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We are going through a historical period where the realism of the practicing policy is centered on the fact that "revolutionary politics do not work, and they have a marginal appeal".

We live in a period where a revolutionary policy with a look towards tomorrow is constantly postponed, and revolutionary voluntarism has been banished from thinking and practice.

It is a phase of the movement where "left pessimism", with eyes fixed on parliamentary percentages, brings disappointment.

It is a time when the workers' communist strategy, as a living policy in the battles of today, is sought, and must be rebuilt. For now it is ideologically "underground", treated as "sectarianism" or "leftism" ...

In this endeavor to restore the revolutionary view to the present, we want to contribute with this event, but mainly with our political intervention, since this will give us again the food for the theory of the new period of the Communist movement that we are already walking on.

Comrades

The October revolution did not come from nowhere. It is the result of the continuous class struggle described by Marx, and whose evolution has proved to be no stopping throughout its duration.

I want to stand on my part in the aspects of this transitional process that we tend to call the period of socialism building, by emphasizing at the restoration of capitalism, a concept we use to mark the completion of this cycle of proletarian revolutions. And I will focus mainly on some of the ideological-political issues that have emerged. These are the most important points that the modern communist movement must be occupied with.

The bourgeoisie needed more than 3 centuries of ideological preparation, from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment, in order to claim its role according to the level of development of the productive forces.

The ideological preparation of the proletariat did not have such a time allowance precisely because the conditions of the class struggle and the completely different basis of its intended social challenge (the abolition of any exploitative relationship rather than its replacement) did not allow it.

Leninism confirmed Marxism as a philosophy by registering it as the theory of practice.

October did not only translate the idea into "object" but also the "object" into an idea. From an abstract idea to a social reality.

It escaped the "iron economic rules" and the "laws of maturing and increasing the productive forces" of the Second International Marxism, and turned to the priority of political action (the positive contribution of "What Is To Be Done? ") and to conscious human activity.

It did not arise from accidental events but from the ideological, political organizational preparation of the Bolsheviks as the forefront of the working class and from their direct involvement and the guidance of class action. It responded to the Commune's inability to express the whole class, leaving thus the domination to the petty bourgeois elements, something that corresponded to the level of maturity of the proletariat at that time.

The concept of the party as a pioneer of the class, as a mediator of the exercise of its political power in co-operation with the Soviets in the early years, was a response to the advanced maturity of the proletariat. The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR) has advanced this response further without, however, negating the objective and subjective conditions of the party's existence. This finding is – especially nowadays, with myths about the absolute spontaneity of the masses - the focal point of ideological and political orientation. The point is, as was shown by the comrade's previous discourse, about the character of the party's intervention, the party-class-state relationship, and its constant ability to redefine the proletarian line in the process of building socialism.

The Restoration of Capitalism was never considered by us as a result of an external imperialist intervention, or even an internal rebellion (party, social or military). The answers we are looking for are in the field of class struggle and what it has produced in the years of building socialism. We believe that the necessity to investigate how we have come to the defeat of the communist movement even after the capitalist restoration in China is the primary task of the forces that want to contribute to building a revolutionary party. And not to further strengthen the "academicization" of Marxism, as we can see from the modern trends of the "new left" and aspiring theoreticians of Marxism who like to seek out and respond outside of the action of the masses. All of them, having rejected the Leninist view of the revolution, they either adulate the October Revolution as a model that matched the then Tsarist conditions rather than a developed Capitalism, or, having abandoned completely the concept of overthrowing the bourgeois state, speak of a "fairer distribution of wealth". However, the issue of the Marxist view of class struggle was not just a fair distribution of wealth but the overthrow of the exploitation through the appropriation of the means of production. That is, the crush of the old state and authority and the adoption of production and distribution by the broad base of the social pyramid, the proletariat and the working people.

But here there is the convenience of ostracism in the quests that each makes according to his ideological origins or endpoints that he has prescribed. Thus, the restoration may be considered by some as inevitable because of Russia's backwardness. Charles Bettelheim, for example, in his work "Class Struggles in the USSR 1930-1941" underestimating the role of the productive forces, and by overemphasizing, with an anti-dialectical approach, the superstructure, characterizes October as a "capitalist revolution" and the Bolsheviks as being from the start a "substitute state-capitalist class" in place for an inept Russian classic bourgeoisie. Others attribute it to the fact that the bureaucracy prevailed through the Stalinist insistence of strengthening the state and neutralizing any voice that resisted this line.

I would dare to say that for some of the Bolshevik leadership it was the concept of capitalist restoration and not fear - which would be something normal – that followed them along the merciless question that had been put forward at various stages of the revolutionary process (revolution in one country, War Communism, New Economic Policy, collectivization, industrial development), "how we proceed".

But one thing was the political point of view that some Bolshevik leaders might have had - something that they had already expressed from the beginning - and something different the class expression in the Russian society of those forces who wanted to return to the capitalist embrace. This required time and conditions to take shape. Let's see them.

At societal level, especially after the '40s-50s we see the formation of a stratum of specialists/experts - in the party, mechanisms, state, production, kolkhoz, trade unions, culture. As early as the '30s, Soviet authorities have been trying to create the so-called Red specialists/experts in order to replace the old intelligentsia. This layer came to claim a special role in Soviet society and economy as a result of the successful rebuilding of the Soviet economy, not only after the war but before, too. Particularly the leap of the special weight of the USSR after 45-47 "intoxicated" those layers that exhibited an even greater elitism. On this background, and in co-operation with the remnants of the people of NEP, mainly in trade and the rural economy, the new bourgeoisie is built mainly in the period of Brezhnev.

At the party level, the conditions for the Capitalist Restoration are shaped by the disorder of the relationship between the proletariat and the people-party-leadership-state-intelligentsia. The party being the only political field for all the views that were being developed in Soviet society, and whilst the differences were considered as different views or a political line but without social-class expression, the Bolshevik leadership and Stalin could control them by confronting them. This was the real political expression of the proletariat. But while that confrontation was contained in the highest guiding levels, the base and the working masses were left out, favoring unity in the face of the dangers that were coming. At that point the issues began to manifest into another dimension. From the period when (intentionally or unintentionally) the different political lines came to express opposing class interests, the underestimation of class struggle by the working class party formed new facts. The references to the "end of the class struggle" or that "the danger of capitalist restoration has disappeared," or that "exploitative classes have been eliminated" determined to a significant extent the course of the revolution. At the same time, the fusion of state and party that is developing, irrespective of the necessities that imposed it (the need for economic development and the coming war) created perceptions on a social stratum which saw itself as important to serve the so-called whole state interest, not only the working class. Moreover, the removal of responsibilities from the party and the working class and the corresponding strengthening of the role of the mechanisms (at first complementary to collectivization, later decisively in the period of the trials) created an even greater marginalization of those responsible to defend their interests.

In the field of the economy, we also have significant changes. The basic socialist transformation of private property took place in the early 1930s. In the '50s we have private ownership limited mainly to commerce (12%) and agricultural production (cultivated land by private individuals 6.4%) while the rural economy remained largely cooperative. (Statistical Yearbook of the Soviet National Economy, 1954).

For a long time the three exchange areas coexist : state trading, cooperative and collective farms. Central planning played a decisive role, but as a consequence of the price law, the profit gained by collective farms varied on the basis of production and market conditions, creating inequalities and deviations from design. This means that bourgeois right remained at various levels in the various productive relations. Commodity production involves the contradiction between use value and exchange value. But here is the basis of Stalin's reflection on "The economic problems of socialism in the USSR" 1952. In socialism, the enterprise requires the satisfaction of the needs of the whole society with products of abundance and good quality. In contrast to the commodity economy,

prices play a key role, calculated on the basis of capital spending and profit. So there is the risk of a contradiction between the central goals of socialist production and the capitalist profit-seeking tendencies, with negative consequences on the design and supply of the market. Stalin's solution is a process of direct exchange of non-commercial agricultural and industrial products. Thus, the law of value is subordinated to the basic economic law of socialism in order to satisfy the ever-increasing needs of workers, limiting the action of exchange value to the value of use. Irrespective of whether Stalin's thoughts expressed at the 19th Congress and Malenkov's contribution could fully answer the question if they were to be put into practice, the attempt to understand and address the issue of productive relations with the strengthening of the proletarian direction is demonstrated. The implementation of the proposed measures required an enormous ideological-political campaign with an intensive class struggle in the party, the state, and the economy. Therefore, upgrading the party's role with the masses.

It is indicative how these evolved after Stalin's death. The adjustment of economy on a mixed system is imposed. There is State planning and market. Indicatively, we mention: "The regulation of state socialist businesses stipulates: the rights of the production management shall be exercised by the director or the financial director or the personnel officer and other managers of the business, according to the allocation of the responsibilities". The director-general has the right to sell, grant or lease the means of production of the business, define the number of personnel, hire or fire personnel and also choose the utilization of several "financial incentive funds", which have been in his disposal by the state. The new politics was developed by Lieberman - a symbol of Khrushchev and Brezhnev - in his book "Planning, profits and premium". In Khrushchev's time, on the pretext that the kolkhoz chairmen had a lower educative level and weren't professionals, they got replaced by "specialist agronomists" and "experienced operators of higher level". The technocrats dominate in all fields.

In the political field, little time before the war, but especially after it, with the definitive intervention of the USSR and Stalin in the crush of fascism, a wider field of revolutionary overthrows appears, where the "win in one country" results on a prevalence of revolutionary regimes in a number of European countries and, at the same time, on an empowerment of revolutionary, national-liberal movements in the whole planet. That shocking overthrow "allows" the formation of nationalist elements, or even imperial perceptions. The excessive emphasis on patriotism - result of the need for all the soviet people to rally against Nazism - gave advantage to groups that found opportunities in revansism (Japan), or even compromise in the postwar sharing with the USA.

If all these deal with a part of the issues that compose the search for our answer regarding the reasons why the Russian revolution, or the Chinese some decades later, failed, we - as dialectical thinkers - have to search for the ideological mistakes or weaknesses that contributed in this restoration. Because, dialectics follows its own principle "action, theory and then action" and because today the reconstruction of the revolutionary subject requires the redefinition of the perspective, grounded through the conclusion, which, until now, we can extract from action. Namely, the class struggle.

Regarding this, as everything shows – considering the worries that have been expressed by the leaders of these revolutions - we drive ourselves in the investigation of the contrasts, based on which - according to the dialectical materialism - everything moves. There is no doubt that classes and class struggle exist in all the transitional period, which we define as socialism, even after the nationalization of the means of production has been completed. This is the consequence of the

contradictions which are constantly developed and in their unity. According to Mao, "in philosophy, materialism and idealism form a unity of opposites and fight between them". That also happens in dialectics and metaphysics. Furthermore, in every process, there is a main and a secondary contradiction, but even in every contradiction there is a main and a secondary side, which may change position and thus the whole process, under certain conditions. Thus restoration confirmed the existence not simply of contradictions during the socialist construction, but also that these may become contradictory. Also, that in the pairs of contradictions "economic base-structure", "productive forces-productive relations", and "theory-action" it may happen an alteration changing the main and the secondary to each other. And no matter how... philosophical all these sound, we would observe through Lenin's and Stalin's writings - not mentioning Mao - that they followed these contradictions, trying to answer the unprecedented issues, which were produced in their journey in uncharted waters.

The theory of the productive forces was examined by all the pioneer revolutionists. Maybe a little less on a pre-revolutionary level, than during the construction of socialism which keeps concerning today each one, who is related to the class struggle, on the side of the worker's and people's interests.

On that base, there was a criticism on Lenin for violating history, because there weren't the proper material terms in Russia.

Writings, such as those of Trotsky ("Terrorism and Communism - an answer to Carl Kautsky", 1918) or later, writings of Preobrazhensky about the "new economy" and the "socialist primary accumulation" in 1923, were negatively disposed towards the collective management of the factories and were clearly for the single management by directors - bourgeois specialists, or directors appointed by the party. These are writings, which express an unlimited admiration of the American Taylorism, as capitalist achievement. They glorify the German "state capitalism" (German military economy) of 1916-1917 and extol the strong discipline in the factory and the total concentration of industrial production, under the orders of a very few specialists. It is Stalin himself that criticizes Jarosenko for his distorted dealing with the contradictions, in his writing named "The mistakes of comrade Jarosenko": "Jarosenko's main mistake is that he departs from Marxism, regarding the role of the productive forces and productive relations in the development of a society. He exaggerates the role of the productive relations, to end up declaring that, in socialism, the productive relations are a part of the productive forces." He later states: "However, our productive relations nowadays totally correspond to the development of the productive forces and they make them progress significantly. But it would be a mistake staying on that and thinking that there isn't any contradiction between the productive forces and the productive relations. Contradictions do exist and will definitely exist, since the development of the productive relations is delayed and will be delayed compared to the development of the productive forces. If the leading organs make a correct choice, these contradictions cannot be degenerated in antagonism and won't result in a conflict between them. It will be different, if we follow a wrong politics, like the one suggested by Jarosenko. Then, conflict will be unavoidable and our productive relations may turn into a serious obstacle in the development of the productive forces."

It is the same theory adopted by Deng in China, with his famous saying: "It doesn't matter if the cat is black or white, as long as it catches mice", thus abolishing class struggle and introducing capitalism in the economy.

Today, we may find it almost in all the political groups of “our” Left, from ORCPG (Organization for the Reconstruction of the Communist Party of Greece) and its opposition on strikes, to the CPG’s (Communist Party of Greece) productive suggestions, to the transitional platforms of the Out-parliament Left (Generally organizations of the left with no parliament representation) that bows towards the Scientific-Technological Revolution and to the miracles of automated production, putting knowledge, science and the productive process itself outside class conflict.

Stalin’s approach towards the delay of socialist construction was to go through 100 years of delay in just 10 years, which required an industrial explosion and capital accumulation by a widespread collectivization. The development of the productive forces in the USSR opened the road for the improvement of the standard of living of millions of people, to the preparation for the coming war, but also for the conquest in the postwar USSR of a higher level of development and progress second to the USA. However, as every political choice is a risk in itself, it put in danger the alliance between workers and farmers, it allowed kulaks to resist and opened the road for the red specialists, which at first constituted a way out and an unblocking for the socialist construction against the use of the specials of the tsarist period.

As we saw, Stalin is aware, that the wrong handling of these contradictions may evolve to antagonism. Mao, taking this into account and based on the experience of the Russian Revolution, mentions that the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is continuous, even during the socialist construction. We, therefore, see that those issues, with which the leaders of the revolutions dealt with were definitely not simply... philosophical and definitely not... planned in advance.

Dear comrades

Let me, quickly, mention two other sides, which are correlated. The first one, actually, concerns the modern version of Kautsky’s belief about the reformation of the state. This is how the new-left groups of our time discovered the demand for a stage of dual power, referring, actually, to the situation described by Lenin on February of 1917. Where is the relevance? Of course, in Khrushchev’s restoration and the 20th Congress, no dual power existed, though there was an acceptance of class coexistence, something that became more obvious in Brezhnev’s period, and even during the GPCR. That’s why this bastard policy that could tolerate - under the socialist dressing, which was indeed very hard to be abolished - the existence of capitalistic forms of construction and productive relations, was also expressed in the external policy of USSR, through the “peaceful coexistence” and the “non- capitalistic road”, while respectively in China, the supporters of the introduction of capitalist means in the production, introduced the “theory of the 3 worlds”.

All those, that in their programs adopt Dual Power as an aim of struggle, on the one hand proclaim the end of single-act revolutions, and at the same time promote transitional programs and unstable governments. Except that they deliberately confuse a crucial separation mark between Lenin's Dual Power and their programming stage. It's one thing if Dual Power emerges, as it happened in Russia along the way to an overthrow, and another to pursue it yourself. Besides, as history has shown, such situations have arisen elsewhere (e.g. Greece in December 1944, Nepal recently), when the revolutionary forces were unable to solve the duality from their side. And as Lenin was concerned - if you don't provide a solution, then the bourgeoisie does. And that is exactly because class coexistence cannot exist for long. This is different from preparing your members and the movement to seek this stage, obviously unfolding the fan of reforms and

demanding "unstable" governments. They are constructing a mentality of coexistence, in which their program will convince with its effectiveness, instead of preparing the revolutionary subject for the conflict and the certain fierce reaction of the bourgeoisie and imperialism. In reality they are unable to learn from the October Revolution, in which, despite the fact that the roles were reversed (there was workers' power), the reluctance to provide answers to the class struggle on the premises of conflict with the rising new-bourgeoisie elements has led to the defeat of the revolution, let alone in a dual period, in which the bourgeoisie is predominant.

The second point, which is connected to the previous one, is that of the Intelligentsia, the red specialists. I believe that it is a problem that every revolutionary process will encounter. Except that the answers given by "our" left are once again removed from the October experience. All those enthusiasts of the Scientific-Technological Revolution (STR) and of the dual power (for these views coexist) believe that the revolutionary subject is not anymore the manual worker or the mass worker, but the so called collective worker and every salaried scientist, technician, employee, to say nothing of every other exploited (precariat). Thus the red specialists exist into the body of the working class already since capitalism acquiring a left orientation from the universities. This provides us with an answer to the matter of the red specialists. For them a program for the restructure of production, the nationalization of banks and basic industrial plants is sufficient so that through a demand-stage of Dual Power we would be ready to construct another economy. We will certainly not dispute that the educational and technical level of the working class is not the same as it was in the pre-war period. But the point that they are making is the differentiation of the revolutionary subject in a way that it incorporates the working class and the industrial intelligentsia, bypassing a fundamental issue exactly because it doesn't interest them. Namely that even if these social strata maintain today a stance at the side of the working class due to the exploitation that they are enduring, tomorrow this stance will have to be altered, because it will have to be set under the proletarian line and serve it. And the October Revolution has demonstrated that such social turnovers are not serenely achieved.

Summing up I would like to point out that in spite of the completion of a circle of the workers' revolutions of the previous century with the restoration, which has replaced them, and the defeat of the communist movement, the class confrontation, that is being constantly reproduced by the capital-labor contradiction, continues to be the nutrient medium for the shaking off of every exploitative society. It continues to generate revolutionary conditions.

In its long course the Marxist current of socialism had many victories as well as serious defeats (the Commune, 1905, the German Revolution, October, China). Notwithstanding, through its tortuous path it has managed to closely examine and overcome its mistakes. The difference today is that we have a complete de-constitution of the working class as a "class-for-itself" and a crashing of a dream, the attainment of which brightened the hearts of the oppressed. This current has always been guided by its trust in the power of the masses, by its reliance on dialectics. We are convinced that the worldviews that consider the theoretical approaches and political practices that Marxism-Leninism has built in the past two centuries are adequate in order to re-constitute the communist revolutionary movement, cannot deal with the realities of today. The reevaluation of basic notions (such as trade union, party, reform, mass relations, parliamentarism) is in immediate demand by the class struggle itself, for this is dialectics.

In order to make it more comprehensible let me briefly mention the concerns about parliamentarism. Immediately after the overthrow of Kerensky, the Assembly of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets convened in the Smolny Institute. The Bolsheviks and the so-called "left SRs"

are the majority. The Bolsheviks unanimously agree with the suggestion of the "left SRs" that the government which is to be formed should represent all the democratic (non-tsarist) parties. The Congress, after approving unanimously and with a single vote against the according Decrees on peace with Germany and on the redistribution of land, unanimously elects the Bolsheviks to the Council of People's Commissars. The Bolsheviks in turn offer to the left SRs positions in the Council, who initially refuse, and afterwards accept the proposal. Lenin offers the Council President's seat to Trotsky, who rejects it, and so Lenin becomes the leader of the new, transitional government. The announced composition of the new Soviet Central Executive Committee includes the de facto majority of the Bolsheviks, but also positions for the representatives of other parties, including the right SRs and the Mensheviks, that had withdrawn from the Assembly of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets. The intention is obviously the multiparty composition of the key institutions and bodies of the new society. The "dictatorship of the proletariat", though an essential theoretical and strategic part of Marx' and Engels' outlook, as well as Lenin's, of course, has not yet become applied policy - besides, naturally, the armed overthrow of Kerensky and the establishment of Cheka (December 20, 1917) aimed at preventing terrorist acts against the new regime. On November 25, 1917 elections take place for the composition of the [Russian Constituent Assembly](#). The Bolsheviks are unprepared, although they possess the majority of votes in such cities as Moscow, Minsk and Petrograd, although they easily have the majority of the workers' votes (86.5%), the SRs get 40.4% of the total votes (less than half of the registered on electoral rolls have voted), and the Bolsheviks come second at 24%. The left SRs that had supported the Bolsheviks and have in the meantime withdrawn from the SR party, got only 1 % of the votes. The Constituent Assembly which consists of the representatives that were elected in November 1917, convenes on January 18, 1918 and rejects Lenin's proposal to form the Soviet Republic; the October Revolution is essentially nullified by parliamentary means, as the SR majority and its political will constitutes a reinstatement of the Kerensky political regime. Lenin persuades the Bolsheviks to withdraw from the Assembly and composes, as the temporary leader of the government, the Decree on the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, which is the first legal act of the "dictatorship of the proletariat". The Constituent Assembly, which was elected based on electoral lists composed before the October Revolution, manifests the previous political power balance, that existed when the power was at the hands of the compromisers and the Kadets. Hence, the Constituent Assembly dedicated to be the pinnacle of the bourgeois parliamentary power, could not but become an obstacle on the way of the October Revolution and the Soviet Power.

By handing over the power to the Soviets, and through the Soviets to the working and exploited classes, the October Revolution has fully recorded itself as the beginning of the socialist revolution. The working classes have learned through experience that the old bourgeois parliamentary system had worn out its purpose and was utterly incompatible with the goal of achieving socialism, and that not national but only class institutions (like the Soviets) were able to overcome the resistance of the owner classes and to establish the foundation of a socialist society. To abdicate the sovereign power of the Soviet, to renounce the conquered by the people Soviet Republic for the sake of the bourgeois parliamentary system and the Constituent Assembly would now be a step backwards and would induce the collapse of the October Revolution of workers and peasants. It was inevitable that the Bolshevik group and the left SRs, who clearly compose the vast majority of Soviets and command the confidence of the workers and of the majority of peasants, would have to withdraw from such a Constituent Assembly.

The acceptance of parliamentarism by the masses today is undoubtedly a long way from the tsarist period. Let's contemplate on the tactics followed by Lenin to overcome the Assembly, and for which he was fiercely confronted by Rosa Luxemburg (for abandoning a pre-revolutionary



demand for an constituent assembly), today, when parliamentarism has obtained in the people's eyes (but mostly in the tactics and the programs of the left parties) the status of a touchstone with regard to the expression of the people's will, how difficult it will be to overcome it, and the need of the redefinition by the revolutionary communist movement of the tactics regarding the political institutions.

It is true that many trends have tried in the past decades to express the objection of the popular masses to exploitation. From Blanquists, the Bakunin anarchism, Trotskyism to the new left of the May of '68 in France and Italy, many trends that considered themselves as subversive, have tried to prove their veracity. Besides the positive and negative criticisms that have been and will be received by the Marxism-Leninism current, it was the only one that has made possible to blaze visible, feasible, and vanguard trails of emancipation for the damned not only of their own countries but of the whole planet. They have made the declaration of the Communards: our victory is your hope, come true.

In retrospect the experience has shown that all the Marxist-Leninist revolutionaries that didn't follow the guidance of the Bolshevik Party and of the Third International in the West or elsewhere in the world, have soon failed and evolved into sects, which couldn't play any essential role in the political class struggle of their countries.

That which was indeed proved wrong by the legacy of the October Revolution is the political fantasy that some "exceptional organizers" of (labor) politics - next to the "exceptional technicians of the (capitalist) production" can make "revolution from top-down" and succeed, ignoring the real people. That has never happened and never will. The socialist revolution is based on the longterm and complete constitution of the consciousness of the class as a whole and not solely of its vanguard or some of its "enlightened" sections. It is based on the longterm conscious activity of the class as a whole and is an essential stepping stone in its class identification.