

# Some Particularities of Contemporary Pro-Soviet Revisionism

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The growing decay of bourgeois society and the restoration of capitalism in a series of socialist countries, among them the USSR, have led to a series of new features in contemporary revisionism. These changes do not alter the essence of revisionism i.e., "bourgeois castration of Marxist truths," as Lenin defined it, aimed at defending the system of exploitation. The essential role of the revisionists as servants of bourgeois rule continues in full force, for their principal task continues to be that of preventing revolution and preserving the bourgeois state. Moreover, the present features of revisionism make it a political and ideological movement even more openly reactionary and dangerous than in the past.

However, with the rise of the struggles of the proletariat in the epoch of moribund capitalism; the advances of the liberation movements against imperialist oppression; the ever-deepening and sustained crises of the capitalist system; as well as control of state power by revisionists in a series of previously socialist countries, among them the USSR; revisionism in the capitalist world has ceased to limit itself to the crumbs offered by the ruling sectors. Today, the revisionist chieftains in each capitalist country seek to control state power, and to this end they promote as a model an exploitative society which they try to pass off as socialism. This model is none other than the type of exploitative society which countries such as the USSR and the countries of Eastern Europe dependent on it have become, due to the degeneration of socialism. That is, state capitalism based on the dictatorship of a bureaucratic bourgeoisie, whose base of economic support is state control of the principal means of production. This state, for its part, rather than being a tool of the dictatorship of the proletariat, is a tool of that bureaucratic bourgeoisie.

During the period analysed by Lenin and the Third (Communist) International, there were no countries in which the revisionists had usurped state power, and the decay of the capitalist world was not as acute as it is now. At that time, the only source giving rise to revisionism was the corruption which the bourgeoisie, which was raking in tremendous profits from colonial exploitation, promoted among certain sections of the labor aristocracy and petty bourgeoisie infiltrating the workers' parties. These revisionist forces, open or concealed agents of the bourgeoisie utilising the means the bourgeoisie provided to them, deceived relatively broad sections of the proletariat and the people by spreading reformism, chauvinism, economism, parliamentarism, and other opportunist distortions. Essentially, their role consisted of promoting mere reforms, holding back the class struggle in order to keep it on an acceptable and controllable level for the bourgeoisie, thus preventing the proletariat, at the head of the masses, from advancing towards the destruction of the

bourgeois state and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. "Opportunism today, as represented by its principal spokesman, the ex-Marxist Karl Kautsky," wrote Lenin in 1917 in *State and Revolution*, "fits in completely with Marx's characterisation of the *bourgeois* position quoted above, for this opportunism limits recognition of the class struggle to the sphere of bourgeois relations. (Within this sphere, within its framework, not a single educated liberal will refuse to recognise the class struggle 'in principle'!) Opportunism *does not extend* recognition of the class struggle to the cardinal point, to the period of *transition* from capitalism to communism, of the *overthrow* and the complete *abolition* of the bourgeoisie."

The policy of the bourgeoisie, aimed at oppressing and exploiting the proletariat and other sections of the people, has traditionally taken two basic and interrelated forms, the carrot and the stick, that is, deceit and open repression, although at a given moment one or the other predominates. The revisionists have played (and continue to play, although with certain shades of difference) the role of agents of the bourgeoisie infiltrating the ranks of the proletariat and the masses in order to carry out these policies. In times of stability or economic boom (and consequently, political boom), the bourgeoisie prefers to use the method of deceit, and grants certain minor concessions, certain reforms, so as to facilitate the work of its revisionist agents of holding back the revolutionary momentum of the masses and diverting them from the path of destroying the bourgeois state. In these periods (increasingly less frequent due to the sharpening and deepening of the capitalist crisis), the revisionists are better able to camouflage themselves, and their deception of the masses is more effective. As Lenin said in "What Next?" in 1915, "The particularly rapid growth of this social element of late years is beyond doubt; it includes officials of the legal labour unions, parliamentarians and the other intellectuals, who have got themselves easy and comfortable posts in the legal mass movement, some sections of the better paid workers, office employees, etc., etc. The war has clearly proved that at a moment of crisis (and the imperialist era will undoubtedly be one of all kinds of crises) a sizable mass of opportunists, supported and often directly guided by the bourgeoisie (this is of particular importance!), go over to the latter's camp, betray socialism, damage the workers' cause, and attempt to ruin it. In every crisis the bourgeoisie will always aid the opportunists, will always try to suppress the revolutionary section of the proletariat, stopping short of nothing and employing the most unlawful and savage *military* measures. The opportunists are bourgeois enemies of the proletarian revolution, who in peaceful times carry on their bourgeois work in secret, concealing themselves within the workers' parties, while in times of crisis

they *immediately* prove to be open allies of the *entire* united bourgeoisie, from the conservative to the most radical and democratic part of the latter, from the free thinkers, to the religious and clerical sections."

We see, then, that according to Lenin, the revisionists' ability to serve the bourgeoisie lies in their ability to camouflage themselves and to deceive, and that this ability is limited when, due to the crisis, they are forced to expose themselves and to come out openly in defense of the bourgeoisie. Needless to say, then, as the decay and crisis of the capitalist system deepen, the revisionists must use more subtle and covert methods in playing their role. The very development of revisionism on a grand scale towards the end of the 19th century is linked to a situation in which the bourgeoisie, due to the development of the proletariat and the spread of Marxism, was no longer able to openly defend liberalism, and capitalism had to resort to the "fig leaf" of reformism in order to hide its open sores.

In his work, "Reformism in the Russian Social-Democratic Movement," written in 1911, Lenin points out, "The tremendous progress made by capitalism in recent decades and the rapid growth of the working-class movement in all the civilised countries have brought about a big change in the attitude of the bourgeoisie to the proletariat. Instead of waging an open, principled and direct struggle against all the fundamental tenets of socialism in defence of the absolute inviolability of private property and freedom of competition, the bourgeoisie of Europe and America, as represented by their ideologists and political leaders, are coming out increasingly in defence of so-called social reforms as opposed to the idea of social revolution. Not liberalism versus socialism, but reformism versus socialist revolution—is the formula of the modern, 'advanced,' educated bourgeoisie. And the higher the development of capitalism in a given country, the more unadulterated the rule of the bourgeoisie, and the greater the political liberty, the more extensive is the application of the 'most up-to-date' bourgeois slogan: reform *versus* revolution, the partial patching up of the doomed regime with the object of dividing and weakening the working class, and of maintaining the rule of the bourgeoisie, *versus* the revolutionary overthrow of that rule.

"From the viewpoint of the universal development of socialism this change must be regarded as a big step forward. At first socialism fought for its existence, and was confronted by a bourgeoisie confident of its strength and boldly and consistently defending liberalism as an integral system of economic and political views. Socialism has grown into a force and, throughout the civilised world, has already upheld its right to existence. It is now fighting *for power* and the bourgeoisie, disintegrating and realising the inevitability of its doom, is exerting every effort to defer that day and to maintain its rule under the new conditions as well, at the cost of partial and spurious concessions."

And he concludes: "The intensification of the struggle of reformism against revolutionary Social-Democracy *within* the working-class movement is an absolutely inevitable result of the changes in the entire economic and political situation throughout the civilised world."

At that time, due to the development of the working class and a genuine socialist movement inspired by Marxism-Leninism, the bourgeoisie, making use of revisionism, was forced to oppose socialism with reformism instead of with liberalism. Nevertheless, this reformism continued to be trite and lacked a long-term perspective; it continued to propose the patching up of bourgeois society, without offering a well-defined model of a society as an alternative. The revisionists, as Lenin pointed out, continued to be "the nurses of capitalism," content with promoting minor reforms. In characterising the tendency of revisionism in this period, Lenin writes in his article, "Once Again About the Duma Cabinet," "We repeat: this is the fundamental, the typical argument of all opportunists all over the world. To what conclusion does this argument inevitably lead? To the conclusion that we need no revolutionary programme, no revolutionary party, and no revolutionary tactics. What we need are *reforms*, nothing more. We

do not need a revolutionary Social-Democratic Party. What we need is a party of democratic and socialist reforms. Indeed, is it not clear that there will *always* be people who admit that the existing state of affairs is unsatisfactory? Of course, always. Is it not also clear that the *largest* number of discontented people will *always* be in favour of the *smallest* rectification of this unsatisfactory situation? Of course, always. Consequently it is our duty, the duty of advanced and 'class-conscious' people, *always* to support the *smallest* demands for the rectification of an evil. This is the surest and most practical policy to pursue; and all talk about 'fundamental' demands, and so forth, is merely the talk of 'utopians,' merely 'revolutionary phrase-mongering'. *We must choose*—and we must always choose between the existing evil and the most moderate of the schemes in vogue for its rectification." And in *State and Revolution*, Lenin points out, "Kautsky's thoughts go no further than a 'government . . . willing to meet the proletariat half-way'—a step backward to philistinism compared with 1847, when the *Communist Manifesto* proclaimed 'the organisation of the proletariat as the ruling class'."

These merely reformist type opportunist tendencies within bourgeois society, whose model didn't appear very different or coherent, were successful in the relatively "peaceful" period between 1871 and 1914. In 1914, the sharpening of the capitalist crisis led to the first inter-imperialist world war for the redivision of the world. This war, together with the development of the Marxist-Leninist movement, had the virtue of completely unmasking the role of the revisionist leaders of the Second International as servants of the bourgeoisie. In spite of the fact that at the congresses of the Second International held in Copenhagen in 1910 and in Basel in 1912 they had adopted a resolution calling for opposition in Parliament to the war credits demanded by the bourgeoisie in each imperialist country, they voted in favour of the credits in 1914 when their countries entered the war. In this way, the "reformers" of bourgeois society openly exposed themselves as lackeys of *their* bourgeoisie in each country, and the Second International collapsed, totally discredited.

Lenin took this opportunity to reassert the stand which he had always argued for regarding revisionism: it had to be combatted relentlessly and completely broken with organisationally. In 1915, in his work, "The Collapse of the Second International," he maintains, "The building of a revolutionary organisation must be begun—that is demanded by the new historical situation, by the epoch of proletarian revolutionary action—but it can be begun only *over the heads* of the old leaders, the stranglers of revolutionary energy, *over the heads* of the old party, through its *destruction*." Around that time Lenin initiated several different truly internationalist conferences and made efforts both to promote the formation of genuine communist parties and to unite them in opposition to the chauvinism and reformism of the parties of the Second International.

This formation of truly Marxist-Leninist communist parties was given a tremendous boost by the triumph of the October Revolution in Russia and the weakness of the bourgeoisie as a result of the imperialist-world war. In March 1919, various communist parties met in Moscow and formed the Third (Communist) International. The communist parties launched an assault on discredited revisionism on all fronts: ideology, politics, trade unions, parliament, etc. In opposition to dead-end reformism, the communist parties, aside from their superior ideology, were able to offer a concrete model of society, the USSR. Reformism beat a retreat on all fronts.

The bourgeoisie, facing the revolutionary assault, the sharpening of the crisis and the decay of its system, and the rise of the liberation movement in the colonies and dependent countries—a movement in which the proletariat step-by-step began to play a leading role, linking it to the struggle for socialism—intensified its demagogic offensive in some places, and in others imposed fascism, in order to stop the revolution. On the demagogic front, it even presented as "socialist" certain bourgeois governments which promoted the nationalisation of some unprofitable privately owned

businesses and brought some "socialists" into their cabinets, where, according to Lenin, "they prove to be a useless ornament or a screen for the bourgeois government, a lightning rod to deflect mass indignation, an instrument of that government to deceive the masses." At the same time it redoubled its offensive aimed at corrupting the communist parties, as well as its aggression against the USSR, the first socialist country in the world.

The fascist regimes, in addition to their viciousness against the masses, stirred up chauvinist feelings, taking advantage of the unfavourable position in which they found themselves after World War I, and World War II was unleashed. This war was accompanied by aggression against the USSR by the fascist countries headed by the most reactionary monopolist bourgeoisie, which had ambitions of dominating the world. In order to confront this brutal aggression, the USSR was forced to ally itself with certain rival imperialist powers who opposed (although for different reasons) the fascist Axis. This necessary alliance, like the formation by the International Communist Movement of a United Front in each country even with sections of the bourgeoisie, offered the bourgeoisie an excellent opportunity to successfully intensify its efforts to promote revisionist tendencies in the communist parties. To give just one example: during the war the majority of the communist parties of Latin America fell into conciliatory tendencies with regard to U.S. imperialism, following the anti-Marxist orientation of Secretary-General Browder of the Communist Party of the United States. At the same time, in many cases they allowed bourgeois forces to gain leadership in the anti-fascist United Fronts, casting aside proletarian leadership. Different opportunist tendencies which arose in this period, and not only in Latin America, lasted after the war. In the post-war period, the international bourgeoisie combined cold war repression with efforts to corrupt leaders who'd become used to cushy jobs within bourgeois democracy during the war, or at least to the hope of obtaining this democracy at any price in those countries subjected to fascism. In this way different opportunist tendencies persisted and became stronger after the end of the war.

At the same time, after World War II the international bourgeoisie continued its efforts to undermine the construction of socialism in the USSR and those countries where the proletariat had seized power after the war. Titoism played an important role as pawn of imperialism in its efforts to subvert and corrupt the socialist system from within. For various reasons, which we cannot analyse here, these tendencies developed in the majority of the socialist countries. In the USSR, after the XX Congress of the CPSU, following Stalin's death, Marxism-Leninism was openly discarded and revisionist theses were promoted as the line for the International Communist Movement. With the exception of Albania and China, which rejected this revisionist line initially formulated by Khrushchev, all the other countries, as well as almost all the communist parties of the world, took it up. The overwhelming majority of the leaders of these parties, already corrupted, adhered to the opportunist line and were able to drag the majority of their members behind them. In opposition to this corruption of the old communist parties and this revisionist counter-current, new communist parties arose, although they lacked the mass influence which revisionism retained. In the socialist countries where Khrushchev's line was enforced, and certainly in the USSR itself, a process of capitalist restoration developed.

However, the imperialist countries, which had gleefully counted their successes in corrupting the communist parties and undermining the construction of socialism from within, found themselves trapped in a serious dilemma. In the post-war period, as long as socialist construction lasted in the USSR and in the People's Democracies of Eastern Europe, the economies of these countries developed powerfully, and the USSR became one of the foremost powers in the world. In addition, the prestige won by the USSR in its struggle against fascism during the war was tremendous. Similarly, the communist parties of the world had gained a vast influence over the masses. The repression which was

launched against them in the post-war period in a series of countries could not destroy them, and the attempt to encircle the USSR and use atomic blackmail during the "cold war" failed. Very soon the USSR broke the encirclement of atomic weapons, and it became the first country to launch an artificial satellite, demonstrating its technological advances to the entire world. In this way, when the establishment of revisionism "bore fruit" in the USSR and the communist parties were also dragged towards openly opportunist positions, the USSR and the countries of Eastern Europe dominated by it constituted a formidable bloc rivaling the one under the hegemony of U.S. imperialism. Due to certain features acquired during the period of the construction of socialism, these countries not only enjoyed a pace of growth superior to that of the capitalist countries, but also social-imperialism was not yet as discredited as the U.S. They had, moreover, the support of powerful revisionist parties in a series of capitalist countries. The concessions which the bourgeoisie had to grant them, inasmuch as they acted to hold back the revolution, reinforced their influence even more. On the one hand, they fed on petty-bourgeois forces ideologically inclined towards opportunism, and on the other, they utilised the prestige won by the USSR in its first years, deceiving in this way vast sections of the people.

The strength of the revisionist movement in the post-war period, along with the hegemonic policy of social-imperialism rapidly becoming a superpower, as well as the growing crisis of the capitalist world, were some of the factors which determined certain changes in the role of the revisionists in the present period, as compared to the past. Objectively, as we have pointed out, as far as holding back the revolution and defending the bourgeois state, they continue to be in essence agents of the ruling bourgeoisie in its opposition to the proletariat and the people. However, their role as mere tools of traditional bourgeois rule, which they played in the pre-war period, has been modified considerably. At the present time, the revisionist pro-Soviet leaders don't aspire to be mere agents of the ruling bourgeoisie in exchange for a few crumbs, as they did in Lenin's time, *but rather to transform themselves into the ruling bourgeoisie*. In order to do so, they need to force out certain bourgeois sectors and seize the means of production in the key areas of the economy which are in the hands of those bourgeois sectors. In general, they set out to do so in alliance with other sectors of the bourgeoisie, within the framework of the bourgeois state. To this end, in order to deceive the masses, they present a more coherent political plan than the mere scattered reformism of the past, a model of pseudo-socialist society inspired by the state capitalism of the ex-socialist countries. Not that the revisionists had not previously formulated certain political programs in accordance with their opportunist outlook. But their close dependence on the bourgeoisie at that time, their inability to offer a concrete model of society, and the lack of support from an important centre of power (such as that provided now by social-imperialism), forced them to limit themselves, as Lenin pointed out, to promoting mere band-aids for bourgeois society, ending up at times of crises openly identifying themselves with the policy of the bourgeoisie.

In fact, we may remember that before World War II, the social basis of revisionism was limited to simply the charity bestowed on its leaders by the bourgeois sectors made wealthy by colonial domination. Lenin, in characterising this situation, pointed out the following in his 1915 report, "Conference of the RSDLP Groups Abroad," with regards to the economic base for revisionism: "The collapse of the Second International is the collapse of socialist opportunism. The latter has grown as a product of the preceding 'peaceful' period in the development of the labour movement. That period taught the working class to utilise such important means of struggle as parliamentarianism and all legal opportunities, create mass economic and political organisations, a widespread labour press, etc.; on the other hand, the period engendered a tendency to repudiate the class struggle and to preach a class truce, repudiate the socialist revolution,

repudiate the very principle of illegal organisations, recognise bourgeois patriotism, etc. Certain strata of the working class (the bureaucracy of the labour movement and the labour aristocracy, who get a fraction of the profits from the exploitation of the colonies and from the privileged position of their 'fatherlands' in the world market), as well as petty-bourgeois sympathisers within the socialist parties, have proved the social mainstay of these tendencies, and channels of bourgeois influence over the proletariat." Further, in summing up the rise of opportunism, Lenin said at the Second Congress of the Communist International, "Here we must ask: how is the persistence of such trends in Europe to be explained? Why is this opportunism stronger in Western Europe than in our country? . . . It is because the capitalists of these countries obtain a great deal more in this way than they could obtain as profits by plundering the workers in their own countries.

"Before the war, it was calculated that the three richest countries—Britain, France and Germany—got between eight and ten thousand million francs a year from the export of capital alone, apart from other sources.

"It goes without saying that, out of this tidy sum, at least five hundred millions can be spent as a sop to the labour leaders and the labour aristocracy, i.e., on all sorts of bribes. The whole thing boils down to nothing but bribery. It is done in a thousand different ways: by increasing cultural facilities in the largest centres, by creating educational institutions, and by providing co-operative, trade union and parliamentary leaders with thousands of cushy jobs. This is done wherever present-day civilised capitalist relations exist. It is these thousands of millions in super-profits that form the economic basis of opportunism in the working class movement."

Many of these gifts from the bourgeoisie continue to flow towards present-day revisionism, because in view of the bankruptcy of the previous opportunist current, the bourgeoisie cannot totally do without it. However, pro-Soviet revisionism, due to the strength it has acquired for reasons pointed out earlier and due to its ability to deceive vast sections of the masses, also develops its own resources and counts on, above all, *the many-sided support of Russian social-imperialism*, which, having become a superpower, needs these parties' aid in order to push through its plans for world domination. This last factor, especially, is a totally new one in regard to the propping-up of present-day revisionism. Social-imperialism needs governments which open the door to its domination, forcing out those sectors which the other super-power, U.S. imperialism, relies on. In this sphere, although not exclusively and not without certain contradictions, social-imperialism requires the complicity of the revisionist parties as much as these parties need its complicity to fulfill their new plans.

These new characteristics of the present situation have made the revisionist movements in the capitalist countries bolder in carrying out their plans than in the past, due to their greater force. The revisionist leading circles, especially those in the capitalist countries who aspire to seize power and the economic base from powerful traditional bourgeois sectors, while serving as an obstacle to the proletariat overthrowing the latter, represent in particular those bourgeois sectors with whom they hope to form an alliance in order to carry out their task, on the one hand, and on the other, represent their own independent interests with their hopes of becoming big capitalists through state capitalism, as well as those of the social-imperialists on whom they rely for their plans. Because of the bourgeois interests that they represent and their own bourgeois interests, they may come into conflict (as in fact they already have in certain countries) with the ruling social-imperialist bourgeoisie, on whose support, however, they depend to come to power. Further, frequently some of the contradictions between the revisionists in the capitalist countries and the rulers of the USSR and other countries of Eastern Europe dependent on them, can be explained for tactical reasons, making it difficult to determine exactly to what degree these "differences" are real or simply allowed by the Soviet leaders to

facilitate their own maneuvers. Since the brutally repressive character of the ruling circles of the USSR and pseudo-socialist countries of Europe is well-known and hated by broad sectors in the West, the revisionists (especially those in Europe where this hatred is more obvious) feel forced to condemn it demagogically. And since bourgeois propaganda points to these regimes as "socialist" and as "Marxism in practice," for these as well as other reasons they also feel ever more impelled to renounce Marxism's basic theses. Obviously, the essential reason why they renounced Marxism is rooted in the impossibility of reconciling this revolutionary theory with their reactionary plans to set up a new system of exploitation disguised as socialism. With respect to this last point, it is significant that their "condemnations" of the countries ruled by revisionists always refer to violations of bourgeois-democratic rights and never to the fierce exploitation in those countries which is the purpose of the oppression of the masses. On the other hand, the need of the revisionists in the capitalist world (especially in Europe) to win over certain bourgeois allies in order to eradicate the more powerful ones, as well as their need to adjust their tactics in accordance with their ability to challenge U.S. domination, often moves them to accept forms of imperialist domination (for example NATO and the Common Market) to a certain degree in opposition to the hegemonistic interests of social-imperialism. In other cases, however (as appears to have been the case in Chile before the coup, in Portugal after the overthrow of fascism, and possibly in France during the last presidential elections), social-imperialism itself calls for them to advance with more caution in carrying out its plans and even to retreat, in conformity with their overall world strategic plans and its ability to actually militarily and economically support the displacement of powerful local and U.S. imperialist interests. Therefore, in the evaluation of contemporary revisionism, we must guard against past errors of merely considering them agents of the local bourgeoisie, ignoring their strong ties to social-imperialism and the changes that have taken place with respect to the role they carry out in bourgeois society; as well as the simplistic absurdity of merely considering them agents or "fifth columns" of social-imperialism, since viewing them in this way actually makes it impossible to expose the interests and plans they embody in each country so as to be able to confront them.

The new features of contemporary revisionism (which we call pro-Soviet so as to differentiate it from the ruling revisionism in China, which as we will see has its own particular features)—that it is at the same time a servant of the bourgeoisie and aspires to replace it as the ruling and exploiting class—have determined that today its contradictions with the bourgeois sectors whom it hopes to replace in power and in the control of the key means of production are much more acute than in the past. Earlier, it was simply a matter of struggle for certain reforms (a struggle which was often more fictitious than real), reforms frequently conceded to a considerable degree by the bourgeoisie to facilitate revisionism's role as "castrators of revolutionary energy." However, the revisionists today, making use of their renewed ability to deceive the masses (for the reasons already pointed out) and acting in accord with the hegemonistic appetites of the social-imperialists, push hard to politically and economically replace powerful sectors of the bourgeoisie, as well as the monopolies of the USSR's superpower rival, in the Western countries of the capitalist world. Where the interests of the ruling bourgeoisie and the penetration of U.S. imperialism (and its allies) are relatively weak or unstable, as is the case in Africa, for example, they carry out more direct and aggressive measures to accomplish their aims: coups, military intervention, etc. The weakness of the local revisionists in those African countries means that the external factor, that is, the presence of social-imperialism and the mercenaries at their command, such as those provided by the Cuban government, plays a decisive role. On the other hand, in regions such as, for example, Latin America, where there is a powerful U.S. imperialist presence, united with a powerful local monopoly bourgeoisie (as is the case in Western Europe), the pro-Soviet revisionists pursue

their objectives in an indirect manner (for now). That is, they seek to divide the bourgeoisie and to unite with one sector (especially the sector which poses as reformist and has a strong influence over the masses) in order to eradicate certain monopoly sectors (from power and from the economy) and to meddle in the sectors controlled by U.S. imperialism.

Without taking into account these new features of revisionism today and the sharpening of the contradictions with the bourgeois sector which they hope to replace, it is impossible to understand the events which have taken place in countries like Chile, for example. There the revisionists were able to take over the government through elections, in alliance with other forces integrated into the so-called Popular Unity coalition which they dominated. State power, however, remained in the hands of the monopoly sections of the bourgeoisie, the landlords and U.S. imperialism, which controlled key instruments of the state, such as: the armed forces, Parliament, an important administrative sector, the courts, as well as the principal means of production, publications, etc. Before and during the Popular Unity government, the revisionists tried to incorporate the Christian Democrats (in opposition to some of their allies) into their plan to seize the basic means of production belonging to monopoly sectors of the bourgeoisie, the landlords and the U.S. monopolies in Chile. The leadership of this party, the largest one in the country, with a large influence among the masses, including among the workers and peasants, represents certain bourgeois sectors (principally non-monopoly sectors), as well as the most dynamic monopoly sectors of U.S. imperialism, principally represented by the Democratic Party. Due to the pressure of the imperialists and the political skill of the monopoly and landlord sectors of the bourgeoisie, the revisionists failed in their attempt to reach a "historic compromise" with the Christian Democrats, an alliance insisted upon for quite a few years by the Soviets, and the CD moved closer and closer to the most reactionary forces. For its part, the Popular Unity government, in carrying out the program inspired by the revisionist "C" P and in spite of their bold efforts (in view of the failed alliance with the CD) to negotiate such a program, carried out an advanced set of reforms, nationalising banks, industrial monopolies and imperialist enterprises, and expropriating large sectors of the landed estates. The contradictions between those who wanted to expand state capitalism, and the Chilean and U.S. monopolies and the landlords, became extremely sharp. The central policy of the revisionists was to block any revolutionary response by the masses to the reactionary offensive aimed at overthrowing the Allende government, and at the same time to try desperately to reach a compromise with the CD. Finally the Allende government was overthrown by a bloody military coup and a vicious fascist repression was unleashed on the masses of people and members of the traditional and revolutionary left organisations. As demonstrated by what has happened in all Latin America and not only in our country, the bourgeoisie must resort to fascism with ever more frequency in order to confront the struggle of the masses who escape from the revisionists' control, as well as to confront the plans of the revisionists to make use of bourgeois legality to displace them from power and deprive them of the means of production. Bourgeois democracy, utilised today by revisionism for its own plans and not only for demogogy in the service of the bourgeoisie, becomes ever more unstable, transitory and conditional.

This contradiction (in the context of the struggle between the two superpowers) makes revisionist demogogy among the masses easier. In fact, many sectors of the masses are led to believe that the state capitalism offered as a political perspective by the revisionists is in fact true socialism. At the same time, the tenacious and aggressive resistance with which the affected sectors, generally the most reactionary and most hated by the masses, oppose the plans for reforms (especially when there is a real possibility of carrying them out), strengthens the deception and tends to give prestige to revisionism, which of course jealously hides its intentions of replacing the old exploiters and opening the door for do-

mination or interference by the social-imperialists instead of or alongside the other superpower. This confusion created among the masses by the sharp struggle between the U.S. imperialists and the most reactionary forces in Chile on the one hand, and the revisionists and their allies in government on the other, contributed to a large degree in our country to maintaining illusions about these forces among the masses and preventing the masses from going over to a truly revolutionary alternative.

At the same time, the promotion of their plan for state capitalism masked as socialism (pointing, to different degrees, depending on public opinion's reservations about what is really going on in those countries, to the pseudo-socialist states as proof of its practicality) provides the revisionists with the opportunity to carry out more active demogogy than in the past, when they almost exclusively played the role of servants of the ruling bourgeois interests, promoting some reforms only to maintain their prestige among the masses. In the past, when revisionism's dependency on the ruling bourgeoisie was much greater and their contradictions more restricted than at present, such reforms were by necessity fundamentally limited to the necessities and interests of the bourgeoisie, and were in no way in serious contradiction with it. At present, for the reasons already given, these contradictions—which at certain points become antagonistic, although they occur within the framework of inter-bourgeois contradictions and are not for the benefit of the people but rather for the benefit of the revisionists, of certain bourgeois sectors and of social-imperialism—take on a more acute form and provide the revisionists a much broader field for demagogic maneuvering among the masses.

Moreover, revisionism today, given the influence and demagogic power that it has obtained and the substantial support of one of the superpowers (and the countries dependent on it), and given its aim to press for the realisation of its political objectives within the framework of bourgeois society, works in many places with all the powerful means of a bourgeois party: propaganda on a vast scale costing millions, thousands of officials, offices and meeting halls, etc. This allows them to reinforce their demogogy even more. To carry out this demogogy and their struggle against revolutionary ideas, they employ the most powerful means provided by modern technology to influence public opinion: the press, radio, TV, polls, etc. Further, they actively take advantage of all these means to recruit indiscriminately, based on careerism, economism and deception, and leaving out, obviously, any revolutionary ideology.

Finally, contemporary revisionism's reactionary objective of replacing the present system of exploitation with one in which they could play a dominant political and economic role has helped reinforce their opposition to the revolutionary principles of Marxism, as well as their even more open support for the laws and institutions that serve as the foundations of bourgeois society. Now they not only oppose revolution and defend the pillars of bourgeois society as second-rate lackeys of the bourgeoisie, but also due to their own reactionary plans. They must take advantage of their demagogic influence among the masses, their alliances with certain sectors of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie, as well as the support of social-imperialism, in order to displace powerful bourgeois and U.S.-controlled interests. Nevertheless—first and foremost—they must keep the people from fighting to destroy the bourgeois state and from making revolution under the leadership of the proletariat and its vanguard party.

This constitutes a much more serious threat to their aims of imposing on the people a new system of exploitation and oppression with a socialist mask than the fascism promoted in defense of their own interests by the bourgeois sectors who are threatened by revisionism's state capitalism and terrified that the masses may take advantage of that contradiction to rise up in their own independent interests. This was particularly evident in Chile during the reactionary offensive aimed at kicking the Popular Unity out of the government. Here the revisionists gambled everything (as

they did in France in 1968, and in many other places) in order to prevent any revolutionary mobilisation of the masses, not hesitating to repress them and the revolutionary forces which led their struggles, at every opportunity. In the face of the ultra-reactionary offensive against the Allende government, all they did was try to divide the bourgeoisie, to conciliate with the most aggressive section and U.S. imperialism and try to win over a section of the armed forces, while stubbornly opposing any mass mobilisation. They even facilitated both the disarming of the few political forces which had any arms and the brutal intimidation of the masses, providing the armed forces with a law which authorised drastic raids in factories and working class communities, and the punishment of those who possessed arms, a law approved unanimously by the opposition and government parties in Parliament, a law which in fact served the military's practical preparations for the coup. Finally, after a prolonged campaign of praise and promotions for the putschist chiefs of the armed forces to buy them off, and failing in this way to stop the coup, on the day the coup was unleashed the revisionists made public calls on radio and TV through one of their top leaders in the Central Unica de Trabajadores (National Trade Union Confederation) to not resist the coup and to submit to the new fascist authorities. After the coup, following the same political line, the revisionists have opposed any resistance which might overthrow the fascist junta and sought support among the military, the Christian Democrats and even U.S. imperialism, on the basis of pledging to prevent any manifestation of mass indignation against the crimes committed by the dictatorship, calling for nothing more than the replacement of the dictatorship by "less fascist" military chiefs who little by little are to open the way for a return to the reactionary civilian governments of the past, with the repressive forces intact "behind the throne."

All the intensification of the anti-Marxist harangues of the revisionists today, their public abandoning of Marxist theses which in the past they at least pretended to accept, derives from their necessity (no longer only in support of the traditional bourgeoisie, but also of their own objective of becoming a bureaucratic bourgeoisie) to oppose the revolution by every means. Obviously the wanton demagogy they must carry out to further their objectives; the sharpening of the class struggle which gives rise to their conflict with certain sectors of the bourgeoisie and imperialists (against whom the people also struggle but for other reasons); the rise of genuine Marxist-Leninist parties in opposition to revisionism; the interference of the superpowers in this conflict; all of this along with the general crisis of the capitalist system imperils their plans and the capitalist system itself. The danger they face is that the masses will escape from their control, and, under revolutionary leadership, bury capitalism along with their dreams of becoming exploiters. This is why they are forced to open the way for their plans by uprooting all revolutionary influence and by vigorously defending the basic laws and institutions of the bourgeois state which hold back the revolutionary mass struggle, while they maneuver to seize a position as the dominant exploiters. In this way, the bourgeoisie, which certainly is not about to accept being cooked in its own sauce, its own laws and institutions, finds itself obligated to renounce them, promoting an increasing fascistisation of the state or the open establishment of fascism.

The essence of this revisionist policy of—first and foremost—holding back the revolution is expressed in their defense of the anti-Marxist thesis of a "peaceful road to socialism." The bottom line of this opportunist thesis is that the people are forbidden to make revolution and destroy the bourgeois state apparatus that the revisionists seek to seize peacefully from within. The whole hypocrisy of the revisionist formulation of the "peaceful road to power" and the clear proof that it is only meant to hold back the masses of people, is obvious from the fact that the ruling revisionist circles do not tremble at the prospect of resorting to armed violence when it is necessary for their objectives, so long as it does not mean arming the masses. Thus, they

did not hesitate to intervene with their troops in Czechoslovakia; to use Cuban and other kinds of mercenaries in Africa; to foment coups where they were able to bribe a section of the reactionary armed forces; to foment local wars, etc. In the name of the "peaceful road to power," they not only preach a deadend road for the people, as they did in Chile, but further, they *actively* oppose and suppress those who refuse to follow this road, even at the expense of opening the door for fascism and along with that, the repression of their allies and their own members. If during the rise of revisionism there were honest opportunists, who genuinely believed in reaching socialism through the legal apparatus of bourgeois society and through reforms, if even now this naive species could exist in sectors influenced by the petty-bourgeois mentality and even among the rank and file influenced by revisionist leadership, the leadership does not adopt these opportunist positions due to errors in their understanding of Marxism, but rather as a fully conscious strategy in line with their reactionary aims. Therefore, those who consider the revisionist point of view on this subject mere "errors" in their comprehension of Marxism and seek to convince them of their "mistake," are wasting time and doomed to failure. This strategy is entirely in agreement with their reactionary aims and is only designed to prevent the masses from taking up arms. When they have their own revisionist armed forces to make use of; mercenaries or bourgeois armed forces put at their disposal for their own aims, they immediately do away with the "peaceful road" and they do it without any hesitation.

The efforts by the revisionists to utilise their ability to deceive the masses, to use them as an electoral contingent or pressure group to advance their reactionary plans, at the same time preventing them from escaping their control and taking a revolutionary road, have intensified the bureaucratic deformations which have always been a characteristic of their leadership of the masses. More than ever, they tend to put all power of decision in the hands of revisionist bureaucrats and hold back any initiative (especially any initiative of struggle) on the part of the masses of people, smothering any real expression of democracy within the mass organisations. In Chile, where they promoted the formation of thousands of mass committees on the eve of the elections which gave the Presidency of the Republic to Allende, these committees were used purely for electoral purposes and dissolved once the Allende government was elected. They even systematically opposed all Allende's proposals to carry out national plebiscites, when his government was the most popular, to win approval of the points in his program sabotaged by the opposition which had the majority in Parliament. This would have contributed to "inciting" the masses and interfered with their plans to reach an agreement with the Christian Democrats.

This bureaucratic tendency is also manifested within the revisionist parties themselves, where they have suppressed all internal democracy, all rights to thoroughly debate ideological and political questions, and the membership is manipulated by a corps of bureaucrats on the payroll of the revisionist leaders who impose their decisions. The objective of this policy is not only to keep the masses or the members from breaking with the revisionist leadership, but also to create the appropriate conditions for their future society, in which a group of bureaucrats who control state power and the production in the hands of the state impose their dictatorship over the masses, brutally suppressing every attempt to rebel.

In the labour movement and the mass movement in general, today the revisionists continue to promote spontaneous economist tendencies and call for certain reforms from the bourgeoisie, so as to preserve their influence over the masses. However, they concentrate more of their efforts than in the past on electoral mobilisations, and frequently they put off the demands of the masses (especially in pre-electoral periods), turning these demands into demagogic promises for when their candidates are elected.

Having analysed these characteristics—which basically corres-

pond to pro-Soviet revisionism, in which there is a unity between the expansionist aspirations of the social-imperialists and the present reactionary plans of the anti-Marxist current which has taken over the old communist parties—the revisionist line promoted by the Chinese leaders, with sinister chauvinist and hegemonistic intentions, proves to be much more clumsy and naive. They haven't renounced the principal theses of Marxism part by part (like the pro-Soviet revisionists); instead, they have invented a "theory" (the infamous "theory" of the "three worlds") in complete opposition to Marxism. Another difference is that they don't even promote plans for a false socialism as the other revisionists do in the capitalist and dependent countries. Lacking any "serious" pseudo-Marxist political basis of support in the capitalist and dependent countries, since all they have at their disposal is isolated sects, they look to unite with any reactionary forces: the fascist military, petty kings, monopoly circles and even U.S. imperialism, with the aim of expanding their sphere of influence and interests and becoming a superpower. In order to obtain this influence, they sacrifice not only the Chinese people, who have to pay for the economic aid their rulers give the most reactionary forces, they also negotiate an alliance with these reactionary forces in exchange for pledges to stop the liberation struggles of the oppressed peoples and to stop revolution in the capitalist countries. Having come late to the division of the spheres of influence in the world controlled by powerful monopolist interests and in particular the two superpowers, they have not hesitated to openly ally themselves with U.S. imperialism and the monopoly groups linked to it in the hope of finding a "place in the sun" of imperialist hegemony, on the basis of replacing the social-imperialist superpower. To further these expansionist plans, linked to their aim of speedy capitalist restoration in China, the Chinese revisionists have bribed small groups of pseudo-Marxists, who, in open opposition to their own people, simply play the dismal role of mouthpieces for the hegemonistic international line of the Chinese leaders. Their points of view are so anti-Marxist that one wonders if it is even legitimate to call them revisionists simply because they continue to invoke the name of Marxism.

We feel that it is of great importance for the development of the Marxist-Leninist movement to discuss the characteristics that the revisionist movement has assumed in the present period. With a clear understanding of the enemy, its plans and methods of action as well as its demagogic arguments, our struggle against them will be more powerful. One of the obstacles to a vast development of the Marxist-Leninist parties and their influence over the masses is the demagogic force and the international support of the pseudo-socialism on which contemporary pro-Soviet revisionism relies.

To take on our revolutionary tasks, we must first of all strengthen our ideological struggle in defense of Marxism-Leninism, which is not only abandoned more and more openly by the revisionists, but is also criticised with redoubled force by the traditional bourgeoisie which presents what goes on in the pseudo-socialist countries as the "application of Marxism" and not as it really is: a betrayal of Marxism.

In opposition to the revisionist parties now completely transformed into bourgeois social-democratic parties, we must vigorously build parties with a solid revolutionary ideology and spirit, capable of integrating Marxism-Leninism with the objective concrete conditions of the class struggle in their countries and the world. We must forge combat parties, disciplined and fit for legal and illegal struggle, fully conscious of their central task of leading the proletariat and through it the broad masses of people to their liberation, and likewise, parties deeply rooted in the masses. Parties that are clearly different than the revisionist parties which recruit indiscriminately on the basis of unprincipled careerism and manipulate and deceive the masses in the same way as the bourgeois parties do.

We must be capable of unmasking both the role of the revisionists as servants of the bourgeoisie and the reactionary

character of their false plans for socialism. Capable of showing that the degeneration of the societies where the revisionists have usurped power is not due to the failure of Marxism-Leninism, but on the contrary, to the betrayal of Marxism-Leninism by the revisionists, refuting them as well as the traditional reactionaries who present this as socialism.

With respect to the struggle to prevent capitalist restoration in a socialist state, Mao Tsetung's contributions to the continuation of the class struggle under socialism are of great importance. Summing up what had occurred in the USSR and other countries which became revisionist, Mao determined, for the first time, that the principal danger of capitalist restoration did not lie in the old expropriated bourgeoisie, nor in the massive engendering of bourgeoisie through the (uncontrolled) development of small production, but rather, that a new bourgeoisie was engendered on the basis of state property, setting up its headquarters within the socialist state and the communist party itself. This bourgeoisie is characterised by the promotion of a revisionist line within the state and the economy, taking advantage of its position of leadership within the party, which leads to abandoning the dictatorship of the proletariat and the step-by-step (and at certain points violent) restoration of a bourgeois dictatorship and capitalist exploitation in the form of state capitalism. Further, he pointed out that the leftovers of bourgeois right under socialism—the division of labor, wage differences, privileges of the leaders, as well as the existence of a commodity system, the differences between the cities and the countryside and between mental and manual labor, and other leftovers of the old system which must be rooted out step-by-step but firmly by means of the dictatorship of the proletariat—make up the basis for the formation of a new bourgeoisie. Further, Mao Tsetung demonstrated a universally applicable method for combatting the new bourgeoisie: the Proletarian Cultural Revolution, that is, a broad mobilisation of the masses under the leadership of the proletarian sector within the party, to overthrow the bourgeoisie from those sectors of power that they have usurped, and the active participation of the masses in all aspects of society: the state, cultural, military, the party, etc., so that they can recognise their enemies and struggle against them in all spheres, thus liberating themselves.

We must be capable of showing the masses the particular features of a real socialist society in opposition to state capitalism dressed in socialist garb, and of the real dictatorship of the proletariat in opposition to the fascist dictatorships exercised by the revisionists. In particular, that the dictatorship of the proletariat is exercised over a minority of exploiters, guaranteeing a broad democracy for the people, a democracy which is not only formal, but one in which the masses progressively take into their own hands the affairs of state and have at their disposal vast democratic rights not only on paper, as is the case in certain bourgeois societies, but with the means to put it into practice.

We must show that under true socialism, the leading party draws its force not from some bureaucratic control of the state organs, nor from imposing repression on the people, as under revisionism, but rather from its ability, recognised among the proletariat and masses, to lead them effectively in their own interests and educate them to take these interests into their own hands. As Lenin put it, "The vanguard of the proletariat, the Communist Party, leads the masses of non-party workers it instructs, prepares and educates the masses (the 'school' of communism), first the workers and then the peasants, so that they can take and hold in their hands the whole of the administration of the national economy." And elsewhere he says, "What is important to us is to be able to enroll all the workers in the running of the state. This is an extremely difficult task. But socialism cannot be established by a minority, by the party. It can only be established by tens of millions of people when they have learned for themselves how to carry out this task." In other words, a socialist society where there is active struggle against the bureaucratic tendencies left over from the old society or arisen within socialism itself, sources of the resurgence of revisionism.

We must put forward a socialist society in which the vanguard party not only leads and educates the masses, but also learns from them, systematising their experiences from a Marxist point of view, as Lenin puts it: "Collective experience, the experience of millions can alone give us decisive guidance in this respect, precisely because, for our task, for the task of building socialism, the experience of the hundreds and hundreds of thousands of those upper sections which have made history up to now in feudal society and in capitalist society is insufficient. We cannot proceed in this way precisely because we rely on joint experience, on the experience of millions of working people." Likewise we must put forward a socialism in which the vanguard party does not pretend to "strengthen itself" by turning into the "private property" of the party the knowledge and other conditions which make it the vanguard, but instead progressively raises the masses to the level of the vanguard, to identify with it, in such a way that along with firmly applying repression against internal and external enemies through the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat, with the aim of abolishing class society and bourgeois right it also progressively creates the conditions so that in the future classless communist society, the state will wither away, as put forward by the founders of Marxism, making even the existence of the vanguard

party itself unnecessary.

Lenin points out: "We set ourselves the ultimate aim of abolishing the state, i.e., all organised and systematic violence, all use of violence against man in general. We do not expect the advent of an order of society in which the principle of the subordination of the minority to the majority will not be observed. But in striving for Socialism we are convinced that it will develop into Communism and, hence, that the need for violence against people in general, for the *subordination* of one man to another, and of one section of the population to another, will vanish altogether since people will *become accustomed* to observing the elementary conditions of social life *without violence* and *without subordination*."

Today more than ever, in order to confront the complicated present situation, we must raise very high the banner of Marxism-Leninism, and in opposition to all the bourgeois and revisionist distortions, show the bright features of socialist and communist society as they were put forward by the founders of scientific socialism. We have complete confidence that the revisionists of all stripes will be defeated and that their vile influence will be eradicated from the ranks of the proletariat and masses of people, by us, the Marxist-Leninists, an essential condition for leading the exploited to their complete liberation.