalist offensive;
- c) for the strengthening of the friendship between the working class of the U.S.S.R. and the working class in the capitalist countries;
- d) for the strengthening of the link between the working class of the U.S.S.R. and the liberation movement in the colonies and dependent countries.²⁷

At the same time it fought bourgeois pacifism, with its League of Nations, its preaching of „peace,“ its „prohibition“ of war, its talk of „disarmament»: *“There are naive people who think that since there is imperialist pacifism, there will be no war. That is quite untrue. On the contrary, whoever wishes to get at the truth must reverse this proposition and say: since imperialist pacifism and its League of Nations are flourishing, new imperialist wars and intervention are certain. And the most important thing in all this is that Social-Democracy is the main channel of imperialist pacifism within the working class -- consequently, it is capitalism's main support among the working class in preparing for new wars and intervention”*.²⁸

The league of nations from the accession of the USSR to its expulsion

After the withdrawal of Japan (March 1933) and Germany (October 1933), 30 member states of the League of Nations headed by France asked the USSR to join the League of Nations. The USSR sought to utilize the accession to the League of Nations in order to accomplish the main task it had set that is to hinder the formation of a united imperialist block against it.

In reply to a question of an American reporter about whether the USSR still had a negative stance towards the League of Nation Stalin explained: *“No, not always and not under all circumstances. Perhaps you do not fully understand our point of view. In spite of Germany's and Japan's withdrawal from the League of Nations—or possibly just because of it—the League may become a certain factor in retarding the outbreak of hostilities or in preventing them altogether. If that is so, if the League can prove to be something of*

27. J.V. Stalin: “Political Report of the CC of the R.C.P. at its 15th Congress”, “The Growing Crisis of World Capitalism and the Foreign Policy of the U.S.S.R.”, Collected Works, vol.10, pp 312-313

28. J.V. Stalin: “Results of the July Plenum of the CC of the R.C.P. (B), Collected Works, vol. 11, pp230-231.

*an obstacle that would make war at least somewhat more difficult and peace to some extent easier, then we shall not be against the League. Yes, if such is the course of historical events, the possibility is not excluded that we shall support the League of Nations despite its colossal shortcomings".*²⁹

Thus, the USSR accepted this invitation and became a permanent member of the League of Nations, seeking to obstruct the outbreak of a war after the withdrawal of these two countries. However, the Soviet government warned that it would not assume any obligation as regards the decisions and agreements that the League of Nations had realised before the USSR joined the League.

The USSR was expelled from the League of Nations in 1939, a few years before the League practically ceased functioning because it responded to Finland's military provocations. In that period the fascist axis (Germany, Italy, Japan) was reversing the "scenery" set by the First world War. The Soviet leadership estimated that "the new imperialist war had become a fact".³⁰

At the same time, he soon saw two causes for the constant submission of the western democracies to the fascists: They were afraid that the second imperialist world war might also lead to the victory of the revolution in one or several countries³¹ but at the same time the "western democracies" were trying to turn the fascist countries against the USSR: *"The policy of non-intervention reveals an eagerness, a desire, not to hinder the aggressors in their nefarious work; not to hinder Japan, say, from embroiling herself in a war with China, or, better still, with the Soviet Union; to allow all the belligerents to sink deeply into the mire of war, to encourage them surreptitiously in this, to allow them to weaken and exhaust one another; and then, when they have become weak enough, to appear on the scene with fresh strength, to appear, of course, "in the interests of peace," and to dictate conditions to the enfeebled belligerents".*³²

Thus, the main goal of the USSR was to maneuver in order to thwart these plans. As we know, this was achieved through the "non-aggression pact" also known as Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact which was signed after Great Britain, France, Italy, and Germany had signed the Munich Pact that led to the dis-

29. J.V. Stalin: "Interview with a correspondent from New York Times", collected works, "Synchroni Epochi", vol.13, p 310.

30. J.V. Stalin: "Report at the 18th Congress on the work of the CC of the R.C.P. (B), 19.3.1939", "Collected Works", vol.14. p 376.

31. J.V. Stalin: "Report at the 18th Congress on the work of the CC of the R.C.P. (B), 19.3.1939", "Collected Works", vol.14. p 376.

32. J.V. Stalin: "Report at the 18th Congress on the work of the CC of the R.C.P. (B), 19.3.1939", "Collected Works", vol.14. p 376.

solution of Czechoslovakia and the annexation of its territories to the German Reich.

The participation of the USSR in the UN

UN was founded in 1945 and reflected a new reality as regards the correlation of forces where the USSR held an upgraded position due to the role it played in the outcome of the Second World War. At the same time, the danger of war was taking on new dimensions due to the emergence of nuclear weapons.

In 1944 Stalin elaborated the following positions: *“There is only one means to this end, apart from the complete disarmament of the aggressor nations: that is to establish a special organization made up of representatives of the peace-loving nations for the defence of peace and safeguarding of security; to put at the disposal of the directing body of this organization the necessary minimum of armed forces required to avert aggression, and to oblige this organization to employ these armed forces without delay if it becomes necessary, to avert or stop aggression, and to punish those guilty of aggression.[...]”*

*Can we expect the actions of this world organization to be sufficiently effective? They will be effective if the great Powers which have borne the brunt of the war against Hitler Germany continue to act in a spirit of unanimity and accord. They will not be effective if this essential condition is violated”.*³³

These statements were made in a historical period marked by the acute competition for the advantage to produce nuclear weapons. As we know today, the USA proceeded. In 1949 it used nuclear weapons against Japan while its real goal was to terrorize the USSR that acquired this weapon only in 1949, creating the so-called “nuclear balance” which has been a deterrent factor against a new imperialist aggression against it.

By means of war or conventional weapons it was soon proved that the character of UN was not different from that of the League of Nations. Before 1955 the imperialist powers used the UN in their plans e.g. against the People’s Republic of China, in the war of Korea (1950) while they sought to abolish the right of veto of the USSR in the UN Security Council, they rejected the proposals of the USSR on disarmament.

Their leader of the USSR condemned the imperialist interventions in China and Korea and made the following analysis on the UN resolutions:

33. J.V. Stalin: “speech delivered at the 27th Anniversary of the Great October Revolution”, Collected Works, “Synchroni Epochi”, vol. 15, p236.

"I regard it (the utilisation of the UN against the Peoples Republic of China and Korea) as a scandalous decision.

Really, one must have lost what was left of conscience to maintain that the United States of America, which has stolen Chinese territory, the island of Taiwan, and fallen upon China's borders in Korea, is the defensive side; and on the other hand, to declare that the Chinese People's Republic which has defended its borders and striven to take back the island of Taiwan, stolen by the Americans, is the aggressor.

The United Nations Organization, which was created as a bulwark for keeping peace, has been transformed into an instrument of war, a means to unleash a new world war. The aggressive core of the United Nations Organization have formed the aggressive North Atlantic pact from ten member states (the U.S.A., England, France, Belgium, Canada, Holland, Luxemburg, Denmark, Norway, Iceland) and twenty Latin-American countries (Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Columbia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruquay, Venezuela.) And the representatives of these countries now make the decisions in the United Nations Organization about war and peace. It was these that have, in the United Nations Organizations, carried through the scandalous decision about the aggression of the Chinese People's Republic. [...]

Thus, the United Nations Organization, from being a world organization of nations with equal rights, has changed into an instrument of a war of aggression. In reality, the United Nations Organization is now not so much a world organization, as an organization for the Americans and treats American aggression as acceptable. Not only are the United States of America and Canada striving to unleash a new war, but on this path you also find the twenty Latin-American countries; their landowners and merchants long for a new war somewhere in Europe or Asia, to sell their goods to the countries at inflated prices, and to make millions out of this bloody business. The fact is not a secret to anybody that the representatives of the twenty Latin American countries represent the strongest supporters and the willing army of the United States of America in the United Nations Organization. The United Nations Organization treads, in this manner, the inglorious path of the League of Nations. Thereby they bury their moral authority and condemn themselves to fall into decay.³⁴

34. J.V. Stalin: "Interview with a "Pravda" correspondent", Collected Works, (forthcoming by Suynchnoni Epochi) vol.16, pp173-175.

In the same interview in "Pravda" Stalin defined the nature of the struggle for peace as follows: *"Where will this entire struggle between the aggressive and the peace-loving powers end? Peace will be kept and strengthened if the people take the holding of peace into their own hands and defend it to the utmost. War could be unavoidable if the arsonists of war succeed in trapping the masses with their lies, in deceiving them and in drawing them into a new war."*

*Now, therefore, a broad campaign for the holding of peace, as a way of exposing the criminal machinations of the arsonists of war, is of prime importance. As far as the Soviet Union is concerned, it will continue to carry through the politics of preventing war and keeping peace".*³⁵

On the role of the USSR in the UN

The socialist reconstruction in the USSR, despite the enormous destruction (human and material) caused by the Second World War, the strengthening of the USSR combined with the presence of other socialist countries were powerful factors that influenced the correlation of forces and had also an impact on the UN.

The USSR as a permanent member of the UN Security Council used its veto right 120 times (79 times in the first ten years) while the USA has used its veto right 76 times so far.³⁶

Thanks to the presence of the USSR and the other socialist countries (after 1955) as well as of other countries from Asia and Africa, the UN adopted a series of significant, positive resolutions against imperialist plans and powers e.g. the condemnation of US action against Cuba (1960-1962), in the Middle East and the Cyprus issue.

A series of agreements and treaties, resolutions on disarmament, on the ban of nuclear testing, on bacteriological war and space were adopted as a result of the pressure exerted by the USSR.

Nevertheless the nature of imperialism did not change! International Law and its resolutions have been a result of the global correlation of forces that forced the imperialists to maneuver and make concessions although they never gave up their plans as the imperialist interventions, the coups and the

35. J.V. Stalin "Interview with a "Pravda" correspondent", Collected Works, (forthcoming by Suynchroni Epochi) vol.16, pp173-175.

36. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/2828985.stm

armaments race have shown. Besides, the imperialist powers used, despite the opposition of the USSR, the UN troops for their reactionary plans as they had done three years previously in the Congo (1960-1963).³⁷

But over the course of time, especially after the establishment of new states in the 1950s and 1960s in Asia, Africa and Middle East, the break with the bonds of the colonial system and the strengthening of the economic, military and political relations of the USSR with these states, the international correlation of forces was overestimated and considered to be for the benefit of the USSR and the socialist countries. A. Gromyko, foreign minister of the USSR in the period 1957 – 1985 and B. Ponomarev member of the PB of the CPSU and responsible for the international relations of the CPSU in 1955-1986 assessed: *“the construction of intercontinental and space missiles of great accuracy, the launching of the first satellites and the launching of rockets to the moon show the enormous achievements of the Soviet country in significant spheres of science and modern technology including the military one. The emergence of the intercontinental missile has broken the military invulnerability of the US. The military correlation of forces has changed to the benefit of the Socialist block”*.³⁸

The developments have tragically refuted these assessments. The resolution of the 18th Congress of KKE on socialism estimates: *“Both sections of the communist movement (in power or not) overestimated the strength of the socialist system and underestimated the dynamic of the post-war reconstruction of capitalism”*.³⁹

On this ground, utopian positions developed along with opportunist policies on the international and regional “security systems”.

The situation after the counterrevolution in the USSR

After the counterrevolution, the correlation of forces in the UN changed radically for the worst. The USSR was formally replaced by Russia. However, as the 18th Congress of KKE estimated: *Capitalist Russia, with its enormous deposits of natural resources, its nuclear arsenal, and the infrastructures inherited from the USSR, as well as a skilled work force, has the prerequisites to upgrade its*

37. A. Gromyko- B. Ponomarev: “The History of the Foreign Policy of the USSR”, vol.2 1945-1985, pp294-295.

38. Ibid p370.

39. Resolution of the 18th Congress of KKE: “Assessments and Conclusions on Socialist Construction During the 20th Century, Focusing on the USSR. KKE’s Perception on Socialism”, publication of the CC of KKE, p 80.

position in the imperialist pyramid. This eventuality does not constitute a guarantee for the peoples against the US and other imperialist centres – as was the case with the USSR, the socialist system and the Warsaw Pact as a whole – because the character of present-day Russia is imperialist”.⁴⁰

At the same time we see that “International Law, as the peoples knew it during the period in which the socialist system was energetically present and active in international affairs, no longer exists. It has been totally replaced by the imperialist doctrine of the “pre-emptive strike”, and of the campaign “against terrorism”. A particularly dangerous strategy is that of imperialist interventions that invoke what is called “self-determination” as a pretext to stir up minority issues and create protectorate states”.⁴¹

This is particularly evident in the recognition of Kosovo independence by the US, the EU and NATO as well as of South Ossetia and Abkhazia by Russia. This development has given rise to the discussion about the need to reform the UN, to create new “security systems” in Europe as well as to the declarations about a “multipolar world”. It is the “tip of the iceberg” in the process of changing the correlation of forces among the imperialist centres. Of course this tendency is linked with their effort to conceal the aggressive character of the imperialist alliances and unions. At the same time, along with the bourgeois political forces, the opportunist forces play a significant role with their position about the “humanisation of the UN” concealing the fact that war is inherent to the exploitative character of the capitalist system even more so at its higher stage, namely imperialism.

The UN at the present day is similar to the League of Nations. Still, he who pays the piper calls the tune. Thus, in 2009 22% of the UN budget was covered by the US, (598,2 million dollars) 16,62% by Japan and 8,57% by Germany.⁴²

Criticism of bourgeois and opportunist contrived notions about interstate relations

Peaceful coexistence and competition

KKE believes that the people’s movement cannot treat the UN and international law according to the standards it used to have in the past when the

40. 18th congress of KKE, Documents, Publication of the CC of KKE, p285.

41. 18th congress of KKE, Documents, Publication of the CC of KKE, p276.

42. 6,64% by Britain, 6,30% by France, 5,07% by Italy, 2,97% by Canada, 2,96% by Spain, 2,66% by China, 2,25% by Mexico while Russia offered to the UNO 1,2% of its budget. Data from wikipedia.

USSR and the socialist system existed. The reason for this is that the existence of the USSR and the Warsaw Pact strengthened the anti-imperialist movement while to a certain extent it was possible to restrain the imperialist plans. However this possibility should not be over-emphasized as it was in the past.

Thus, the appeal to positive decisions of the past will lose importance as long as the they are not implemented and new, openly aggressive imperialist UNO resolutions emerge e.g. the resolutions that concede to NATO the right to occupy Afghanistan, the sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for its nuclear program, the resolutions on the disarmament of the Lebanese resistance etc.

We should not forget that the positive UN resolutions may have been a point of reference for the peoples and facilitate their struggle on several issues, however they were not always implemented by the imperialists.

We know for instance that the just resolutions of the UN Security Council on the Cyprus issue have never been realized since they oppose the interests of the US and the other powerful imperialist powers. Neither could the positive resolutions of the UN and the existence of the USSR change the relations of dependence and interdependence (political, military, and economic) between the countries of the world imperialist system. Furthermore, as we concluded in our 18th Congress, after the Second World War, *"the imperialist system, with the USA at its helm, created a series of military, political, economic alliances and international lending organisations (NATO, EC, IMF, World Bank, international trade agreements). These ensured the coordination of capitalist states, and bridged some of the contradictions amongst them, in order to serve the common strategic goal of a multi-pronged pressure on the socialist system. They organised imperialist interventions, systematic and multi-faceted provocations and anti-communist campaigns"*.⁴³

However the situation has become incomparably worse since the USSR and the block of the socialist countries no longer exist. On the other hand, China, which is a permanent member of the UN Security Council, cannot fulfill the role that the USSR used to play in the past. The reason is not its power but the fact that *"the People's Republic of China has been implementing a policy of opening up its economy to the international capitalist market. It joined the*

43. Resolution of the 18th Congress of KKE: "Assessments and Conclusions on Socialist Construction During the 20th Century, Focusing on the USSR. KKE's Perception on Socialism", publication of the CC of KKE, p 77.

*World Trade Organisation (WTO). It has established a connection with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. [...] the emergence of exploitative social forces with political representation in the Chinese society entails dangers not only for the interests of the Chinese people and the role of China in the international anti-imperialist movement".*⁴⁴

At the same time, intra-imperialist rivalry has increased since the 1990s due to the assimilation of the former socialist countries (territories, raw materials, labour force) into the imperialist system, which have been isolated from the imperialist system for decades. Even more so, as uneven capitalist development brought about a new balance of forces in the international imperialist system and called into question the balance of forces reflected in the international agreements and unions.

That's why international law has radically changed for the worst over the last twenty years. To the extent that the international law is formed only by imperialist states and does not reflect the balance of forces between the capitalist and socialist states, it cannot be but worse for the peoples and the working class in the capitalist states. Nowadays, the workers' and people's movements should take into account these changes and they should not be trapped into demands about the democratization of the UN or international law that are mainly used by bourgeois forces in order to ensure the upgrading of their position. At the same time these forces deliberately deceive the popular forces arguing that they can guarantee a peaceful world without undermining the foundations of the capitalist society. Similar "demands" are put forward by several "left" forces, even by forces that call themselves anti-imperialist. Thus the 3rd World Social Forum in Porto Alegre talked about a "world democratic order".⁴⁵

These positions constitute an adherence to past forms that do not apply in the current conditions. They approach the international unions and organisations not according to class criteria but on the basis of the adherence to institutions.

We must draw lessons from relevant approaches that underestimated the "predatory" nature of imperialism and finally lead to retreat towards it as happened with the sliding from the "peaceful coexistence" of both socio economic systems to views prevailing in the CPSU about a system of "European Security" that would ensure peace and mutual respect of different social systems

44. 16th Congress of KKE, Documents, Publication of the CC of KKE, pp 48.

45. Newspaper "Rizospastis", January 22 2003.

etc. Thus, in 1955 the USSR sought “a security system whose state-members would promise to give up the use of armed forces and solve all crucial issues with peaceful means”.⁴⁶

KKE notes that “the line of “peaceful co-existence”, as was developed in the post-war period, to some extent at the 19th Congress (October 1952) and primarily at the 20th Congress of the CPSU (1956), acknowledged the capitalist barbarity and aggression of the USA and Britain, and of certain sections of the bourgeoisie and its respective political forces in the western European capitalist states, but not as an integral element of monopoly capitalism, of imperialism. In this way, it allowed the nurturing of utopian perceptions, such as that it is possible for imperialism to accept on a long term basis its co-existence with forces that have broken its worldwide domination”.⁴⁷

Though reality proved to be much more different and showed that imperialism -with the war being its inherent element- utilizes the interstate agreements at will and therefore the peoples should not have any illusions about its allegedly “peaceful” intentions.

The positions of Lenin continue to be timely: “Under these conditions the slogans of pacifism, of international disarmament under capitalism, of arbitration courts, and so on, are not only a reactionary utopia but also a downright swindle of the toilers aimed to disarm the proletariat and to distract the workers away from the task of disarming the exploiters. Only a proletarian socialist revolution can lead humanity out of the impasse which imperialism and imperialist wars have created. Whatever difficulties the revolution may have to encounter, whatever possible temporary setbacks or waves of counter-revolution it may have to contend with, the final victory of the proletariat is inevitable”.⁴⁸

“Autocracy or “multipolar world”

Several forces see imperialism only in the US “autocracy“. This position is expressed by the president of Venezuela who calls upon Russia to lead the anti-imperialist forces. However, nowadays Russia is a big capitalist country

46. A. Gromyko- B. Ponomarev: “The History of the Foreign Policy of the USSR”, vol.2 1945-1985, pp294-295.

47. Resolution of the 18th Congress of KKE: “Assessments and Conclusions on Socialist Construction During the 20th century, Focusing on the USSR. KKE’s Perception on Developed Socialism”, publication of the CC of KKE, p 78.

48. V.I. Lenin: “Programme of the R.C.P. (B), Collected Works, “Synchroni Epochi”, Vol. 38, p.421

that seeks to upgrade its position in the international imperialist system. It should not be regarded as a substitute for the USSR or as an anti-imperialist force even if it opposes the US plans in order to ensure its own interests.

Likewise the concept of imperialism should not be identified with the USA. This point is analyzed in other articles of cadres of KKE and therefore we shall not dwell on it in detail. Nevertheless, we should stress that the aforementioned (solely anti-American) approach weakens the front against imperialism; it traps the people in other imperialist centres such as the EU, Russia etc.

Other contrived notions that conceal the main contradiction

The theories that focus on the contradictions between “North and South”, between “developed and dependent countries”, “golden billion” and “raw material supplies” also serve the manipulation of the labour and people’s movement. And the reason is that they deliberately conceal the main contradiction between capital and labour. The relations of dependence for instance are detached from the ownership relations and the international correlation of forces. As a result, the strategy of the communist parties for their abolition leads to alliances with bourgeois forces in the framework of the capitalist system. Moreover by isolating the data of individual consumption they draw arbitrary conclusions about the “subjugation” of their countries, considering that this situation can change only through the democratization of the UN, international relations and the establishment of new interstate alliances without affecting the capitalist production relations.⁴⁹

The stance of the communists towards the international organisations and the interstate unions nowadays

New interstate alliances are emerging nowadays in various regions of the planet. The fact that the driving forces of these alliances are actually the rising powers of the world capitalist economy such as Russia (in the Eurasia region: Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC), Collective Security Treaty Organisation etc (CSTO) or Brazil in the Latin America region, is not a coincidence.

49. See articles: “The Golden Billion and Proletarian Internationalism”, Communist Review, iss. 3/2002 and “Relations of Dependence and Interdependence”, Newspaper “Rizospastis” Sunday, January 25 2009.

They are not merely economic unions but unions with political and military character that, as we have already mentioned, seek to take part in the “new architecture” of international relations spreading illusions that the world can be “more democratic”, “more safe and peaceful” by means of changing the international correlation of forces at the expense of the US.

The opportunist forces such as SYN/SYRIZA in Greece and the European Left Party in Europe adopt similar positions and contrived notions.

Our party has accumulated a great deal of experience from the accession of Greece to the EU which confirms what Lenin stressed about the slogan for the “United States of Europe”: *“a United States of Europe, under capitalism, is either impossible or reactionary”*.⁵⁰ In our opinion, this union cannot change from within as the opportunists of the European Left Party and the European social democrats claim because *“the reactionary character of the economic procedures of the capitalist integration is reflected in the reactionary character of its institutions”*.⁵¹ For that reason, the struggle for an economy in favour of the peoples, the struggle for a clash at the level of state power is linked with the struggle for disengagement from the EU and NATO bonds.

Communists and in general the forces that struggle against imperialism must oppose and organise the people’s struggle against the imperialist unions as a whole. The EU cannot play the role of a counterweight to the US and thus the unions created using the other capitalist countries as “steam engine” cannot play a positive role in the “restraint” and “prevention” of the imperialist contradictions but cause reshufflings at the top of the imperialist pyramid.⁵²

These reshufflings can in no case make humanity “more democratic” or “more peaceful”. Our party esteems that *“as the tendency for disengagement from the imperialist unions extends, the need for bilateral, multilateral, and regional cooperation on an anti-imperialist basis will become a fact. It is crucial for each movement to accelerate these tendencies and weaken imperialism and its unions”*.⁵³

For that reason, we insist that *“the labour movement should say NO to the imperialist centres irrespective of geographical basis”*⁵⁴ and continue its struggle

50. V.I. Lenin, “On the Slogan of a United States of Europe”, Collected Works, “Synchroni Epochi”, vol. 26, p 359.

51. Note of the PB of the CC of KKE: “European Capitalist Integration and its Role in the International Developments. The Alternative of the Communists”, November 2005.

52. Resolution of the CC of KKE: “The International Situation, the Developments in Middle East and Iran. The position of Greece in the Region. The response of KKE.”, May 19th 2006.

53. *ibid*

54. Note of the PB of the CC of KKE: “European Capitalist Integration and its Role in the International Developments. The Alternative of the Communists”, November 2005.

for the interests and the needs of working people without losing sight of its perspective that is the overthrow of capitalism and the construction of socialism.

This principle concerns the communist forces in power as well. The interstate economic relations with the capitalist economies on the basis of mutual benefit should not be theorized. At the same time, they should strive for the biggest possible independence of the socialist economy because *“the economy should be planned as to ensure the independence of the people’s economy and prevent it from becoming a tool of the capitalist economy.”*⁵⁵

Can interstate unions serve the interests of the peoples? The strengthening of the anti-imperialist movement, of the class struggle and the clash with the imperialist commitments and organisations will bring the development of positive revolutionary processes that can indisputably lead to a revolutionary situation paving again the way for the victory of socialism in one or more countries. The merging of the efforts of the socialist countries constitutes the only progressive socioeconomic and political basis that exists nowadays, namely socialist principles. However, the course towards social revolution and socialist construction requires an unwavering struggle against all the imperialist powers and unions irrespective of their national, international, interstate “colours”. Apart from the will to struggle it also requires the steadfast class oriented approach of international relations and developments.

Conclusions

1. The stance of the communists towards the international, interstate organizations should be based on a class approach.

2. As long as the USSR and the other socialist countries participated in the UN it was possible to prevent to some extent the imperialist plans and adopt several decisions that helped the people. However, after the war the imperialist block regrouped its forces creating a complex of economic, political and military unions that enabled it to ignore the resistance of the USSR and the peoples’ movements and promote its own plans.

55. Extract from a contribution in a debate, where V. Molotov (member of the PB and the Secretariat of the Bolshevik party as well as foreign minister of the USSR) apart from the aforementioned position defended the central planning of the economy: “try to abolish the planning and all will go to pieces” [...] “the duty of the central planning is not to allow the emergence of disproportions on the people’s economy”. “The Debate about the Manual of Political Economy”, January 1941, in: R.I. Kosolapov, “Comrade Stalin has the floor”.

3. The stance of the communists towards the UN should not remain unchanging; it should take into account the balance of forces within the UN that nowadays given the absence of the USSR is clearly in favour of imperialism.

4. International law as we knew it when the USSR existed, no longer exists. Of course the peoples and the popular movements can appeal to just resolutions formed in the period of the existence of the USSR and the other socialist countries. But as long as new resolutions that cynically serve the interests of the imperialists appear, these resolutions will lose their importance.

5. The views about the “multipolar” world, the “democratization of” and the “new architecture” in international relations spread illusions about the nature of the imperialist system, drawing a veil of “humanization” over imperialist barbarity.

6. The intra-imperialist contradictions led in the past to tens of local and regional conflicts and to two world wars. These contradictions will continue leading to difficult economic, political and military conflicts irrespective of the functioning of the international security organizations that are unable to prevent them. Besides, “*war is a continuation of policy by other (violent) means*”⁵⁶. The only hope for the peoples lies in the firm and mass anti-imperialist struggle in the common front against imperialism and its unions and not in the illusions about the “world democratic governance of capitalism”. This struggle is inextricably linked with the struggle for the overthrow of socialism and the socialist construction.

7. Imperialist unions such as the EU or others that may appear, having big rising imperialist powers like Russia as driving forces, cannot replace the peaceful role that the USSR used to play in the past. Due to their class nature, they are the predators that will strike the people and their movements along with other imperialists and compete with each other for their share of the loot.

8. The people, the anti-imperialist movements, the Communist Parties, countries that are trying to construct socialism must take into account the aforementioned intra-imperialist contradictions and utilize them if possible. However, they must refute the illusions about the real intentions of the imperialist powers and unions.

9. The international communist movement must draw important lessons as regards the line of the peaceful coexistence as it was implemented after the 20th congress of the CPSU leading to illusions about imperialism and its aggressive nature. These illusions are also evident in many Communist Parties and lead to the adherence to the institutions as regards their stance towards the UN and other imperialist institutions and organizations.

56. V.I. Lenin: “Socialism and War”, Collected Works, “Synchroni Epochi”, vol.26, p 322.

On current international issues

Dependent or interdependent relations?*

by **Stefanos Loukas**

Member of the Politburo of the CC of KKE

The natural gas issue and the confrontation between Russia and the Ukraine concerning its flow towards the EU and especially Germany, brought to the surface, among others, a problem that reflects relations among powerful capitalist states on energy issues and the transportation of energy from a producer to a consumer state. This issue has been posed several times and will be posed again. These relations are imbued with the realisation of the interests of the monopolies and of the economies of the two states. These co-operation relations coexist with antagonist relations. In brief, the issue of energy dependence of Germany on Russia arises in a strategic sector of the economy.

It is certainly not the only example of such relations among capitalist economies. For instance, the USA has the largest external debt, even though it has the strongest capitalist economy in the world and is the leading state of the imperialist pyramid. Moreover, the US economy depends on China regarding the acquisition by China of a huge amount of US bonds. Economic analysts say that the American economy sits on a powder-keg that will explode, in the event of China demanding an immediate realisation of the bonds.

These are some examples of relations among capitalist economies showing that along with the deepening of their intertwining, powerful capitalist economies are linked to others through their dependence on them. Is it correct? It is more appropriate to say that in conditions of intensification and deepening of capitalist internationalisation, these relations among states are interdependence relations. They are objectively reflected in the political sphere. This phenomenon has existed since the era of the establishment of capitalism as a socioeconomic system. It is not new.

* The article was published in the newspaper "Rizospastis" on 25 January 2009.

Since the era of the Manifesto of the Communist Party

The activity of capital has no boundaries. The law of profit, an absolute law of capitalism, objectively guides its activity. Its all the more extended reproduction cannot be achieved unless it leaves national borders, either through the export of capital or through the export of commodities. This takes place when the limits of the national market are narrow, suffocating, for the reproduction of capital and impede the gain of maximum profit. This is why the global market is a characteristic of the capitalist socioeconomic system.

In 1847 Marx and Engels wrote about this in the “Manifesto of the Communist Party”: “Modern industry has established the world market, for which the discovery of America paved the way. This market has given an immense development to commerce, to navigation, to communication by land. [...] The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the entire surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connections everywhere.”

Further down:

“The bourgeoisie has, through its exploitation of the world market, given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country. To the great chagrin of reactionaries, it has drawn from under the feet of industry the national ground on which it stood. All old-established national industries have been destroyed or are daily being destroyed. They are being dislodged by new industries, whose introduction becomes a life and death question for all civilised nations, by industries that no longer work up indigenous raw material, but raw material drawn from the remotest zones; industries whose products are consumed, not only at home, but in every quarter of the globe. In place of the old wants, satisfied by the production of the country, we find new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes. In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal inter-dependence of nations. And as in material, so also in intellectual production. The intellectual creations of individual nations become common property. National one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness become more and more impossible, and from the numerous national and local literatures, there arises a world literature.”

In the era of the highest stage of capitalism, imperialism, the interdependence of capitalist economies of capitalist states deepens, gets tighter. This has to do with the formation of monopolies. Monopolies tend to dominate; therefore, they mark the rate of expansion and development of the world capitalist market as well.

Thus, the phenomenon of intertwining and interdependence of capitalist economies, namely capitalist internationalisation, is intensified along with the transition from pre-monopoly to monopoly capitalism and its forms of manifestation follow the process of the evolution of capitalism.

Throughout the history of human evolution, relations tend to be formed among the states. The terms on which relations among states are formed are the terms of each dominant socioeconomic system. In capitalism these relations are antagonist.

From the time of "the industrial revolution" capitalism aims at exporting capitalist relations from one state to another, where capitalist relations have not yet developed. For example, Englishmen forced capitalist production relations upon their colonies (e.g. India).

Forms of interdependence in the era of imperialism

In the era of imperialism interdependence acquires new forms, such as international agreements among capitalists up to international and regional imperialist organisations (the International Monetary Fund, The World Bank, the World Trade Organization, the European Union, NAFTA, etc.). They are necessary, because the intensification of interdependence imposes the international state or interstate regulations in order for the reproduction of capital to be facilitated.

The activity of capital in the frames of the global market strengthens the intertwining of its parts from different states. Definitely, its national basis remains dominant. Thus its centralisation (takeovers, mergers, other agreements among monopolies of different states) may take place on an international level, but its dominance is protected by a certain state and has a national basis, despite its international activity. This also becomes apparent from the heightening of inter-imperialist contradictions among imperialist states or unions of states (e.g. the USA – the EU), even among partners within regional capitalist unions, for instance, between England and the Franco-German axis. The last such example is related to the economic crisis. In the attempt of the EU to form a uniform policy of crisis management, disagreements have been expressed among the member states, e.g. whether banks or the industry should be supported, whether the financial fund is going to be formed at EU level or on a national-state basis in each country, on the issue of the relaxing of the Stability Pact. Internal antagonisms from the scope of the particular interests of the monopolies of each country have been expressed, therefore there is a failure in implementing a uniform policy. This has also been expressed in the past, for instance, in the war against Iraq, when more EU countries took the side of the English and

the Americans (Spain, Portugal, Italy, as well as the new member states Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary etc.), contrary to the Franco-German axis. Before that in the Summit of Nice on the political unification and form of the EU, contradictions have been expressed between Germany and France concerning decision making. Furthermore, these relations develop unequally among states due to the uneven development of capitalism. Thus, the intertwining of the national capitalist economies, which is conducted through struggle, is marked by the strongest.

Nevertheless, it is wrong to examine the issue of capitalist economies relations, therefore and of capitalist states, even those at an intermediate or lower position in the imperialist pyramid comparing to other stronger states, as an issue of dependence. Such an approach is not comprehensive. It could lead to the conclusion that Germany is a dependent state, since it is energy depended by 2/3 from Russia. Or that the USA depends on China.

We can achieve a correct comprehensive approach to capitalist economies relations and therefore to capitalist states relations, **only** by examining them in the frames of their interdependence.

For example, the strong state, that is the strong capitalist economy, needs a lower, an intermediate one. Without it, without the export of capital and commodities to it, it is difficult for capital to reproduce itself. Certainly, the same applies to the lower economy that has an intermediate position in the imperialist pyramid. If it is not intertwined with the strong capitalist economy, capital reproduction and the reproduction of capitalist relations as a whole are endangered. For example, there is no other way to explain the US intervention against the decision of the current government (edit. – of Greece) to create energy pipelines with Russia, nor the insistence of Greek governments on attracting foreign investors through former public corporations and organisations such as the Hellenic Organization of Telecommunications (OTE) and former state-owned banks (the Commercial bank).

This reality, in conditions of uneven development and antagonism determines objectively the international relations among states. However, the prevailing elements, the basis, are the capitalist production relations that also determine the relations among EU states, the policy of the EU and its member states.

The economic base, capitalist production relations and their abolition should be of primary importance to the movement of the working class and of its allies. Only this way can lead to the abolition of the unequal relations, which in capitalism, all in all, follow the laws of capitalist development, due to the laws of development of capitalist internationalisation in conditions of uneven development.

About the intermediate and lower position in the imperialist system

From the standpoint of the working class struggle and its orientation it is very important to have comprehensive knowledge, monitor and study the world imperialist system and the relations among states as they are formed according to their position in the imperialist pyramid. Because, on the one hand, these relations are not equal and on the other hand the contradictions and antagonisms among states, as well as the formation of temporary or comparatively permanent alliances and coalitions among them include compromises and antagonisms.

These tendencies, the formation of the various relations among economies and states are influenced by the “strength” of each capitalist economy, of the monopolies and of the capitalist state. However, this cannot be detached and examined on its own, independently of what it really serves, the reproduction of the capital in each state, the strengthening of the capitalist production relations, the strengthening of the political power of the capital. Therefore, both the external and internal policy of each country are determined by its position in the world imperialist system and serve consciously the reproduction and strengthening of exploitation relations.

Here, we need to remember that imperialism constitutes an entire historical era in the development of capitalism and it characterises capitalist societies of all capitalist countries, independently of the level of capitalist development and of the uneven development among them.

«All capitalist countries are integrated in the international imperialist system, independently of the level of development of capitalist relations and of the forms and ways this integration takes place, namely, if it is conducted through the integration into interstate regional, world capitalist unions, or through “assistance” programs of world imperialist organisations, through upgraded interstate monopoly regulations, the export of capital and commodities, through military interventions and war in general, through open or covert interventions in the formation or renewal of the political system, etc.» (Extract from the lecture of the Politburo of the CC of KKE “Ideological issues concerning capitalist economy” KOMEP, 2/2002, pg. 91-92).

Therefore, the study and interpretation of the policy implemented by the bourgeois governments of Greece should take all the above mentioned into consideration in their dialectical relation. On this basis the decisions and alliances of the ruling class concerning the integration in international and regional imperialist organisations and unions (e.g. the EU) should be understood. Deci-

sions such as the building up of relations with Russia according to the strategy of the ruling class on the geostrategic upgrade of Greece in the Balkans and its emergence as an energy hub, in order to serve export and capital penetration into these countries.

The impact in the policy of bourgeois governments

Based on the above mentioned, the policy implemented by the bourgeois governments in Greece, both internal and external, reflects the intermediate position of Greek capitalism and the decisions seem to be “compulsorily implemented”, in the sense that bourgeois governments do not oppose them despite their seemingly negative effect on the country. These are conscious decisions deriving from the position of Greece in the imperialist system. They benefit the interests of capital in general.

For example, the integration of Greece into the EEC and later into the EU and the EMU was a decision serving the general interest of bourgeoisie, despite the fact that some of its sections suffered a blow by the single internal market or by the broader international agreements of the Union with countries outside the EU, which were obligatory for each member state. Furthermore, the governments co-decide in the frameworks of the EU and the position of each of them reflects the particular interests of the capital of each country. The fact that the countries with a lower position than the leading countries of the EU make compromises as far as those interests are concerned, when their position differs, is an expression of unevenness. However, this does not nullify the fact that even these compromises are determined by the general long-term interests of the capital of the country.

This unevenness, for instance, caused the blow against the shipbuilding and repair industry (edit. – in Greece), as Germany and Holland demanded to halt its development in other states, such as Greece, since they wished to have the shipbuilding and repair industry almost exclusively to themselves. In addition, international agreements in favour of the strong capitalist states concerning the import of cheap commodities produced by industries that are traditional for Greece, such as textile, clothing and leather industries, led to their shrinkage in our country. Certainly, the lower percentage of profit of these sectors in comparison with the so called capital-intense sectors also contributed to this. Meaning that capital invests and develops sectors on the basis of quick and large profits, and not according to the potential of the resources. Even if these relations did not exist, and if the traditional sectors went on developing (this would not have happened), if Greece was not a

part of the EU, would the working class and the people have benefited from the capitalist economy?

Surely, the bourgeoisie in Greece did not lose from this development as a whole, since other sectors have developed, e.g., telecommunications, energy, informatics, construction companies etc., furthermore, intertwined with the international capital they export capital to the broader region (the Balkans, the Black Sea, etc.). Another main issue is the strengthening of the power of the bourgeoisie of a country with an intermediate and lower position through the participation in imperialist interstate unions. Through NATO that can intervene within the member states, if the power of capital is endangered, as well as through the EU, the EU terror laws, police cooperation etc. Greece has indeed developed. It went through capitalist development, therefore this development is of class anti-popular content.

Even if we consider correct (it is not) the point of view that the integration of Greece into the EU impeded its development, what was the impediment? Why is agricultural production shrinking, and small and medium sized farms being destroyed? Did not monopolies impose the EU Common agricultural policy? Why is the development of the industrial sectors not even, why does it not correspond to the potential of the resources of the local production base? Do not monopolies impose it? This is the essence, so, in order for development to be in favour of the people, monopolies and their power should be abolished and their property socialised.

Struggle for the equality of capitalist relations or struggle for socialism?

Consequently, the working class, the popular strata need to understand more deeply and get to know the core of the issue of the attitude of the bourgeoisie and of the governments of the leading imperialist powers towards the governments of less developed countries. This understanding should be based on class and not superficial moral behavioural criteria, e.g., according to the separation of owners and servants, powerful and subservient, subordinate.

There is a propagandist argument stating that a certain policy, such as the Common agricultural policy, or capitalist restructuring deriving from the Lisbon strategy is implemented in Greece, because this it is imposed by the EU. This strategy is not imposed on the governments by the EU. It serves the interests of capital of all EU member states as a whole, therefore, it also serves the particular interests of Greek capital. That is why they implement it. This strategy enables the reproduction of capital. Consequently, anti-popular

policy is not a result of imposition by the EU. It is a result of the need of capital in Greece as well. This policy is co-developed with the participation of the bourgeois governments of Greece in the organs of the EU. When this policy is to a greater or lesser degree contrary to the interests of some parts of capital and there are contradictions, they are solved by the power of monopolies. Even thus, when the monopolies of the strong imperialist states have greater benefits, the general interests of capital in Greece benefit and this is apparent both from the efforts of governments to attract foreign capital, and from the intertwining of Greek and foreign capital in companies of the productive sector, as well as in commercial companies, in the financial system, etc. What are monopoly groups, such as "Marfin", Latsis group, or various large supermarkets? They are associations of Greek and foreign capital. For example, "Carrefour" merged with "Marinopoulos". Latsis group is intertwined with German capital and so on.

Certainly, this does not mean that the struggle of the working class and of the other popular strata to withdraw from the EU and all the international and regional imperialist organisations should be considered independent from the struggle against the rule of capital. Because these relations of Greek capitalism, in the frames of capitalist internationalisation, accord with the law of development.

We refer to the issue of dependence as of the interdependence of capitalist states and their dialectical relation to the economic basis of capitalism. At a political level and even more so in international relations it is wrong to attribute the causes of popular problems to "dependence", or to speak of the possibility of their appeasement when there is no "dependence" (even outside interstate unions bilateral relations are determined by the "power" of monopolies), without disclosing the primary causes, which are capitalist production relations. This approach does not take into account the laws of capitalist movement and on the other hand it does not contribute to the maturing of the political consciousness of the working class and its allies, to their orientation towards struggle, which should be directed towards the overthrow of capitalism, the conquering of power and the building of socialism-communism. Consequently, this approach undermined the strategy of KKE, its alliances policy and the struggle for popular power.

Thus, what should be of primary importance to the movement of the working class and of its allies is the abolition of capitalist production relations and not the abolition of the unequal relations among states in capitalism, which all in all follow the process of capitalist internationalisation in conditions of uneven development, which is determined by the law of development.

International solidarity

KKE and KNE throughout the entire year organized dozens of solidarity demonstrations with socialist Cuba. As Aleka Papariga, GS of the CC KKE, stated in October, 2009 marking 47 years since the imposition of the blockade, «KKE expresses its full solidarity and support for the people and the Communist Party of Cuba. The mass demand for the end to the blockade becomes more effective when it is combined with the struggle against imperialism and its open or covert subversive aims, with the struggle against EU aggression with which European governments, including Greece, have aligned themselves. The defence of socialist Cuba, the struggle against the blockade, means the defending of the right of our people to fight against one-way solutions, to fight to throw off the yoke of exploitation, to fight for another road of development with people's needs at the core.»



Brigade of the Communist Youth of Greece(KNE) departs for Cuba



Solidarity Demonstration of the Thessaloniki KKE organisations, in solidarity with Cuba, for the liberation of the Five Cuban Patriots from American prisons.

International solidarity

KNE forces march in protest to the port of Astakos, January 2009, where they blockade it, preventing the loading of war cargo headed for Israel during the period of the vicious slaughter of the Palestinian people in the Gaza. Rallies and demonstrations in solidarity with the Palestinian people took place all over the country. The Greek communists were at the forefront of the movement condemning the USA and Israel, for the murder of the people

of Palestine. KKE also condemned the EU which at that point was upgrading its commercial relations with Israel, as well as the social democrats of the «Socialist International» who took equal positions of so-called neutrality towards both the victim and the aggressor, thus reinforcing Israeli barbarity.

Communists and other anti-imperialists in class-oriented trade unions, the All-Workers' Militant Front (PAME), gathered blankets and medical supplies for the suffering people of Palestine.

In addition, the class unions, like the largest Federation of the private sector, the Construction Workers' Union, carried out 24-hour solidarity strikes or work stoppages during the days that the atrocities were unfolding in Gaza.

In the city of Nikaia, with its communist mayor, the Town Council unanimously voted to raise the Palestinian flag over the Mayor's Office!

KKE contributes in every way to the reinforcement of the workers' movement and to anti-imperialist resistance against Israeli occupation, to the clash with imperialist plans for a «Greater Middle East» and more generally, the machinations of the USA, NATO, and the EU.



KNE Mass Event on Socialism in the Polytechnic University of Athens Auditorium



In 2009, KKE and KNE held scores of mass meetings in all of the major cities of Greece and at the major universities, against the anti-communist campaign which had been launched by the mechanisms of manipulation of the ruling class. The Resolution of the 18th Congress of KKE where the causes of the overthrow of socialism in the USSR are examined provide a substantial answer to this attempt coordinated by the EU, and within the frameworks of the Council of Europe and the OSCE.

KKE MPs and MEPs led the way in refuting the anti-communist propaganda at the different forums, while KKE and KNE held a series of demonstrations and other events countering these attempts, such as the large rally and march that took place in Athens (22.6.2009), (second photograph).

Greek communists also organised a series of symbolic actions, to oppose the anti-communist campaign. KNE organized a mass event in the areas where the Democratic Army of Greece carried out bitter battles with British-American imperialists and the Greek bourgeois army, during the Civil War (1946-1949). The GS of the CC of KKE, Aleka Papariga lay a wreath at the monument of Soviet soldiers at Dusseldorf (9/5/2009) on her trip to Ger-



many to speak to Greek immigrants about the Elections for the European Parliament. At a commemoration on August 31st at the execution site of 200 Greek communists by Nazis, May-Day 1944 in Kaisariani, Athens, Aleka Papariga stated, among other things: "We are gathered here today in this place of sacrifice of 200 select members and cadre of KKE to declare that this contemporary anti-communist campaign which aims to equate socialism with Nazism-fascism, backed by the leadership of the EU, will not go unchallenged. Our answer is not put forth on anniversaries; our answer will be



put forward every single day, in struggles, in the organization of the class struggle, in the gathering of forces and the building of alliances among anti-imperialist forces, in the struggle for peoples' power, in the struggle for socialism.



On the international communist movement

18th Congress of KKE:



«The International Communist Movement, despite whichever steps were taken, remains in crisis, is organizationally and ideologically splintered. A basic characteristic of the crisis continues to be the struggle between revolutionary communist viewpoints and reformist opportunist ones which is under development in all areas and in a series of parties takes place internally.

At the center of the struggle is: the relevance of Marxism-Leninism in this time period, the necessity and the

realistic possibility of socialism under conditions of the temporary victory of counterrevolution. The character of imperialism and of interstate unions. The strategies of alliances, the communist stance during periods of capitalist crisis and in relation to the inter-imperialist conflicts.

A basic issue is the stance concerning socialist construction in the 20th century.

The prolongation of crisis in the international communist movements harbors dangers of even greater backsliding. The revolutionary communist forces need to take initiatives to deal with the crisis that widely affects the anti-imperialist movement of the peoples', hinders the regrouping and counter-attack of the working class movement».



The 18th Congress of KKE estimated that «The International Meetings of Communist and Workers' Parties (IMCWP) must continue.

At the same time, the 18th Congress of KKE emphasized the need to «systematize the practical work for the formation of a distinct communist pole, preserving and developing even further the tried and true forms of international and regional meetings, as well as that of bilateral contact.»

In this direction KKE supports the International Meetings of the CPs as well as the regional and thematic meetings, along with the initiative of publishing the «International Communist Review» (<http://www.iccr.g>). As was noted in the meeting of its editorial board, the publication of the first issue of «The International Communist Review» expresses the necessity of cooperation between the theoretical and political journals of Communist Parties who have common positions on a series of fundamental theoretical and ideological issues».

10 Years of PAME



Photos from the MAY DAY strike rally of PAME in Athens, Syntagma Square (outside of the Greek Parliament) 2009.

10 years ago in 1999, on KKE's initiative, the forces inside the trade union movement who recognized the need for class struggle, proceeded to found the All-Workers' Militant Front(PAME). On the banner, marking this 10-year course 1999-2009 is written: «We continue on the road of class struggle».

PAME unites within its ranks today 8 branch federations (including the Federation of Greek Construction Workers, of Textiles, Leather, the Press, Pharmaceuticals, etc.), as well as 13 local union councils (Labour Center) and dozens of primary trade unions where class forces have the majority.

Those unions have not withdrawn from the trade federations of the private(GSEE) and public(ADEDY) sectors.

Thus, they come in conflict not only with capital, with bourgeois governments and the EU, but also with compromised leaderships GSEE/ADEDY and more generally with forces of yellow trade unionism.

At the same time, PAME forces also act inside unions where the class forces are not in the majority. In these cases, PAME forces constitute the 2nd force, in a series of branch federations (such as the Food processing and Tourism Federation and the Metal Workers' Federation), as well as in Labour Centers, e.g. of Athens and Thessaloniki.

PAME organizes the action of class-oriented unions, coming in sharp conflict with employers, governments, and compromised leaderships, and for this it has led 10 years of tough battles at the workplace, branch, and national levels calling 24-hour nation-wide general strike mobilizations against class collaboration, against pseudo «social dialogues» and compromise.



10 Years of PAME



Photo of a PAME march in support of public universal mandatory social insurance.

The Political Resolution of the 18th Congress of KKE stresses: «The working class and the peoples' strata in our country have no interest in «solutions» that help the system to get out of its crisis. The class oriented trade union movement must expose, reject, and take action against the purposefully misleading viewpoints on «social problems» and «joint efforts to deal with the problem», «regulation», «reforms», «humanizing» of capitalism, that «demonize» liberalism in order to save capitalism.

The bourgeois political forces, administrators of the system, express great concern facing the existing danger that they might not be able to control developments arising from the aftermath of the crisis, specifically regarding their political stability. However, the danger of an economic and political destabilization for the bourgeois class represents a hope for the working class, popular forces.

In these conditions, KKE turns its attention and all of its activity and action in the direction of the only real way out for the people and the youth: to accelerate the process of regrouping the labour movement, building the social alliance with the militant forces of the self-employed, small and medium sized farmers, to reinforce the workers' movement worldwide.

The crisis requires a workers' counterattack, intensification of the class struggle. Behind the anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly line of struggle there is only submission and assimilation. Facing the Party are new, even greater demands on the ideological front, the struggle of ideas within the ranks of the movement, the need in tandem with the basic strategic goal, to weaken bourgeois concepts and bourgeois ideas, to attack reformist opportunist forces ideologically and politically, that constitute a basic obstacle to unity on a class basis, to the social alliance, to the radicalization of popular consciousness and action, to the formation of a united social political front that organizes the struggle for the overthrow of the power of the monopolies, putting forward the concepts of «Peoples' Power and a Peoples' Economy».



Photo from the takeover of the Ministry of Finance in the center of Athens by PAME forces in order to propagandize the strike on 17th December 2009 that was called by PAME.

Moments of the class struggle



«To prevent the passage of the anti-social security measures of the government»
PAME mobilization against social democracy government plans to impose new measures that will greatly reduce and privatize social security.

«Not another dead worker» «Workers' health and safety measures now!»
PAME mobilization for safety measures in response to the death of a factory worker.



«No Young Workers with flexible forms of employment. No young workers with uninsured work» is written on the picket signs of the Youth Secretariat of PAME in a PAME mobilization in Athens.

«We demand a life with rights. Hands off Laws for Hazardous Occupations. Pharmaceutical Workers' Federation.» PAME Mobilization against government plans to abolish the category of hazardous occupations.»



Moments of the class struggle



Early in the morning, striking workers guard a strike at a large milk production factory. PAME fights during every strike to enlighten, the workers, to organize the struggle, and to stand guard.

Striking workers guard the ship- workers' strike in the Port of Pireaus, blocking ship entrances. Thousands of youth and university students stand guard together with striking shipworkers and industrial workers from early in the morning.



PAME forces stand guard from the wee hours at a strike outside a factory.

Strike against trade unionists' firings at a private telecommunications company. Under today's conditions of capitalist crisis, PAME is at the forefront in the battle to prevent firings and for the rehiring of fired workers.



PAME actions with immigrants



Egyptian fish industry workers in Mihaniona (near Thessaloniki), January 2010 in a strike rally organized with the help of PAME, defending their rights against employers arbitrarily reducing wages and firing workers on the pretext of the economic crisis.



Foreign workers at a PAME demonstration holding a banner that says «1400 euro minimum wage, against austerity and compromise» Hundreds upon hundreds of foreign workers rally today with class-oriented unions, in PAME, fighting together with Greeks to defend and extend their rights.

PAME actions with immigrants



KKE, KNE, the class oriented trade union movement (PAME) develop continual actions against the illegal status of foreign workers –immigrants who live in our country and endure the harshest exploitation at work. At the same time, they develop an ideological and political front against the racism and xenophobia that is cultivated by the bourgeois parties at the expense of the immigrants.

As is stated in the documents from the 18th KKE Congress: «The development and strengthening of the class movement, the overall increase in the organization of the working class and progress in its unity are incomprehensible without systematic party work among economic immigrants who endure to the bone the most vicious class exploitation.

An inseparable element in the programming of party work must be the participation of immigrants in union bodies, in the trade union movement, their defence in workplaces from employer impunity, whether they work in the cities or on the land. Today, immigrants need defending and solidarity against their fellow-countrymen who employ them, who exploit them just as harshly as do Greeks.

Work among economic immigrants must be extended to the entire range of problems that they face as far as their life quality and living conditions are concerned, the problem of educating their children, social infrastructure, the problem of health, their defence in each and every situation of repression and violence, their legalization».



Against the EU



PAME banner against the anti-people policies of the government, capital and the European Union that abolish workers' gains and commercializes health, social security and education.



Poor and medium sized farmers block the national roads every year in protest against the situation caused by the implementation of an EU Common Agricultural Policy, put into practice with the aim of consolidating agricultural production into a few capitalist agro-industrial monopolies.

Declaration of 21 Communist and Workers' Parties of the EU

On May 12th, 2009, the daily newspaper «RIZOSPASTIS», organ of the CC of KKE, ran on its front page the Joint Declaration of 21 Communist and Workers' Parties in EU countries, in light of the EuroElections.

On the eve of its printing, **Aleka Papariga**, GS of the CC of KKE held a press conference where the President of the Hungarian Communist Workers' Party, **Gyula Thurmer** and General Secretary of the Communist Party of the People of Spain, **Carmelo Suarez** were present and spoke.

A. Papariga stated during the press conference: «We consider it an significant achievement that for the first time we have produced a joint Declaration of 21 Communist and Workers' Parties, with common positions that respond to the nature of the European Union and the nature of conflict that must take shape all over Europe in response to this. Naturally, every party in its own country must adapt the Declaration based on the particularities that exist». She added, «the workers', the general popular movement is helped when consistent and stable joint actions exist, when differences don't divert us, when estimations are not generalized, because then the agreement is unstable and there is the danger of the workers understanding these decisions in an individual way, each worker acting as he/she believes. «Ambiguity» is not real strength.

KKE, with its unwavering stance, the patience that it commands which is an advantage and not a disadvantage in politics, believes that in the following years there will be further positive



developments in the development of a wiser, more experienced communist current. A current that will contribute to the broader massing of forces, yet that will be stable and unwavering in aspects of assimilation, manipulations; tough under ideological and political pressure, a characteristic that contributes to the endurance of the movement given the ever-changing maneuverings of the class enemy».

Moments of KNE's actions



On the 7th, 8th and 9th of May the Communist Youth of Greece (KNE) is organizing its 10th Congress under the slogan: "Communism is the youth of the world. KNE is our organization".

Today it has been confirmed that there is no problem affecting the youth that is not associated with the political problem of the country, with private capitalist ownership, with the anarchy of capitalist production, with capitalist exploitation (unemployment, class barriers, flexible labor relations, the lack of free time, drugs, the destruction of the environment, cultural degradation).

The necessity and realism of Socialism has been confirmed. The capitalists and their servants know this. That is why they are attacking communist ideology and the construction of socialism in the 20th century with such hate. That is why anti-communism has become an official policy and ideology of the EU that is taught in schools through the process of education. They want to slander communist ideology in the minds of young people. KNE unwaveringly defends the construction of socialism in the 20th century, its achievements and contributions.

The central theme of the 10th Congress is the strengthening of KNE. KNE strives to be able to fight alongside the Communist Party of Greece even more effectively, under any circumstances, and commit more young people to the prospect of socialism-communism. KNE wants to contribute to the development of young communists, of the new members of KKE. It wants to play a leading role in the reinforcement of the youth movement on an anti-monopoly and anti-capitalist basis.

KNE is playing a significant role in the rebirth of the students' movement in Greece

On November 6th of 2009 the Students' Militant Front (MAS) of Universities and Technological Educational Institutions was created at the University of Athens. Its creation constitutes a historic moment and a great achievement of the student movement in Greece.

The founding of MAS is the result of the need to confront the decay of the student movement in Greece, to reorganize it and give it a militant orientation, to fight back against the Bologna and EU policies that are enforced through the laws implemented by both neoliberals and social-democrats, to struggle for rights in education and work, for the students of today and the workers of tomorrow.



Moments of KNE's actions

More than 700 representatives of 110 Militant Committees and 17 Student Unions participated in the founding assembly for the establishment of MAS. The representatives of the class forces in the Greek trade-union movement were present and saluted the creation of MAS.

KNE appeals to all the students that come from poor and working class families to create Militant Committees in every faculty all over Greece, to strengthen MAS.

KNE prioritizes work among working youth. The experience that was gleaned from working class struggles, strike battles of the previous years against the whirlwind of anti-workers' measures constitutes an important legacy. Important battles were waged with multinational corporations, dozens of KNE members were fired for their actions in the workers' movement. Under these conditions, a solidarity movement developed that had important results, such as rehiring, signing of local branch contracts which supersede national contracts. Young vanguard communist workers led the way, becoming beacons for the rest of the workers and employees.

KNE plays a leading role in organizing young workers in the class-oriented trade union movement. The organization of the young generation in the working class, of unemployed youth, of youth with flexible work relations, is a basic prerequisite for the change in the balance of forces, for the strengthening of the class line of PAME.



During the great strike mobilizations that PAME organized on 17/12, 10/02, 24/02, young working people, students, etc. participated in a mass way. The bloc of Young People hired in the Stage Programme, the construction workers and university students of MAS stood out in these mobilizations. Many banners declared «Organization – Counterattack» while the main slogan was «The law is workers' rights» which was shouted out by thousands of young people.

Moments from KKE actions in 2009

In 2009 KKE held its 18th Congress (February), while at the same time it had to carry out two tough electoral battles, the Elections for the European Parliament (June) and the early Parliamentary Elections (October) under conditions of economic crisis, and gains in the popularity of social democracy.

Taking into account the totality of factors that shaped the level of political consciousness, as well as the negative role played by the opposition parties in relation to peoples' consciousness, KKE remained strong; it managed to block attempts to remove it from 3rd position, through ideological pressure, and attempts to strip it of the largest sections of its political and electoral influence.

The criteria with which KKE judges the electoral results lead it to the estimation that «the strengthening of the Party cannot be accelerated under the same terms, the same methods, the same criteria that are required for the bourgeois parties, for the other parties that express petit bourgeois concepts, opportunist, etc.»

From this viewpoint, KKE does not make absolute the election results and election battles, it puts forward the duties of the Party that concern the action of the workers' movement, the progress in party building, the effect on the youth movement, the level of ideological and political maturity, dedication to the struggle and the prospects for socialism.

The election results demand that we intensify our efforts to disseminate as widely as we possibly can the strategies of the Party, to work on the development of its ranks and party

building in the working class, to respond to the greater demands placed on the Party to work out its strategy, for stability in struggle, the base of such work being its strategy, for work on party structure and prospects. Like many times before, KKE reminds that the electoral polls must conform to the strategy of the Party and not vice versa.



Photo from the main pre-election rally of KKE in Athens.



Moments from KKE actions in 2009



Photo from a demonstration in Athens, 17 November, KKE and KNE forces outside the American Embassy.

KKE, with its 18th Congress, focuses its attention on a multi-form, ideological, political, mass struggle based around immediate and urgent workers', farmers', and more generally, peoples' problems that are of course being greatly worsened under today's crisis conditions. Nevertheless, it estimates that this vanguard work is not enough for the development of political consciousness in the working class and the popular strata, and does not contribute enough for people to fully comprehend how this daily struggle must be directed in a struggle for the

overthrow of unjust exploitative power.

As is stated in the 18th Congress documents, the ideological struggle today plays an even greater role in the organization of the class struggle, in the social-political alliance, in the broadening of the radical current that fights the very foundation of severely worsening problems in the direction of solving the problem at the level of power.

The 18th Congress of KKE armed the entire Party with important decisions that concern the regrouping of the workers' movement, party building, ideological-political work, the promotion of a social-political alliance of the working class with the popular strata in the cities and in the villages. A basic tool in this direction is the Resolution of the 18th Congress concerning the estimations relevant to socialist construction in the USSR in the 20th Century and the viewpoints of KKE regarding socialism.



Photo from the 18th Congress of KKE that took place in February, in the building of the CC of the Party.

Regional issues: EUROPE

The European dimensions of contemporary opportunism and the struggle of the communist movement*

by **Kostas Papadakis**

Member of the Central Committee of KKE,
member of the International Section of the CC

The recent elections for the European Parliament, as well as the subsequent elections in countries such as Germany, Portugal, and Greece, gave rise to a discussion which is far from innocent once we examine the motives behind it. This discussion focuses around and attempts from different angles to promote the conception that today there is no need for the existence of communist parties. The bourgeoisie class and its mouthpieces have set in their gun sights one more time, the indisputable choice of every genuine Marxist-Leninist Communist Party to have as its strategic aim the overthrow of the power of the monopolies and the building of socialism-communism.

The recent electoral results “are interpreted” by bourgeois analysts in such a way that they put ideological and political pressure on the Communist Parties, projecting as contemporary and new the assimilation into the strategies of capital and imperialist bodies, propagandizing in different ways, the so-called ‘new left’. Various groupings that are harmless for the capitalist system and the plutocracy are projected in a mass way.

Our world theory reveals the special connection of imperialism with the political current of opportunism. The massive profits of the monopolies are those that ensure for capitalism the buying out of different layers of the work-

* Article published in the 6th issue of the theoretical journal of the KKE “Communist Review”, in 2009.

ing class, winning them over to the side of the interests of the bourgeois class.

The transformation of a “workers’ aristocracy” constitutes the social-class base for the political current of opportunism.

The special connection and relation of the development of the monopolies with opportunism imposes specific political duties. Because of this, no anti-imperialist struggle can be considered valid if it does not contain the necessary element, the struggle against opportunism and all its varied forms. It has no importance if the major political representatives of opportunism have few forces. The bourgeois class benefits greatly from the results of their misleading the people on a wide level. Under conditions of capitalist crisis, opportunist forces and their parties act as a safety valve for the bourgeois political system. They constitute a “proper” alternative choice, and for that reason they are supported by the primary parties of capital as they do not require any type of conflict with capitalist power. During a period of pressure for adaptation, dilemmas and the blossoming of the idea of the lesser evil, they can offer useful services to the bourgeois class, depending of course on the smaller or greater ‘empty political space’ that is left open for them, depending on the situation of social democracy in each country.

Two camps: Confrontation versus assimilation

The dilemma of confrontation versus assimilation is becoming even more urgent. This dilemma is projected as a major question for the Communist Parties. The crucial question is whether the program, the line, the declarations, the goals and the demands of the Communist Parties directly confront the central political problem in each country, that is the issue of “which class is in power”, and if they will build into the daily class struggle the prospect of socialist revolution which is the only way out of the capitalist system.

More specifically, the conflict concerning the orientation of the International Communist Movement (ICC), a conflict which has been developing for quite some time now, was expressed with the pretext of the elections for the European Parliament.

In these elections, on the one side was the strategy of assimilation into the aims of big capital within the framework of the EU, which sets as a basic precondition the abandonment of the Marxist-Leninist world theory, the mutation and the social-democratization of the Communist Parties. The tool for

the construction of this pole of contemporary opportunism in Europe is the European Left Party (ELP).

On the other side were the forces of confrontation with imperialism, with the EU, the strategies of capitalism. These forces are none other than the communist and workers' parties that consider non-negotiable the struggle for socialism and will not submit to the line of capital. These parties, despite the fact that they continue to follow a course of working out programmatic choices and seeking answers to the causes of the overthrow of socialism as we knew it, put forward the issue of a change in power; they defend from a principled standpoint socialism as we knew it; they believe in and they advocate socialism as their strategic aim.

The cooperation and joint declaration of the 21 Communist and Workers' Parties and the initiatives for action that were developed in the pre-election period project the right of every people to decide on its own path of development, including – in certain cases – the right of withdrawal. They revealed the imperialist character of the EU and more importantly, the issue of the power of the monopolies which is the real political problem in every country.

On the other hand, ELP during the elections for the European Parliament acted for the assimilation of the people's forces into the capitalist system, into imperialism, the EU and the strategies of capitalism. Its particular role was to push the communist parties into a line of acceptance of the European one-way road, the creation of obstacles from the left which acted to undermine the actions of the revolutionary parties such as KKE, and the slandering of its positions.

An operation with a historical precedent

The pre-requisites have been shaped historically in order for this operation against the Communist Parties to find fertile ground and to be developed even further. In Europe for many decades now, the communist movement has been undergoing a deep crisis. The opportunist current of eurocommunism enjoyed a long-standing dominance in the decades preceding the counter-revolutionary overthrows which culminated with the opportunist current of the past two decades in the communist movement of Europe. Communist parties dissolved themselves or were assimilated into other political formations or even worse, they retained their communist title but rejected socialism as we knew it in the 20th century. They renounced their working class character and mission, their communist ideology; they ceased to be the ideological and

political vanguard of the working class, abandoning the class struggle. They followed the strategy of capital, class collaboration, smashing powerful bonds that they had previously maintained with the working class of their countries. Whatever remaining bonds that existed proved to be useful for the bourgeois class at the end of the previous decade.

Very soon these communist parties were called upon by quite a few bourgeois classes in European countries to collaborate in government formations for the administration of capitalism together with social democracy (i.e. France, Italy, and Spain). It was urgent then for capital to gain extra valuable time, while the big words concerning so-called social prosperity for all and eternal peace that accompanied the dissolution of socialism seemed more and more to be just a deception. The role of such Communist Parties during this period was especially useful for capital, offering invaluable services in the leading countries of capitalist Europe enabling them to push through capitalist restructuring of strategic importance with more ease and popular consent. The participation of the Communist Parties in bourgeois governments brought converted communists into positions of government responsibility in order to oversee the implementation of the restructuring that was demanded by the needs of capital and that made way for the Maastricht Treaty, the anti-people directives of the EU as well as the Lisbon Strategy.

They were very same Communist Parties who dirtied their hands with the blood of the people in the war in Yugoslavia, participating in collaborationist governments with the social democrats and facilitated by every means the bombarding of the Yugoslavian people. The “renewing wave of hope that dominates Europe” was of course very quick to go bankrupt. The ideological and political bankruptcy of the French Communist Party, just as the erosion of the prestige of the Communist Parties that came out of the Italian Communist Party and the Spanish Communist Party were expressed in their massive electoral losses just a few years ago. We refer to this because in a previous phase, their great electoral influence had been interpreted as a vindication for their policies.

A corresponding negative effect on their orientation and communist character was experienced by those parties that had hastened to mimic and follow the line of these parties. The circle was completed for these parties and several others that considered them as a model, without them reaching any essential conclusions from a class standpoint.

New bearer of social democracy a change in a willing guard

Those Communist Parties were thrown out by the ruling classes of their countries, used-up and no longer useful. A willing replacement had to be found quickly and it didn't take long. In any case, the opportunistic parties of the so-called "left" didn't appear out of thin air. All these years they had made a special contribution to these developments, under which the communist movement was driven to an even more difficult position.

After the overthrows, utilizing the vehicle "the unity of the left", the promotion of illusions of a "left-friendly to the people" wing of social democracy and the logic of participation in bourgeois governments, different opportunist groups attempted to attack the Communist Parties in an indirect manner, like leeches "sticking" on them, they had a multi-sided ideological-political effect, reproducing the dominant bourgeois ideology and its petit bourgeois variations under the cloak of "another left".

The trend for the social-democratization of the Communist Party with the intervention of imperialist mechanisms and the bourgeois mass media took on serious momentum. An organized anti-communist campaign contributed decisively that very quickly proved to have strategic importance for capital in its clash with the communist movement and the class-oriented workers' movement.

ELP- A lever for the mutation of the communist parties

The transformation and the course that was followed by ELP, in which Synaspismos (SYN) contributed energetically, confirms the estimation in the Theses of the 18th KKE Convention that *"it constitutes from its founding a institutionalized element of the EU and a coordinating lever for the attempts at the mutation of the character of the parties that maintain the title communist or who have maintained to one degree or another, at least typically, some characteristics."*¹

ELP, as an organized center of opportunism for all of Europe, aims to amass all those communist parties that compromise with bourgeois ideology and politics, utilizing the harsh struggle taking place internally in a se-

1. "18th Convention of KKE, Documents", CC of KKE publication, pg. 297.

ries of communist parties between a revolutionary line of confrontation with imperialism and that of assimilation. ELP expertly makes use of the gaps, the weaknesses and the faltering in the creation of a revolutionary strategy under contemporary conditions from a series of Communist Parties following the overthrows. It aims to influence the contemporary course and character of the Communist Parties by distorting the conceptions around socialism, by promoting a definitive assimilation into the opportunist current and class collaboration. They aim at blackening the conceptions around the Communist Parties with all types of anti-communist argumentation, not focusing simply by chance on Stalin; that is during the period when the foundations of socialist construction in the USSR were laid.

At the same time, ELP attempts to intervene beyond the borders of the EU. With a flood of financing from the EU and with the multi-branched network of subsections of Non-Governmental Organizations, with the foundation “Rosa Luxembourg” belonging to the “Die Linke” in Germany in the forefront, has set up sections for study and projection of theoretical positions of opportunism in countries such as: Poland, Russia, Brazil, Mexico, South Africa, Israel, Palestine, Vietnam and recently in India.² This intervention supports the opportunist forces in their undermining role against the international communist movement.

ELP- Force for class collaboration in the working class trade union movement

Even in the working class movement, ELP forces unfalteringly serve class collaboration, negotiations, boss unionism, and compromise. While capital becomes even more aggressive under crisis conditions, ELP forces, such as the “Die Linke” in Germany or the “Left Bloc” in Portugal have taken on the responsibility to rein in whichever working class trade union organization that has radical class-oriented demands. During the summer, their trade union leaders proposed reductions in salaries and hours, and firings in order to buoy up the so-called multinational companies. Government collaboration with the social democrats in Berlin, out of compassion for the bosses, announced a salary freeze and an increase in work hours for public employees, reducing even further the price of the labor force.

2. See the website for the “Rosa Luxembourg” Foundation, www.rosalux.de.

In other words, they leave worker-employees defenseless to the bosses' demands for flexibility and compression of the price of the labor force towards the bottom. They cultivate the logic that with "contemporary" proposals for workers' adaptation it's possible to satisfy the thirst of capitalists for new profits *and at the same time* workers can avoid the consequences of the crisis. The result of course is that the last word in capitalist exploitation is being adopted.

Their hostile stance against the class-oriented trade union movement, their effort at stifling any genuine radical class claim against the bosses is expressed in a myriad of ways, including recruiting either the completely employer-controlled sold-out company councils (e.g. Germany) or the trade associations manipulated by social democracy with the logic of class cooperation. During big strikes, e.g. in the branch of the automobile industry, they played the role of "fifth column" (Volkswagen in Portugal – Continental in Germany, etc.)

A declaration of compliance with imperialism

The European declaration of ELP does not allow for any misinterpretation of its goal: *"Confronting the present crisis, the European Left is called upon, even more to play a decisive role in the support of social political actions against the policies of the cultural leadership of the right wing. The application of neoliberal policies in the EU became possible, among other reasons, due to a kind of great coalition between the parties of the European Conservatives and the European Socialists. This common consent is one of the causes of the political crisis in the smooth functioning of Europe. It creates great conflicts in the inner workings of the social democratic parties."*³

In its pre-election platform ELP does not make of course any reference to the issue of the power of the monopolies. This basic political problem is methodically covered up, while the imperialist character of the EU is white-washed. The concept of socialism has no place in this document, even in reference. From the beginning and a priori, whichever communist parties co-sign the declaration with the opportunists, renounce or are pressured to renounce their basic mission that is defined by their character, they are nullified or are pressured to nullify their strategy within the restrictions of the exploitative system.

3. EL Electoral Platform – 2009, "Together for Change in Europe!"

At the same time, they cover up fundamental contradictions, basic truths of capitalist production and reproduction. They attribute these causes of the crisis to neoliberal administration of capitalism as much as to capitalist restructuring. Significantly, the ELP declaration makes the profound estimation. *"The world has been led to this global crisis by the leadership policies of the USA and especially the Bush administration."*⁴ The crisis of the capitalist system is attributed to the "uncontrolled, without barriers" functioning of the monetary credit system and the crisis in the EU to "its dependence on the USA", which it misleadingly emphasizes in this declaration. It purposefully conceals that the dependence between different imperialist centers is a characteristic of capitalism in its imperialist stage, such as the export of capital, the entanglements in the composition of capitalist sections that are accumulated in different markets. It hides the major fact that it is a crisis of overproduction of the very same capitalist system, whose deeper cause is the relationship between exploitation of workers' labor power by capital.

There is at no point a clear position of contradiction with the imperialist bodies and especially the EU. In fact, exactly the opposite is true; it consciously adopts the stance that "the EU finds itself at a crossroads", if it will reject neoliberal administration or not, or if it will supposedly choose a pro-people or anti-people course. It aims to conceal the fact that the EU came about as an interstate union representing the dominance of the monopolies in Europe and for that reason it cannot change, except perhaps to be fought against by the workers' movement, as the power of the monopolies of capitalism should be fought against in every member state of the EU. *The neoliberal or the social democratic administration of capitalism, the outdated divisions of the past decades such as "left-right" that serve the 2-party, 2-polar alternation, the misleading role of social democracy in the manipulation of the workers and popular masses, conceal the real minimal dividing line between the monopolies and the peoples' majority.* It is concerning this basic contradiction that each party must make a stand and it is the Communist Parties who from their very character must take a position against the monopolies, on the side of a social alliance of the working class with the lower-middle agricultural layers, small business and self-employed.

A central slogan of the ELP declaration is the classless slogan "People before Profits" that considers as a given that capitalist profits will exist and its promotes illusions that with the existence of profits, peoples' needs can

4. Electoral Platform EL – 2009, "Together for Change in Europe!".

somehow be addressed and even satisfied, while at the same time it cultivates timeless social democratic delusions for “fair distribution”, during a period when power is in the hands of capital.

The ELP document simultaneously expresses the concern that *“a contradiction is developing between a European interest in security and the strategy of war intervention and the widening of NATO. [...] We must stress the political, not only the military, negative role that NATO plays, according to American interests in Europe [...] NATO remained as and developed even more into an operational tool for the governments of the USA for their hegemonic strategies.”*⁵ The EU is free from blame and is made out to be a supposed counterweight to the USA. The idea that NATO can change and be freed from the “American hegemony” is put forward. The ELP declaration also mentions that *“...the European Union must open up to democratic participation of all the peoples, otherwise it won't have a future”*, cultivating in this way a deceptively consenting stance against the EU and NATO. The character of these centers of attack against all the peoples is purposefully concealed, independently of the relations between them or the inter-imperialist rivalries.

The positions expressed in the pre-electoral platforms of ELP on the rehabilitation and the democratization of the European Central Bank are in the same vein.

*“We criticize the goals and the current policies of the European Central Bank, its complete independence from any form of political control, the lack of transparency in its decision-making and actions. The role of the European Central Bank should be changed in accordance with criteria of employment and of social and ecological development and with the selective reduction of interest rates. The ECB should be submitted to public and democratic control and its regulations must be changed. [...] Crediting and the system of the ECB should be reoriented....”*⁶

Its positions concerning the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund are similar: *«...for the revision of the structural regulatory programs of the World Bank and the IMF.»*⁷

In this way, all the tools of strategic importance in the merciless exploitation of the peoples are ‘baptized’ by opportunism as ‘friendly-to-the-people’ at some level. It reveals a conscious effort at deception that aims at the accep-

5. Electoral Platform EL – 2009. “Together for Change in Europe!”.

6. Electoral Platform EL – 2009. “Together for Change in Europe!”.

7. Electoral Platform EL – 2009. «Together for Change in Europe!».

tance and legitimization of this in the peoples' consciousness, the restraining of the struggle against the power of capital in every member country and within the imperialist alliances themselves.

The same spirit is evident in the position of ELP on the Euro Mediterranean Union: «A democratic and transparent procedure must bridge the gap between the countries of the North and the South Mediterranean. This is the only road in order to avoid transforming this ambitious political plan for a Mediterranean Union into a political structure of inequality.»⁸ That is, ELP supports that there can exist a Euro Mediterranean Union that can serve the peoples while within it rival capitalist states will predominate, such as France and Germany. It is not at all by chance that the international imperialist bodies are presented by ELP without their class character, as «neutral» commercial bodies for international cooperation that simply have made some bad decisions which can be withdrawn and be replaced by some more people-friendly ones. This position of ELP towards the imperialist bodies promotes the global culture of capital in the framework of a «global culture of Europe».⁹

Comparable is the reference to the OSCE in the ELP Platform: «*More than ever, security in Europe must be based on the principles of peace, disarmament, a structural incapacity for attack and the solution of conflicts with political means within the system of the OSCE.* »¹⁰ The OASE is presented as a «dove of peace». It is an imperialist body that recognized the pseudo-state of Kosovo, continuing the policy of imperialist intervention and dissolution of the Balkans. It maintained complete silence on the bloodbath of the Gaza Strip, which the Israeli Army continued to impose for weeks. One month after the Euro Elections, the Parliamentary meeting of the OSCE confirmed its reactionary role, voting for the shameless anti-communist vote. Of course, the anti-communist action of the OSCE did not move ELP, who not only did not condemn the fact, but went on to adopt all of the anti-communist argumentation, giving a «left» alibi to the anti-communist hysteria. It's important to note that in the ELP document the anti-communist campaign is included among many other elements, and of course, after the «struggle against homophobia».

The Lisbon Treaty along with the Maastricht Treaty, are not condemned at all in their entirety. The opposite is true, they are dealt with individually and only certain clauses are singled out for disorienting criticism but in essence

8. Electoral Platform EL – 2009. «Together for Change in Europe!».

9. Electoral Platform EL – 2009. «Together for Change in Europe!».

10. Electoral Platform EL – 2009. «Together for Change in Europe!».

the entire reactionary content and the strategic importance that they have for the needs of big capital are obscured. In any case this tactic of criticizing only certain clauses played an analogous important role recently allowing the imperialists to throw dust in the eyes of the Irish people who supposedly only had a problem with some of the clauses in the Lisbon Treaty that with some modifications do not jeopardize the anti-people essence, the Irish people should have said «YES», something that they were forced to do with the second public referendum. ELP with such demands greatly aided European imperialists and undermined the struggle of the Irish people for a second rejection of the Euro Treaty.

Initiative for a platform of GUE/NGL

At this point we should recall that in addition to ELP circulating its platform for the Elections for the European Parliament, Parties of GUE/NGL did the same, the technical confederate team in the framework of the Euro Parliament. They adopted its own statement before the Euro Elections, as it has been done since 1999. We should note that this specific declaration comes in conflict with the very character of GUE/NGL, transforming the framework of technical cooperation in the European Parliament into a framework for political cooperation and programmatic directions, which the endorsers promise to uphold in their own countries and Europe-wide. It is no accident that the specific document enjoyed mass publicity in quite a few countries as a document of cooperation between Communist Parties and parties of the «new left».

Certainly KKE did not sign the text of the declaration, the political content of which follows the same line of assimilation, deceptively humanizing it, a framework which we have already presented in a critical manner. The text downplays the fact that the capitalist restructuring that is promoted by the EU is not simply a result of choices made by neoliberal governments – as is supported in the document- but reflects a deeper need of capital to reinforce capitalist profit, that it needs to be confronted and overthrown at the level of power.

Auxiliary formations and reserves for social democracy

The fortunes of time brought three countries to the polls within a space of two weeks, where in recent years opportunist parties of the 'new left' have been formed (Germany – «Die Linke», Portugal – «Left Bloc», Greece – SYN/SYRIZA). Despite the various differences between them, their general orientation coincides with that of ELP, as was analyzed above. The various amounts of fake revolutionary rhetoric of these groups are determined by the particular conditions in each country, mainly depending on the influence of the Communist Party and the front of conflict with it that exists.

In addition, in the German and Portuguese elections, the opportunist forces were facing a social democracy in retreat, which finally experienced a serious defeat in Germany and severe weakening in Portugal. The inflated percentages of the «Die Linke» in Germany and the «Left Bloc» in Portugal were overly promoted by the bourgeois mass media. This promotion by the ruling class reveals the certainty of the reserves that they hold in their hands, under conditions that are making things difficult – for the time being – for the social democratic parties of the bourgeois political system to entrap the people as effectively as they had done in the past.

Under conditions of capitalist crisis, such types of reserves - independently of whether or not the capital will ultimately use them to form a government – are important since they facilitate the capital to manipulate the working class popular movement and to easily promote the necessary restructuring in order to strengthen capitalist profits during the phase of revitalization. Parties of the ELP type, such as «Die Linke» in Germany, function as the most secure space not only for reserves but also for renewal of forces for social democracy. Bordering social democracy, opportunism easily receives disappointed forces that continue to have faith in social democracy and maintain delusions for its future renewal, following its 'punishment' with ephemeral electoral losses.

«Left» formations as opportunistic pressure on the communist parties

The composition of those social forces that turn mainly towards the opportunist parties is made up mostly of low-middle class and middle class

layers that foresee a direct long-term worsening of their position in the class stratification, which they want to avoid by negotiation, without the intention of seeking any deeper changes. The conceptions, which are promoted by these social layers, have an effect on workers' popular forces and especially on the youth who lack social experience.

These types of parties objectively have restricted possibilities to genuinely influence worker-popular forces, to gain the crucial amount of force from the working class that acts as a vanguard for radicalization. The restrictions that they have in any case stem from the very social base of opportunism, but also from the fact that they do not constitute parties that can replace the ruling parties, despite the fact that they aim to upgrade their role within the framework of the bourgeois political system.

The parties of the «new left» aim to affect the political representative of the worker's movement, the communist movement independently of its electoral influence. Taking advantage of their communist origins they project social democratic policies with «left» phraseology. The amount of their influence must not only be examined through electoral percentages, but mainly through their role in the hindering of radicalization and the deepening of political consciousness that is leaning towards emancipation.

Today, there is a need to confront the opportunism that is developing within the ranks of certain Communist Parties. It's not enough to defend the communist name and symbols to prevent a mutation. Their defense must be accompanied by an incessant battle for the development of a revolutionary strategy. It is vital we comprehend in a more significant way that an effective battle against opportunism presupposes a clear strategy with the goal socialism, evaluating socialist construction of the 20th century and defending its contributions and achievements, scientifically using the tool of Marxism-Leninism. Experience has shown that compromise and negotiation with opportunism leads to the abandonment of communist principles and characteristics, and an abandonment of the struggle for socialism.

For this reason opportunism and its groupings are systematically supported by the bourgeois institutions in combination with anti-communism and with all types of means in order to marginalize those Communist Parties that have stayed the course, the undermining of their strength in the struggle to confront and destabilize bourgeois power.

Thus, despite the electoral reinforcement of parties such as «Die Linke» in Germany or «Left Bloc» in Portugal, the goal remains to submit the Com-

munist Parties to a strategy of assimilation. In Germany, the «Die Linke» as a political undertaking has a significance of European dimensions, even though today it does not have a powerful Communist Party to deal with. However in record post-electoral time, it confirmed its real role. In the ongoing governmental cooperation with social democracy in the Berlin state, it expressed its post-electoral wish for joint action at a state and federal level.

Despite the artificial inflation of SYN/SYRIZA's percentages to 20% through Gallup polling, the bulk of the pressure was placed on KKE in the direction of the logic of a «great left majority trend to be shaped» to promote a governmental solution with a popular face, without however jeopardizing the power of capital.

Along the same line, the electoral results of all the «parties of the Left» were added together and were presented as a «left» percentage. This effort found fertile ground, also given that some Communist Parties have weakened their fight against opportunism. The 'concern' for the «sum results of the left» is combined with the 'concern' for the reduction of the electoral influence of KKE, with the only goal being to force it to abandon its consistent anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly line of alliances and the strategic aim of socialism.

Similar pressures were placed in Portugal and in Italy. During the summer, Communist Refoundation together with the Party of Italian Communists and a social democratic group proceeded to found a so-called «left alternative federation». The frantic actions till now lead directly toward the steady dissolution of the communist parties and their merging into a 'left' coalition, which will converge in the direction of creating a party of the type «Left» in Germany.

Notwithstanding the reservations that may exist concerning the final result of these developments, since there are forces that put forth the need to defend a communist identity and declare as an essential condition the need to maintain the communist party, the developments in this neighboring country are especially worrisome.

In an Italian newspaper article commenting on the Elections for the European Parliament, the leaders of Communist Refoundation, Grassi and Steri note: « *We are proposing an alliance with the prerequisite an effective answer to the capitalist crisis, social conflict and protection of the working class [...] we confirm as well that the European scenario offers a series of possible solutions for the left to co-exist. We are not suggesting one party necessarily, but the co-existence of various formations. The differentiation must be clear*

however in relation to the culture of neoliberal policies, here is where we see the essential revamping of the Democratic Party.”¹¹

How much simpler and more popular could they describe things from the moment that the communists diminish their polemics and their confrontation with opportunism, following a road of «co-existence» with it, either within the framework of the same party or with a cooperation with its organized political representative, which leads to a betrayal of communist characteristics and there is no other course from that of social democratization. The increased percentages do not constitute an indication of popular policies. It has been proven that bourgeois forces and opportunist forces can with greater ease extract the support or the tolerance of the working class and the poor people's strata who have not yet comprehended their class position, the exploitative character of capitalism, nor the necessity of the struggle for power. For this reason they know full well that their choice does not presuppose any clash with the bourgeois class.

Opportunist forces in Europe as well as in other areas of the world make use of the weaknesses of the communist movement, exploiting the weak ideological-political front and the insufficient struggle with the forces of opportunism. They exploit problems that the Communist Parties experience around issues of strategy and tactics, weaknesses in their bonds with the working class, the people's strata, the youth (e.g. Germany). Whatever collaboration with, or support given to these parties has and will have catastrophic consequences for Communist Parties.

The entrapment of Communist Parties in outmoded dividing lines of past decades that rehash the meaningless concept of the «left» is 'icing on the cake' for parties of the ELP type.

Steps forward in the joint struggle of the communist parties against opportunism

No tolerance or co-existence from the side of communists can exist with opportunism or social democracy. The communist movement must reinforce its ideological front against the attack of so-called contemporary adaptations of it with a rejection of “communist ideas on existing socialism”, etc. The

11. Newspaper, «Il Manifesto», 6 October, 2009.

struggle against opportunism must be strengthened, against ELP and its forces in every country.

At the base of this discussion is a positive step by the Joint Declaration of 21 Communist and Workers' Parties of countries in the EU on the Euro Elections June 2009. The specific Declaration expressed common positions that correspond to the character of the EU and the content of the confrontation that must take place all over Europe.

An added positive element that was expressed during the same period was the withdrawal of the Hungarian Communist Workers' Party from ELP. As is emphasized in the letter of withdrawal: *"We are convinced that what we need is not a "new European political culture", but consistent struggle against capitalism, for the rights of the working masses. We must not only criticize capitalism, but we must organize the daily struggle of the workers.*

*We want to abolish capitalism. The European Left Party wants to improve it [...]. We tried to influence and to change these events, but we must recognize and accept that something like this is not feasible. The political line of the basic party members of ELP and ELP itself are turning in a direction that violates the basic interests of the working class, the international communist movement. We consider that revisionism and opportunism constitute the biggest danger that threatens the communist movement. It is bad that we are poor and that we don't have money. But we will lose everything if we resign ourselves from our true ideological convictions, if we abandon Marxism-Leninism."*¹²

Today, it is necessary to clearly show that participation in the ELP is not consistent with the fulfillment of the revolutionary mission of a Communist Party - that is to organize the working class in a course of confrontation with bourgeois power.

The joint action, solidarity and coordination that was developed in the months preceding the Euro Elections among the Communist and Worker's Parties of Europe was a major achievement. It aids in directing the development of the communist movement in each country, in order to strengthen the actions of communists under conditions of great ideological political attack and vulgar anti-communism. It was tested with success in the tough and extraordinarily difficult battle that the Irish people fought in the recent public referendum; despite the final "YES", an important section - 33% - was expressed with a "NO" as a force of resistance. The call for solidarity of communist and workers' parties with the Irish people with a class orientation re-

12. Statement of the Hungarian CWP on its withdrawal from EL

vealed the need for the rejection of the Euro Treaty, directly challenging the conception of the ELP and its cohorts that there can be a people-friendly version of the Treaty. This was reinforced by the dramatic retreat and even disappearance of opportunist and bourgeois formations – especially in Scandinavia and Northern Europe – that were asking to negotiate for a better Treaty or seeking exceptions to the general anti-worker line of the EU (e.g. formations against the Euro Treaty in Scandinavia, the party Libertas in Ireland, etc.) Such formations, that together with the compromised unions and their federation, the ETUC, called to struggle for exception protocols to the anti-worker plague were either markedly weakened or dissolved.

The EU however in the recent referendum did not insist on “YES” or “NO” in the Euro Treaty. All their strategy was placed at the main point of the propaganda campaign. They made it clear to the Irish people that “NO” to the Treaty meant “NO” to the EU in its entirety. When the opponent mobilizes the entirety of its strategy it provides one reason more for the communists to juxtapose their own strategy, to reveal the imperialist character of the EU, the monopoly power that it serves and the need for its overthrow; to open a ideological-political front against the forces that demand only some small adjustments, who sooner or later lead the radical forces to disillusionment and surrender and the people’s forces to compromise and concessions.

In Greece, KKE consistently wages a battle against SYN/SYRIZA, ELP and all other opportunist forces. Its detailed strategy and its recent decision on socialism constitute an unshakeable compass, a guarantee for the failure of the all-sided maneuvering from either the bourgeoisie or the opportunists. For this reason, the strength and the exceptional endurance that KKE shows is not coincidental.

Today, the international communist movement can and must draw conclusions, to generalize the positive and also the negative experiences from its decades-long confrontation with opportunism. The decisive initiation of a unified revolutionary strategy of the Communist Parties against imperialism is a necessary prerequisite so that the struggle has depth, continuity and prospects.

In the next period KKE, together with a number of Communist Parties, have the ability to take decisive steps in this direction.



Regional issues: EUROPE

The European Union of war and capital is dangerous for the people*

by **Elisseos VAGENAS**

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As the date of the elections for the European Parliament approaches, more and more debates have been held around issues of “isolation” in different versions. There is the version of KKE’s political isolation, or the version of national isolation in case KKE’s political proposal for the formation of the Social and Political Front for the people’s becomes a reality.

It is by no means accidental that such «worries» like «national isolation resulting from opposition to the EU» are being cultivated by certain sections of the bourgeoisie political system, but also by SYN/SYRIZA. Of course, it is not surprising that such concerns influence a section of the working people that otherwise recognize the consistent action of KKE and the vindication of its positions on the European Union from the day of Greece’s accession until now. Future developments are of course a concern and on this ground the alarmist slogan of «isolation» is cultivated.

Let’s look at the main arguments used to contradict the KKE perspective.

The weak points in distortion efforts

The isolation worry is an argument used directly or implied indirectly. Thus, an article recently published in ‘AVGI’ (Synaspismos newspaper) implied that KKE was the only party which did not undersign a common declaration by par-

* Article published in the newspaper Rizospastis on May 10, 2009.

ties that were mainly adherents to GUE/ NGL. This declaration was eventually undersigned by 14 parties in 11 countries.

This “quality” newspaper saw this as its chance to put us in the corner, by implying that KKE follows a lonely path in relation to the other Communist and European parties, yet it neglected to mention at least two other things:

1.)The GUE/NGL group in the EP is a confederative group. That is, it does not function as a political framework in regard to EU issues. In the last 4 years there have been plenty of instances which prove that. Unacceptable decisions regarding Cuba, as well as the Green Paper, or even open anti-communist resolutions were not unanimously rejected by the Group, nor were they rejected by powers which are considered to be “left” and “progressive”.

2.)The second issue that “AVGI” forgets to mention is the common declaration itself. In this document one can find points and phrases such as “the democratization of the European Central Bank”. There are also references stating that neo-liberal administration is to blame for the crisis, while there is no reference to social-democrat responsibilities. Moreover, at no point is there any reference to Maastricht which solidified the EU and its anti-popular policies, with the support of right, social-democrats, and also «new left» parties such as Synaspismos. In the document referred to by «AVGI», there is no reference at all to the imperialist character of the EU while any reference to a socialist prospect is strikingly absent.

KKE obviously could not undersign such a document, as it is a party which is consistent in its political positions. It has no relation to SYN that shows one face in the European Left Party, a second as a SYRIZA component and a third as a GUE/NGL component. This political attitude is pure opportunism and has nothing to do with KKE.

KKE has a complete political thesis

Of course, we cannot overlook one of their fundamental arguments which always precedes elections for the European Parliament. That is: “the only Communist Party in Europe seeking the withdrawal of Greece from the EU, is KKE”. They believe that using such an argument will persuade the workers that on the one hand, no other communist party agrees with KKE, and on the other hand, that such a political proposal is “destructive” for the country and the people.

This is definitely not the case. This is proven by the “Joint statement Facing the European Elections”, issued by 21 Communist and Workers Parties from

19 EU countries. This declaration illustrates the significant level of agreement on basic positions such as the following:

“The EU is a choice of capital. It promotes measures in favour of the monopolies, the concentration and centralization of capital. With the “Lisbon Treaty” its characteristics as an imperialist, economic, political and military bloc have been strengthened against the interests of the workers and the peoples. Armaments, authoritarianism, and state repression are strengthened.

In the name of “modernisation”, of “competitiveness”, “enterprise”, and of “flexicurity”, the attacks on working and trade union rights are intensifying. The right to strike is being undermined, as well as other trade union freedoms. The working week is being reduced as well as wages with the crisis as a pretext, in order to safeguard the profitability of capital. The prospect which is in the cards for workers is work without rights until death. A nightmarish landscape for labour rights is being fashioned, with the increase of working hours per day and the 65-hour work week, along with underemployment, unemployment, insecurity. The blows against wages, pensions, with the increase of the age of retirement, the separation of labour-time into active and non-active, with price rises, the significant rise in labour accidents. With surrender of the education, health and social service systems to big capital. The dwindling of small and medium farmers, to the benefit of big farmers and monopolies. The increase of state repression, the rise of anti-communism, racism, xenophobia. The first victims of the intensification of exploitation, increased repression are the youth, women, and immigrant workers.”

Another example from this document is this: *“These developments vindicate those forces which resisted the Maastricht treaty, and those of Amsterdam and Nice.”* At this point, allow me to remind you that SYN voted for the first treaty, while in regard to the 2nd and 3rd ones, while not stating their clear opposition, chose to abstain.

Another important point in the Joint statement of the 21 Communist Parties of the EU is the following: *“The peoples to become the masters of the sources of wealth and the strategic sectors of the economies of their countries. Free public healthcare, and social security systems. For the lowering of retirement age and real increases in pensions. For upgraded free unified public education for all.”*

Last but not least, is that this Joint Statement demands: *“The right of every people to choose their own path of development. This right includes the right of disassociation from the multifaceted dependencies on the EU and NATO as well as the socialist option.”*

The recognition of such a right for every people is directly contradicted by the fact that SYN/SYRIZA considers the EU as a one-way road. Of course, the political proposal of each Communist and Workers' Party depends on the elaboration of its tactics and strategy.

KKE assessed a long time ago that there is nothing to hide from the Greek people. So, it has clearly proposed the construction of an alliance, the Front of the people that will not only struggle for the protection of their rights and the winning of new ones for the workers and the rest of the popular strata, but will also create the perspective for the economy and the governance of the people, for socialism. Such a perspective is incompatible with participation in imperialistic Unions, such as NATO and the EU

Such a position has been adopted by other Communist Parties, such as the Communist Party of the Peoples of Spain.

Consequently, this myth of isolation collapses. Once more the propagators of the anti- KKE attack have been exposed.

It is proven that KKE is a strong political power through this revolutionary strategy and tactic, based on solid ground in the workers-people movement, gaining 9,5% in the elections for the EP and 8,2% in the national elections. These are two important results that have been achieved under really difficult conditions, while the international communist movement is in a phase of retreat and other communist parties, especially in Europe, have backed off under the pressure of the enemy's attack and have abandoned our name, our symbols, and ideology. Thus, the results achieved by KKE in the last 20 years have required and continue to require more effort to overcome the obstacles set against the ideological, political and mass action of KKE by the bourgeois class, the EU and their political representatives.

That is the reason why SYN/ SYRIZA is worried and resorts to a bunch of anti-communist claims.

The joint action of the Communist Parties is strengthening

Claiming that KKE is isolated, just after its 18th Congress where 88 Communist and Workers' Parties participated, along with liberation movements, is utterly absurd!

In fact, in the past 4 years following the 2004 elections for the EP, the number of regional and multilateral initiatives of the European Communist and Workers' parties, in which KKE has played an active role, has increased. Co-operation on specific issues, for example the issue of Education, takes place

on a more systematic and permanent basis, while internationalist solidarity towards workers' and peoples' struggles becomes stronger.

The Communist Parties have proven their capability of organizing mass initiatives with a European dimension. To illustrate this, let's recall the mass demonstrations against the 2004 NATO Summit in Istanbul, the pan-European and coordinated campaign against the anticommunist resolution of the Council of Europe, the solidarity campaigns for the KSM, the Hungarian communists, the anti-fascist fighters in the Republics of the Baltic Region etc. KKE had an active role in all these initiatives, plus others taking place outside the EU, for example in the Balkans, the Middle East and elsewhere.

The KKE political proposal does not mean international “isolation”

Maastricht supporters tend to resort to fear tactics in order to persuade the people that the participation of Greece in the EU is a one-way road. That is, if we withdraw from the EU and the developments taking place within its framework, then we will become isolated and as it is claimed... we will become “Albanians”!

Similar kinds of alarmism have been spread, not only in Greece, but also in other countries. For example, in Cyprus during the process of referendum for the Annan Plan, in France and the Netherlands where the people had the strength to say “NO” and reject the European Constitution, as well as in Ireland where the people rejected the Treaty of Lisbon.

However, the dilemma «EU or isolation of the country», is a false dilemma which aims at spreading fatalism, terrifying the people and concealing the real capabilities of our people and our country.

In reality, a Greece free of EU and NATO terms, where the main production means will be of public ownership, the production and share of the goods will be done through central planning and monitored by the workers and the people, Greece will be a country that can develop to the utmost of its capabilities. It is clear that a country of people's and workers' governance will be able to have mutually beneficial economic, commercial and other relations with other countries in or outside the EU, within our region or further.

Such a country will be our contribution, the contribution of the Greek people to the international struggle for a Europe of the people, a Europe of Socialism. Only then can Europe be truly united, that is, when the authority of the monopolies which separates the people are overthrown.

**ΜΗΝ ΑΝΕΧΕΣΑΙ
ΝΑ ΣΕ
ΦΟΒΙΖΟΥΝ**



ΦΟΒΙΣΕ ΤΟΥΣ ΕΣΥ!



Ανοιξε το δρόμο της λαϊκής αντεπίθεσης

Regional issues: Latin America

The communist movement and the change of the correlation of forces in Latin America*

by Kyrillos Papastavrou

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for the Ideological Committee of the CC

The election of governments in Latin American countries that have as a common feature the opposition to the US plans in the region (opposition to the formation of ALCA, to the activity of the north American monopolies in the region and the US military presence, renegotiation of agreements etc.) has given rise to discussion in the ranks of the communist movement.

We refer to the government of Morales in Bolivia, Chavez in Venezuela, Lugo in Paraguay, Ortega in Nicaragua, Zelaya in Honduras, Tabare Vasquez in Uruguay, Rafael Correa in Ecuador, Mauricio Funes in El Salvador. Despite their differentiations, the governments of the Socialist Party in Chile, the Kirchner government in Argentina and the government of Lula Da Silva in Brazil can be classified in the same category.

These governments are presented as Latin America's "turn to the left" or as the "alternative" to neo-liberalism or even to imperialism. This discussion has intensified due to the fact that some of these governments maintain good relations with Cuba and oppose the US plans against it. In most cases, these governments are supported by the poor popular masses but also by Communist Parties, like the Communist Party of Brazil and the Communist Party of Uruguay.

* Article published in the 6th issue of the theoretical journal of the KKE "Communist Review", in 2009.

The analysis of the character of these governments, the stance of the communists towards them and other relevant issues cause an ideological and political discussion within the international communist movement. In our opinion, it is imperative to approach these developments according to the theoretical principles and the methodological criteria of Marxism-Leninism, utilizing the accumulated historical experience of the international communist movement.

Of course, it is not possible to present in detail aspects of a socioeconomic and political study that concerns a big number of countries and obviously requires more comprehensive research. In this article we will try to highlight several issues that the communist movement has also faced in the past.

The character of the societies in Latin America

Several theoretical issues

We will dwell in detail on several theoretical issues because, when discussing the character of the Latin American countries, we need to answer a series of –not new- views, arguing that in Latin American countries capitalism is not the typical one but a “rentier capitalism”¹, which has “particular features due to the processes of capitalist accumulation developed throughout the world”², that the bourgeoisie is a “a parasitic and ineffective entrepreneurial class”³.

Other views differentiate the bourgeoisie into “national” and “servile to foreign powers” according to the stance of its segments negotiations with the USA and consider that the working class can create an alliance with the bourgeoisie. In addition, there is a view that regards the uneven relations between these countries and the USA as the cause of the backwardness in their capitalist economies. In fact, such views underestimate the history of capitalist development; they detach the relations of dependence and interdependence from the capitalist relations of production and the struggle for their overthrow.

These views exert influence on the ranks of the communist movement in these countries as well as on the formation of its strategy. Thus, most of the communist parties in the region consider that the solution of the problems

1. Capitalism of rentiers.

2. Ali Rodríguez Araque – Alberto Muller Rojas: “Socialism in Venezuela and the Party that Will Promote it”, published by the United Socialist Party of Venezuela-PSUV, published by KΨM, Athens, 2009, p. 48.

3. Ibid. p.26

of backwardness- dependence require bourgeois-democratic progress that must precede a socialist revolution. Nevertheless, it is not the first time that such strategic approaches appear in the international communist movement, even in countries with advanced capitalist development.

The global dominance of capitalism has its origins in the early 19th century when capitalist relations held sway in the major developed countries (Great Britain, France, Germany, Holland, Belgium, USA etc) while a series of regions in the planet had not yet entered the path of capitalist development. In 1948 Marx and Engels noted in the "Manifesto of the Communist Party": *"Modern industry has established the world market, for which the discovery of America paved the way. This market has given immense development to commerce, to navigation, to communication by land".*⁴ The development of colonialism in the 19th century, that is the conquest of new territories in Africa, America, Oceania and Asia by the great capitalist powers, and above all by Great Britain, France, Germany, the USA and Russia as well, led to the acceleration of the development of capitalist relations in this region but also to the spread of capitalism in the whole world.

In his work "The future results of the British rule in India" Marx made the following analysis: *"England has to fulfil a double mission in India: one destructive, the other regenerating the annihilation of old Asiatic society, and the laying the material foundations of Western society in Asia".*⁵ In the same work Marx predicted that the misery for the majority of the population would not stop with capitalist development: *"All the English bourgeoisie may be forced to do will neither emancipate nor materially mend the social condition of the mass of the people, depending not only on the development of the productive powers, but on their appropriation by the people. But what they will not fail to do is to lay down the material premises for both. Has the bourgeoisie ever done more? Has it ever effected a progress without dragging individuals and people through blood and dirt, through misery and degradation?"*.⁶

The course of capitalist development in a series of countries confirmed the position of Marx that capitalist development draws the masses of the population into misery while at the same time the owners of the means of production accumulate immense wealth in their hands.

4. K. Marx-F. Engels: "Manifesto of the Communist Party", "Synchroni Epochi", p. 27.

5. K. Marx -F. Engels: "Colonialism in Asia (India, Persia, Afghanistan) 1853", "Agra", p.52.

6. Ibid. p.59.

The transition of capitalism to its imperialist stage, which is characterised by the priority given to the export of capital in relation to the export of goods, gave an even bigger impetus to the development of the capitalist relations of production in the colonial or semi-colonial countries, to the draw of all the countries to the “maelstrom” of capitalism. In his work “Imperialism the Highest Stage of Capitalism” Lenin quotes the following extract from Hilfering’s work “Financial Capital”: *“The old social relations are completely revolutionized, the age-old bondage to the soil of the ‘nations without a history’ is disrupted and they are swept into the capitalist maelstrom. Capitalism itself gradually provides the subjected people with the ways and means for their own liberation. They adopt as their own the ideal that was once the highest aspiration of the European nations; namely, the formation of a unified national state as an instrument of economic and cultural freedom”*.⁷ The dissolution of the colonial system in the 20th century confirmed this position.

The transition of all countries to capitalism and yet to the monopoly stage of its development obviously was not realised in a single way. On the contrary, as a result of the law of uneven development capitalist relations developed at different levels in the various countries.

The establishment of the primitive internal capitalist market (primitive accumulation) was based on the total and violent expropriation of pre-capitalist relations and especially of the small sized farmers in England in the 16th and 17th century. This was the prerequisite for the establishment of the basis for the development of primitive capitalism but it did not apply for the countries drawn into capitalism later on, when the international market had already been formed. Thus, in a series of countries capitalist relations held sway, while pre-capitalist modes of production had not been eradicated yet, submitting the latter to capitalist development. This was a fact for countries like Germany and France in the 19th century. The tendency to reduce agricultural-individual production, generally agricultural production and develop capitalist relations in agriculture prevails in capitalist development and is reinforced by the needs of international competition. Besides, this very tendency is served by the interstate monopoly interventions; the EU Common Agricultural Policy, for instance has set the goal to reduce the participation of the economically active population in agricultural production below 8%.

Therefore, in a series of capitalist societies the development of capitalism,

7. V.I. Lenin: “Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism”, “Synchroni Epochi”, volume 27 p. 141.

the accumulation of production by the big monopolies, the utilisation of the most modern achievements of technology coexists with rural populations who live under miserable conditions, facing serious shortages in infrastructure and using primitive means of production.

The following data about India is significant: the participation of agriculture in the GDP amounts to 16,6% while at the same time agriculture employs 60% of the population. Such phenomena are also common in countries of Latin America.

The deep unevenness in these societies does not negate the capitalist character of these countries that actually finds itself in the monopoly stage of its development.

Mechanisation is a precondition for the development of capitalist relations. At the same time, the general needs of capitalist reproduction require the formation of several conditions for its realisation such as the electrification of a country, the development of communications and transport infrastructure that obviously affect the living conditions in the village.

The direction of capitalist development is the expropriation of the small farmers on an increasingly large-scale, their transformation into wage-labourers in big capitalist industry, in trade, in service sector etc., while the conditions of extreme poverty in a series of countries are utilised for the reduction of the price of the labour force both in the internal and the international capitalist market.

The different historical conditions in the capitalist development of each country are reflected in the degree of unevenness among the sectors of production and the economy which is more acute in the countries drawn into capitalism through colonialism.

The uneven development amongst the states and the relations of dependence in the international imperialist system are often described as a vicious cycle, though, with the one-sided explanation that "the rich countries have condemned the weak ones to poverty". This explanation overlooks the natural laws of capitalist accumulation, surplus value, the fact that very competition itself leads to the increase of labour productivity. Objectively, greater capital is more capable of achieving such a rise, utilising above all new science and technological achievements, new methods for the organisation of production. Capitalist economies with comparatively higher labour productivity, namely the more "competitive" economies, manage to gain additional profit and get bigger shares in the framework of the world market by means of displacing countries with lower labour productivity.

Of course the size of the home market, which is formed by the state and the extent of the existence of pre-capitalist modes of production play a signifi-

cant role. But in the long term, even under the most unequal interstate relations or under relations of subordination, the input of foreign capital will bring capitalist development, even it is deeply uneven. The reshufflings among the segments of the domestic bourgeoisie may cause reshufflings as regards the pursuit of foreign allies or even the choice of different imperialist centres for commercial and generally economic relations, as happened with the Latin American countries especially in the current century.

As it has been proven in specific historical periods, the priorities of capitalist development, bourgeois modernization and alliances with the international imperialist centres can cause serious conflicts in the ranks of the bourgeoisie. The strengthening of the capitalist economy means a stronger state, namely a more powerful economic and military force and consequently a stronger position for negotiations in distribution of markets at the global level.

The relations of dependence and interdependence between capitalist countries are changing; they do not remain uninfluenced by the course of capitalist development, though, without changing the main element, namely inequality and without abolishing the imperialist pyramid. Colonies, for instance do not exist nowadays, while in the course of capitalist development a series of countries e.g. Greece increased, in relation to the past, the exports of capital to third countries. Other countries upgraded their position at the regional level while they still hold an intermediate position in the international imperialist system.

The class analysis of the contradictions, the utilisation of the inter-bourgeois and intra-imperialist contradictions and developments without losing one's political and strategic independence, constitute a challenge as well as a complicated duty for a communist party.

We should also mention that under capitalism it is not possible to plan an even development of the economy. Profit is the criterion for the transport of capital from one sector or branch to another. Moreover, disproportions among the various sectors of the capitalist economy are evident in all capitalist countries.

The deeper unevenness -especially in the manufacturing industry and the production of modern means of production- can cause the intensification of the social contradictions to the extent of a nationwide crisis. This fact does not justify the alliance between working class and bourgeois forces for a government defending a "productive model" of capitalism as opposed to a "non productive-parasitic model".

The duty of the communist movement both in the more and in the less developed capitalist societies is to see in time the tendencies of capitalist devel-

opment, the expansion of the capitalist relations of production in new sectors (e.g. tourism, education and healthcare), the accumulation of the foreign labour force or the export of a highly specialised labour force, the emergence of absolute poverty that spreads even in the most developed capitalist societies like the USA; under these conditions it can develop its links with the masses.

Several data about the history and the current level of development of these countries

In the early nineteenth century bourgeois anti-colonial revolutions unfolded in the Latin American countries and led to the national independence of these countries. These revolutions were led by the bourgeoisie in alliance with the poor peasantry. In the mid 19th century slavery was abolished in a series of countries (e.g. Brazil). These developments determined the course of capitalist development in these countries, which was also influenced by the investments of English, French and North American capital. In addition a number of countries such Argentina, Chile, Brazil attracted immigrants from European countries (e.g. Italy, Germany).

Lenin, already in the early 20th century, studied the statistical data of that time and classified the main countries of Central and South America into the so-called second group of countries (along with countries in Eastern Europe and in a part of Asia)⁸. In other words, he regarded them as countries with a medium level of development compared to the big imperialist powers on the one hand and to the colonies and semi-colonies on the other.

The Latin American countries should not be treated in a single way since there are different speeds in capitalist development. Countries like Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica etc belong to another category. Chile for instance, that has the biggest industry in the region cannot be classified in the same category with Bolivia where agriculture employs 40% of the population.

In the 1920s and 1930s several countries in Central America (Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama, Costa Rica) and in Caribbean (Cuba, Puerto Rico, Jamaica), the so-called “banana republics” were under the status of limited national independence. Some countries remained colonies until the early 20th

8. V.I. Lenin: “Notebook Imperialism”, in “Notebook Austrian Agricultural statistics”, Collected works, “Synchroni Epochi, vol.28, p.697.

century (Cuba), others were transformed to US semi-colonies (Panama, Guatemala) or they were occupied by the US (e.g. Nicaragua 1907-1933).

The management policy in those countries could not be uniform, of course, however, it followed the general trends of capitalist development.

A series of Latin American countries implemented in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s policies characterised mainly by measures protecting the labour force; they established labour laws that did not exist till that period; they nationalised several enterprises; they consolidated the orientation to the utilisation of energy resources⁹; they renegotiated agreements with the US and proceeded to agricultural reforms and modernisation of the educational system.

Such policies were implemented by the governments of Cárdenas in Mexico (1934-1940), of Getúlio Vargas in Brazil (1930-1945 and 1951-1954), of Juan Perón in Argentina (1946-1955), by the progressive governments in Chile (1938-1952), by the governments of the Liberal Party in Colombia, by Romulo Betancourt in Venezuela (1945-1948).

The exploitation of hydrocarbons and ore deposits by the state have stimulated the economies of several countries like Venezuela, Mexico, Brazil, Chile etc. The state utilisation of these resources gave rise to the development of specific infrastructure, to granting of several benefits to the working people.

Both before but also during the Second World War most of these governments formed relations with both imperialist blocks¹⁰. We should mention that in the beginning of the war, the government of Cárdenas in Mexico was supplying Germany with oil, forcing the US and Britain to lift the boycott imposed before the war on Mexican oil and Mexican products in general, due to a decision on the exploitation of the Mexican oil fields by a Mexican state-owned enterprise.

The contradictions between the various segments of the bourgeoisie concerning the priorities in the development of these countries intensified, taking into account the powerful role that the big landowners were playing in certain countries. In many cases these contradictions were solved through military coups with the significant intervention of the USA. The 10-year civil war in

9. The government of Lázaro Cárdenas in Mexico played a leading role in the exploitation of oil fields and founded the enterprise "Mexican Eagle". The government of Perón in Argentina promoted research on nuclear fusion, while the second government of Vargas proceeded to the state exploitation of oil resources, founding the state oil enterprise "Petrobras".

10. Several of them like the governments of Vargas in Brazil and Perón in Argentina had openly pro-fascist trends. Yet Perón presented his programme as the "third way" between capitalism and communism.

Colombia (1948-1957) between the Liberal and conservative party constitutes a characteristic example of an inter-bourgeois conflict.

Starting from the 1970's and later on the 1980's a number of countries adopted policies that promoted deregulation, privatization of enterprises, reduction of social expenditure on Education, Healthcare, Social Security. In some cases, for example Chile and Argentina, this policy is implemented by governments of military junta, so practically no resistance is manifested. This policy results in the reinforcement of monopoly capitalism on the one hand and the deeper intensification of social contradictions on the other. In most Latin American states social contradictions deepened due to the crisis that occurred in the 1990's. In some countries, such as Argentina, the crisis worsened and the recovery was delayed due to the lending conditions imposed by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank that prohibit an expansionary fiscal policy.

The Report of the United Nations Economic Commission in 2005 confirmed that in the 1990's the unemployment in the broader region had increased by at least 10%. In some countries, such as Argentina, unemployment increased from 8,8% in 1990 to 19,7% in 2002, while in Uruguay it increased from 8,5% to 17%. The crisis also led to social outcry, such as in Venezuela in 1989 and in Argentina in 2001.

In order to deal with the impact of the crisis and to fulfil the needs of capitalist reproduction they imposed direct intervention of the capitalist state in the economy. Thus, most of the countries either proceeded to partial or large-scale renationalisation, or purchased a basic block of shares in enterprises of strategic importance (e.g. in Argentina the Postal Service and the Water Company of Buenos Aires, natural gas company in Bolivia); ensured their participation in energy companies (82,14% of the shares of the Electricity Company in Caracas was bought by the state) and in telecommunications (in Venezuela 28,5% of the shares was bought by the state), the creation of new state enterprises (energy, airline, satellite manufacturing companies in Argentina), renegotiation of contracts with foreign capital (e.g. the relations of the state company PDVSA in Venezuela with foreign oil companies). The natural subsoil rich in petroleum, natural gas and minerals offers great privileges to all these countries as regards the energy sector, especially under conditions that the issue of energy resources has become one of the most important, strategic issues in the framework of the conflict within the international imperialist system. It is significant that in most of these countries production exceeds or equals oil and natural gas consumption. For instance, Argentina

produces 801,700 barrels of oil per day and consumes 480,000, 43,7 billion m³ of natural gas and consumes 38,79 billion, Bolivia produces 41,570 barrels of oil per day and consumes 31,500, 12,74 billion m³ of natural gas and consumes 1,486 billion. Nevertheless, the limited consumption needs indicate limited development. For instance, Greece consumes 415 thousand barrels of oil per day and 2,724 billion m³ of natural gas. Some countries proceeded to renew their agreements with the International Monetary Fund and to renegotiate their debts.

The basic element is the development of cooperation between these countries with different conditions from what the US pursued in the framework of the promotion of the agreement of "Free Trade Area of the Americas" (ALCA). Some countries such as Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, reacted intensely to the creation of ALCA while other countries such as Argentina, Chile and Brazil just did not support it.

These governments did not oppose the process for the creation of a single regional market *from the very beginning*, but rather to the *terms* of its realisation. According to various analysts ALCA, which expressed the interests of the US in this direction, is considered to be dead based on the actual data. The president of Bolivia, Evo Morales who supported the need for the creation of a union of Latin American states according to EU standards as well as others, consider the existence of a "regional union" necessary. In this direction ALBA (Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas) was created in which Venezuela, Nicaragua, Bolivia, Dominica (a small state-island in the Caribbean) and Cuba participate. The integration of Honduras in ALBA was recently signed, while Ecuador participates as an observer. The most recent agreement of the countries that participate in ALBA concerns the creation of a common currency zone between the country-members and Ecuador. Cuba participates in this process in the framework of an effort to establish economic relations with capitalist countries aiming at facing problems that derive from the embargo imposed by the US many years now. Nevertheless, this participation does mean that ALBA constitutes an interstate cooperation which is a counterweight to the imperialist interstate unions and organisations at regional and international level since it does not constitute cooperation between socialist states.

Argentina, Chile and Brazil occupy an enhanced position in Latin America; thus they keep a distance from this effort although they have established multilateral cooperation with countries that participate in ALBA. Brazil has played a decisive role in the establishment of UNASUR (Union of South American

Nations)¹¹. In the framework of this process the establishment of a common market by 2019 is being promoted, liberalisation in people's circulation, co-operation for the creation of infrastructure, especially in the field of energy. At the same time, on the basis of a common proposal by Venezuela-Brazil, the creation of the "North American Council of Defence" is being promoted that concerns the military cooperation of these countries.

This fact highlights the dominant role of Brazil as an emerging capitalist power at the international level, participating in the BRIC group (Brazil, Russia, India, China). Its president, Lula da Silva stated recently, expressing the aspirations of the bourgeoisie of his country: "I do not know if I will be alive to see it, but I think Brazil will become a big power in the 21st century".

Moreover, all these countries seek and manage to attract capital from EU countries and China. At the same time, contradictions are also developing between these countries such as between Venezuela and Brazil two years ago on the occasion of the renegotiation of the agreements on oil production, the border dispute between Chile and Argentina concerning the frontier line in Patagonia which is related to the exploitation of natural gas. Recently, disputes have arisen by the decision of Brazil to reduce the imports of natural gas from Bolivia. The fact that Brazil, Argentina, Chile and Bolivia participate in the "United Nations Stabilisation Mission in Haiti", which constitutes a military intervention in Haiti after the overthrow of the legal government of Aristide, has created tensions.

The new necessities of capitalist reproduction required the confrontation of certain problems, such as mass illiteracy, the necessity to develop a "protection net" against the most extreme phenomena of poverty and misery, the creation of infrastructure.

The consolidation of the social alliances of the capitalist class imposed the modernisation of the functioning of bourgeois democracy. For instance, in Chile more than 50 modifications were made to the Constitution that was approved in 1980 eliminating regulations enforced by the A. Pinochet dictatorship (1973-1990).

This upturn reduced unemployment which in some countries was 50% less (in Argentina fell to 10% from 19%, in Venezuela to 10% from 20% etc) while at the same time policies were implemented to limit extreme poverty.

In Brazil, according to estimations of the United Nations, the real income of

11. The following 12 countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Surinam, Uruguay, Guyana, participate in UNASUR.

the poorest house-holds was boosted by 28% during the period 2004-2005, while the minimum wage increased by 25%.

In Venezuela, the income of the poorest people increased by 43% in 2005. In Venezuela, particularly, the policy of “Bolivarian Missions” is being implemented. These programmes mainly concern volunteer work aiming to eradicate illiteracy, to provide medical assistance to people in poor neighbourhoods, to organise soup kitchens to construct new housing units for the poor, to train people to use software etc. Mission “Zamora” promotes the so-called “land reform” which consists of the redistribution of land to landless peasants. The land that according to the programme can be distributed is either state-owned, land claimed by individuals -whose claim is disputed by the government- or unused private land. So far, this reform concerns the first two categories and has not yet been extended to the third one.

There has been an effort to turn the acceptance of these governmental policies by the poorest popular strata into a process of dynamic support through the action of various mass organisations and institutions.

Latin America a field of intensification of the intra-imperialist contradictions

The possibility of challenging the dominant role of the US in the region is associated with the fact that new powers are emerging at the global level (Russia, China, India etc.), new possibilities for the adjustment of alliances are being created (e.g. alliance of Russia with Germany-Italy in the field of energy) as well as relations between the capitalist countries. Several Latin American countries promoted the development of overall relations with Russia, China and the EU countries. Venezuela proceeded to a second agreement to purchase military equipment from Russia, Argentina to twelve bilateral agreements with China and seven with Russia, Brazil proceeded to agreements to import commodities from China. In late 2008 the Russian navy appeared near the coasts of Venezuela causing the reaction of the US.

In these circumstances, Latin America becomes a field where the intra-imperialist contradictions among the US, the EU countries, Russia, China and Brazil, with its emerging role, intensify. Especially for Chinese capital, the Latin American countries have become a privileged area for their activation. On November 2004, China signed 39 trade agreements with 5 Latin American countries. In Argentina the Chinese investments have reached 20 billion dol-

lars. China has signed an agreement with Venezuela for a future extraction of oil and natural gas, while it has lent the latter 700 million dollars for housing. Moreover, the EU has recently elaborated a project entitled "Regional Strategy for Latin America 2007-2013" that highlights the basic strategic goals of the cooperation between the EU and the Latin American countries. The EU will fund specific programmes aiming at creating the necessary conditions for the investment of European capital in the region.

The sharpening of the intra-imperialist contradictions has caused the increase of armaments in the countries in that region. Thus, it is not only Venezuela that proceeded to certain agreements in order to purchase armaments from Russia, signing twelve contracts of 4,4 billion dollars from 2005 to 2009. Brazil, as well, on December 2008 reached an agreement of strategic cooperation with France including the supply of 36 fighter aircrafts, the construction of submarines and helicopters etc.

From the perspective of the governments of the Latin American countries, as well as of other political forces within the communist movement, these multilateral relations not only with the US but also with other imperialist centres are portrayed as the way to achieve a "peaceful road to the world", the so-called emergence of a "multipolar world". According to this view the questioning of the position of the US by other imperialist forces can supposedly help to prevent wars, can lead to a "balance of powers".

Latin American social-democracy

The developments during the decade of the 1990's and the sharpening of the social contradictions provoked upheavals in the bourgeois political system and the emergence of forces beyond the existing at that time coalitions of bourgeois parties alternating in government.

No political force can be judged solely by its pronouncements, neither by its self-characterisation nor solely by the social forces that support it. It is mainly judged by its actions and the interests it serves. Certainly, a comprehensive assessment for each country in Latin America requires data that is not available at the moment. Nevertheless, it wouldn't be risky to include social-democracy those forces that have emerged in governments. Of course, social-democracy in Latin America differs from traditional European social-democracy. This is not an unprecedented fact. The socialists of the European south (Greece, Spain, Portugal) in the 1970's and 1980's differed towards German and Scandinavian

social-democracy as they addressed countries with different social-economic and political conditions, e.g. countries that had just emerged from dictatorships, that had not yet joined organically the EEC etc.

Contemporary Latin American social-democracy is a special set of forces which includes sectors of traditional “populist” forces (e.g. Peronists), nationalists, traditional forces that come from social-democracy, social-democratic parties in Latin America that did not participate though in the Socialist International (e.g. the Brazilian Workers’ Party of Lula), as well as former partisan anti-imperialist movements, some of which even had a Marxist orientation (such as the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, the Farabundo Marti Front in El Salvador, the Tupamaros in Uruguay) etc. Its slogans are elaborated on the basis of the existence of broad agrarian and petit-bourgeois strata in these countries and the general popular opposition towards the US.

The anti-imperialist slogans do not constitute a presumption of a consistent anti-imperialist line. In reality, in the Latin American countries (and elsewhere) there are two “anti-imperialisms”. There is the bourgeois one that expresses the interests of the bourgeoisie of these countries that seek to upgrade their position within the country and their relations within the imperialist system demanding the renegotiation of their political and economic relations mainly with the IMF and the US that plays a leading role in it. The “other” anti-imperialism, the consistent one, expresses the interests of the working class and of the poor popular strata; it opposes imperialism as monopoly capitalism and in this context it *also* deals with unequal relations at international level. The first, the bourgeois perception on the struggle against the US imperialism, is based on the consideration of imperialism as a relation of subservience and suppression of national and sovereign rights. To the extent that this view influences the communist movement, dangerous confusions may develop.

The following observation is very interesting: *“What is clear, especially in Latin America, is that governments and intellectuals are talking about the viability and promise of social democracy – though the term itself may not be employed. In Latin America, elections since 2000 have brought the democratic or quasi-democratic left to power in countries accounting for three-quarters of the region’s population: Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Venezuela, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Bolivia, and Chile. Governments in at least Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Chile, in addition to Costa Rica, have adopted a social-democratic path.*

The conventional wisdom that neoliberal globalization undercuts social democracies, especially in the dependent countries of the global south, is wrong.

*[...]It is not necessary to develop a high level of social cohesion before instituting social-democratic arrangements..."*¹².

The above quote highlights the fact that the possibility for social-democracy to be the alternative political option for the management of the system is not confined to countries where there is a traditionally strong labour aristocracy and a trade union movement that expresses its interests, an objectively strong social base. We should not underestimate the existence of sectors of labour aristocracy in some countries in Latin America (e.g. sectors of workers in the oil company of Venezuela PDVSA) whose most traditional sectors had developed bonds with older bourgeois political parties. We should not underestimate also the development of new sectors of labour aristocracy. To a large extent social-democracy in Latin America is based on semi-proletarian, agrarian and petit-bourgeois masses that adopt bourgeois anti-imperialism.

The bourgeois content of the policies of these governments –with its specific features– cannot be disputed. The nationalisations, the programmes that diminish intense poverty -that in most cases are promoted through institutions resembling “civil society”-, the bourgeois modernization, the renegotiation of international relations at international and regional level are elements that have been adopted historically by various versions of bourgeois management. The development of alliances of the bourgeoisie with the large poor peasantry and the middle semi-proletarian strata is a basic element of these management policies.

On the slogan “Socialism of the 21st century”

Today, a basic element of the crisis of the communist movement is that to a large extent the view predominates concerning “national particularities” on socialist revolution and socialist construction. Of course, socialist construction under conditions of significant delays in capitalist development will have to face greater difficulties, more complex tasks; it will require transitional measures, a tough fight with the inherited remnants of the old society. The experience accumulated from socialist construction can contribute to the maturity and readiness of the subjective factor and first of all of its vanguard, the Communist Party, for this task.

12. Article by Richard Sandbrook, professor of Political Science at the University of Toronto, published in the electronic review e-republic which publishes articles of university professors of social-democrat orientation mainly from Greece.

The difficulties in the policy of alliances between Communist Parties get complicated also due to the fact that the political forces in government, such as in Venezuela and Bolivia, maintain that they are preparing the “socialism of the 21st century”, in contrast with the socialism that was constructed in the 20th century in the USSR and other countries of Eastern and Central Europe. “Socialism of the 21st century”, according to the opinions of two leading cadres of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV), Alí Rodríguez and Alberto Muller Rojas, is based on the redistribution of the wealth by the state; it does not prohibit the establishment and activity of private capital as *“it is a process that does not restrict economic freedoms as it considers that antagonism is democratic provided that it is clear and does not lead to the creation of oligopolies or monopolies”*; *“it does not make the mistake to consider that it may be imposed through the dictatorship of the proletariat”*, and its intention is *“the expansion of public space” “the development of the productive capacity in the framework of a viable economy through the creation of new –public, community and private- enterprises and the enhancement of the already existing ones”*¹³.

They are classical and implemented positions of social-democracy, adopted by opportunist forces that exert similar pressure on the line of communist parties. Such theories are also adopted by opportunist forces in Greece.

When asked *“if the administration of the bourgeois institutions, particularly of the state governance”* is a means *“for its radical transformation in socialist direction”* they answer that *“...there has been procedures that through movements conquered the power, such as the case of Morales in Bolivia, the Chavez ‘phenomenon’ in Venezuela...”*. They reach the conclusion that *“...the revolutionary strategy for socialist transformation can only be identified with the radical transformation of the state and the market towards their abolition(withering away, according to Lenin) and that this process does not begin ‘when political power is seized by the working class’; it is (or can be) carried out also in a state of typical capitalist domination limiting the market field, claiming ‘public space’ and ‘free services’ and mainly through the promotion of forms of social and workers’ control and direct democracy in functions of the state and the economy”*¹⁴.

13. Ali Rodríguez Araque – Alberto Muller Rojas: “Socialism in Venezuela and the Party that Will Promote it”, published by the United Socialist Party of Venezuela-PSUV, published by KΨM, Athens, 2009, p. 48.

14. Article by Giannis Millios “Issues of Communist Strategy”, review “Thesis”, issue 103, April-June 2008.

This process will neither abolish nor diminish the exploitation of capital. Thus, remains the need for independent organisation and ideological and political action of the Communist Parties in order to gather forces for the prospect of conflict and overthrow of capitalist power and exploitation.

Certainly, even the allegedly most radical version of the so-called “left wing governments” in Latin American, e.g. in Venezuela, do not promote reforms in order to approach socialism. In fact, there is no agreement between the forces that support the government of Chavez on the content of the concept of socialism, as has pointed out the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Venezuela Oscar Figuera “*Some people consider that socialism means to offer breakfast to students, programmes. However, socialism is a profound change of consciousness, sustained participation, and profound change in the relations of production*”¹⁵. The measures that have been taken do not affect the basis of the capitalist ownership on the means of production nor the bourgeois character of the power.

Some measures, such as the establishment of community councils, popular assemblies in the neighbourhoods, a system of “self-governance”, are institutions included in the modernization of the bourgeois state, as had occurred in a number of European countries for decades, ensuring at the same time a broader integration of the workers.

A prerequisite for socialism is the revolutionary consolidation of the power of the working class which will promote new relations of production so as to proceed to the construction of these relations, leading in this process the entire population¹⁶. Another prerequisite is the demolition of the old state apparatus and the establishment of new institutions of workers’ power.

The means of production become social property and are set not just under state control in general, but under the control of a workers’ revolutionary state. At the same time the prerequisites are developed for the merging of the small size commodity production into cooperatives aiming at transforming it into a directly social one. Socialism means central planning of the economy;

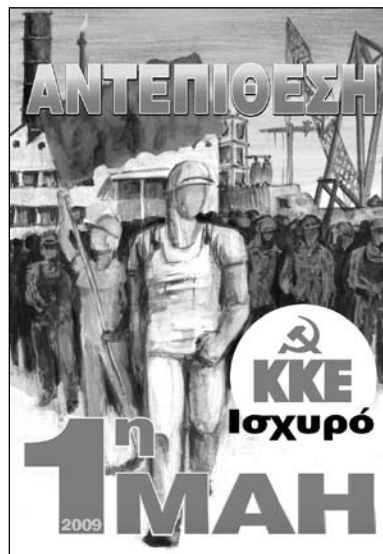
15. Interview with O.Figuera under the title “Socialism Means Changing the Relations of Production”, “Rizospastis” newspaper, Sunday May 11, 2008.

16. Also see the article “The theoretical Analysis of the Socialist Revolution and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat”, lecture of the Ideological Section of the CC of KKE, KOMEP 3/2008.

conscious setting of goals, plans, and incentives for the further development of the communist relations of production aiming at the transition to a complete communist society etc.

Epilogue

The regrouping and reinforcement of the international communist movement should concern all Communist Parties and their strategy as regards the class struggle against the international unity of capital. From this point of view, the reflection and discussion on issues of strategy is necessary without negating the primary responsibility of each Communist Party to elaborate its strategy. As regards historical necessity, capitalist development in Greece enables generalisations from the positive and negative experience of the 90year history of KKE.



Region Issues: Latin America

On the opportunist theory of “21st century socialism”*

by Dimitris Karagiannis

Member of the Editorial Board of the newspaper “RIZOSPASTIS”,
daily organ of the Central Committee of KKE

The positive developments that have taken place during the last years in several Latin American countries (Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Uruguay, Paraguay, Chile, Argentina, Brazil, recently in El Salvador, Honduras), to a different extent and depth in each country, have created important expectations as well as various confusions and illusions throughout the world.

The new situation is mainly defined by opposition to US imperialism -this however leads to the identification of the concept of imperialism with the US, and its characterisation as “empire”. The issue of relations of dependence that each country faces in the framework of interdependence within the world imperialist system is also approached in an incorrect, one-sided way. The lack of a class approach, the necessity for class struggle and confrontation with the interests of capital are obvious. At the same time, due to the erroneous analysis of the contemporary world and the prevalence of opportunist influences, the bourgeois class is wrongly differentiated as a national one and one subjected to foreign influence

Thus, sections of the bourgeoisie, who are owners of means of production and control the economy, often participate in fronts that manage to win the elections without aiming to overthrow capitalism but to better promote their interests and claim a bigger slice from the pie of the conflict with capital, in

* Article published in the newspaper Rizospastis on December 13, 2009.

particular the US one. This actually occurs in all countries from Brazil, Argentina and Chile that claim to play a leading role in the region, to El Salvador, Ecuador, Bolivia and Venezuela, where this process is more advanced. This intention of the bourgeoisie in each country, in relation with the level of capitalist development, is in line with the spontaneous anti-imperialism and anti-Americanism that exists among the popular strata. It constitutes a response to the cruel anti-people's policies implemented the previous decade throughout the continent by political forces that had good relations with US monopolies. At the same time, through the intense promotion of the platform for **"21st century Socialism"**, particularly in Venezuela and Bolivia, a blurred picture of the socialist perspective is created.

The new theory is ...old

Let's examine this "new theory" that is presented as "21st century Socialism" which, by no accident, has been adopted by various political forces compromised with the system, reformists and opportunists, such as the European Left Party.

The so-called theory of the "21st century Socialism" was promoted in 1996 by the German sociologist **Hans Dietrich Stefan** who has lived and taught in Mexico since 1977 and has served as advisor to the president of Venezuela Hugo Chavez.

This theory was developed after the overthrow in the socialist countries. It is based on the arbitrary assumption that *"capitalism and real socialism have bred a huge deficit of democracy and failed to solve urgent problems of humanity such as poverty, hunger, exploitation, economic oppression, sexism, racism, the destruction of natural resources and the lack of a truly participatory democracy"*.

Dietrich and his theory annihilate the contribution of socialism in the 20th century, lumping together the exploitative system and the socialist construction that offered great achievements to humanity and paved the way for a society without exploitation of man by man. He says that "the social programme of the bourgeoisie and of the historic proletariat" have failed and underlines that "it's time to overcome the culture of the ruling class towards a post-capitalist global society, a generalised liberal democracy". This fabrication is presented as the "new socialism of the 21st century". Dietrich claims that it will be based on *"the mixed economy, on the diverse forms of ownership (social, cooperative and private)"* which, supposedly, will give priority to social ownership and *"will be*

based on the Marxian labour theory of value while the values produced will be distributed democratically to those who produce them, in contrast with the principles of the market economy”.

It is evident that this theory is utopian and arbitrary due to the fact that in a society where private ownership of the means of production for profit exists, that is a capitalist enterprise, there cannot be social priorities. Dietrich, in order to make his contrived notion even more persuasive, claims that private capital will be forced by the prevailing social state production to be at the service of development in favour of the people that “the *public sector will prevail over the private*”. He also goes beyond the issue of central planning as an essential element in socialist construction saying that it will be solved by the capabilities of new technology nowadays. It comprises a “mixture” of opportunist and utopian ideas that cannot be implemented because mixed socialism or socialism with a market cannot exist. However, it is a theory as old as the first revisionists of Marxism. It actually wants to give a “left” cover to a social-democratic type of management of capitalism.

This theory, however, exerts a broad influence on the popular strata with little political experience in countries of Latin America and elsewhere. It is also promoted the view that broad political alliances can be developed without the need of ideological homogeneity, as if policy and ideology can be separated by great walls. A key issue in order to understand that this theory is actually a variant of social-democratic management of capitalism is the criterion of ownership of the means of production, the analysis from the class point of view of who is served by this “new theory”. The opportunist position presented as “socialism of the 21st century” sidesteps the fundamental issue that the interests of the workers, of the popular strata, are opposed to those of the bourgeoisie, of the capitalists and cannot be identified in the name of a “participatory and pluralistic democracy”; it neglects the fact that the class struggle is irreconcilable.

The Bolivarian process

In this spirit we must examine the so-called Bolivarian process in Venezuela, the country that since 1998 has paved the way for changes in favour of the poor popular strata through the utilisation of important state revenue that is mainly derived from oil. Social programmes that contributed to combat illiteracy, to provide health services to the popular strata, to strengthen the cooperatives, to distribute land to landless peasants, to improve nutrition through

state stores with low prices overcoming the speculation of the private food sector, to create lending opportunities and to subsidize other sectors such as culture and sports were based on this revenue. In these programs the mutual cooperation established with socialist Cuba since the very first moment is of significant importance.

However, this so-called “anti-imperialist process for national liberation” does not lead to a confrontation with the bourgeois class that still holds economic power. The socialism that the president of Venezuela refers to and has been adopted by the Unified Socialist Party -a multi-class, multi-tendency party organised throughout the country- is far from scientific socialism. In his statements, Hugo Chavez revives positions against the dictatorship of the proletariat and in favour of a supposedly “democratic socialism”.

The essence of these positions results from influences from bourgeois, social-democrat approaches to socialism in the 20th century. Even the USSR and the socialist countries we have known in the 20th century are characterized as totalitarian and bureaucratic regimes, although their internationalist contribution to the struggle against imperialism, to Cuba for example, or the support of popular movements cannot be ignored.

The petit-bourgeoisie and the preservation of capitalism

In this direction is the proposal for the establishment of the so-called “**5th Socialist International**” currently promoted by President Chavez and his party as a necessary step for the perspective of “21st century socialism”. This proposal is characterised by a great deal of confusion. It involves a generalisation with regards to anti-imperialism that encompasses the necessary political-state alliances in order to maintain the current of change in the American continent by promoting unrealistic views that do not go beyond the management of capitalism or of the mutual cooperation of states contrary to what is defined as “US empire”, while it remains within the framework of the dominant system.

Such a collaboration is also the progressive form of alliance based on solidarity, the Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas (ALBA) in which the following countries participate: Venezuela, Cuba, Bolivia, Nicaragua, Ecuador, the small countries of the Caribbean- Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica and Saint Vincent, the Grenadines, Honduras with the previous (now ousted) president Manuel Zelaya who had signed a joining agreement. However,

the participation of socialist Cuba does not change the character of this interstate alliance between capitalist countries. It is precisely for the fact that it does not constitute an alliance of socialist countries that it cannot be considered as a real counterweight to imperialism; even more so with regards to other unions such as the Union of Nations of South America UNASUR (in which Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Surinam, Uruguay, and Guiana participate) where various bourgeois state interests come in conflict. At the same time, major powers in Latin America, such as Brazil, participate in collaborations at an international level such as BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, China) and develop relations with Russia, Iran and China.

Thus, it is clear that diplomatic relations and interstate cooperation cannot be confused with platforms for a socialist perspective. This perception dominates in the so-called “**Commitment of Caracas**” that was proposed by the Unified Socialist Party of Venezuela in the recent party meeting in Caracas and it also runs through the proposal of Chavez for the “5th International”.

Socialism as immature communism is the society in which the working class and its allies hold the power (its scientific definition is the dictatorship of the proletariat), a prerequisite for the abolition of capitalist ownership of the means of production and for their socialisation. The struggle for socialism cannot be realised without the existence and action of the revolutionary party -as an independent organization; it is the party of the working class, the Communist Party that leads this struggle and at the same time creates socio-political alliances, for the confrontation with imperialism and the monopolies.

History has shown that this struggle will be difficult as imperialism fights “tooth and nail” against any attempt of revolutionary overthrow of the unjust exploitative system. From this point of view, positions that appear in the text of the “Commitment of Caracas” condemning violence in general, as well as the violence that the militant revolutionary forces assert, actually confirm the social-democrat content of this entire effort that does not recognise the right of the people to decide on the form of struggle they will embrace.

The discussion developed around ‘the new socialism’ highlights the necessity of intensification of the ideological-political struggle, the strengthening of Communist Parties and the creation of the communist pole of Marxist-Leninist parties that will decisively defend the principles of class struggle, the necessity of socialist revolution, the overthrow of capitalism and the construction of socialism based on the political power of the working class, the socialisation of the means of production, central planning and workers’ control.

It is necessary to confront on this basis any illusions, confusion and even more so, any petit-bourgeois ideas presented as “21st century socialism” that are based on the maintenance of private ownership of the means of production, the denunciation of the positive contribution of the USSR and generally of the socialism we have known in the 20th century, as well as the rejection of the laws of socialist revolution and construction, the socialisation of the basic means of production, central planning of the economy, workers and people’s control.



Regional issues: Middle East

Strengthening the anti-imperialist struggle and the role of the communists!

(Contribution at the Extraordinary International Meeting of Communist and Worker's Parties in Syria on the situation in the Middle East and solidarity with the people of Palestine, 28-29/9/2009)

by **Giorgos Marinos**

Member of the Politburo of the CC of KKE

Dear comrades,

We salute our meeting in Damascus and we would like to thank the Syrian comrades for having organized this meeting. This meeting is being held in accordance with the decision of the Working Group of the Communist Parties to organize an extraordinary solidarity meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties on the struggle of the Palestinian people and the peoples of Middle East that was taken in its session in Athens on 17th February 2009. Over the last period the situation in the region has become even more complex and complicated as a result of the capitalist economic crisis that has intensified imperialist aggression and sharpened the inter-imperialist contradictions and rivalries. Imperialism has become even more dangerous for the peoples of the Middle East, for the peoples all over the world.

This is a fact, because as capitalism expands, so does its need for raw materials, for exploitation of natural resources, for investments, for acquisition of markets and control of more regions of the planet .

Capitalists compete with each other for control of the world because of the strengthening of the monopolies that constitute the core of the system; due to the increase in the degree of accumulation that leads them to aggression in order to increase their profits and their power. This is demonstrated

by the aggression of the US, NATO, EU and the stance of the other imperialist powers.

It is obvious that the region of the Middle East and the broader region are of great strategic importance for the interests of the imperialist powers especially the US, Great Britain, France, Germany and the respective transnational monopolies. The significant energy reserves of oil and natural gas provoke direct intervention for their control.

Since the early 1990s an attempt has been made to build up an interstate system in the region by means of creating a framework based on NATO forces that will protect the penetration of multinational corporations in the region.

This framework includes the control of the international channels of the Black Sea, the Aegean, the Suez Canal the Red Sea as well as the channels of the Gulf. This arc extends to the eastern coasts of Southeast Asia and aims at ensuring American-NATO dominance. Thus, the rivalry between the imperialist powers intensifies and manifests itself as a rivalry between the two imperialist centres, the EU and the USA. The leading powers within the EU demand a bigger share in the distribution of markets and to be treated equally by the USA.

In the meantime, new powers have emerged and demand to play a new dynamic role in the inter-imperialist rivalries and the new distribution of markets. Such powers are the Russian Federation, China, India, and other powers that insist on playing a leading role at the regional level such as Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia and others.

The conflicts and rivalries for dominance in the distribution of markets and spheres of influence, for the control of the energy resources and the energy transport routes are also underway. They manifest themselves directly or indirectly in the war fronts, in the nationalist conflicts, in the conflicts between neighbouring countries.

Each power participates in this geopolitical game according to its economic, military and political power in the imperialist pyramid, according to its position in the international system as well as its geographic strategic position.

Nowadays, an important area of competition is the arc that encompasses the region of the former Soviet Republics which is rich in oil and natural gas fields, (the region of the Caspian Sea for instance) and extends to the oil fields of the Arab regions, to Iran and Iraq.

The USA wants to control these resources, as well as the transport routes (e.g. in the region of the Caucasus and in the Balkans) while at the same time it intends to reduce the oil and gas flow from the Russian Federation to the EU. This effort has met with the strong reaction of powerful EU countries,

namely Germany, France, Italy and others whose energy needs depend on Russia.

NATO, especially after the overthrow of socialism in the USSR and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, elaborated its new doctrine in order to strengthen its aggressive role under the new conditions, extending its field of action around the globe, and expanding to the former socialist countries in the Balkans, Central and Eastern Europe, as well as to Mediterranean countries. It has designated our region as a high risk region as regards the safeguarding of the interests it serves, by establishing a flexible and strong multinational intervention force to intervene when NATO considers that the imperialist world order is disrupted, improving its ability for "pre-emptive strikes". The situation in the wider region has intensified after the war against Yugoslavia but especially after the war against Afghanistan and Iraq and the ongoing occupation by the USA and its allies.

We note that the US and NATO military presence in all the Balkan countries through military bases and troops has increased significantly. The military bases in Kosovo and FYROM rank among the biggest US and NATO bases while new bases have been established in Bulgaria and Romania that supplement the bases that already exist in Turkey and Greece. These bases participated actively in the interventions in Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, and Iraq and are ready to promote NATO and US plans against Iran Syria and the region of the Caucasus.

NATO elaborated its Mediterranean strategy and defied new threats in its summit in Istanbul in June 2004; therefore, it is ready to take action against the peoples under the pretext of combatting terrorism in order to facilitate the hegemony of the USA and other EU leading powers.

NATO expands to all parts of the world through various relations, with the support of the bourgeoisie and their political representatives in tens of states including states in the Middle East.

It is now preparing itself to adopt a new strategy against the peoples. This new doctrine that will be discussed at its summit in December 2010, provides amongst others the intensification of interventions against the peoples under many pretexts, including, apart from combatting terrorism, internal security, energy security, political and economic crises, even climate changes.

As regards the EU, we should add that the aggression of monopoly capital is demonstrated by the strengthening of its readiness and the reinforcement of the capacities for military and non-military operations, for the acquisition of new positions throughout the world.

EU participation in military missions and occupation forces has multiplied. EU forces are already in the Balkans, Africa, Afghanistan, Iraq and Lebanon.

KKE struggles against the imperialist unions. It explicitly opposed the dispatch of military forces outside the borders of the country. The return of the military missions back to our country is an important area of struggle for the anti-imperialist movement.

The Palestinian issue and the Israeli aggression against the Arab and its neighbouring countries have prevailed for many years in the Arab world.

The recent Israel attacks against Lebanon in 2006 and the Gaza Strip early in 2009 reinforce the assessment of the communist parties regarding the imperialist character of Israel which, supported by the USA and the EU, implements a methodical policy for the genocide of the Palestinian people.

This imperialist aggression is characterised by the ongoing occupation regime; the blockades; the blockade of the Gaza Strip; the cold-blooded murders of civilians, women and children; the murder of fighters; the Wall of partition; the extension of settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem; the oppression and the persecution against the Arabs who live in Israel.

KKE supports the struggle of the Palestinian people and its resistance against the occupation forces; it saluted the victory of the resistance forces in Lebanon. At this point, we believe that it is necessary to emphasize one basic conclusion borne out through the course of the Palestinian issue.

In fact, the logic of the Oslo agreement in 1993, the concept that prevailed in the Camp David Summit 2000 or in the Annapolis Summit 2007, the so-called "road map" has collapsed.

The Palestinian state has not been established yet, the occupation of the territories seized by Israel in the 7-day war in 1967 continues and the situation has become even more complicated.

Imperialists cannot ensure peace for the peoples. Political actions should be carried out on the basis of principles, systematically utilising the anti-imperialist struggle, without any retreats that create hopes and illusionary expectations idealising the role of the US, the EU or other imperialist powers and organisations.

This conclusion is a response to the attempt to mislead the peoples utilising the election of the new US President and his speech at Cairo University on the relations between the US and the Islamic world.

The strategy of imperialism will not change; it is becoming even more aggressive, carefully employing 'the carrot and stick method', trying to utilise

the conflicts created within the movement in order to promote its plans more easily.

The goal is to realise imperialist plans for the “democratisation of the wider Middle East” with the creation of a “new Middle East”, a policy that meets obstacles. In order to promote this goal they try to utilise more effectively the so-called “moderate political forces” which have compromised with the imperialists. At the same time they exert pressure on the Palestinian authorities to make new compromises and try to approach states included in the so-called “axis of evil”.

The EU and the US discuss two states (Israeli and Palestinian). However, they conceal the essence of the problem. The point is that they do not mean a sovereign, organised state where the people decide on its future. They mean a state without borders, without an army, with limited sovereignty while at the same time they promote the autonomy of the Gaza Strip.

The situation in the Middle East is extremely complex. It becomes even more complicated if we take into account a huge problem, namely the management of water resources in the region, in which Turkey and Israel play a key role.

Turkey controls the flow of the Euphrates and the Tigris that constitute a valuable resource for Syria, Iraq, Iran and the Gulf States. Furthermore, one of the main goals of the Israeli wars after 1967 has been the absolute control of the water resources in south Lebanon, in Golan Heights, and the West Bank.

Israel also exclusively controls the water resources that belong to the Palestinians. It has full control over water resources of the occupied West Bank and uses 90% of groundwater resources, although Article 40 of Annex B of the Oslo Agreements of 28/9/1995 recognizes Palestinian rights on the water resources of the West Bank.

It is obvious that international Law, as the peoples knew it during the period in which the socialist system was energetically present and active in international affairs, no longer exists. It has been totally replaced by the imperialist doctrine of the “pre-emptive strike”, of the campaign “against terrorism”. The UN is also working in this direction.

Under these conditions, we are very concerned about the organisation of the struggle for the solution of the Palestinian issue and from this standpoint concerned about the internal situation of the Palestinian resistance movement which is characterised by internal conflicts and contradictions, especially after the electoral victory of Hamas in 2006.

In our opinion, the developments that followed, the situation in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, creates a very difficult situation for the Palestinian

resistance movement; it leads to a general weakening of its positions; it aids the multiform intervention of the imperialist forces in Palestine that aim at eliminating the resistance movement against occupation and support the forces that accept a complete compromise and have a negative stance towards the struggle for the establishment of an independent sovereign and viable state with East Jerusalem as its capital.

The Palestinian movement has undertaken a great responsibility. In our opinion, the effectiveness of its action depends on the will and the ability to rally and mobilise forces against imperialism and occupation for the solution of the Palestinian issue, for radical changes that satisfy the people's needs.

We are following with great interest the action of organisations that oppose occupation and imperialist interventions.

We struggle against the effort to blame the resistance movement and its actions in the name of terrorism and we emphasize that imperialism is the only terrorist against the peoples.

The peoples must utilize every form of struggle including the armed struggle against the oppressors, for national and social liberation. As every people, Palestinian people should have the right to make sovereign decisions on its future and its government.

Every movement, and this applies also for the Islamic organisations, is judged by its stance towards imperialism, monopolies, towards the conflict between capital and labour, towards the anti-peoples policies of the governments as well as by its stance towards the communist movement.

Anti-communism has always been used as a tool against the peoples, against the working class; it undermines the struggle against imperialism and this has been borne out through long historical experience.

The stance of the communists towards Islamic and other movements should be based on principles, on social and class-oriented criteria; it should reinforce the ideological political struggle aiming at the strengthening of the anti-imperialist struggle.

Communists are at the forefront of the struggle for the promotion of the interests of the working class and the people and are sharply aware of the huge challenges. These challenges are, among others:

1. the aim to play a leading role in the daily anti-imperialist class struggle, against all imperialist powers and organisations, against the capitalist powers at a national level, against opportunism and social-democracy that poison consciousness and lead the labour and people's movement to compromise and submission.

2. the reinforcement of the links with the working class, the popular strata and the youth; the building of strong communist parties, and strong, mass, class-oriented trade unions.

3. the organisation of the anti-imperialist –anti-monopoly struggle for the overthrow of the monopolies' power.

4. the struggle against national, economic, political, and military dependence cannot be detached from the struggle for the solution of the conflict between labour and capital.

Nowadays, in the era of the transition from capitalism to socialism, the struggle for working class state power, the struggle for socialist society should not be regarded as an issue for the future; it is linked with the daily action for the worker's problems for national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The line of the anti-imperialist struggle and rallying of forces can create a positive basis for an alliance policy of the communist parties that have the duty to defend their organisational, political, and ideological independence and prevent compliance with segments of the bourgeoisie which aim at the assimilation and the disarmament of the revolutionary movement.

In our opinion, the workers' and peoples' struggle in the Middle East should acquire a singular, class-oriented, political character in order to develop an anti-imperialist movement that will forestall the instigation of religious, secessionist and ethnic divisions and conflicts according to the conditions in each country.

Communists, but also the people's movement in general, should reject the views arguing that the so-called "complexity", the so-called "modernisation" and the new "architecture" of international relations can impose just solutions in favour of the peoples without weakening the barbarous imperialist system. The struggle of the people of Palestine and the peoples in the region should take into account the inter-imperialist rivalries. However, life has proven that the imperialist EU or capitalist Russia or France and Germany cannot support their struggle against the US plans. The class, "predatory" nature of those powers is the same with that of the US and therefore they cannot substitute the role that the USSR used to play in the past.

Thus, this struggle can achieve the greatest possible resistance against the imperialist plan for the "wider and new Middle East". At the same time, it should seek broader international support by parties, movements and organisations that struggle against the policies and the positions of Israel and in general against the imperialist forces and organisations, against the threats and interventions. Nowadays, the only counter-weight to the imperialist plans is the anti-imperialist struggle of the peoples.

KKE has been at the forefront of the struggle for the solution of the Palestinian Issue, for the support of the peoples in Middle East. Thus, it took important initiatives and organised mobilisations. The issue was brought forward to the workers' and peoples' movement where PAME and the class-oriented trade unions played a leading role collecting medicines and clothing and sharpening the polemics against the government and the EU. We will continue our struggle utilising our rich experience. At this point we would like to note that not all are true friends of the Palestinian people. In crucial moments social-democracy undermines the struggle for the liberation of Palestine as well as the struggle of the peoples of the Middle East. It talks about equal responsibilities and equates the victim with the victimiser. Furthermore, this view constitutes the position of the Socialist International, whose vice-president Ehud Barak led the assault on Gaza Strip last January as Israel's Defence Minister.

Die Linke in Germany that holds the presidency of the European Left Party has taken the same stance. Its stance during the period of the Israeli attack on Gaza has damaged the resistance movement.

We continue our struggle taking into consideration that these conditions require the intensification of our attempts. We focus on:

- the defence of the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of each country against any imperialist intervention that might occur under any pretext.

- the withdrawal of the Israeli army from the territories occupied in 1967 (Golan Heights, the West Bank), the dissolution of the settlements and the establishment of a Palestinian State next to Israel (Gaza Strip and the West Bank) with East Jerusalem as its capital.

- the resolution of the refugees' issue. The return of the Palestinian refugees according to the 194 resolution of the UN General Assembly and in accordance with other resolutions of the UN Security Council.

- the immediate release of all Lebanese and Palestinian political prisoners and Palestinian ministers and MPS.

- our opposition to the establishment of a new UN military force that in practice assumes the role to carry out the goal that military assault and invasion failed to accomplish, that is the disarmament and the elimination of the people's armed resistance.

- the demand for our countries to recall the military forces that participate in the UN military force in Lebanon.

- the restoration of the territorial integrity of Lebanon and the withdrawal of the Israeli army from the occupied territories in South Lebanon including the Sebaa region.

Regional issues: BALKANS

The only hope for the peoples - a joint anti-imperialist class oriented struggle

(Contribution at a meeting of Balkan Communist and Workers' Parties in Thessaloniki, 19/12/2009)

by Giorgos Marinós

Member of the Politburo of the CC of KKE

Dear Comrades,

Welcome to Thessaloniki, welcome to the Meeting of the Balkan Communist and Workers' Parties which is being held on the initiative of KKE and has as its theme "the struggles and the experiences of the communists under the conditions of the world capitalist crisis".

This meeting coincides with the 20th anniversary of the escalation of the counterrevolutionary developments in Central and Eastern Europe which were celebrated by opportunists and bourgeois forces at the various events organised in Berlin. We can sum up what these 20 years actually brought for the peoples in the Balkans, in Central and Eastern Europe in a few words: unemployment, abolition of historic social gains, cruel exploitation of the working class and the other popular strata, poverty for the majority of the people and super-profits for the plutocracy, imperialist wars, dissolution of states, depleted uranium. The celebrations of the bourgeois opportunist parties over the alleged "victory of democracy" in the former socialist countries are totally false and hypocritical. If we carefully observe their democracy we will see that it is all about the aggression of capital, brutal exploitation, the oppression of the working people and repressive measures aiming at undermining the class struggle and every attempt to overthrow the exploitative capitalist system. Once again the bourgeois political forces in Poland have shown this clearly by

banning communist symbols and imposing heavy penalties of imprisonment and fines. It is an outrageous decision that follows the previous decision taken by the EU and its bodies as well as the parliamentary assembly of the OSCE. From this podium we would like to express our solidarity with the Communist Party of Poland that is now acting under very hard conditions since, except from the anti-communist article 13 of the Polish Constitution, the criminal prosecution of communists is also under way. The 11th International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties was held successfully in New Delhi, India a few weeks ago. The Meeting discussed the situation created by the capitalist crisis, the experiences from the workers' and peoples' struggles, the objectives and the role of the communist parties and the workers' movement. It issued a statement stressing that we are witnessing a crisis of the capitalist system that reveals its historical limits and the need for its revolutionary overthrow. The statements underlines the responsibilities of the bourgeois forces both liberal and social democratic ones and reiterates that the communist and workers' parties shall work actively to rally and mobilize the widest possible sections of the popular forces in the struggle for full time stable employment and for social rights as a whole.

In addition the meeting adopted the following principles for the joint action of communist and workers' parties:

1) against NATO and its global expansion, against imperialist military aggression that is taking on new forms, against foreign military bases.

2) to establish the 29th of November as a day of solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinian people according to the decision of the Extraordinary meeting held in Damascus in September 2009.

3) to highlight the 65th commemoration of the defeat of fascism in the year 2010

4) to strengthen the people's mobilisations for the defence of workers' rights in cooperation with the trade union organisations

5) to intensify international solidarity for the liberation of the 5 Cuban patriots

6) To strengthen popular mobilisations and the put pressure on the governments demanding the right to work, in cooperation with youth organisations.

KKE on the crisis

Dear comrades,

The international capitalist economy is going through a profound crisis characterized mainly by its extensive synchronization. Since the early manifestations of the crisis, our party was ideologically and politically prepared and it made an important effort to enlighten the workers about the character of the crisis as a crisis of over-accumulation and over-production.

It refuted the deliberate propaganda of the government and the other political forces arguing that it is merely a crisis of the financial system or a crisis of neo-liberalism. It levelled criticism at the position that the so-called casino or greedy capitalism, the wages and the irresponsibility of the golden boys in the banks and former state-owned enterprises are responsible for the crisis as the liberal, social democrat and opportunist forces argued.

Our party revealed the misleading conflict between “extreme liberalism” and “extreme statism” promoted as the allegedly main difference between the social-democratic and liberal management.

It explained to the working people that both Keynesian and neo-liberal policies lead to the capitalist crisis, which is inherent in the capitalist system and its anarchic development. We refuted with arguments the systematic effort of the other political forces to limit the discussion to the conflict between the so-called healthy and non- healthy capitalism.

We proved that the real cause of the crisis is the sharpening of the main contradiction of capitalism, the contradiction between the social character of production and appropriation of its results due to the fact that the means of production are under capitalist ownership.

We unveiled the slogan “people before profits” promoted by social-democrat forces such as SYRIZA bringing forward the need to abolish capitalist profits, namely the construction of a socialist society having as its driving force the satisfaction of the peoples needs.

The responsibilities of social democracy and the opportunists

The recent elections in October led to the formation of a social-democrat government by PASOK which, in the name of the crisis and the safeguarding

of capital's profit making, is ready to take a series of anti-people measures against social security and the labour rights of the working people affecting particularly the women and the youth. In addition, it invited trade-unions and parties to social partnership talks seeking to achieve the biggest possible social consensus that will enable the imposition of the anti-people measures. The position of KKE and the class oriented trade union movement that rallies in the All Workers' Militant Front (PAME) has been clear: "do not participate in the social partnership talks! Reject social consensus! Class war against the anti-people measures of the government, which are supported by the EU and serve solely the interests of the domestic and foreign plutocracy!

On the contrary, the forces of the government and employer-led trade unionism participated in this fixed game while the opportunist forces took part in the beginning of the talks in order to create the illusion that solutions in favour of the people can emerge from such talks. SYRIZA with its so-called left alternative proposal plays a leading role in the disorientation of the popular strata that seek a way out. With its stance it leads to the disarmament of the movement, it prevents its emancipation from the ruling policy and the false dilemmas of the bipartisan alternation.

The real solution to the problems of the working people does not lie in the ambiguous proposals of the forces of SYN/SYRIZA and the other forces of the European Left Party but in the strategy of the anti-monopoly struggle and rupture till the end, till the overthrow of monopoly power.

The action of KKE under the conditions of the crisis and the attack of capital

KKE formulated, both in the Parliament and the people's struggles, a platform of immediate demands in favour of the employees, the poor farmers, the self-employed, the youth and the women according to the principle and the slogan that the working people should not accept paying for the crisis of the system but on the contrary they should demand the improvement of their position.

Communists along with other forces work for the regroupment of the trade union movement. They decisively support PAME, which has been at the forefront of the struggle to prevent the dismissals announced in tens of enterprises on the occasion of the crisis; likewise in the struggles to prevent the reduction of salaries, the reduction of the working week, and the flexible forms of employment. In many cases, the readiness and the militant stance of the

class-oriented trade union organisations contributed to the reinstatement of workers and revealed the line of consensus and “social peace” that is the unconditional surrender of the workers to big capital.

Our party supported the struggle of the metalworkers in the Perama ship-repair zone who were attacked by forces of repression outside the ministry of Labour. It was also in solidarity with the struggle of the workers in the biggest port of the country against the handover of the port to the Chinese multinational corporation Cosco. It supported the tens of thousands of youth employed in the “stage” programs in the public sector who were dismissed by the government of PASOK as well as the thousands of construction workers who went on strike over the last months. Through strikes, demonstrations, sit-ins and other forms of struggle the class-oriented forces rescind dismissals, force employers to reinstate dismissed workers, sign collective labour contracts that provide increases exceeding the income policy and intervene in the attacks against immigrants.

KKE, along with the class-oriented movement, confronts these difficulties and is particularly demanding regarding the strengthening of the ideological, political, mass struggle for the liberation of the working-popular forces from the influence of bourgeois policies and ideology, reformism.

The strengthening and the effectiveness of the struggle of the class-pole of the movement require its orientation be against the efforts to place the burden of the crisis on the people’s shoulders; likewise, demands that meet the people’s needs (full-stable employment, substantial increases in wages and pensions, exclusively free, public healthcare, welfare education system etc). With the slogans “The law is the right of the worker, not of the capitalist” and “the crisis must be paid by the plutocracy”, “full, stable employment, wages and pensions that respond to contemporary needs, exclusively public, free Healthcare, Welfare, Education” tens of thousands of workers participated a couple of days ago, on 17 December, in the 24-hour nationwide Strike called by industrial federations, trade union centres and primary trade unions that struggle through the ranks of PAME against the consensus of the leadership of GSEE-ADEDY. It was a significant, militant response to the plans of the PASOK government to further restrict workers’ achievements in the field of Social Security. This particularly important front of struggle must embrace all workplaces, factories, enterprises, construction sites, department stores and transform them into “fortresses” of counterattack to the anti-people plans of the government that also have the support of the main opposition party, ND, and of the EU.

Along with the reconstruction of the labour-trade union movement, KKE considers necessary the organizational strengthening of the working class Party in the workplaces. Communists in Greece promote as a basic priority the duty of party building in workplaces, while they orientate the action of local organisations in the workplaces of their territory. Party building is mainly directed towards the working class and the youth.

During this period our Party has further broadened the ideological front against the bourgeois parties and opportunist forces and stressed that the source of the crisis will only dry up with the abolition of capitalist property, the elimination of anarchy in capitalist production. This requires the socialization of the basic and concentrated means of production, central planning of the people's economy and workers-people's control. This will be the content of a people's economy regime; except from communists, a broad social-political Front will struggle for a people's economy as well. This front will represent the forces of the working class, the poor and medium scale farmers and the rest of the popular strata in the city.

This is the political proposal of KKE that rejects the ambiguous schemes of "unity of the Left" and the centre-left administration considering that the interests of the working class and of the other popular strata can only be ensured by people's power that for communists is socialism of course.

Regarding this effort, our Party does not leave unanswered the anti-communist campaign of the EU. We organize dozens of mass events about socialism in neighbourhoods and universities throughout the country. The Resolution of the 18th Congress of our Party regarding the assessments of the overthrow of socialism and the perception of KKE on socialism constitutes an important basis in this effort.

KKE and the intra-imperialist contradictions

Comrades,

On 18.12.2009 the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen came to an end. Despite the declarations and fanfare, the sharpening of the inter-imperialist contradictions in the energy field cannot be concealed. An effort for over-accumulated capital to find a profitable way-out through the so-called "green economy", that is the commercialization of environmental protection and of climate change, is underway.

This Conference, just as the recent Summit Conference of the OSCE Foreign Ministers in Athens, shows that the capitalist crisis sharpens the intra-imperialist contradictions under conditions of serious upheaval; reduction of US participation in the world GDP, the powerful presence of the EU, reinforcement of China, Russia, India and Brazil. Workers should not have any illusions about the so-called “multi-polar world”, about the slogans of social-democracy about the “democratization of the UN” or “a new architecture of international relations”. These slogans intend to humanize imperialist barbarity. There has never been a “unipolar world”! Intra-imperialist contradictions have always existed. Nevertheless, in the past they were mitigated due to the need to confront the USSR and the other socialist countries. Today, we are witnessing a new intensification of the intra-imperialist contradictions as well as the pursuit of several rising imperialist forces and alliances to play an upgraded role in international affairs which is described through the scheme of a “multi-polar world”.

In fact, imperialism is characterized by the drive for markets and natural resources, interventions and wars. Communists have assumed great responsibilities as regards the enlightenment and mobilization of the peoples against the imperialist wars and interventions, the occupation of countries by the imperialists, against NATO, the EU and any other imperialist organization and centre, regardless of the “Colour”, name or region they are formed in.

Comrades,

As regards our region, the new PASOK government is giving priority to the full expansion of NATO in the Balkans, to the accession of all Balkan countries to NATO by 2014. It seeks a more active involvement of Greece in imperialist plans. Furthermore, the Greek government is upgrading the participation of Greece in the occupation of Afghanistan and is discussing the accession to the anti-missile shield. In this framework it promotes the accession of the rest Balkan countries to the EU and NATO presenting it as the only solution for the peaceful resolution of all problems in the region. KKE revealed that NATO and EU are capitalist unions; that they cannot ensure security and peace for the peoples in the region but on the contrary they constitute tools for the heightening of oppression and exploitation of all peoples.

The worsening of workers' life in the Balkan countries, the reinforcement of the imperialist organisations, the measures of repression against communists and the anti-imperialist movement that are taken throughout Europe, also increase the need to act in a better, more organized and coordinated

manner through the ranks of the anti-imperialist, anti-NATO and mass labour movement.

The main condition, though, in order to further develop our action, to pave the way for people's power, socialism, is to reinforce the role of Communist and Workers' Parties. This would improve coordination of action and joint activities among the CP. More specifically:

1) We consider as an important element the labour solidarity and unity that can develop among workers among the Balkan peoples, in the mobilizations that take place in Balkan countries. This requires the CPs to promptly provide information about these mobilizations and assist the communication of the class trade union forces that struggle against the anti-people measures and the provocations of the employers.

2) We daily note the need to reinforce the work in the working class, in order to recruit new forces in the trade union movement and to establish trade unions in which the class oriented forces will play a leading role.

3) We need to contribute with all our forces to the strengthening and broadening of the peace, anti-imperialist movement; to repulse NATO plans through the reconstruction of the Balkan Anti-NATO Centre, against the imperialist military presence in the Balkans, the foreign bases and troops, the participation of military forces from Balkan countries in NATO and EU missions in other countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, the Persian Gulf and elsewhere.

4) We must demand the return of troops from the Balkan countries that are currently abroad and to end the engagement of our countries in new imperialist wars.

5) We must express our solidarity with the people of Cuba and to intensify our struggle for the liberation of the 5 Cuban patriots from the US prisons.

Comrades,

The workers and the other popular strata in the Balkan countries, 20 years after the overthrow of the popular regimes, have nothing to hope for from the imperialist organisations, the EU and the NATO, or from the bourgeois governments of right wing and social-democratic forces that have been tested in practice.

The only hope is the joint anti-imperialist and class struggle with the communists in the frontline.

December 19, 2009

GREECE

Informational Article of the International Section of the CC of KKE

The 18th Congress of KKE

The 18th Congress of KKE was held in Athens on 18th-22nd February. The Congress discussed two subjects:

1. The action of the party since the 17th Congress and its duties until the 19th Congress
2. The theses of KKE on socialism.

In addition, it elected the new Central Committee of the Party that comprises 77 members.

Before the Congress the party held an inner-party debate in the Party Base Organisations and the party Conferences (in territories, cities and regional organisations), a 3-month public debate in the pages of the daily newspaper "Rizospastis", organ of the CC of KKE, while it published a special issue of the "Communist Review", the theoretical journal of the Party. The debate was held on the basis of the "Theses" for both subjects which were published by the CC in due course.

How has the situation been in recent years?

In order to understand the duties discussed in the congress one should take into consideration several issues concerning the positions and the action of KKE at least over the last 18 years, the way in which they developed as well as some aspects of the social-political situation in Greece.

The crisis of the international communist movement, which manifested itself after the overthrow of socialism and the dissolution of the USSR (1990-1991), has influenced Greece as well. Under the influence of the ideas of Gorbachev, a part of the party's leadership aided by bourgeoisie and other opportunist forces, that left KKE in 1968 and expressed the current of euro-communism, tried to

diffuse KKE into a wider front organisation, Synaspismos (Coalition of the Left and Progress), which had been previously established by KKE.

Thanks to the determination of the members and cadres of the Party who remained loyal to Marxist-Leninist ideology and the revolutionary role of the Party, the efforts to diffuse KKE in Synaspismos, were prevented. KKE won this ideological and political battle and started its ideological, political, and organisational regrouping. All of those who hoped that KKE would be wounded by counterrevolution and the split and thus be incapable of intervening in Greek political life and exceeding the 3% limit required for parliamentary representation, have been disappointed. In the elections after the split in 1991, October 1993, KKE gathered 313.001 votes namely 4,5% and elected 9 members to Parliament.

In the next few years KKE took several particularly important political-ideological and organisational steps. Thus, in 1993 it organised a special party Conference in which it drew conclusions about the character of the EU and the stance of KKE towards this imperialist union. In 1995 followed the public debate and Party conference that arrived at conclusions concerning the causes of the overthrow of socialism and the restoration of capitalism in the USSR and Eastern Europe. In 1996 KKE was mature enough to elaborate a new Party program, which was approved at the 15th Congress. The Program of the Party stresses the socialist character of the revolution in Greece and the need to create a Front that constitutes the alliance of the social and political forces struggling against monopolies and imperialism and can pave the way for the strategic goal of the Party.

Following the counterrevolution, KKE has made important efforts for the regrouping of the labour movement. It opposed the notions of "consensus", "social dialogue" and "social peace" spread in the labour movement by bourgeois, reformist and opportunist political forces. Communists have promoted the line of class struggle and confrontation, in order for the workers to achieve gains. Thus, they preserved and gained new positions in trade unions, industrial federations and labour centers which are part of the integrated (as regards its organisation) Greek trade union movement that consists of the trade union federations in the private and public sectors (GSEE and ADEDY). However, the struggle of the class-oriented forces has been hindered by the leaderships of GSEE and ADEDY. KKE examined this situation in 1997, in a special Conference on the labour movement. In 1999, on the initiative of communists the All Workers' Militant Front (PAME) was developed. PAME draws together trade unions, industrial federations and labour centers that recognise

the class struggle. These forces develop independent, multi-faceted activity while coordinating their struggle for the interests of the working class, for the strengthening of class unity and the change in the correlation of forces in the trade union movement.

The 16th Congress specified issues regarding the Front. The concepts of a People's Economy and Power were established as a goal uniting the forces that will build the anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly, democratic Front. In addition, the Congress clarified the content of these concepts. For communists, this content is identified with that of socialism. However, KKE does not consider agreement on a course towards socialism or on KKE's perception of socialism as a prerequisite. It seeks agreement on the concept and the content of the terms "people's economy and "people's power" that are based on the socialisation of the basic means of production, central planning and workers control.

The 17th Congress dealt with the question: "what party do we need nowadays?" It organized the party's organisational regrouping in the workplaces and various labour sectors. In addition, it approved a special resolution on the situation of the international communist movement and the duties of KKE.

In the period between the 17th and 18th Congress, KKE held two nationwide Conferences, which focused on key-issues concerning the course of the Party, such as the work of the Party among the women and the youth.

At the same time KKE made an important effort to elaborate several issues concerning the history of the communist movement. The statements of the CC on the 60th anniversary of the Anti-fascist Victory, the 90th anniversary of the October Revolution and KKE, the 60th anniversary of the Democratic Army of Greece were not merely typical "anniversary" statements. On the contrary, they contributed to the strengthening of ideological political unity as well as to the development of multi-form events.

Furthermore, the utilisation of the research work of the last 4 years on the issues of socialist construction in the USSR has intensified. We now have new sources of information; we organised the theoretical symposium of the Communist Review with the participation of representatives of communist journals, Marxist research centers and communist parties. All the bodies and the Party Base Organisations discussed a document concerning the enrichment of the Party's perception on socialism that resulted in the "Theses of the CC on socialism".

Some facts about the influence of KKE today

KKE has forged important links with the working class in Greece. Thus, in a number of industrial federations, such as the Federation of Construction Workers (the largest private sector federation in Greece), Textile Workers, Pharmaceuticals etc. as well as in some local trade union organisations (Labour Centers) the lists supported by KKE get the majority of votes. At the last Congress of the General Confederation of Greek Workers in private sector (GSEE) in 2007, the class-oriented forces supported by KKE had 21% of the representatives and 11% at the Congress of the Confederation of Public Servants (ADEDY) in 2007.

These class-oriented trade union forces, as we mentioned, rally in PAME that is constantly expanding its influence in new trade unions and exerts strong pressure on the “yellow”, employer-led trade union leadership. PAME organizes strikes at the enterprise, branch and national level. It strengthens the struggle in order to repel the attack launched by the government and the employers. A characteristic example is the recent battle in the chain of stores under the trade name “JUMBO” due to the dismissal of a communist trade-unionist.

The Communist Youth of Greece (KNE), the political youth of KKE, also carries out very important action within the youth movement for the politicization of the youth struggle. This is more obvious among the university students. In the elections held in the students’ associations, PKS, the list supported by KNE, in 2007 was supported by more than 23,7 thousand students, as it got a 15,38% in the Technological Education Institutes and a 15,97% of the votes in Universities all over the country.

In the local elections in 2006, KKE had candidates in all 54 prefectures, as well as in all major municipalities, covering 80% of the country. It elected 64 prefecture council members (48 in 2002), hundreds of municipal council members and 15 mayors.

In the parliamentary elections in 2007, KKE gained the 3rd position, gathering 583.818 votes namely 8,15 %, and elected 22 MPs.

Despite these considerable successes since the 17th Congress until today, KKE has assessed in its 18th Congress the weakness to advance the building of the Party, the low pace of recruitment from the working class and the need for a more methodical effort for an overall development of cadres from the working class and especially women. However, this does not mean that the Party has not made any progress. During the last 4 years the social and

age composition of the Party members has improved slowly but steadily, at the national and local level. The organisational rearrangement of the Party Organisations based around production sectors has proceeded and has brought positive results by gathering and developing forces according to work sectors and workplaces. A very important element is the increase in the number of women party members by 4,5% as well as the renewal of the party forces. 37,2% of the party members joined the Party after the crisis of 1990-1991. There has been an increase of the PBOs in factories, in various workplaces, in the branch organisations by 4% with a simultaneous increase of the party members that joined them. There is also an increase of the percentage of employees in the private sector by 2,3%, of the self-employed by 2,3% as well, and of the students by 1,9%. There's been a decrease in the number of party members who are pensioners and housewives.

The 18th Congress has assessed that we should utilize and strengthen the positive elements.

The Congress and the developments

It should be noted that although the inter-party procedures (assemblies, conferences) objectively took up valuable time, at the same time KKE was present at the struggles of the workers, the youth, the farmers, as well as the anti-imperialist struggle that broke out in Greece during the three month pre-congress period.

The consequences of the capitalist crisis are used by the liberal government of ND, by the social-democrat PASOK but also by capitalist employer-led bodies so as to ensure unity and consensus in order to face the crisis "all together", as they claim. These incentives, exposed by KKE, are absolutely false, misleading and very dangerous and aim at the disarming of the labour movement and the movement of the popular social forces; it's a call for new sacrifices and submission.

Equally dangerous for the labour movement are the views put forward by various opportunists, such as SYRIZA (a social-democrat medley in which the main force is Synaspismos), exonerating the capitalist system, presenting the crisis as a result of the subjective choices of one or another bourgeois party, or as a deviation of the supposedly healthy capitalist system.

The communists have been and still are the vanguard in the labour and trade union struggles so that the workers won't pay for the crisis. At the same time, KKE has exposed the causes of the capitalist crisis which are inherent in

the exploitative character of society, raised the imperative need to popularise and increase the influence of Party policy, the importance of socialization, cooperative production, national planning and workers' control.

Of equal importance was the political intervention of KKE during the youth outcry, and more generally, people's outcry against the cold blooded murder of the student in Athens, in December 2008. The youth, especially school students and university students, filled the streets of most cities throughout the country with slogans against state violence, demanding at the same time free, public Education. The communists, the class-oriented trade unions were by their side making important progress in the joint action of the labour and youth movement. It has been shown that the youth does not constitute any specific class or stratum. It's an inextricable part of the social class structure. Its major part comes from, belongs to, or is close to the contemporary working class and the majority of the young people will become part of it as workers.

This outburst of youth indignation was described as a "peoples uprising" especially by the social-democrat oriented part of the bourgeois Press. On the other hand, SYRIZA characterised the movement as an "uprising of the youth". There has also been an attempt to mark the mobilisations of the youth through the re-emergence of structured, "trained" groups calling themselves the "anti-authority movement", characterized by hoods and "blind violence" as well as by the use of Molotov cocktails for the destruction and plundering of shop-windows, banks, public buildings etc. In addition, they were characterised mainly by the absence of political slogans, demands and goals of struggle and by their opposition to all forms of guidance and organisation.

Our Party distinguished from the very first moment the mass youth demonstrations from the action of the so-called anti-authority forces, groups engaged in anticommunism.

The political demands and the mass participation in the protected demonstrations of the school students, the university students and the workers, organized by KKE, PAME and the Coordination of Struggle of School Unions might not have reached to the TV screens of various Greek and foreign bourgeois-led television networks (on which the scenes of blind violence predominated), though they left an important legacy for the political maturing of large section of the youth.

The communists were also in the vanguard of the struggles of the small and medium scale farmers that a few weeks before the 18th Congress of KKE had proceeded in setting up road blocks, blocking national highways. The

basic element of the movements was the mass participation of young farmers who felt that their survival is threatened through the CAP that has been implemented in Greece for years by the governments of ND and PASOK.

The members and cadres of KKE and KNE were in the vanguard of the anti-imperialist struggle against the brutal Israeli attack on Gaza. Once again we experienced the indignation and the emotion of the Greek people. Our Party played a leading role in the mobilisations through its independent action but also through the support of the initiatives and mobilisations of hundreds of mass organisations also at a local level. We proposed stoppages and sympathy strikes but, unfortunately, they have not been accepted by GSEE. We regard as positive the fact that several Federations participating in PAME took the initiative to organise strikes offering the chance to hold a number of events and debates. We must not stop expressing our solidarity with the Palestinian people. The necessity to establish a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, to deal with the issues of settlements and the wall in the West Bank and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Arab lands are more important than any form of humanitarian aid and solidarity.

The discussion and the resolutions of the 18th Congress

This article does not intend to substitute for study of the Documents of the Congress (Theses of the CC, Reports of the CC, closing remarks and resolutions). We call on all Communist and Workers Parties, communists from other countries, who are interested in the developments in Greece and the action of KKE to study the documents. For that reason our party translates these documents in several basic languages and they will be soon available on our website.

We briefly mention that the 18th Congress showed that there is a noticeable improvement concerning the main duty set by the 17th Congress: the orientation of our work towards the working class and young people. The conditions for targeted activity of the Party among young people have improved. At the same time, KNE has also made progress. We have developed our tactics concerning the mobilisations, the mass movement nationwide in order to rally and mobilise the workers' and people's masses around demands and goals of struggle, to strengthen the anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly line and consciousness; to promote the struggle for another path of development, for the people to realise that we need a change at the level of state power and not the alternation of the two partners or the coalition governments which

manage the system. Nowadays KKE is more capable of combining its tactics and strategy; it is more prepared to struggle for its new duties arising from the outbreak of the global economic crisis and against the efforts of the bourgeois political system to hinder the radicalisation of the masses.

The discussion on the socialist construction in the 20th century focusing mainly on the USSR has also been very important (both subjects were discussed for two days). Several issues concerning the economy and the superstructure in socialism as well as the strategy of the international communist movement were stressed in the second part, focusing on the enrichment of the Party's perception on socialism.

The Report of the CC in the 18th Congress mentions: "nowadays it is not possible for a communist party to act effectively, to have a revolutionary strategy elaborated from a scientific viewpoint, to provide answers to the big questions without utilising the positive and negative experience of the socialist revolution and construction. Those who gave up these principles before the counterrevolution, but also afterwards in the name of "renewal", have been led to an underestimation even to a rejection of the struggle for socialism. This occurred in a period of increased confusion regarding the causes for capitalist restoration, a period full of disappointment, reduced hopes and questions regarding the feasibility of a true way out. Socialism is not a vision; it is a goal to be attained under specific preconditions. One of these is the preparation through the daily struggle as well as the ideological-political vigilance of the subjective factor, something that cannot be attained without drawing lessons from socialist construction".

International movement

The 18th Congress confirmed that KKE will steadily and more effectively continue co-operating with other Communist and Workers' parties on bilateral, regional and international levels, for the continuance of the international Meetings, common activities on the basis of common resolutions, for the coordination of their activities, for the strengthening of the anti-imperialist struggle, against imperialist wars and interventions, against poverty, hunger, for the environment.

KKE gives priority to the development of bilateral relations, aiming at the strengthening of the solidarity movement with the peoples in Latin America focusing on Cuba, with the peoples in Middle East, focusing on the Palestinian issue.

KKE supports the regional Meetings of the Communist Parties in the Balkans, East Mediterranean- Middle East and Red Sea, in the EU member states as well as the thematic meetings such as the meetings of the Communist Parties of Europe on education.

KKE will make efforts to increase the regional Meetings according to the developments and the specific problems in order to strengthen the process of collective elaborations and common efforts for the development of ideological political struggle against the bourgeois, reformist and opportunist currents, new-fascist activities, nationalism and chauvinism.

The Party will continue its effort to promote common action around anti-monopoly and anti-imperialist goals with those communist and workers' movements with which there are ideological differences, without waiving the right to critical discussion of these differences.

As it is mentioned in the document of the 18th Congress, our reflection and activity focuses on the fact that the international communist movement remains organizationally and ideologically fragmented. As long as the situation does not improve, the danger for a new backsliding increases. Already, in a series of countries the process of de-characterization and mutation of the communist parties towards a social-democratic orientation continues. In a period where the pressure for denying a communist identity increases, the new wave of state anticommunism grows into new dimensions, whereas the context of this new anticommunism is being adopted also by the modern opportunist currents. The founding of the "European Left Party" in the EU signaled the organic merging of modern opportunist currents with the structures of the EU and the state mechanism of the member-states.

Today this trend is becoming more and more obvious and thus makes abundantly clear the need to speed up the processes of forming and shaping a communist pole, a distinct, in other words, presence of communist and workers parties, of communist forces that actively work in the direction of a united revolutionary strategy of the international communist movement.

We do not share the fears that such a collective effort may cancel the responsibility of each Communist Party at the national level, nor that it would make more difficult the general effort to coordinate communist and workers' parties that have differences as regards various anti-imperialist goals. The effort for a united revolutionary strategy against the united strategy of imperialism can strengthen and define even better the duties of each Communist Party in their country and its responsibilities vis-à-vis the working class, and generally the working people. In our opinion, cooperation at a higher level

should be based on the equality of parties, the respect of their independence and the particular views they may have.

It's the responsibility and right of every CP to study the theoretical issues of our movement, the formation of a revolutionary strategy, to draw lessons from the front of struggle with bourgeois views, reformism and opportunism at an international level, to prepare the Party and, generally, the class forces for the ups and downs of class struggle, for the successes but also the defeats, that occur, to provide scientific explanations, to take advantage of experience in order to prepare for a new advance forward, to drawn gains, for the final victory. At the same time, in our opinion every CP has also the responsibility and right to make those studies available to the fraternal communist and workers parties, to study their thoughts and views, in order, ultimately, through collective work to ensure that all the hammers are hitting in the same direction, in the struggle for changing the correlation of forces and to overthrow capitalism.

Our solidarity towards all the communist parties is a fact, especially towards those that are acting under harsh conditions. Our solidarity does not depend on the degree of our agreement, but emanates from the need, and with our assistance, to help them overcome the specific problems that they face in their countries due to state violence and oppression, prosecutions and prohibitions, etc. When there is a critical discussion of the various different views, in our opinion, it takes place for reasons of solidarity, common worries about being able to correspond to today's increased needs at the national and international level. All of us anyway with our actions and with our attitude exert influence, not only on the movement in our country, but also on international developments, the international movement.

Counterattack

KKE characterised its 18th Congress, congress of counterattack. This term refers to the counterattack of the labour and popular movement against the anti-people's plans of the bourgeoisie; to the ideological political counterattack for the organization of the working people in view of the crisis; to the formation of the Front and the prospect of the People's economy and power, to the prospect of socialism.

The discussion in the 18th Congress and its resolutions give us strength for our struggle.

GREECE

The Communists and the elections

KKE's response to the results of the recent parliamentary elections in Greece and comparisons to corresponding results from Germany and Portugal

**(Information article of the International section
of the Central Committee of KKE on the results
of parliamentary elections)**

On October 4, 2009, early parliamentary elections were held closely following analogous electoral procedures in Portugal and Germany. Certain presentations of the election results abroad expressed analyses that “Greece took a turn to the Left”, or that a “victory of the Left” had been achieved.

These analyses were based on the combination of the percentages of 3 parties: the social democratic party PASOK, which is a vehicle for harsh anti-popular policies and constitutes one of the two basic “pillars” of the bourgeois political system; the “new left” formation SYRIZA, (a meshing of euro communist and former communists, that originated from the base of a social democratic programme); and KKE that struggles daily for the interests of the working class and the people’s strata, heading towards a transformation of society, the overthrow of the power of the bourgeois class and the building of socialism. This arbitrary combination of dissimilar political forces in the name of the “Left”, clearly shows that this meaning does not correspond to the real political and social divisions of society, when they place together e.g. forces that support the imperialist body NATO (such as PASOK), the EU (PASOK and SYRIZA) and KKE that wages battles against both these imperialist bodies and demands the withdrawal of our country from both of them. Such a

combination of political forces who have 'bought' the argument of the bourgeois class regarding the "competitiveness" of the Greek economy: (PASOK, SYN), with KKE with which they clash along the entire ideological-political front on this and other concepts of the bourgeois class, with KKE, who bears the greatest burden in the struggle against the anti-popular restructuring and that determinedly takes on the forces of capital.

Basic facts regarding the election results

KKE amassed 517,138 votes in the recent elections, which is 66,612 less than the 2007 elections, where it had 583,750 votes. The result of this small loss was that the electoral percentage dropped from 8.15% to 7.54%. KKE lost one seat in parliament, electing 21 deputies (instead of 22) in the 300-seat parliament. At the same time, we must note for readers abroad, that in the 2007 elections, PASOK was experiencing a serious crisis and a victory for New Democracy (ND) was considered certain. For this reason, we must take the election results from 2004 into consideration as well because then the ruling party PASOK was defeated and ND came into power due to strong popular discontent. At that point KKE had received 436,561 votes and the percentage reached 5.9%. Conclusively, in 2007, KKE had achieved a significant electoral increase for a communist party; about 150 thousand votes, or more than 2%.

In addition, in the 2009 elections, the forces of the bourgeois two-party system, (PASOK and ND) amassed in total 77.4% of the votes. This percentage is the lowest amassed by the two-party system parties since the 1981 electoral battles. PASOK gathered 43.92% (+5.8%) while ND had 33.48% (-8.4%).

An increase was noted by the nationalist party LAOS, gathering 5.63% (+1.8%), however in an analysis of the results it must be considered that the liberal party ND, which constitutes the "reservoir" from which LAOS draws its forces, lost more than 8% of its vote.

SYRIZA retreated from 4th or 5th political position, receiving 4.6% (-0.4%). This retreat was covered up by all the jubilation expressed in part by the bourgeois mass media that support social democracy and who had become anxious since the polls showed that SYRIZA was marginal given its predicted electoral percentage to get into the parliament (3%); especially since it had covered all of the demagogic "curve" from 18-20%, that was polled 15 months earlier, reaching the lower limit of 3% in just one year.

Finally, the party “Ecologists – Greens”, despite the overwhelming support it enjoyed from the mass media and corporate circles, could not at this time amass votes over the cut off of 3% to elect parliament members, gathering only 2.5%.

Certain qualitative facts on KKE's electoral results

The electoral results of KKE show that the Party gathers the highest percentages in the city centers, where on average it amasses 8.8%. In the sub-city areas, the percentage is 6% and in the strict agricultural areas, it is 6.1%. KKE receives high percentages (from 10% to 20%) in the working class neighborhoods of Athens, Piraeus, Thessaloniki, Patras and other large cities.

On the island of Ikaria that served in the past as an exile island for communists, and where KKE traditionally enjoys high electoral percentages, the Party came in first, with 37%.

However, as sociological research shows, the electoral strength of KKE is greater than the percentages that it received among the youth ages 25-34 (11%), and the productive age groups 45-54(9%), salaried private sector employees (11%), the unemployed (11%), and university students (11%).

Assessment of the results

The CC of KKE estimates in its initial conclusions that “the electoral result, as far as KKE is concerned, is low in relation to the prestige and the influence that the Party has gained through its political action and it does not correspond to its role in the development of the struggles that have taken place, without which the results would have been unfavourable (...) KKE waged a tough battle under conditions of economic crisis, an upturn for the social democratic forces. Despite the fact that it did not succeed in reinforcing its forces, it showed resilience, it managed to thwart the attempts to remove it from third position in the parliament, to apply ideological pressure, to destroy as much as possible the greater part of its political and electoral influence. KKE's endurance throughout the dilemmas, the fears, the blackmail and manipulation, shows its capabilities, its correct line, and its readiness for tomorrow to be MORE DECISIVE on the front line.”

It is obvious that in PASOK's electoral victory the logic of "the lesser of the two evils" played its role which social democracy played on, as well as the mechanisms of 'buying votes', through a system of promises and exchanges in the working class sector, that made use of the harsh fact of unemployment and poverty, under conditions of a global capitalist crisis, intensifying the insecurity and the pressure for quick fixes. Clearly, there are other reasons for this result, such as the anti-communist campaign that was developed in Greece during the previous period and to which we have referred to analytically in a previous article on the Euro elections of 2009.

There are as well more generalized reasons, such as the effect of the situation in the workers' trade union movement in Europe and in Greece, the weak bonds of the party organizations of KKE with new working class strata that approach the Party yet require additional efforts in order from them to become stabilized. During this period, the party organizations of KKE are studying the first conclusions drawn by the CC as well as the weaknesses and the experience that has been gathered through their action.

The result indicated that the efforts to oust KKE from 3rd position that have taken place during recent years, also aided by the intervention of the American factor, did not succeed. These efforts which are supported by powerful publishing centres who control the electronic mass media, aimed either at SYRIZA's ascension, or that of LAOS, or of the "ecologists" to the political position that is maintained today by KKE.

External factors

We need to keep in mind that, as the Statement of the CC of KKE declares, "We find ourselves in a period where intra-imperialist contradictions are sharpening in the area."

The effort of Russia to promote its own plans for oil pipelines and natural gas in Europe, in conflict with similar plans of the USA, are reflected in the agreements that have been signed by the previous government, and are also reflected in the participation of Greece in some of these Russian plans (oil pipeline Burgas-Alexandroupolis, section of the natural gas pipeline "South Stream"). In parallel, the efforts of China to make inroads in European markets have led it to (through the COSCO company) to acquire an important section of the basic port of the country, its base for commercial containers.

Both Russia and China aim at the materialization of specific plans to upgrade their role in international affairs, to form alliances with sections of European Union capital, gaining shares in the European market, as well as in the wider region.

It is not by chance that the American President, Barack Obama, rushed first of all of the foreign leaders, before the electoral results had even been announced, to hail the victory of PASOK and George Papandreou. This was not by pure chance as prior to the elections G. Papandreou made various skeptical comments against the construction of the Burgas-Alexandroupolis pipeline, while the situation with the other Russian plan for the “South Stream” pipeline remains unclear.

During the entire pre-election period this specific issue became a point of reference and exploitation and clearly demonstrates that the intra-imperialist rivalries play a role in the internal political conflict between bourgeois political forces in the country. Except for this, prior to the elections, PASOK left open a possible revision of the agreement with the Chinese COSCO. A section of the bourgeois Press directly “nailed” G. Papandreou stating that if he were to be elected he would faithfully serve American plans, while related innuendos were also made toward the former ND Minister of the Exterior, Dora Bakogianni, who is now laying claim to the leadership of the ND party.

“Wherever there is smoke, there is fire”. It is a fact that various monopoly circles, both national and foreign, and the great powers are interested in having the support of the varied political forces for their plans. The most characteristic example is provided by Mr. Alex Rondos, whom we should keep in mind went from being a G. Papandreou advisor (Minister of the Exterior in the former PASOK government), with a role in the overthrow of Milosevitz, in Serbia, to becoming an advisor in the services of American supporter President of Agriculture, M. Saakasvili.

The position of KKE on the issue of intra imperialist disputes

Here we would like to refer to KKE’s position on the two aforementioned examples:

KKE emphasizes that the construction of oil pipelines and natural gas pipelines or not and the transformation of Greece into an “energy center” or not does not mean at all that the access of Greek working people to energy resources will become cheaper. It will mean the **enriching of the profits of**

those private associations who will benefit from the specific projects. The benefit is just as direct (from the exploitation of the pipeline), as it is indirect (with the alliances that will be created with sections of capital from other countries, e.g that of Russia, of Italy, of Germany, etc.)

The construction of energy pipelines, just like every project for the energy infrastructure, would be useful for the working class only within the framework of a Peoples' Economy, which would insure the utilization of transport pipes and domestic energy resources, based on peoples' needs and not capitalist profit. Such an achievement of course, demands something radically different, popular-workers' power, that is socialism.

At the same time, the Communist Party of Greece denounced the privatisation of the ports and the signing of the Cosco agreement. KKE demanded both before and after the Parliamentary elections that there should be "no review, no renegotiation, but complete annulment of the agreement with Cosco as well as of all the laws that the governments of PASOK and ND have voted through concerning the privatisation of the ports". The communists supported the Piraeus dockworkers' continuous strike against the privatisation of the port.

In general, KKE calls upon the workers not to comply with any imperialist power, as some suggest arguing that it is for the sake of "national interests". Behind the latter lie the often colliding industrialists', ship-owners' and bankers' interests and certainly not those of the working class and the other popular strata.

What does the electoral result of the Communist Party of Greece express?

The rivals of KKE, capitalists, and their system mechanism attempt to dictate their criteria regarding the evaluation of the electoral results. They conduct biased analyses to undermine the impact that the theses of our party have on people.

Reality demonstrates the upward course of KKE in recent years. Its influence has grown both in the workers' - popular movement and in the elections, by rallying significant parts of the working class, of the popular strata and of the youth to struggle against big capital, its political and trade union representatives and anti-popular policies in general.

Reality shows that the Communist Party of Greece is a revolutionary party that concentrates and educates forces in the struggle for socialism. It does

not have parliamentary illusions. It does not believe in the progressive rise of its electoral performance from one electoral battle to another that supposedly may eventually lead to the formation of a “socialist government” through elections. KKE has rejected as dangerous and inadmissible the idea of participation and support of “centre-left” or “left” governments that will manage the capitalist system. The policy of alliances of the Communist Party of Greece projects the need to build the anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly, democratic front, where the social and political forces that are willing to fight against monopolies and imperialism will converge and put forward a framework of struggle for popular power and a popular economy.

The Communist Party of Greece is well aware that the ideological and political consciousness of the workers’ masses requires a process of successive confrontations with capitalists, with the ideology and political power of the capital, with its institutions that include its political parties and its “varied” supporters.

The electoral abandonment of the bourgeois parties and the electoral support of the Communist Party of Greece is an act of confrontation with the establishment of exploitation, an act of emancipation.

The electoral percentage of KKE has no relation to the electoral percentage of the “mutated” forces

That is why the electoral percentage of KKE cannot be compared with the results of the so called “left” parties that serve to manage the capitalist system (PASOK and SYRIZA) or with the results of parties or coalition-parties of our country or other countries that have “mutated communist forces” as their core (for example SYRIZA in Greece, Die Linke in Germany and “Left Bloc” in Portugal). Despite their declarations those forces fit into the system. They are forces of capitalism’s management. They support the imperialist centre of the EU spreading illusions that it can be “humanised”. They cannot be models of revolutionary parties’ development because *they have resigned from the revolutionary world view of Marxism-Leninism and the traditions of the communist movement*. Often, these particular forces are protagonists in the anticommunist propaganda reproducing the bourgeoisie’s charges against the socialism that was built in the USSR and in the Eastern European countries in the 20th century. In fact, these parties try to disorientate or relieve popular radicalisation. Their coincidental growth in percentage has to do with the difficulties that the classical social-democratic parties face in many EU-countries in this period. For instance, the rise of SYRIZA according to Gallup Polls 1.5 years ago was a result of the corresponding deep collapse of the main so-

cial-democratic party of Greece, PASOK. When PASOK got over its internal problems and the bourgeoisie decided to trust it with governmental power, supporting this choice by all means, PASOK easily managed to regain its “lost ground” from SYRIZA.

KKE stresses that the need for change in the correlation of forces and therefore for rallying around the Communist Party requires realisation of the need for confrontation with capitalist exploitation, not only for the prospect of its abolition but also for the satisfaction of immediate demands, such as the improvement of working conditions (wages, workday, pension, insurance), the survival of poor farmers or small-shop owners and manufacturers, the guaranteeing of public and free Education, Healthcare and Welfare for the people.

Class struggles, party and trade union building

KKE works in this direction aiming to build more and more Party Base Organizations (PBO) mainly focusing on production and other workplaces. Communists are in the forefront of all struggles, small or big ones that PAME (All Workers' Militant Front) organises. PAME is a front of class-oriented organizations. Large industrial confederations, district trade union organisations (Labour Centres) and a large number of trade unions participate in PAME and organize the struggle of the working class in our country against the employers, the anti-popular governments, the compromised General Confederation of Greek Workers (GSEE) and the Confederation of Civil Servants Unions (ADEDY).

Thus, during the summer for example, the class-oriented Federation of Workers in the Food and Beverage Industry which participates in PAME, organised a huge strike that brought production to a standstill in many large factories. As a result, the workers won several new gains. Similar struggles have been fought in many sectors and workplaces. Definitely in workplaces where such struggles took place, the workers appreciated the struggle of the communists even more. This has been repeatedly substantiated; during the very short pre-election period, communists managed to get into thousands of factories, construction sites and other workplaces, where they discussed the political positions of KKE, during worker's breaks and at workers meetings.

The Regroupment of the labour and trade-union movement – a basic element of the struggle

The liberation and emancipation from bourgeois dilemmas that trap people into bourgeois power is an important subject for class struggle.

The electoral bourgeois institutions do not determine whether KKE will be a party that rallies the majority of the working people, a party recognised by other popular forces as vanguard. On the contrary, this is the process that determines the fate of those institutions, their destabilization and the need for their overthrow.

Thus, the problem of the labour movement is not primarily its political deception in the national, the EP elections or even in the local elections. The primary task is for the labour movement to deal with this deception within the labour movement itself. Therefore, the main issue becomes the regrouping of the movement.

Regrouping of the labour movement means that the majority of the workers are organized in their trade unions; that it organizes struggles for all the employees in an enterprise, in a sector or in all sectors, no matter if a segment of the employees works under a better labour or pension agreement; it means that the labour movement is organized and organizes struggles not only against a specific capitalist but against the government of capitalists; not only against the governing bourgeois party but against all bourgeois parties that as “opposition” parties use the labour and trade union movement to achieve their rise to bourgeois government management, only to serve the interests of the monopolies.

In other words, the regrouping of the labour movement necessitates a militant workers’ majority that is organised in the trade unions, struggles for its rights and is capable of isolating the influence exerted by PASOK, ND, Labour Centres and Confederations, so that GSEE becomes exposed and in continuation this will expose the hollow “leftist” rhetoric of Synaspismos/SYRIZA. PAME must become the leading force of the trade union movement that mobilises hundreds of thousands of employees in all urban centres.

The shortcomings of party forces must be overcome

The subjective and objective difficulties that KKE faces can be overcome with a stronger impetus, above all with stronger ideological power. Our ide-

ological persuasion concerns primarily the strengthening of our ideological front, the elaboration of our positions in each sector or in districts, the study of the history of our party and the international communist movement, the quality of our publications and our media, the party schools for Marxist education etc. Furthermore, it also concerns our ability to work so that all these aspects become a fundamental element of the internal functioning of the PBO, of the communist groups in schools, hospitals, factories, shopping centres, trade union boards, mass organisations etc. It has to do with our ability to make each group of communists, no matter if they are members of the Party or not, each group of KNE members more capable of agitating and spreading our ideology and organising the masses. The communist trade unionists must play the leading role in this action.

Our organisational power must also grow stronger. We have to think more creatively, to take multifaceted and bold steps for the acquisition of the necessary knowledge and competence. This refers to the function, the content and the action of the PBO. This process will bring substantial, qualitative changes in the functioning, the content and the activity of trade unions, mass organisations, youth and women associations. Furthermore, the forms of organization and rallying of forces as regards the trade union struggle, but also the struggle for cultural, educational entertainment must become more attractive. However, they should neither lose their class political character nor substitute the struggle for the satisfaction of these needs with the responsibility of the state.

KKE assumes its responsibilities. It has experience and finds itself in a state of readiness and better ideological-political unity and maturity compared to that of the parliamentary elections in 2007, regardless of its electoral percentage. It will utilize all its capacities for organizing the people's counterattack against the plans of monopolies, the new government, the EU and international imperialism. This process will bring about ideological and political maturity for new segments of employees; it will forge the class struggle and produce significant changes in the balance of forces.

22/10/09

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