

Theoretical Issues on the Programme of the Communist Party of Greece (KKE)

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INTRODUCTION

The struggle of the working class against the capitalist class in order to be complete, i.e. a struggle of class against class, must foremost be revolutionary.

The struggle should be against both individual capitalists and the capitalist class as a whole, and their power as well. The Communist Party, through its activity, organizes the workers and transforms the struggle against the exploiters into «whole class struggle, of a determined political party for determined political and socialist ideals»

Lenin argued: «....*only the political party of the working class, the Communist Party can unite, educate and organize as the vanguard of the proletariat and the working class. This vanguard is capable alone to oppose the inevitable petty bourgeois' vacillations, the inevitable traditions and relapses of professional paucity or superstition within the proletariat and guide the action of the whole proletariat, namely to guide it politically and through the proletariat to lead the working masses*»¹

In the history of revolutionary workers' movement, the communist identity-the characterization and incorporation into Communist International- emerged in conditions of conflict with the opportunist social democratic wing, which acted treacherously towards the interests of the working class during the European imperialist war (World War 1) 1914-1918, and in the revolutionary conditions that followed in countries such as Germany, Hungary, Slovakia, Italy, etc. It was a result of the Socialist Revolution's victory in Russia (1917) and its influence on the revolutionary workers' movement. The characterisation of the workers' parties as Communist has its roots in the "Union of Communists" and the Manifesto of the Communist Party by Marx-Engels. Later, during the last decades of 19th century and in the early 20th century, the worker's parties were characterized as social democratic or socialist, a characterization that expressed to a great extent prevailing reality in these parties. In April 1917, Lenin proposed the need to change the names of the workers' parties and to adopt the term communist and establish the new International. In this direction the Communist International (3rd International) was founded in 1919.

Over the years, under the influence of the new changes in the correlation of forces in the class struggle worldwide (retreat of the revolutionary upsurge in the second half of the 1920s, World War II and the Nazi's attack against USSR in 1941, "cold war" and nuclear threat, as well as due to post-war capitalist development) new opportunist currents were formed, such as eurocommunism. Opportunist currents developed, also, inside the Communist Parties of the socialist countries, with the 20th Congress of the CPSU (1956) as a milestone in this process. The transformation of the Communist Parties that exercised state power into treacherous parties of the counter-revolution led as a catalyst to a deep, ideological-political and organizational crisis of the international communist movement.

¹ V.I. Lenin, Complete works, volume 4, p. 192, publication Synchroni Epochi.

It is not sufficient for the Communist Party today in order to be the vanguard of the working class To consolidate its communist identity(title), to generally accept the Marxist-Leninist theory of scientific communism and recognize the vanguard role of working class. All the above are preconditions. In order to be a vanguard, it must have a revolutionary political programme, it must have the ability to act in all conditions, namely in conditions of the movement's retreat or rise. It must develop and regenerate the ability to face the objective pressures that are formed in the negative correlation of forces in the class struggle.

As a criterion for the character of a Communist Party is its programme and its Political line: *«To understand the meaning of the struggle of the parties, we shouldn't believe the words that are spoken, but we should study the history of the parties, probe the actions of a party and how they solve the different political issues, what is their stance towards the issues that affect the crucial interests of the different classes in the society...»*²

What is the main issue that determines the character of a party's programme, and what is the precondition for its revolutionary content? The most important question that determines the revolutionary content of the programme of the communist party is the specification of the revolution's character, i.e. the answer to the question:

"Which contradiction will be solved by the impending social revolution, which class will take power?"

Based on this position, the line for the concentration of social forces is formed (motor forces) that have an objective interest in the revolution. Of course, the programme doesn't start and end with which class must conquer power. A revolutionary programme must establish its stance towards this crucial problem based on the level of the capitalist development in each country inside the framework of the international developments in the capitalist system. It must answer concretely based on the socioeconomic reality in relation to the working class of the country to what sectors it is concentrated in, what its characteristics are, what is its internal stratification - diversification, what are its most dynamic sections, what is the situation of the intermediate strata (those social forces that are located between the working class and the capitalist class), and by what criteria the intermediate strata are differentiated and, thus, which sections of these strata can become the allies of the working class. A revolutionary programme must predict and explain the tendencies of the specific capitalist economy, their relationship with the developments in the political structure, the relationship between this bourgeois state and the other states within the international imperialist system. It must detect the contradictions that can become a factor for the destabilization of capitalism in the future.

² V.I. Lenin, Complete works, volume 43,p. 94.

Furthermore, the revolutionary programme has to provide the basic content, the scientific laws and the construction of the society which is the aim, i.e. the communist society, the duties that must be solved by the immature phase of communism, socialism.

The ability of the CP to form a revolutionary programme is defined by the properly understood class dialectical relationship and scientific approach in its functioning. It is determined by ensuring the class character of the Party as a party of the working class, by the predominance of the working class within the social composition of the party organizations, their formation prioritizing the large production units and the places with a concentration of the working class, and especially by the promotion and development of working class cadres.

Regardless of the number of the members of the party, the CP must have solid and persistent orientation within the ranks of the labour movement and the union's activity, and create bonds and channels of communication with the working class. The development of party forces, the existence of PBOs in the workplaces are determined both by the persistent orientation in the development of the struggle, of the class struggle, and of course by objective factors. At the same time within its ranks and activity, it should highlight and implement the alliance line of the working class and its leading role in the alliance.

The above preconditions should be combined with the ability of the Party to form a scientifically substantiated perception of politics, to scientifically analyse the developments, elaborate the issues of the class struggle, meaning the absorption and development of Marxist-Leninist theory. This demands that the Party function as a "collective intellectual", to cope with- as much as possible-the inner difficulties that objectively arise due to the division of labour. Namely the worker-member of the Party should acquire the characteristics of a communist intellectual, regardless of his formal educational level or professional specialization. And vice versa, the communist scientist-intellectual should adopt the lifestyle of the communist worker and devote his intellectual ability and work to benefit the revolutionary, communist struggle.

Without the scientific outlook, based on the Marxist-Leninist theory, of issues of class struggle, the Communist Party cannot have a revolutionary political line. The political line of Communist Parties should be based on the objective laws that determine the relationships between the classes taking into consideration the level of society's development at any given moment, laws that Marxism has revealed. Lenin emphasized the scientific character of the political line and its preconditions:

«Science demands, firstly, to take into consideration the experience of other countries, and especially if the other countries ,that are capitalist, try to experience something alike. Secondly, to take into consideration all the forces, the teams, the parties, the classes, the masses that act in a country, and not to determine the policy based only on the wishes and perceptions, the

level of consciousness and the willing for struggle from only one group or one party.»³

The theory for the strategic, revolutionary political line of the communist movement is based on the materialist perception of history, Marxist political economy, scientific communism.

Engels determined the historical mission of scientific communism as follows:

«Duty of the theoretical expression of proletariat movement, scientific socialism, is to explore the historical terms and thus the same nature of this act of world's liberation, and in this way to make it clear in consciousness to the destined-for-action and oppressed class.»⁴

Historical experience-and the today's reality- demonstrate that the realization of the duty of forming a revolutionary programme is not simple.

There were many and different factors that contributed and contribute in this way to the fact that in important periods of the communist movement's history, a lot of the Communist Parties didn't have a Programme that could answer properly the basic question of power. This situation is both a cause and an expression of the deep and long-lasting crisis within the International Communist Movement, which in essence is a crisis of strategy, i.e. a lack of revolutionary strategic unity.

We must make clear that the strategic unity between the communist parties can not be ensured by the common declaration of the goal of socialism-communism.

The critical issue is what their position is on the issue of power, the alliance policy, the safeguarding of their organizational ideological and political independence. In the final analysis, how they are going to face the dilemma «reform or revolution», the participation e-support in a section of bourgeois state (government) or the struggle for its overthrow? How is it going to fight against its bourgeois class of its country? How is it going to ensure the independence of the working class political line against imperialist war and imperialist peace? After the counterrevolution, the criterion for every Communist Party was their position towards the contribution of the socialist edifice and the basic cause of its overthrow in the 20th century.

There are major differences between the Communist Parties on these issues.

The KKE, having as its starting point the issues that arose because of the counterrevolutionary events in 1989-1991 and the deep crisis within the International Communist Movement, tried to critically probe the issues regarding the course of socialism in USSR and in other socialist states, the

³ V.I Lenin, Complete Works, vol. 41, p. 65, publication Synchroni Epochi

⁴ Fr. Engels, The Development of Socialism from Utopia to Science, p. 109, publication Synchroni Epochi

issues of International Communist Movement's strategy and the strategic course of the KKE in Greece.

On the basis of these efforts, the formation of a new modern-revolutionary Programme began. The first step towards this direction was the Programme, which was elaborated by the 15th Congress of the **KKE**, where the socialist character of the revolution in Greece was clearly defined, without having another kind of revolution before, government or power, as used to be the case in previous Programmes of the KKE. The elaborations that followed in subsequent Congresses and especially the elaborations of the 18th Congress on socialism, the drafting by the Central Committee and the approval by a nationwide Party's Conference of the conclusions of the "Essay on the History of KKE", vol. 2, 1949-1968, helped form the new Programme of KKE, as it was approved at the 19th Congress of the Party.

Chapter One

The maturation of the material pre-conditions for socialism

What is the character of the contemporary era of capitalism?

Contemporary capitalism is monopoly capitalism, imperialism. The contemporary era of capitalism started in the beginning of the 20th century and was “defined” by the historic event of the outbreak of World War 1 in 1914.

The main characteristic of the “contemporary era” is the domination of the monopolies. We should not understand the monopoly by its literal meaning, namely as a unique company that controls the whole production and market in large sectors of the economy. The monopolies should be understood as very large capitalist stock companies that have activity in one or more sectors and are sharing with other stock companies the majority of the production and market. For this reason there is a fierce competition amongst them. Hence the monopolies do not lead to the negation of competition but to its expression at another level, mostly among monopolies. Monopoly competition is conducted together with phenomena like agreements among monopolies (regarding curbing the fall in commodity prices), national and international “antitrust” interventions to boost competition, for the “liberation” of markets from national or trust regulations etc. Even the state of the capitalists itself is preventing the total domination of one monopoly in a sector (antitrust law), with the only exception the protection of the state monopoly for as long as the capitalist development itself needs it (eg. in the production-distribution of electricity for as long as it wasn't profitable for private capital).

Competition occurs inside the monopolies themselves (intramonopoly) for the control of the share package, amongst sections of capital (industrial commercial- banking), between new dynamic and older companies, amongst smaller companies or/and self-employed that of course to a great extent operate around the periphery of the monopolies.

Domination of large capitalist companies, monopoly groups in the contemporary capitalist economy doesn't mean that there are no disturbances like the dissolution of companies even groups of companies, the creation of others etc.

Large capitalist consortia concentrate capitalist companies of various sectors and branches of the capitalist economy. So companies that have production activities (manufacturing, construction, transport, energy, telecommunication), companies of the financial sector (banks-insurance), companies in the retail trade can coexist in the same consortia.

The emergence and domination of the monopolies came as a result of the concentration and centralization of production, through the accumulation of capital and through competition. Changes that were made through the development of the means of production lead to the reinforcement of *the social character of labour*, and consequently production demands much more mechanized and automated means of production that work with the combined effort of tens of thousands workers with different specialities and

specializations and therefore the combination of this activity through the function of the large capitalist companies is necessary. The monopolies were established and dominated as large *joint stock companies*. The fundamental feature of stock companies is the detachment of ownership from the operation of capital, thus capitalists today are stock owners without playing any necessary role in capitalist production itself, in contrast with the old capitalist industrialist-factory owner etc. Marx regarded the phenomenon of the creation of stock companies-that wasn't dominant in his era but it became so later on-as *"...this is the abolition of the capitalist mode of production within the capitalist mode of production itself, and hence a self-dissolving contradiction.."*¹, because, as he explains, in the stock companies *"...the function is separated from capital ownership, hence also labour is entirely separated from ownership of means of production and surplus-labour. This result of the ultimate development of capitalist production is a necessary transitional phase towards the reconversion of capital into the property of producers, although no longer as the private property of the individual producers, but rather as the property of associated producers, as outright social property."*²

The driving force of capitalism is not only the industry owner and the banker but also the individual owner, the owner of individual means of production who aims through the use of the accumulation of his own surplus-product to be able to appropriate alien surplus-product through the employment of alien labour. So the individual owner is a potential capitalist, (craftsman, merchant, farmer) and constitutes the foundation of the private ownership over the means of production. At the same time the expansion of the capitalist relations entails the abolition, the isolation of the individual producers from their own means of production, their transformation into a work force without means of production.

The replacement of the individual owner by a group of individual owners, of individual capital by collective capital (where the collective owner is not detached from the means of production or the function of production) and later by the stock capital (where the shareholder is detached from

¹ C. Marx, *Capital*, Vol.3, page 553, Sygchronh Epoxh Editions.
<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1894-c3/ch27.htm>

² C. Marx, *Capital*, Vol.3, page 551, Sygchronh Epoxh Editions.
<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1894-c3/ch27.htm>

production), is an adjustment of capitalism to its own trajectory, to its own needs. It is an adjustment of capitalism that doesn't overturn its essential economic relation, the ability to appropriate the results of alien labour, the appropriation of surplus value. Instead it reinforces it with joint stock capitalist ownership, with company investment agreements, with groups, with the mixed companies which have the participation of the state and private capitalists. Thus the necessary centralization of individual capital that corresponds to the centralization of new machines, new technological procedures for the organization of production, transportation etc is carried out.

The large stock company on which the monopoly is founded constitutes the adjustment of the capitalist relation to conditions when the social character of the labour has already been achieved and developed to a great extent. Marx-Engels assumed that a certain level of socialization of labour, concentration of capital, development and concentration of the working class that are achieved in capitalism show the necessity of overcoming the capitalist relations:

*“Centralization of the means of production and socialization of labour at last reach a point where they become incompatible with their capitalist integument. This integument is burst asunder. The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated.”*³

The main feature of the contemporary era of capitalism is the creation of the mature preconditions for socialism-communism. Thus in the bowels of capitalism itself the prerequisites and conditions for its historic overthrow are created.

This feature of the era has a historic and global dimension, irrespective of the degree and manner of the maturation of the material preconditions in the various capitalist societies.

Lenin, in his work *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, analysed the contemporary era and determined its historic character as the eve of socialist revolution. In relation to this he wrote that:

“When a big enterprise assumes gigantic proportions, and, on the basis of an exact computation of mass data, organises according to plan the supply of primary raw materials to the extent of two-thirds, or three-fourths, of all that is necessary for tens of millions of people; when the raw materials are transported in a systematic and organised manner to the most suitable places of production, sometimes situated hundreds or thousands of miles from each other; when a single centre directs all the consecutive stages of processing the material right up to the manufacture of numerous varieties of finished articles; when these products

³ C. Marx, *Capital*, Vol.1, page 787, Sygchronh Epoxh Editions.
<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867-c1/ch32.htm>

*are distributed according to a single plan among tens and hundreds of millions of consumers (the marketing of oil in America and Germany by the American oil trust)—then it becomes evident that we have socialisation of production, and not mere “interlocking”, that private economic and private property relations constitute a shell which no longer fits its contents, a shell which must inevitably decay if its removal is artificially delayed, a shell which may remain in a state of decay for a fairly long period (if, at the worst, the cure of the opportunist abscess is protracted), but which will inevitably be removed.”*⁴

Later developments have confirmed the above positions. The concentration of production and the working class in the industrial centres of Russia constituted the foundation for the development of the revolutionary workers’ movement that under the guidance of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks

and Lenin led to the victory of the socialist revolution in Russia and socialist construction in the 20th century. On the other hand, it was confirmed by the course of history that no matter how mature material preconditions for socialism are within capitalism, the transition from one society to the other cannot be realised without the political revolution, without the existence of a well-prepared political vanguard of the working class. Even more so, the counterrevolutionary events of 1989-1991 period showed that the revolutionary political vanguard of working class, assembled in the Communist Party, cannot be taken for granted. Its ability to come into conflict successfully to overthrow bourgeois power cannot constitute the sole guarantee for its ability to confront successfully every remnant of private property in every phase of the expansion and deepening of the new relationships of social ownership and distribution.

Even though widespread counterrevolutionary overthrows do not mean a change in the character of the era, they confirm that the construction of the new communist society is a much more complex process than the communist movement imagined and it demands a harsh class struggle even inside the socialist-construction societies themselves and against the existing capitalist states.

However, the historically temporary victory of capitalism over socialist construction in the 20th century is not the first and only setback in the course of social progress. The same setback also happened to capitalism in its first efforts to prevail (e.g. in the cities of Northern Italy during the 13th century) that did not reverse the trend of the historical movement from feudalism to capitalism, something that was confirmed by the victory of the bourgeois revolutions in the 17th-18th and 19th centuries.

⁴ V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, page 432, Sygchronh Epohi Editions.
<https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1916/imp-hsc/ch10.htm>

The Programme of the KKE makes the following assessment about contemporary capitalism:

“The historical setback in the development of the class struggle is accompanied by the mass influx of cheap labour force into the international capitalist market (from Asia, Africa, Latin America, Eastern Europe etc.), by the devaluation of labour power in the most advanced capitalist countries (OECD countries), as well as by the emergence of the generalized absolute destitution of the working class in these countries, by the intensification of capital's offensive at an international level. The tendency for important changes in the correlation of forces among the capitalist states became more apparent with the deep crisis of capital overaccumulation in 2008-2009 which in several capitalist economies has in reality not been overcome. This process occurs under the impact of the law of uneven capitalist development. This tendency concerns the higher levels of the imperialist pyramid as well. (...) The inter-imperialist contradictions, which in the past led to dozens of local, regional wars and to two World Wars, continue to lead to tough economic, political and military confrontations, irrespective of the composition

or recomposition, the changes in the structure and the framework of goals of the international imperialist unions, their so-called new "architecture". In any case, "war is the continuation of politics by other means", especially in the conditions of a deep crisis of capital's over-accumulation and important changes in the correlation of forces of the international imperialist system, in which the re-division of the markets rarely occurs without bloodshed. The periodical outbreak of the crises of over-accumulation tests the cohesion of the Eurozone, as a monetary union of the economies of member-states with deep unevenness in the development and structure of industrial production, in productivity as well as their position in the EU and international market.

The tendency for the strengthening of the interdependence of the economies of the states in the international imperialist system does not lead to a decline of the role of the bourgeois state, as many theoretical variations of "globalization" claim.

(...)The crisis highlighted even more intensely the historical limits of the capitalist system. The contradictions are sharpening, as well as the difficulties in the bourgeois political management of the crisis and the difficulty in passing into a new cycle of expanded reproduction of social capital in general.”⁵

⁵ “Programme of the KKE”, *Communist Review*, issue 3/2013, page 96-97.

<http://inter.kke.gr/en/articles/Programme-of-the-KKE/>

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What do we mean when we say that the character of the era determines the character of the revolution?

Lenin in his work “Under a false flag” adopted the “periodization” of capitalism (that other Marxists had elaborated) into three historical epochs with as conventional and relative milestones the social revolutions and wars and based on the position of the classes in social progress:

1789-1871

The first epoch, from the great French revolution until the Franco-Prussian war and the Commune, is the era of the rise of the bourgeoisie, of its complete victory. It's the era of bourgeois democratic revolutions and national movements, the era of the demolition of the historically outdated feudal relations.

1871-1914

The second epoch is the era of the complete domination of the bourgeois class that loses its progressive role in social development.

1914-...

The third epoch is the era that puts the bourgeois class in the same historical position as the feudal class was during the first epoch. Imperialism, as monopoly capitalism, is the era of the socialist revolutions for the transition to the communist society.

It is worth looking at the criterion provided in the same work for the determination of an epoch and also separate it from the events of either acceleration or deceleration of the realisation of the working class' mission from country to country:

*"We cannot know how rapidly and how successfully the various historical movements in a given epoch will develop, but we can and do know which class stands at the hub of one epoch or another, determining its main content, the main direction of its development, the main characteristics of the historical situation in that epoch, etc. Only on that basis [...] (and not single episodes in the history of individual countries), can we correctly evolve our tactics; only a knowledge of the basic features of a given epoch can serve as the foundation for an understanding of the specific features of one country or another."*⁶

Lenin with the above elaboration in fact presents the course of the rise, domination and parasitism of the bourgeois class. The bourgeois class as a vehicle of capitalist relations had in a specific historical period a progressive role, it was the social force that pioneered the abolition of feudal relations and the respective superstructure. The dominance of capitalist relations and the

Passing of power into its hands brought it over the course of time into the same position where feudalism was, established as a class that seeks to maintain its privileges and power at any cost, and for this reason it obstructs social progress, the transition to a socio-economic formation that is superior to capitalism, communism. The very development and dominance of capitalism gradually brings the working class to the forefront, the contemporary proletariat, this social force that is connected to social production, that is subjected to exploitation by the owners of the means of production, that sells its ability for work, takes a portion of what it produces (salary) which corresponds to the reproduction of its labour power (capacity to work), while basically the results of its work are appropriated by the capitalist owners. This social force expands to the extent that the **capitalist relations of production** expand and are prevalent. It is the vehicle of social ownership over the means of production which is the foundation for the formation of all the new communist relations, gradually abolishing every form of private ownership over the means of production. Its leading role in social progress, regardless of the correlation of forces in the class struggle against the capitalists and partial defeats, is due to its relation with the social character of production.

The contemporary era of capitalism, the era of socialist revolutions, only began in the second decade of 20th century, bringing the revolutionary workers' movement to the forefront of social development, as the protagonist of social progress. As a consequence the character of revolution is determined by objective factors. It defines which class must take the power, in which direction the revolutionary change of the economic relations must be realised. Lenin, explaining the character of the contemporary era, highlighted that:

“The abolition of capitalism and its vestiges, and the establishment of the fundamentals of the communist order comprise the content of the new era of world history that has set in.”

The leading role of the working class is secured through conscious planned action under the guidance of the Communist party for the preparation of the clash against the state of its exploiters when favourable conditions will objectively be formed. In other words the foundation of the Communist Party, as an expression of the unification of revolutionary theory, scientific communism and the labour movement is the first decisive step in the course of its ideological and political emancipation from the bourgeoisie, but it is not the last. The main issue is how the political elaboration of the Party corresponds to the objective character of revolution. Historical experience has shown that this is a complex issue.

Lenin as head of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks in Russia led the elaboration of the communist movement strategy in the contemporary era in historical conditions where the duties of the emerging contemporary era were tangled up with the duties of the previous historical period of capitalism. Initially Lenin, in 1905, with his work *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*, tried to separate the strategic goal of power for the working class together with the numerous peasantry from the strategic goal of the bourgeoisie, in conditions where the latter did not dominate politically, while the power was in the hands of the old landowners in the form of the Russian Tsarist Empire. Russia was between two eras according to Lenin. In these conditions of struggle for the overthrow of tsarism in Russia and while power was mostly in the hands of princes and landowners, Lenin believed that revolution with the mass participation of proletarians and peasants could lead to a temporary, transitional type of power, which he called the “revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry”, that would be supported by organs of revolutionary struggle, like the Soviets (councils). It is an application to the conditions of Russia in 1905 of the methodology that Marx-Engels had developed forming the line of “permanent revolution” during the period of the bourgeois revolutions of 1848-1850 in Germany and other European states. This line provided for the political and organizational separation from the bourgeoisie, the possibility that the proletariat could be the leading force of the revolution and aim for the transition from the bourgeois revolution to a proletarian revolution. Lenin himself considered it as a political line adapted to the revolutionary conditions of Russia in 1905. The main element in these elaborations of Marx-Engels and Lenin is the recognition of the leading role of the proletariat and the need of its full ideological-political emancipation from the bourgeois class even in conditions where “the bourgeois revolution has not been completed”.

Lenin thereafter, in the revolutionary conditions of Russia after the victory of the revolutionary uprising of February in 1917, the abolition of tsarism and the establishment of a bourgeois government, with clarity took a discrete position against the new power, denounced the support given to it by the opportunists (Mensheviks) and petty bourgeoisie (the SRs), raised the question of immediate struggle in the Soviets of workers and revolting soldiers and sailors

for the revolutionary conquest of working class power, the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Lenin elaborated this new strategy with the help of his preliminary work for *The State and Revolution* and it was codified in the *April Theses* in 1917. Lenin argued against his Bolshevik comrades who claimed that the bourgeois democratic revolution had not finished. He noted characteristically:

*"To be guided in one's activities merely by the simple formula, "the bourgeois democratic revolution is not completed", is like taking it upon oneself to guarantee that the petty bourgeoisie is definitely capable of being independent of the bourgeoisie. To do so is to throw oneself at the given moment on the mercy of the petty bourgeoisie. [...] [...]Comrade Kamenev's mistake is that even in 1917 he sees only the past of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. As a matter of fact its future has already begun, for the interests and policies of the wage-worker and the petty proprietor have actually diverged already, even in such an important question as that of "defencism", that of the attitude towards the imperialist war."*⁷

Lenin considered that the line of "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" was outdated and argued that the working class should take the power through Soviets, supported by the poor peasants. That is why Bolsheviks formulated the slogan: "All power to the Soviets!" Indeed, after the repression of the Bolsheviks by the bourgeois Russian Provisional Government (RPG) supported by the Soviets which were controlled by opportunists and petty bourgeois, in July of 1917, Lenin temporarily removed the slogan: "All power to the Soviets!" and defined the main task:

*"The aim of the insurrection can only be to transfer power to the proletariat, supported by the poor peasants, with a view to putting our Party programme into effect."*⁸

The reason why this strategic elaboration was not generalised, did not prevail even much later in states with much more developed capitalist relations and established bourgeois states, is an issue that needs to be studied, by examining the entire course of Communist International.

In the history of the strategy of many Communist Parties and the KKE, a stage of governance was often inserted (bourgeois-democratic, anti-monopoly, patriotic democratic) on the terrain of capitalism.

The justification for that was sometimes attributed to the correlation of forces inside a country or at an international level, sometimes to pre-capitalist remnants in the economy or the organs of power, sometimes to the distinction of capital's forces into pro-war and pro-peace sections, into patriotic sections and sections that were betrayers of their nation.

Among the factors that contributed to a deviation from the generalization of Lenin's revolutionary strategy in 1917 was undoubtedly the retreat of the revolutionary upsurge during the '20s, the negative correlation of forces for

the USSR, the opportunist pressure on Communist Parties in developed capitalist countries, the lack of scientific analysis and class interpretation of internal and external contradictions that intensified during the '30s.

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Whatever attempt to determine the character of revolution with criteria other than the ones that arise from the character of the era and the maturity of the material preconditions, is not objective. In the Essay on the History of the KKE, volume 2, 1949-1968, there is the following reference:

“The character of the revolution, as the basic element of the strategy of a communist party that acts under the conditions of capitalist power, cannot be determined by the existing correlation of forces, but by the maturation of the material preconditions for socialism. The latter determines its necessity and timeliness. The minimum necessary degree of the maturation of the material preconditions exists even if the working class is a minority of the Working Age Population, from the moment that it becomes aware of its historic mission through the establishment of its Party. The social alliance of the working class with the popular strata and every form of its political expression ought to serve the strategic goal of working class power that expresses the interests of the majority of the people”⁹

It is important to stress that Lenin wrote “Under a false flag” in order to highlight the issue that if the proletariat in a specific historic period assumes duties that do not correspond to this specific historical era and mechanically transfers the experience from previous periods, then it cannot fulfil its contemporary duties, and will always be dragged behind the bourgeois class, being under a false-for its own class interests- flag.

According to what criteria is the maturation of the material preconditions for the socialist revolution assessed?

Often the answer to this question is sought in substantiation with statistics that refer to the extension of the means of production and industrial materials, generally to the correlation of forces amongst the manufacturing sectors but also amongst various sectors of the capitalist economy. All these of course are very useful for the study of the economic base of capitalism in every capitalist state, for the knowledge of the economic base that the socialist revolution will inherit from capitalism, for the elaboration of Central Planning of production and social services, for its sectoral and regional specialization, because socialist construction will be based on it. We will elaborate these issues in the following chapters.

But we must not forget that the basic criterion for the degree of maturation of material preconditions is the development of the productive forces, combined with the extent and deepening of capitalist relations.

First of all when we refer to forces of production we should think of the main productive force, the direct producer, the working man, thus the working class in capitalist conditions.

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The contemporary working class is the basic productive force of capitalist society. It is the most characteristic product of the concentrated capitalist industry, of the monopoly. It is this class that undergoes capitalist exploitation. The basic feature of the working class is that it lacks the means of production and it is obliged to sell its labour power (its ability for work) to the class of the owners of the means of production, the class of the capitalists.¹⁰ Capitalists hire the working class in order to operate the means of production which they own, aiming at the highest possible profit. The “consumption” of the labour power of working class is what produces new values, a great part of which as a surplus value is transformed into profits for the capitalists. Labour power is the only product that, when consumed, produces a value higher than the one that it has itself. All the wage workers that sell their labour power to the capitalists in order to live belong to the working class today and *“who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labour increases capital.”*¹¹

Therefore, the basic indicator of the maturation of capitalism is the concentration and expansion of wage labour, which expresses the intensification of the fundamental contradiction of capitalism, i.e. the contradiction between the social character of labour and the private capitalist appropriation of its products.

This does not mean that the development of wage labour is expressed only with the percentage that it represents among the economically active population. Of course, if wage labour does not predominate as a percentage, this does not mean that the capitalist mode of production is not already dominant, that it has not matured into monopoly capitalism.

Lenin, under conditions where the proletariat was a minority in Russian society, answered those that were questioning the possibility of a socialist revolution based on the percentage of the proletariat in society:

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¹¹ C. Marx- Fr. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, page 33, Sygchronh Epoxh Editions.
<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/ch01.htm#007>

“The strength of the proletariat in any capitalist country is far greater than the proportion it represents of the total population. That is because the proletariat economically dominates the centre and nerve of the entire economic system of capitalism, and also because the proletariat expresses economically and politically the real interests of the overwhelming majority of the working people under capitalism.”

That was the case in Russia during the period 1914-1917. On the eve of World War 1 there was on the one hand significant development and

concentration of the working class in Russia and on the other hand extensive backwardness: The total number of workers was estimated at 15 million, of which 4 million were industrial and railway workers. In addition it was estimated that 56.6% of industrial workers was concentrated in industries with more than 500 workers. The large scale capitalist industry was concentrated in 6 areas:

Central, N/W (Petrograd), Baltic Sea, South Poland, the Urals, which concentrated about 79% of the industrial workers and produced 75% of total industrial production. The working class was barely the 20% of the total population (from source to source it varies between 17-19.5%). Small commodity producers (farmers, artisans, craftsmen) were 66.7% and exploiting classes were 16.3%, of which 12.3% were kulaks.

The same situation can be observed even today in capitalist states like India with a very deep unevenness in capitalist development, but which is an emerging capitalist power at an international level (BRICS).

Capitalism can mature by maintaining and reproducing very deep unevenness, incorporating for a long time and in some cases to a great extent, vestiges of pre-capitalist relations of production. Of course, comparing that period with today in the most developed countries, the working class is the absolute predominant social force.

Marx's thesis that: *"No social order is ever destroyed before all the productive forces for which it is sufficient have been developed, and new superior relations of production never replace older ones before the material conditions for their existence have matured within the framework of the old society."*¹², often becomes an object of distortion by some so-called "Marxists", in fact revisionists of Marxism and supporters of modern opportunism at a political level, who speak of the immaturity of material preconditions for the transition from capitalism to socialism and provide as evidence that socialism did not survive. As far as the above extract from Marx is concerned, they detach it

¹² C. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, page 20, Sygxnroh Epoxh Editions. <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1859/critique-poleconomy/preface.htm>

from the immediate following sentence: *"Mankind thus inevitably sets itself only such tasks as it is able to solve, since closer examination will always show that the problem itself arises only when the material conditions for its solution are already present or at least in the course of formation."*¹³

This thesis is also repeated in his work *The Poverty of Philosophy*: *"Of all the instruments of production, the greatest productive power is the revolutionary class itself. The organisation of revolutionary elements as a class supposes the existence of all the productive forces which could be engendered in the bosom of the old society."*¹⁴

So the indicator for the maturation of the material preconditions is not just the existence of the working class but also its political formation into a revolutionary force, i.e. the development of class struggle.

Already from 1848, when capitalism from a historical standpoint was a new social system and the working class being numerically weak was just coming to the forefront, Marx-Engels wrote in the *Communist Manifesto*:

"But with the development of industry, the proletariat not only increases in number; it becomes concentrated in greater masses, its strength grows, and it feels that strength more. The various interests and conditions of life within the ranks of the proletariat are more and more equalised, in proportion as machinery obliterates all distinctions of labour, and nearly everywhere reduces wages to the same low level. The growing competitions among the bourgeois, and the resulting commercial crises, make the wages of the workers ever more fluctuating. The increasing improvement of machinery, ever more rapidly developing, makes their livelihood more and more precarious; the collisions between individual workmen and individual bourgeois take more and more the character of collisions between two classes. Thereupon, the workers begin to form combinations (Trades' Unions) against the bourgeois; they club together in order to keep up the rate of wages; they found permanent associations in order to make provision beforehand for these occasional revolts. Here and there, the contest breaks out into riots. Now and then the workers are victorious, but only for a time. The real fruit of their battles lies, not in the immediate result, but in the ever expanding union of the workers. This union is helped on by the improved means of

¹³ C. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, page 20, Sygchronh Epoxh Editions. <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1859/critique-poleconomy/preface.htm>

¹⁴ C. Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, page 173, Sygchronh Epoxh Editions. <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1847/poverty-philosophy/ch02e.htm>

*communication that are created by modern industry, and that place the workers of different localities in contact with one another. It was just this contact that was needed to centralise the numerous local struggles, all of the same character, into one national struggle between classes. But every class struggle is a political struggle. And that union, to attain which the burghers of the Middle Ages, with their miserable highways, required centuries, the modern proletariat, thanks to railways, achieve in a few years."*¹⁵

Socialist revolution breaks out and even more so prevails, when there is a minimum level of maturation of the material preconditions for communism. The Mensheviks in the conditions of the Russian revolution were arguing that the revolution was untimely, that undeveloped and "uncivilised" Russia ought to follow the road of a bourgeois society in order to be integrated into the "civilised" nations. Instead, Lenin thought that proletariat had no reason to wait until it may reach a certain "level of culture":

“If a definite level of culture is required for the building of socialism (although nobody can say just what that definite “level of culture” is, for it differs in every Western European country), why cannot we begin by first achieving the prerequisites for that definite level of culture in a revolutionary way, and then, with the aid of the workers’ and peasants’ government and Soviet system, proceed to overtake the other nations? ¹⁶

Of course a relatively undeveloped capitalist economic basis, with the coexistence side by side of the dominant capitalist mode of production with other modes of production that correspond to previous socioeconomic formations, is a grave legacy for socialist construction. This does not mean that the labour movement should subordinate itself to a false rationale that first capitalism would solve all the contradictions, the deep unevenness and then the time will come for the socialist revolution. Besides the progress of history itself has confirmed that what is born historically as a possibility of social progress smashes every prior backwardness in leaps and bounds and does not necessarily pass through all the socioeconomic formations of the past.

This was also the case in capitalist development with its catastrophic impact on the Native American communities.

In addition, a large scale destruction of productive forces that may come about as a result of economic crises, imperialist wars etc. does not mean the negation of the material preconditions.

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16.V.I.Lenin, “Our Revolution”, *Collected Works*, Vol. 45, page 381, Sygchronh Epoxh Editions. <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1923/jan/16.htm>

However, even today, a bourgeois-democratic stage is included in the strategy of many Communist Parties as an inevitable process for the elimination of unevenness, of pre-capitalist vestiges. Even more so, every element that actually emerges from the functioning of the laws of capitalist economy itself, from unevenness, from the anarchy of the capitalist production, parasitism and are wrongly interpreted as deviations from capitalist development and declared to be elements of “backwardness”. Today the discussion that has been initiated in Greece by the government and SYRIZA about the so-called “production model” of the country is very characteristic.

Have the material conditions in Greece matured for socialism?

The Programme of the Communist Party states:

“Capitalism in Greece is in the imperialist stage of its development, in an intermediate position in the international imperialist system, with strong uneven dependencies on the USA and the EU.

The accession of Greece to the EEC at the beginning of the 1980's accelerated its adaptation to the western-European market, a process that continued with its accession to the EU in 1991 and to the Eurozone in 2001.

The Greek capitalist state was more organically integrated into the international imperialist system, through its participation in the restructuring of the EU and NATO and other imperialist inter-state alliances.

The Greek bourgeois class initially benefited from the counterrevolutionary overthrow in the neighbouring Balkan countries and from joining the EU; it achieved significant capital accumulation and capital exports in the form of direct investments which contributed to the strengthening of Greek businesses and monopoly groups.

The capital exports also expanded to Turkey, Egypt, the Ukraine, China as well as to Britain, to the USA and other countries. It actively participated in all the imperialist interventions and wars, such as those against Yugoslavia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya etc.

In the decade which preceded the outbreak of the ongoing crisis, the Greek economy maintained a significantly higher annual rate of GDP growth than the corresponding level of the EU and the Eurozone, without substantially changing its position within it. However, it enhanced its position in the Balkans.

After the outbreak of the crisis, the position of Greek capitalist economy deteriorated in the framework of the Eurozone and the EU and the international imperialist pyramid in general, something which does negate the fact that the accession of Greece to the EEC-EU served the most dynamic sections of domestic monopoly capital and contributed to the buttressing of its political power.

The participation of Greece in NATO, the economic-political and political-military dependencies on the EU and the USA limit the room of the Greek bourgeoisie to manoeuvre independently, as all the alliance relations of capital are governed by competition, unevenness and consequently the advantageous position of the strongest; they are formed as relations of uneven interdependence.

The inter-bourgeois contradictions up to this point do not negate the strategic choice to join NATO and the EU although the participation in the Eurozone is developing in a contradictory way while at the same time the trend for the strengthening of relations with other centres (Russia, China, and USA) is being reinforced.”¹⁷

How are these assessments validated?

• *In Greece the working class comprises the predominant social force, concentrated in crucial and key sectors of the economy.* Even though as a Party we do not have a recent study of the social composition of Greek society indeed based on the previous study of the 1990s and the study of the tendencies in the development of wage labour, we can substantiate the above conclusion even though capitalist economic crisis has a negative influence by increasing the percentage of unemployment.

The number of wage workers ¹⁸ in 2012 was about the same with the number of waged workers in 2001, 2.4 million, but this parity hides a very important rise in the number of waged workers before the outbreak of the crisis and consequently their rapid reduction. As a percentage of the total of employed workers, wage ones represented 59.4% in 2001 and 69.3% in 2012. Before the outbreak of the crisis the rate of increase was higher.

The number of wage workers in manufacturing decreased from 426.000 in 2001 to 266.000 in 2012.

Percentage of wage labour in constructions also diminished significantly, from 66% in 2001 to 59% in 2012.

¹⁷ "Programme of the KKE", *Communist Review*, issue 3/2013, page 97-98.

<http://inter.kke.gr/en/articles/Programme-of-the-KKE/>

¹⁸ Even though there are problems in the measurement of waged workers, according to ELSTAT (Greek Statistical Service) methodology, these trends have not changed.

The number of wage workers in retail trade sector increased significantly from 345.000 to 383.000, with their percentage rise from 49% in 2001 to 56% in 2012 among the total of the employees of the sector. Trade sector has still a large number of self-employed, but concentration-centralization and **proletarianization** tendencies are apparent.

The percentage of wage workers in the tourism-catering sector remains the same at 58%.

The number of wage workers in the financial sector rose slightly from 96.000 in 2001 to 107.000 in 2012. This sector has a very large percentage of wage labour that touches 90%, almost stable from 2001 until 2012.

The sector of scientific-technical services employs 221.000 workers, of which 85.000(39%) are wage workers.

The officially recorded unemployment, during the period 2001-2012, jumped from 11.2% in 2001 to 25.4% in 2012. The outbreak of the crisis led to sudden reverse in its trend to fall which existed up to 2008. In May 2013, unemployment rose to 27.6%.

According to data of the Eurostat, in 2011 in Greece there were officially registered 956.000 immigrants, 8.45% of the total population, (which is 11.309.885), a percentage well above the average in the EU that the same year was 6.63%.¹⁹

- The structure of the capitalist economy in Greece generally follows the trends that characterize developed capitalists states. Thus a reduction of what bourgeois statistics calls the secondary sector (basically because of the reduction in the industrial sectors of manufacturing and construction) and the expansion of the tertiary sector, which also includes industrial sectors like shipping, telecommunications etc.

The secondary industrial sector as percentage of Gross Value Added shrank from 21.1% in 2001 to 17.1% in 2011. Tertiary sector as a percentage of Gross Value Added, increased from 75.2% in 2001 to 78.8% in 2011. In the industrial sector of shipping, Gross Value Added is estimated to have risen from 4.1 billion euros in 2001 to 7.8 billion euros in 2011. In the industrial sector of telecommunications, Gross Value Added rose from 3.1 billion euros in 2001 to 6.2 billion euros in 2010.

¹⁹ All the previous statistics can be found in "Theses of the Central Committee of the

The agricultural primary sector as a percentage of GDP fell from 5.8% in 2001 to 3.5% in 2008 only to increase 4.1% in 2011 (due to the fall in GDP and not to a small absolute increase). Despite the sharp decline of some products, production seems to have increased during this period (e.g., durum wheat, maize and rice).

In the agricultural sector, the average area of rural exploitation remains very small up to today (in 25% of the EU average). Agricultural holdings with Standard Gross Margin (SGM) of over 48,000 euros in 2007 covered 12.9% of rural land versus 3.94% in 1990. We believe that an agricultural holding with SGM under 48,000 euros does not ensure a general expanded reproduction of its capital.

- There are obvious trends of concentration in the farming sector enhancing the industrial character of production.

The livestock production, compared to 1981 (that Greece joined the EEC), presents significant reduction in meat, generally a stagnant production of milk (with an increase in fresh milk products), reduction in butter. In livestock production appears a significant concentration, even though a large number of holdings with small animal capital still remain.²⁰

- Before the outbreak of the crisis, Greek capitalism had upgraded its' position in the region of the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean, a position that consequently after the crisis was downgraded. During 2004-2009 the export of capital from Greece to the international market and especially to South-East Europe increased, as well as active participation in imperialist interventions for the control of the markets.

²⁰ All the previous statistics can be found in “Theses of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Greece for the 19th Congress”, *Communist Review*, issue 1/2013, page 30-31.

<http://interold.kke.gr/News/news2013/2013-03-05-thesis.html>

- In the context of uneven development, Greek capitalism acquired an upgraded position in the Balkan region, which was realised after these countries became capitalist.

Greek capital invested in the Balkans and generally in South-East Europe over 14 billion euros in total. Greece had acquired the 3rd position among foreign investors in Romania and Bulgaria. It was also the largest foreign investor in Albania. Businesses of Greek or mixed capital that were established in the Balkans reached 4,000 and employed 200,000 workers. Regarding the foreign investments of the bank sector, Greece had the 2nd position in Romania and Bulgaria.²¹

The Greek economy had maintained until 2009 a significant annual growth rate of GDP (almost double) in comparison to the Eurozone average. Generally, the average annual growth rate of GDP in twelve years 1996-2007 reached 3.9%, thus resulting in the reduction of the gap with more developed

economies in the EU. Per capita GDP of Greece reached t 88% of the EU-15 average and 98% of the average of the EU-27.²²

After the outbreak of the crisis this course was reversed. The distance between Greece and the strongest capitalist economies of the Eurozone grew bigger. It is included in the member-states that could secede in case of a Eurozone reformation. Even though the position of Greece in the broader region of the Eastern Mediterranean remains strong, it is weakening in comparison to Turkey and Israel. During the last five years there is a loss of its capitalist competitive position, a major shrinkage of production, mainly in the manufacturing and construction sector and less so in agriculture, while the shipping sector maintains its leading role in the international capitalist market (the Greek- owned fleet is the 2nd power worldwide and 1st in EU, while the fleet flying the Greek flag is 6th power worldwide). The Greek fleet used to transport and still carries a great part of marine freight and oil to the USA. It is the only section of Greek capital that can negotiate from a position of strength inside the EU.

In the context of uneven development, Greece, with some signs of retreat, still remains in an intermediate position in the international imperialist pyramid, with dependencies on the U.S.A. and EU.

²¹ "Theses of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Greece for the 18th Congress", *18th Congress of KKE. Documents*, page 309-310, CC of the KKE Editions.

²² "Theses of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Greece for the 18th Congress", *18th Congress of KKE. Documents*, page 309, CC of the KKE Editions.

The worsening position of Greece in conditions of crisis is also related to the internal unevenness in the Eurozone.

Greek capitalism, seeking to improve its position in the EU and in general in international imperialist pyramid, sets as strategic aims: the emergence of Greece as a transport hub for energy and commodities from Asia to the EU; the joint exploitation of rich energy deposits (Aegean-Ionian-South Crete); the strengthening of the competitiveness of big capital and the bargaining position of Greece in the Euroatlantic imperialist alliance.

It also highlights the objective of developing certain industries and sectors such as: tourism, production of certain agricultural products, certain sectors of industry with an export orientation.

The Programme of KKE concludes:

"The contradiction between the social character of labour and the private capitalist appropriation of the largest part of its results, due to the capitalist ownership of the concentrated means of production, is being highlighted intensely in every aspect of economic and social life. The need for social ownership, Central Planning with working class power is emerging as an urgent necessity. Socialism is more necessary and timely than ever from the standpoint of the material conditions.

*In Greece there exist the material conditions for socialist construction. This fact flows from the historical era of capitalism, from the level of Greek capitalism's development, from the sharpening of its basic contradiction and its contradictions as a whole. Socialist construction can safeguard the satisfaction of the people's needs which are constantly expanding. Greece today has major unutilized productive potential which can be liberated only through the socialization of the means of production by the working class power, with the Central Scientific Planning of production. It possesses an experienced and numerous labour force and even with a high level of technological and scientific specialization. It possesses important domestic energy sources, considerable mineral resources, industrial, craft and agricultural production which can meet a large part of the people's needs: in food and energy, transport, the construction of public infrastructure works and people's housing. The agricultural production can support industry in its various sectors."*²³

²³ "Programme of the KKE", *Communist Review*, issue 3/2013, page 101.

<http://inter.kke.gr/en/articles/Programme-of-the-KKE/>

²⁴ "Programme of the KKE", *Communist Review*, issue 3/2013, page 99.

<http://inter.kke.gr/en/articles/Programme-of-the-KKE/>

In the Programme of KKE, based on the estimations concerning the contemporary era of capitalism, of capitalist development in Greece, the thesis that the revolution in Greece will be socialist is confirmed. Specifically:

"The Greek people will be liberated from the bonds of capitalist exploitation and the imperialist unions when the working class together with its allies carries out the socialist revolution and moves forwards to construct socialism-communism.

The KKE's strategic goal is the conquest of revolutionary working-class power, the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the socialist construction as the immature phase of the communist society.

*The revolutionary change in Greece will be socialist."*²⁴

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Chapter Two

The socialist revolution

What is a social revolution?

The political and social content of the revolution

In the progressive development of all material phenomena, we can observe two forms: one is the evolutionary form, where essentially , slow, progressive changes take place, without changing the quality of the phenomenon, without changing its' essence, just change as it is, and the other is the revolutionary one, the "revolutionary leap", as it is called within the categories of dialectical materialism, where, essentially, a violent transition from one situation to another takes place, radically modifying the quality of things, changing their essence.

As regards society, we refer to social revolutions, to these revolutionary leaps, violent transitions that change the character of society itself, its essence, change the economic basis, the relations of production (in the core of which the property relations in the means of production are located) and the political, ideological, ethical relations based on them.

Social revolutions constitute the result of the class struggle, which permeates all class societies. They are the result of the struggle between the hostile social classes, independently of its form, of its expression, of whether it is open or not.

Marx and Engels, in 1848, in the Manifesto of the Communist Party, highlighted with scientific accuracy the role of class struggle as a motor force of society:

"The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes.

In the earlier epochs of history, we find almost everywhere a complicated arrangement of society into various orders, a manifold gradation of social rank. In ancient Rome we have patricians, knights, plebeians, slaves; in the Middle Ages, feudal lords, vassals, guild-masters, journeymen, apprentices, serfs; in almost all of these classes, again, subordinate gradations.

The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones.

Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinct feature: it has simplified class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other — Bourgeoisie and Proletariat. " (32)

The Marxist-Leninist theory, generalizing the experience of class struggle and revolutions, proves that revolutions are the motors of social progress, the "engines of history", as Marx characterized them.

The economic basis of class struggle- its' material basis-, is the deep conflict between the development of the forces of production of society and the outdated, conservative system of relations of production expressed by the intensification of social contradictions and their expression at the level of politics and ideology, the struggle between the dominant class, interested in the preservation of the dominant mode of production and the oppressed classes, that fight for its overthrow.

Marx, in the Preface of his work "A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy", accurately described how the necessity of the social revolution is formed:

"In the social production of their existence, men inevitably enter into definite relations, which are independent of their will, namely relations of production appropriate to a given stage in the development of their material forces of production. The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of

production or – this merely expresses the same thing in legal terms – with the property relations within the framework of which they have operated hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then an era of social revolution begins." (33).

In contrast to the transition from slavery to feudalism that ended with the "destruction of the two contending classes", the slave-owners and the slaves, the transition from feudalism to capitalism acquires features of national political action. The bourgeoisie establishes its parties, its various political wings, the role of the conscious action of classes increases. At the same time, the bourgeoisie, that, at that time was comprised of mass strata of small owners and merchants and not only of bankers and industrialists, mobilized against feudalism not only the large strata of peasants oppressed by feudal relations, but also the young, and small in terms of population, proletariat.

The bourgeoisie was established as a representative of all the people, as a representative of the nation. In that way, not only the bourgeoisie and the peasant serfs, but also new "wage- slaves", "released" from the physical and social coercion of slavery and feudalism came to the forefront of social development.

Precisely because the history of bourgeois revolutions reveals that the transition from feudalism to capitalism took place in a revolutionary way, pulling popular and working masses to the forefront of historical evolution, today, contemporary ideological representatives of the bourgeoisie do not only oppose socialist revolutions, proletarian revolutions, but also slander and distort the most radical traditions of the English Revolution of 1648, the French Revolution of 1789, and conceal the social content, the bourgeois character of the revolution of 1821.

In a schematic way, we can see two processes in social revolution: one regarding the change of the relations of production and all social relations and another regarding political revolution, the demolition of the power of the dominant class and the conquest of political power by the revolting class.

As Lenin noted: *«The passing of state power from one class to another is the first, the principal, the basic sign of a revolution..."* (34).

In all the instances of bourgeois revolutions it has been proven that the old feudal society was not willing to "die" voluntarily, to withdraw from the social forefront. On the contrary, it reacted fiercely. In addition, the conquest of political power from the bourgeoisie was a precondition for the extension of capitalist relations, the overcoming of any obstacle set by the feudal superstructure.

Consequently, the main task of any revolutionary class is to conquer political power for the creation of its own class state: *"Because the state arose from the need to hold class antagonisms in check, but because it arose, at the same time, in the midst of the conflict of these classes, it is, as a rule, the state of the most powerful, economically dominant class, which, through the*

medium of the state, becomes also the politically dominant class, and thus acquires new means of holding down and exploiting the oppressed class...." (35).

What are the features of the revolutionary transition from capitalism to socialism? Why can capitalism not be "transformed" into socialism?

The proletarian socialist revolution is a higher type of social revolution which organizes and carries out the full conflict and rupture with the social relations of the capitalist socio-economic formation.

Socialist revolution is a qualitative leap for the scientific transition to a historically superior mode of production.

It establishes the power of the working class, the dictatorship of the proletariat, in alliance with the popular strata. Its main task, on the basis of socialization of the means of production, is to abolish every form of private ownership, to construct the classless, communist society.

Generalizing the experience of the historically known revolutions, K. Marx and Fr. Engels wrote:

"All the preceding classes that got the upper hand sought to fortify their already acquired status by subjecting society at large to their conditions of appropriation. The proletarians cannot become masters of the productive forces of society, except by abolishing their own previous mode of appropriation, and thereby also every other previous mode of appropriation.

[...]

The Communist revolution is the most radical rupture with traditional property relations; no wonder that its development involved the most radical rupture with traditional ideas." (36).

The duty of bourgeois revolution was to bring the superstructure of the society in correspondence with the new economic relations that had already developed or even dominated within the previous society, aiming at their complete extension and domination.

Capitalist relations, the relation of wage labour and capital were developed and also started to become dominant within the framework of the feudal system. What remained was to break the "rotten" chains of the old society and bring the political superstructure in correspondence with the new emerging economic base.

"The difference between a socialist revolution and a bourgeois revolution", said Lenin, "is that in the latter case there are ready-made forms of capitalist relationships; Soviet power—the proletarian power—does not inherit such ready-made relationships..." (37)

The duty of socialist revolution is incomparably more difficult and complex. It is clear that the working class, as the dominant motor force of the socialist revolution, has as its basic duty to resolve the main issue of the revolution, the issue of power. The socialist revolution has to resolve, through the conscious action of the vanguard of the class, of its party, the complex problem that in the previous eras was spontaneously and progressively resolved by History:

the formation of the new socio-economic base of the communist society, the directly social industrial production on the basis of social ownership over the concentrated means of production and of its central planning. The formation of the new relations is a particularly difficult task. It constitutes the basic revolutionary duty of working class power, the dictatorship of the proletariat. The transition to the communist socio-economic formation is not a simple transition from one exploiting society to another, even if it is superior, but the definite and full abolition of any type of private ownership over the means of production, any type of exploiting class and not the succession of one by another.

This is where the harsh character of class struggle originates, as well as enormous difficulties regarding the construction of the new communist society, as it manifested itself in the process of construction and finally of counterrevolution and restoration of capitalism in the USSR and in other socialist countries.

As the development of communist relations presupposes the abolition of every type of exploitative relations, communist relations cannot be formed within capitalism. Communist and capitalist relations of production cannot coexist beside each other. Historically, the view of reforming of capitalism into socialism was based on the phenomenon that the bourgeois state assumed, to a large extent, sectors of the economic activity by founding state monopolies or by the nationalization of some of them. In reality, it was a activity in support of capitalist development, either during periods where the formation of infrastructure is necessary in order to help capitalist activity, capitalist accumulation, (e.g. the formation of railway network in France and Germany of the 19th century etc), or in periods of war preparation (1st and 2nd World War) or in periods after large-scale destruction of forces of production (post-war reconstruction in Europe).

Engels highlighted characteristically: *"...since Bismarck went in for state-ownership of industrial establishments, a kind of spurious socialism has arisen, degenerating, now and again, into something of flunkeyism, that without more ado declares all state ownership, even of the Bismarckian sort, to be socialistic. Certainly, if the taking over by the state of the tobacco industry is socialistic, then Napoleon and Metternich must be numbered among the founders of socialism. If the Belgian state, for quite ordinary political and financial reasons, itself constructed its chief railway lines; if Bismarck, not under any economic compulsion, took over for the state the chief Prussian lines, simply to be the better able to have them in hand in case of war, to bring up the railway employees as voting cattle for the government, and especially to create for himself a new source of income independent of parliamentary votes — this was, in no sense, a socialistic measure, directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously. Otherwise, the Royal Maritime Company, the Royal porcelain manufacture, and even the regimental tailor of the army would also be socialistic institutions."* (38)

All opportunist ideological constructs on economic relations of a new type - "social economy", workers' cooperatives etc., apart from private and more specifically capitalist ownership are nothing more than reheated proposals of utopian socialists that then constituted a feature of the immaturity of socialism

and today constitute an effort to mislead the workers that social revolution is not needed for the overthrow of capitalism.

In the Report of the CC of the 18th Congress of KKE for socialism, it is mentioned that:

"During socialist construction, that it is to say during the long passage from a capitalist to a developed communist society, politics -that is to say revolutionary working class state power with the party as its leading force acquires precedence in the shaping, extension and deepening of the new social relations. This is not voluntarism, as certain comrades have argued. The relations of social ownership do not come about spontaneously as long as relations of private ownership exist. This did not occur with capitalist relations which appeared while feudal relations were still predominant, even if in the case of capitalism that politics harmonized social relations with the new productive forces. Politics gave a new impetus to their development, and later through politics historically out-of-date capitalist relations were maintained and became an obstacle to the development of productive forces. Nevertheless, the relations of social ownership appear only as a result of the revolutionary political act. This does not mean an idealistic downgrading or denial of the decisive role of the productive forces in the relationship between productive forces and productive relations.

In the case of the relations of social ownership, their ability to appear in concentrated industrial production and their moulding comes about as the result of the revolutionary will of the working class and its victory over the state power of capital. From this point of view, revolutionary politics becomes decisive in the shaping of the new productive relations, and also in the course of socialist development, in the course of the disappearance of intermediate cooperative relations. The replacement of cooperative relations with relations of social ownership, the passage from cooperative production to direct social production is not carried out spontaneously through the planned development of productive forces in the cooperatives, but as a result of the revolutionary act." (39)

What are the motor forces of socialist revolution?

When speaking about "motor forces" of the socialist revolution, we refer to those social forces that have an objective interest in the overthrow of capitalist relations of production.

As has already analyzed, the basic motor force, the leading social force of the process of social revolution is the working class, because it has a general interest in the abolition of capitalist relations and the harmonization of the social character of production with social ownership of the means of production.

However, the abolition of capitalist ownership is also in the interests of that section of small owners of means of production that are crushed by large-scale capitalist ownership, the monopolies. The interests of those sections of the intermediate strata are close to those of the proletariat, taking into account the prospect of them becoming salaried workers in the future and not owners of means of production, as they are today.

Lenin noted that: *“Capitalism would not be capitalism if the proletariat pur sang were not surrounded by a large number of exceedingly motley types intermediate between the proletarian and the semi-proletarian (who earns his livelihood in part by the sale of his labour-power), between the semiproletarian and the small peasant (and petty artisan, handicraft worker and small master in general), between the small peasant and the middle peasant, and so on, and if the proletariat itself were not divided into more developed and less developed strata, if it were not divided according to territorial origin, trade, sometimes according to religion, and so on.”* (40)

It is very important to determine such forces, as it has to do with the elaboration of the policy of alliances of the labour movement.

It means the elaboration of the framework of struggle in order for vanguard sectors of such popular intermediate strata to be detached from the political influence of capital and to ally with the revolutionary workers' movement.

In each capitalist country, the composition and the percentage of such forces differ. However, we can define them as being forces that cannot permanently exploit alien labour, cannot achieve accumulation due to their activity.

In the Programme of KKE there is the following reference: *“The motor forces of the socialist revolution will be the working class as the leading force, the semiproletarians, the oppressed popular strata of the urban self-employed, the poor farmers, who are negatively affected by the monopolies, and for this reason have an objective interest in their abolition, the abolition of capitalist ownership, in the overthrow of its power, in the new relations of production”* (41).

In Greece, these are forces consisting of poor farmers, self-employed in retail trade and manufacturing, workers of restaurants and tourism, construction, cleaning etc. They periodically together with other members of their family, they may be owners of land and some other dispersed means of production. The capitalist system that, sooner or later, will make them lose their land, will destroy them as independent producers and workers will lead them to unemployment or, in the best case, to underemployment. Even if it preserves them for a certain period, their conditions of life will worsen (debts, insecurity, too many hours of work each day etc.).

The long lasting and deep crises provoked a sudden change even in branches where self-employment survived under better conditions, in professions related to construction, repairs, law and accounting. The integration of scientists into large capitalist enterprises has extended to the law, accounting, technical work, to all work related to health prevision and rehabilitation, motherhood, health and insurance in the workplaces, Public Health, Culture and Sports, as salaried workers, is increasing even further.

The tendency of deterioration of the conditions of important sections of self-employed and scientists, even if they have a better salary and, mainly, greater freedom than salaried workers, by exchanging their work with income (42) is characteristic. Sections of self-employed scientists (e.g. Engineers, lawyers, accountants etc.) only appear as being self-employed in a formal sense and work with a flat-rate payment for capitalist businesses, issuing themselves a payment receipt.

Their medium-term interest is objectively to be found on the path of conflict and overthrow of the monopolies, capitalist ownership, at the side of the working class for the conquest of the power.

For significant sections of the self-employed, the common struggle with salaried workers is the only choice that serves their future interests. Their own interest lies in the workers' state providing them all the conditions to carry out scientific work for the prosperity of society.

It is inevitable that either they will align with the capitalist mode of production, the consequence of which is the violent destruction of majority of them, or with development based on social (popular) ownership, central planning in favour of social prosperity. It is in the interests of the working class to win such strata to its side, the side of workers' people's power or, at least, to ensure that they are not aligned with the reaction of the class of capitalists.

The destruction of the self-employed should not be understood as an absolute trend, as it coexists with the reproduction of certain intermediate strata, despite the fact this is taking place under conditions of the relative worsening of their conditions in relation to the previous period.

Drawing sections of these forces to the side of the working class or neutralizing them presupposes the existence of a powerful labour movement that will have a leading role in the people's mobilization.

Any underestimation of this aspect creates the danger that, instead of drawing these forces to the side of the working class, the petty bourgeois views of such forces prevail in the working class and turn it into the tail of the bourgeois political line.

The working class is not separated from these strata by a "Chinese Wall", even more so as there is a differentiation inside it, there are objective and subjective factors that place obstacles to its unity.

The policy of alliances of the Communist Party, the policy of alliances from the standpoint of the working class, aims to draw social forces to the side of the working class, aims for such a rally to have a certain orientation and to be formed on an anti-capitalist basis, in the direction of the confrontation against the capital.

The issue of power.

The smashing of the bourgeois state. Why can't there be a parliamentary way to socialism?

The issue posed many times in a theoretical or practical way to the communist movement is whether the working class can use the bourgeois state apparatus in order to construct its own power.

Confusion around this issue arose from the fact that the bourgeois state and mainly the parliamentary form of bourgeois democracy appear as a non-class state based on the democratically expressed will of the members of bourgeois society, irrespective of the classes they belong to.

Marx, in his work "The German Ideology", in the chapter "The relation of the bourgeois to the capitalist state", analyzes how the bourgeois state is presented as something alien to the bourgeois class: *"To this modern private property corresponds the modern State (...)Through the emancipation of private property from the community, the State has become a separate entity,*

beside and outside civil society; but it is nothing more than the form of organization which the bourgeois necessarily adopt both for internal and external purposes, for the mutual guarantee of their property and interests...

Since the State is the form in which the individuals of a ruling class assert their common interests, and in which the whole civil society of an epoch is epitomized, it follows that the State mediates in the formation of all common institutions and that the institutions receive a political form." (43)

Class struggles of the period 1848-1871, culminating with the Paris Commune, helped Marx and Engels to arrive at the conclusion that the proletariat cannot "receive" the bourgeois state apparatus and use it in its favour, on the contrary, it has to "smash" it and to replace it with a new one that corresponds to its own interests.

Lenin, in his work "State and Revolution" developed these theses further, in opposition to those of the German Social-democrat Karl Kautsky, and revealed the necessity to smash the bourgeois state as a precondition for the victory of the proletariat.

He highlighted that there is no "pure" democracy, but class democracy. In capitalism, democracy is the usurpation of the power by a minority of the population, the capitalists, the bourgeoisie. It is a capitalist democracy, a bourgeois democracy, a democracy essentially in favour of the interests of few and a dictatorship for the majority. In socialism, revolutionary power of the working class also is not "pure" and "neutral". It is a democracy for the majority and a dictatorship for the few, the former capitalists.

In addition, even the most developed form of parliamentary democracy on the basis of capitalist relations of production, cannot exceed those limits. As V.I. Lenin argued, *"even the most democratic bourgeois republic is nothing more than an apparatus for the oppression of the working class by the bourgeoisie, of the mass of workers by a handful of capitalists"* (44).

The bourgeois parliament offers stability to bourgeois power as in that way the general interests of the minority (capitalists) are served through its political representatives with the support of the majority (the working class and the poor popular strata). For that reason, bourgeois parliamentary democracy is typical for all developed capitalist countries, is the most characteristic form of organization of bourgeois political power. Lenin, repeating Engels' words, noted that: *"In the 'democratic republic' continues Engels, 'wealth exerts indirectly its' power and, for that reason, it exerts it in a more secure way', and, more precisely, first of all, with the form of 'direct buying of public officers' (America) and, secondly, with the 'form of government and stock marker alliance' (France and America). [...]"*

The omnipotence of "wealth" is more certain in a democratic republic because it does not depend on defects in the political machinery or on the faulty political shell of capitalism. A democratic republic is the best possible political shell for capitalism..." (45)

To the extent that the form of organization of the bourgeois class maintains features of the past (e.g. delay in the development and function of the electoral bourgeois parliamentary regime in contrast to the concentration of powers in the hands of one person), bourgeois movements are formed, in order to sideline them (e.g. the so-called "Arab Spring"). In such movements, intermediate strata that arose from capitalist development itself prevail, pulling with them wide strata of the working class and other poorer popular strata.

The fomentation or support for such movements is often related to the interests of other powerful capitalist countries, with rivalries for the control of energy resources, infrastructure, international transport, military bases etc. Imperialist powers, such as the USA, the EU, under the pretext of "democratization" intervene directly (e.g. Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya) or indirectly (Egypt, Syria).

The general right to vote on the terrain of capitalist relations of productions (which was not conceded by the bourgeoisie but conquered by the struggles of the working class), is under continuous open or concealed limitations, when it has to do with real popular-workers' representation. Because, the only representation of a Communist Party can fulfil this, as long as the Communist Party serve its title in reality. If not, the workers' and people's votes can determine nothing more than *"which member of the ruling class was to represent and repress the people in parliament"* (46).

According to the course of the class struggle, there are phases where the falsification of the electoral expression is carried out in an openly violent way, e.g. in Greece during the decades of 1950 and 1960, against EDA (United Democratic Left), in which members and cadres of KKE were active.

However, "falsification" of the general electoral right, is carried out in any case, even in the most normal conditions, through ideological-political manipulation and buying off, when mass phenomena of open threats and violence are gone, when the working class is called on freely to choose the representatives of the class hostile to it, to vote in the same way as its employers.

As regards multiparty systems within the framework of the bourgeois system, it expresses differences and contradictions between sections of the bourgeoisie around issues of management of capitalism with historical and ideological bases, as well as their need to alternate in government. In that way, their class character, as well as their strategic alignment is concealed.

For these reasons, it is a given that revolutionary majority can be formed only outside the institutions of such democracy and only when opposition to them matures, when illusions about solutions in favour of the people carried out by these institutions collapse, only to the extent that the working class is organized in the units of production, not only on an economic basis, but also in a political direction, i.e. in the struggle for its own power. Lenin, responding to the illusion that the proletariat and the poor popular strata can, through bourgeois elections, constitute a majority expressing the people's will and providing the possibility of conquering political power, wrote against the opportunists: *"The petty bourgeois democrats, their chief present-day representatives, the "socialists" and "Social-Democrats", are suffering from illusions when they imagine that the working people are capable, under capitalism, of acquiring the high degree of class-consciousness, firmness of character, perception and wide political outlook that will enable them to decide, merely by voting, or at all events, to decide in advance, without long experience of struggle, that they will follow a particular class, or a particular party."* (47)

Each time the labour movement made the mistake of thinking that the working class can conquer power through bourgeois institutions, acquiring a parliamentary majority or in compromise with such institutions, it ended up

becoming a follower of the bourgeoisie or of sections of it, it was assimilated into supporting the domination of the monopolies, losing economic gains in this trajectory as well. Also, many times, illusions regarding sections of the bourgeoisie, institutions of the bourgeoisie and bourgeois parliamentarianism, created the possibility of the working class being disarmed in the face of against state repression and provided the terrain for it to be attacked in a mass way (e.g. in Chile in 1973 etc.).

When the sharpening of the class struggle formed even the slightest possibility of endangering the capitalist relations of production, then the supporters of capitalist democracy pass to forms of open terrorist violence against the labour movement, as it has been proven not only by the experience of Greece, but also by international experience. However, they aim not to reach that point. For that reason, even under conditions of "peaceful development" artificial (e.g. suffrage laws) as well as ideological measures for intimidation, manipulation are taken, including even the banning of communist parties (e.g. banning of communist parties and the communist ideology, symbols etc. in various member-states of the EU, mainly in former socialist countries). At the same time, methods to deceive the voters in electoral periods are used, or even methods aimed at their alienation and abstention from voting.

People's sovereignty, the popular mandate, the people's will are invoked only when the people accept the existing situation. When the people decide the opposite, then the people's will is decapitated, an example of this is the fate of referendums for the ratification of treaties of the EU which had a negative result (e.g. the Irish referendum in 2008 for the approval of the Treaty of Lisbon. Moreover, in 2009, after a lot of pressure pressures and sharpening of the intra-bourgeois conflict, there was a second referendum that finally ratified the treaty. Ireland was the only country within the 27 countries of the EU that posed the issue of approval by referendum).

The Political Resolution of the 19th Congress, states the following: *"The developments indicate that the intensification of state violence and repression, the restriction of political and trade union liberties will be expressed in a reactionary revision of the constitution that will incorporate the relevant laws and the restrictions of the EU. The bourgeois class and its parties are even not satisfied with the bourgeois democracy they established themselves. Their choice to break the labour movement, to impede any possible radicalization of the working class and the poor popular strata is inextricably linked with the restriction of the activity of the KKE, with the declaration of anticommunism as the official state ideology, with the utilization of the well-known theory of the "two extremes" (48).*

The revolutionary situation, a precondition for the revolution

The socialist revolution cannot be carried out at any time. The emergence of such an objective situation as a result of sharp changes in the life of the capitalist society, favourable for the revolutionary overthrow of capitalist power and the conquest of the political power by the working class is an essential condition. In Marxist-Leninist theory, such a situation is called the

"revolutionary situation» or "revolutionary crisis" and constitutes the objective basis for the revolution.

Lenin gave the scientific definition of a revolutionary situation:

"To the Marxist it is indisputable that a revolution is impossible without a revolutionary situation; furthermore, it is not every revolutionary situation that leads to revolution. What, generally speaking, are the symptoms of a revolutionary situation? We shall certainly not be mistaken if we indicate the following three major symptoms: (1) when it is impossible for the ruling classes to maintain their rule without any change; when there is a crisis, in one form or another, among the "upper classes", a crisis in the policy of the ruling class, leading to a fissure through which the discontent and indignation of the oppressed classes burst forth. For a revolution to take place, it is usually insufficient for "the lower classes not to want" to live in the old way; it is also necessary that "the upper classes should be unable" to live in the old way; (2) when the suffering and want of the oppressed classes have grown more acute than usual; (3) when, as a consequence of the above causes, there is a considerable increase in the activity of the masses, who uncomplainingly allow themselves to be robbed in "peace time", but, in turbulent times, are drawn both by all the circumstances of the crisis and by the "upper classes" themselves into independent historical action. Without these objective changes, which are independent of the will, not only of individual groups and parties but even of individual classes, a revolution, as a general rule, is impossible." (49)

In other words, when referring to a revolutionary situation as an objective precondition for socialist revolution, we mean a sum total of objectively formed changes in society based on the economic relations, which lead to a temporary balance between bourgeoisie and working class. In other words, the bourgeoisie has the power, however it has difficulties in imposing it, and the working class has the power to impose its will but has not decided to do so yet.

The revolutionary situation is formed under conditions of sudden sharpening of the capitalist society's contradictions. For that reason, only in certain critical moments of History and independently of the will of the classes, the conditions of revolutionary situation are formed.

The phrase "independently of the will of the classes" indicates precisely the objective character of the revolutionary situation.

Such situations existed e.g. in the revolutions of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries in the countries of Western Europe, in 1905 and in 1917 in Russia and in the European continent during the period 1918-1922 and at the end of the World War II, in Greece in October of 1944.

Examining the first characteristic, "a crisis at the top" we do not refer to common "difficulties" that often appear in the bourgeois political system, e.g. resignations of bourgeois governments, conflicts between bourgeois parties, changes in the bourgeois political system with the disappearance of older parties and the formation of new ones, alternations in the state form of bourgeoisie power, their constitutional expression etc. There is a crisis at the

top also when the policy of the bourgeoisie is bankrupt, when it shows an obvious difficulty in managing crisis situations (economic crisis, war etc.) that develop and expand popular discontent in an uncommon way, and as a result "the lower classes" cannot be controlled as before by the "upper classes", confusion prevails at the "summits" and on that basis, intra-bourgeois contradictions sharpen.

It's the critical point where the bourgeois state, its institutions and mechanisms can not any more impose their political domination on the popular masses as easily and with the methods they did before.

This is expressed in moments of historical realignments and conflicts, as during the period from February to October of 1917 in Russia when the bourgeois government did not have the political and military capacity to oppose the Soviets, mainly just before the October Revolution when in Petersburg and Moscow large sections of the army united with the armed workers, when the temporary government of Kerensky and the opportunists who participated in it were completely bankrupt in the consciousness of the masses.

Regarding the second feature, the sharpening of misery and poverty of the masses:

The economic conditions of life of the working class and popular strata constitute an important factor that influences their activity.

The abrupt, massive increase of poverty and unemployment, the abrupt and large-scale worsening of the conditions of work and life that is not manageable by direct (government, Local Government) or indirect (e.g. NGOs', the Church etc.) mechanisms of the bourgeois state, cause the sudden expression of massive popular discontent and action expressed by political strikes, conflicts with the repressive mechanisms, "insurrectionary mood" etc.

Many factors can cause such a sudden change in the material conditions of the working class and the poor popular strata, which, as a result, causes a change in the people's mood. Class contradictions may sharpen to the level of a revolutionary situation, through the combination and interaction of economic and political causes.

According to the historical experience of the 19th and 20th century, the formation of a revolutionary situation is connected to imperialist war. Characteristic cases are those of the Paris Commune in 1871 during the French-Prussian war of 1870-1871, the Russian Revolution of 1905 at the end of the Russian-Japanese war of the period 1903-1905, the October Revolution and the defeated revolutions in Germany, Hungary, Slovakia during World War I, the revolutionary situation in several European states and in Greece during World War II etc.

Lenin, connecting the formation of conditions of revolutionary situation to the development of an imperialist war, in the framework of the conditions formed in June 1915, almost a year after the beginning of World War I, assessed: "*A political crisis exists; no government is sure of the morrow, not one is secure against the danger of financial collapse, loss of territory, expulsion from its country (in the way the Belgian Government was expelled). All governments are sleeping on a volcano; all are themselves calling for the masses to display initiative and heroism. The entire political regime of Europe has been shaken,*

and hardly anybody will deny that we have entered [...] a period of immense political upheavals. " (50)

Lenin considers the sudden change in the attitude and the activity of the masses at a certain period to be an objective phenomenon, i.e. independent of the consciousness of the classes, the will of the parties.

Objectivity does not characterize only the economy, but also politics. Politics, highlighted Lenin, *«have their own objective logic, irrespective of what persons or parties plan in advance* »(51).

Objective conditions inside the context of which the subjective factor acts (classes and strata, their parties or separate representatives of them) are formed by the previous activity of classes, as regards socioeconomics, as well as politics.

Political correlation of forces at a certain moment, as a result of the activity of the classes and parties, is an objective reality which the Communist Party is obliged to take into consideration.

A certain correlation of forces objectively cannot remain stable. Because capitalist reality itself is not stable, it includes the tendency of the sharpening of its contradictions.

The manifestation of a revolutionary situation is a result precisely of that tendency for correlation of forces to change between the working class and the class of the capitalists. However, the outbreak of the revolution and, chiefly, its victory, is not as objective and spontaneous. It can not happen without the appropriate preparation of a vanguard part of the working class, without the ideological, political, organizational preparation for action within such a favourable revolutionary situation. In addition, a successful revolution, which means a complete change in the correlation of forces between the two rival classes is a very demanding issue, requires the ability to evaluate the best "moment" for the "assault», the conquest of power, "neither too early, or too late", as Lenin said.

In this sense, despite the fact that the working class and its party, as well as the capitalists and their state and parties, cannot cause or avoid the manifestation of a revolutionary situation, the previous activity of the communist party, the development of the labour movement can influence the elements of the way the revolutionary situation manifests itself and its utilization.

Lenin, in the conditions of the World War I, evaluated that there was a possibility for a revolutionary situation to be formed and for the socialist revolution to prevail more easily in a less developed capitalist society, like Tsarist Russia, where bourgeois power was not as consolidated and powerful as other capitalist countries.

Such a position was different from the positions of Marxists (also adopted by Lenin himself in the previous period, and this influenced his study as regards the revolution of 1905) that the socialist revolution can take place simultaneously in the leading capitalist countries, a position expressed by Marx and Engels.

To the question whether a communist revolution can take place in any country, Engels replied: *"No. By creating the world market, big industry has already brought all the peoples of the Earth, and especially the civilized peoples, into such close relation with one another that none is independent of what happens to the others.*

Further, it has co-ordinated the social development of the civilized countries to such an extent that, in all of them, bourgeoisie and proletariat have become the decisive classes, and the struggle between them the great struggle of the day. It follows that the communist revolution will not merely be a national phenomenon but must take place simultaneously in all civilized countries – that is to say, at least in England, America, France, and Germany.

It will develop in each of these countries more or less rapidly, according as one country or the other has a more developed industry, greater wealth, a more significant mass of productive forces. Hence, it will go slowest and will meet most obstacles in Germany, most rapidly and with the fewest difficulties in England. It will have a powerful impact on the other countries of the world, and will radically alter the course of development which they have followed up to now, while greatly stepping up its pace.

It is a universal revolution and will, accordingly, have a universal range." (52)

Later, Engels saw in the "democratic revolution" in Russia the flame that could light the socialist revolution in Europe.

Lenin arrived at the conclusion that the workers' movement cannot wait for the simultaneous expression of socialist revolution in all capitalist economies because the uneven economic (as well as political) development of capitalism resulted in the sharpening of internal contradictions and relations between the capitalist countries to a different level, and, as a result, the revolutionary situation, the possibility of its manifestation and the victory of socialist revolution matured at different times.

Lenin, in his work *"On the slogan for a United States of Europe"*, says:

"Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism.

Hence, the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country alone. After expropriating the capitalists and organising their own socialist production, the victorious proletariat of that country will arise against the rest of the world—the capitalist world—attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries, stirring uprisings in those countries against the capitalists, and in case of need using even armed force against the exploiting classes and their states.." (53)

He estimated the possibility of victory of the socialist revolution in those countries or group of countries that would constitute the "weakest link " of the imperialist system.

Socialist revolution in one or another country is not an isolated phenomenon, a sudden event. It is connected to realignments, processes, and changes in the correlation of forces that take place within the imperialist system, somewhere however they lead more quickly to the sharpening of the class struggle.

As is historically proven, the revolutionary situation is not formed in only one country, also because such possibilities are formed under conditions of big events, like imperialist war, that include various capitalist states.

As a consequence, it is impossible for a revolutionary situation to exist only in one country, as well as for socialist revolution to manifest itself and for the international environment, the international or regional correlation of forces to remain stable, unchanged. It has also been proven that the socialist revolution affects the development of the revolutionary, workers', communist movement at a world level.

The proletariat and its vanguard in the country that socialist revolution is taking place, carry out their "national" duty " by getting rid of the bourgeoisie of their country", contributing in that way to the cause of world revolution.

For instance, the entire web of imperialist contradictions obtained enormous dimensions during World War I. Lenin characterized World War I as the great "director" that weakened the capitalist system, provided the opportunity for the front of imperialism to be split in 1917, in Tsarist Russia.

In several of his works, Lenin explained why Russia could be the weakest link and break the chain of imperialism and start the revolution:

«It was easier for us to begin, firstly, because the unusual—for twentieth century Europe—political backwardness of the tsarist monarchy gave unusual strength to the revolutionary onslaught of the masses. Secondly, Russia's backwardness merged in a peculiar way the proletarian revolution against the bourgeoisie with the peasant revolution against the landowners. ... Thirdly, the 1905 revolution contributed enormously to the political education of the worker and peasant masses ... Fourthly, Russia's geographical conditions permitted her to hold out longer than other countries could have done against the superior military strength of the capitalist, advanced countries. Fifthly, the specific attitude of the proletariat towards the peasantry facilitated the transition from the bourgeois revolution to the socialist revolution,.... Sixthly, long schooling in strike action and the experience of the European mass working-class movement facilitated the emergence—in a profound and rapidly intensifying revolutionary situation—of such a unique form of proletarian revolutionary organisation as the Soviets.» (54)

Lenin estimated at his time that in the states of developed capitalism, e.g. in England, Germany, it was more difficult for the revolution to start because the bourgeois regime was particularly strong and "civilized" and the working class lived under conditions of "civilized" slavery, but it would be easier to carry out the work of socialist construction.

The duties of the KKE under revolutionary conditions

What are the subjective conditions for the victory of the revolution?

In periods of revolutionary situation, it is not inevitable that the working class and the popular sections of the intermediate strata will be definitely led to a coherent revolutionary struggle. Their mobility may be oriented to channels that are not dangerous for the system, integrated into a reactionary direction or to fail in relation to the aim of occupying the power. For that reason, the activity of the Communist Party in the previous period, under non-revolutionary conditions, will determine (or not) the development of the preconditions for drawing the masses into a revolutionary direction. A basic precondition is the organization of workers' and popular forces in a direction of struggle favourable to the development of anti-capitalist consciousness.

As has already been mentioned, the revolutionary situation is a necessary precondition for revolution, but not sufficient for the victory of the socialist revolution.

In Western Europe, in 1918-1920, several countries fulfilled the objective preconditions for revolution and communists estimated that a revolutionary crisis existed in Europe, however socialist revolution was not able to succeed.

"Not all revolutionary situations lead to revolutions" (55), wrote Lenin, " not all revolutionary situations lead to a revolution, but only one situation where objective changes... are united to subjective changes and more precisely: to the capacity of the revolutionary class to assume revolutionary massive action, sufficiently powerful, in order to crash (or to importantly weaken" the old government that never, even in crisis periods, does not "fall", unless it's «overthrown" (56).

The first years after the October Revolution and in the crisis brought about by World War I, the working class in Western Europe could not overthrow the power of capital using the revolutionary situation already formed. The main reason was the weakness of the subjective factor, the party of the working class itself, that was not mature enough, as in several countries of Western and Central Europe former workers' parties were suffering from the corrosion of opportunism, social-democratic betrayal and many more revolutionaries remained trapped inside them, as the communist parties that had been established were still weak and above all did not have a clear position towards social-democracy.

Socialist revolution is impossible without ensuring the dialectical unity between subjective and objective preconditions. This important Leninist conclusion has been confirmed many times by history.

Lenin determined the maturity of "the subjective factor of the revolution", referring to three conditions:

The first determining factor is the necessity of a combative revolutionary communist party.

A communist party must first of all be guided by the revolutionary theory of scientific communism, to develop Marxist-Leninist theory, to apply it in a creative way, to develop a stable ideological front against bourgeois ideology and opportunism; to formulate a program, a revolutionary strategy, interpreting in an objective way the socioeconomic and local and international political conditions; to have a correct policy of alliances, long before the formation of a revolutionary situation, serving the strategic aim, taking into consideration each time the correlation of forces. A Party that will not renounce its revolutionary character and its action under conditions of retreat of the movement that will be able to confront the increased pressure for adaptation, for the abandonment its Program in practice. The revolutionary character of the Party must be expressed in its class composition, its functioning, the consciousness of its members and cadres.

The Party must prepare itself and be ready to use all forms of struggle, according to the conditions of the development of the class struggle.

The Party is judged according to its ability to connect to struggles, to serve its strategy through every day action, through its attempt to achieve practical goals. To acquire the capacity to connect to the masses, to act as a vanguard in the struggles of the working class, to create strong bonds of struggle with them, however without subordinating itself to the level of the consciousness of the masses:

"Beginning from the Central Committee to the Branches, the party organs must adjust their activity to the needs of the class struggle, to become a real battle staff, to utilize every site of resistance at the base, generalizing the experience from the struggle. The party organizations must multiply their initiatives for the rallying and organization of the popular masses, the

supporters of the party must be systematically informed, proposals which arise from the experience of the class struggle must be utilized and incorporated in the planning of our activity.”⁽⁵⁷⁾

To be organized and to function ensuring its ideological and political unity, the unified will and action of the Party, not to compromise with opportunism in its ranks, generally combating it, to confront any attempt of assimilation and adaptation to the capitalist system.

It has been historically proven that the lack of a party with a clear revolutionary strategy constitutes the defining obstacle to taking advantage of conditions of the revolutionary situation. Such a conclusion is also related with the KKE itself:

“At the time of liberation from the Germans (12 October 1944) a revolutionary situation was created in Greece. EAM (National Liberation Front) was dominant, while at the same time the bourgeois state machinery was in tatters. The bourgeois government that had been set up was still in Egypt and the British had not yet reached Greece.

The main conclusion is that our Party, despite its enormous contribution and its leading role, was unable to formulate a strategy that would have led to a revolutionary solution to the problem of taking political power, even then, especially after 1943, when conditions required that the issue of the revolutionary seizing of power be raised. Thus, it came about that ELAS subjected itself to British headquarters in the Middle East (5 July 1943) and later to the agreements of Lebanon (20 May 1944) and Kazerta (26 September 1944), in order to maintain and extend “national unity”; it did not create the subjective prerequisites for a course which, depending on other factors as well, could have led to victory” ⁽⁵⁸⁾.

The second condition for the victory of revolution is the rallying of the majority of the working class and above all its leading, conscious elements with the Communist Party. As Lenin wrote: “... the majority of workers (or however the majority of conscious, thinking and politically active workers) to fully understand the need of revolution and be ready to walk to death for it...” ⁽⁵⁹⁾.

The third condition for the victory of revolution is related to the stance of the workers' majority and even broader popular forces that are determined to wage the final battle. Political experience, drawn from the activity of the Party, should lead to the conclusion that there is no other solution other than the armed uprising for power, and that serious reservations about it must be demolished, and the of attitude at least of positive neutrality towards the revolution to have been created amongst other sections of the people:

“We can't win only with the vanguard. It would not only be foolish, but also a crime to set only the vanguard to the decisive battle, before the whole class, the broad popular masses have taken position of open or concealed support of the vanguard, or at least of benevolent neutrality towards such and to have shown that are completely incapable of supporting its' rivalry. [...] In order for such to happen, the political experience of the masses is needed. This is the basic law of all big revolutions, confirmed now in a surprisingly powerful and vivid way not only Russia, but also Germany ...” ⁽⁶⁰⁾

In other words, victory of the revolution requires not only the large scale activity of the majority of the most conscious elements of the working class but also support from the majority of the working class and the popular strata.

What does “ensuring the majority” mean?

Ensuring the support of the majority of the working population is a basic condition for the victory of the revolution. However, how should such a duty be understood? Speaking about the need to win the masses to the revolutionary political line, to be drawn towards the line of the Communist Party, we shouldn't forget, as Lenin noted, that the term “masses” obtains a different content in relation to the conditions of struggle:

“During our revolutions there were instances when several thousand workers represented the masses. [...] When the revolution has been sufficiently prepared, the concept “masses” becomes different: several thousand workers no longer constitute the masses. [...] This word implies the majority, and not simply a majority of the workers alone, but the majority of all the exploited.

(61)”

The concentration of decisive forces of the working class and the social forces allied to them to the side of the revolution, under the leadership of the Communist Party, as a condition for the victory of the revolution, can not be expressed with the 50+1% of votes in the elections for the bourgeois parliament.

Revolution and politics is not simple arithmetic but algebra, said Lenin.

The October Revolution showed that the conquest of the majority was brought to effect within the dynamic of the revolution with its manifestation and the first acts of the new power that stabilized the influence of the (then minority) proletariat on the poor working people (mainly peasants in Russia of 1917).

The Leninist theory on revolution rejects any type of scholasticism trapped in typical schemas of “minority” and “majority” outside of the real correlation of forces that is not expressed in an election. It is an issue related to the capacity of the Party at the critical points of the class struggle, when the consciousness of the masses changes suddenly and very quickly, to estimate objectively this correlation in combination with the political direction of struggle: *“The proletariat wages its class struggle and overthrows the bourgeoisie without waiting for any preliminary elections (supervised by the bourgeoisie and carried out under its yoke); and the proletariat is perfectly well aware that for the success of its revolution, for the successful overthrow of the bourgeoisie, it is absolutely necessary to have the sympathy of the majority of the working people (and, it follows, of the majority of the population)”*. (62)

Replying to accusations of the opportunists of the Second International that the Bolsheviks violated the laws of revolution; that they carried out an

“insurrection of a minority”, Lenin argued: *“The traitors, blockheads and pedants of the Second International could never understand such dialectics; the proletariat cannot achieve victory if it does not win the majority of the population to its side. But to limit that winning to polling a majority of votes in an election under the rule of the bourgeoisie, or to make it the condition for it, is crass stupidity, or else sheer deception of the workers. In order to win the majority of the population to its side the proletariat must, in the first place, overthrow the bourgeoisie and seize state power; secondly, it must introduce Soviet power and completely smash the old state apparatus, whereby it immediately undermines the rule, prestige and influence of the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeois compromisers over the non-proletarian working people.*

Thirdly, it must entirely destroy the influence of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeois compromisers over the majority of the non-proletarian masses by satisfying their economic needs in a revolutionary way at the expense of the exploiters" (63)

The proletariat only when it has conquered the political power in order to establish socialism possesses the political and moreover economic preconditions to gain the majority of the people.

Therefore, it is a major illusion that the Communist Party may obtain in a stable way the majority of the workers, expressed in the parliament, under conditions of bourgeois domination.

Lenin noted what it is more important is where one has the overwhelming superiority in the course of development of class struggle: " *The Bolsheviks had behind them not only the majority of the proletariat, not only the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat which had been steeled in the long and persevering struggle against opportunism; they had, if it is permissible to use a military term, a powerful "striking force" in the metropolitan cities. An overwhelming superiority of forces at the decisive point at the decisive moment—this "law" of military success is also the law of political success, especially in that fierce, seething class war which is called revolution*" (64).

In the conditions of the revolutionary situation, those sections of the working class that mobilize and take part in strikes and the armed struggle have a decisive role. The communist party must above all ensure the majority in those sections of the working class, its representatives in the combat organizations of the workers.

It must have the majority of the working class in crucial and strategically important places where the ability of the party to draw in broad popular and working class masses will be judged to a significant extent.

This issue must be taken into serious consideration by the Communist Party, regarding the duties that is determining related to Party Building within the working class, which means in what places it shall set the priority for Party Building , what will the priorities be, where shall attention be focused, in order to be able to safeguard the necessary organizational preconditions to obtain superiority in crucial areas.

What is the "revolutionary workers' and people's front?"

The long experience of the world revolutionary movement has shown that under conditions of a revolutionary situation, instruments of the workers' popular struggle were formed in order to ensure the essential conditions of the people's survival that bourgeois power was not able any more to safeguard. There is a large variety of forms, through which survival, health care, continuity of education was ensured. In any case, the base was workers' and peoples' control of production (of the factories and agricultural production), of concentration of products, mainly of popular consumption (food, medicines etc), of transport infrastructure etc.

It is essential that such organs shall be established in a unified revolutionary centre that will struggle for the overthrow of bourgeois power and will not be limited only to the safeguarding of the workers' and people's survival. It will utilize the armed sections subordinated to such organs in the development of popular activity for the overthrow of bourgeois power.

Our Party and the workers' and people's movement in Greece has such a historical legacy from its action in the areas of Greece liberated by the National People's Liberation Army (ELAS) and the National Liberation Front (EAM) from the German-Italian Occupation, as well as later during the struggle of the Democratic Army of Greece (DSE) [1946-1949].

Such organs, in the case of Russian Revolution, were the Soviets, the councils of workers and military delegates.

The first Soviets were founded during the revolution of 1905 and had a decisive role in the organization of revolutionary action and first of all in the organization of the general strike. Lenin, from the first moment saw the possibility for the creation of a "tight revolutionary centre" and noted that "*The Soviet should proclaim itself the provisional revolutionary government, or should set up a provisional revolutionary government...*" (65)

The Soviets were established once again during the revolution of February 1917 against the Tsar and the land-owners, in which bourgeois forces also participated. The Bolsheviks placed an important emphasis from the beginning on the Soviets, being at the frontline of their establishment.

The "balance of power" between the bourgeoisie that had constituted its own Provisional Democratic Government and the working class, the soldiers and the poor peasants that had established their own Soviets (delegates' councils) which controlled armed units (armed factory guards and other military sections), was expressed by a situation that was characterized by Lenin as "dual power". Such "dual power" was the result of the fact that the bourgeoisie formed of its own power, its own state just after the overthrow of the Tsar.

However, the Soviets, where petty bourgeois and opportunist forces dominated, supported the bourgeois government and this was expressed by the participation of delegates of petty bourgeois and opportunist parties in it.

The Bolsheviks, in opposition to the Provisional Democratic Government, supported that all the power shall pass to the Soviets, a position that constituted the core of their political action from April to October, 1917.

A combative organization and action of the working class, allied to the poor popular strata, mainly of the rural areas, was expressed in the Soviets.

This organization had taken decisive measures related to the control of production, the maintaining of order, the distribution of food, measures in order to ensure the survival of the workers etc.

As a consequence, the Soviets constituted the seed of the new power and, after the overthrow of the bourgeois government were the organs of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

During the whole revolutionary period of 1917-1921 in Europe, Germany, Hungary, Slovakia, Italy, such organs of the workers' and people's struggle were established. To the extent that such revolutions were not victorious, these organs were either assimilated or dissolved.

The Communist International posed certain directions for the development of the "soviet movement", determining the preconditions and the terms for the establishment and development of the soviets and mainly the precondition for the existence of a revolutionary situation.

However, to the extent that within the Communist Movement parliamentary illusions about a peaceful road to socialism were dominant as well as goals to form (anti-imperialist, democratic, patriot) governments on the terrain of bourgeois power as an intermediate stage towards socialism, any elaboration

of the Communist Parties' Programs about the formation of such organs of revolutionary struggle was absent. In addition, any action for the preparation in a similar direction, if conditions of a revolutionary situation arose, was also weakened.

The KKE, at its' 19th Congress (April, 2013) described the features of the socioeconomic and political situation that can be characterized as "revolutionary" and determined the duties and the direction of the organization of the revolutionary struggle:

"In the conditions of the revolutionary situation, the revolutionary workers' and people's front, using all forms of its activity, can become the centre of the popular uprising against capitalist power. It must prevail in the basic regions, particularly in the industrial-trade-transport centres, communications and energy centres, so as to achieve the full demobilization of the mechanisms of bourgeois power as well as their nullification, the overthrow of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, so that revolutionary institutions created by the people can emerge and prevail, institutions that will undertake the new organization of society and the establishment of revolutionary working class power.

In the revolutionary process there will be the constant impact of opportunist and reformist positions and consequently the need to struggle against them and to marginalize them inside the workers' and people's front.

In the conditions of the revolutionary situation, the workers' and peoples' front will also be expressed through committees to protect the strikes and other forms of the uprising. It will acquire the ability and means to protect the revolution in all its phases, to impose the workers' control in the factories, banks, agricultural production together with the poor farmers, to feed the people, to deal with the multifaceted mechanisms of reaction.

The revolutionary workers' and people's front will acquire the ability to pose its own violence against the violence of capital, the ability to have a paralyzing effect on the staff of the class enemy, to neutralize its counterrevolutionary plans, to cut them off from the active support of people who come from the working class and popular strata. It will have the ability to express the poor sections of the farmers, the popular sections of the urban self-employed, the semi-proletarians, the unemployed and immigrants and integrate them in this direction of struggle" (66).

Armed insurrection for power

The concept of insurrection has been rather abused by bourgeois and mainly opportunist philology.

Particularly in recent years, any type of expression of indignation and protest that may have mass features is characterized as an insurrection, and may have a direction of conflict with state repression but with a controlled content, within the framework of the system (e.g. the protest demonstrations about the murder of the 15-year-old boy in December 2008, the demonstrations against the landfill of Keratea, against the gold mines in Skouries, Chalkidiki etc). This is enhanced by the fact that in those and other cases, the activity of several groups with features of provocation aiming to attack the movement is interpreted as insurrection.

We should also clarify that every armed popular struggle does not constitute a revolution, it does not constitute a struggle for the change of the character of

power, given that this is judged by the aim of the struggle and not by its form. For instance, an armed reaction to the imposition of a military dictatorship, an action of self-defence against murderous attacks of repression mechanisms, employers' mechanisms, and fascist groups does not constitute a revolution, independently of the extent of the sharpening of the class struggle.

An armed insurrection is the most critical and decisive moment in the course of the revolutionary struggle. In the beginning of a revolutionary process, it is impossible for the party to know in advance and in extensive detail the entire course, the forms of organization and struggle, the final culmination and result of the revolution. However, what determines its revolutionary feature, its character itself, is its ability to prepare itself and the working class as well for the armed conflict, as this is caused by the violence of the ruling class. Armed insurrection is based on an elaborated military plan as the climactic manifestation of the civil war. It is a continuation of the class struggle in an armed way.

The aim of the revolution can not be anything other than the conquest of power and is regulated by principles regarding its successful outcome. Lenin described these principles as follows:

"But armed uprising is a special form of political struggle, one subject to special laws to which attentive thought must be given. Karl Marx expressed this truth with remarkable clarity when he wrote that "insurrection is an art quite as much as war".

Of the principal rules of this art, Marx noted the following:

(1) Never play with insurrection, but when beginning it realise firmly that you must go all the way.

(2) Concentrate a great superiority of forces at the decisive point and at the decisive moment, otherwise the enemy, who has the advantage of better preparation and organisation, will destroy the insurgents.

(3) Once the insurrection has begun, you must act with the greatest determination, and by all means, without fail, take the initiative of offensive. "Being on the defensive is the death of every armed rising."

(4) You must try to take the enemy by surprise and seize the moment when his forces are scattered.

(5) You must strive for daily successes, however small (one might say hourly, if it is the case of one town), and at all costs retain "moral superiority".

Marx summed up the lessons of all revolutions in respect to armed uprising in the words of "Danton, the greatest master of revolutionary policy yet known: de l'audace, de l'audace, encore de l'audace " (67).]

Summarizing the experience from the October Revolution, Lenin noted that political supremacy at "the right points at the right moment" does not only ensure the winning of the support (active or passive) of the majority of the working and popular masses for the insurrection, but also determines the success of insurrection itself.

The historical experience of the KKE confirms such principles. Wavering as regards the armed struggle, which constitutes a form of struggle for the completion of the strategic aim of the conquest of the power by the working class, normally expresses a wavering as regards the aim of the struggle itself. Armed insurrection is a military operation that must be directed towards the conquest of power. A timely evaluation of the conditions of a revolutionary situation, as well as a timely plan of a related action, a right evaluation of the

most appropriate moment, when the enemy faces its greatest weakness, deprived of internal and external allies, is needed.

The moment of final conflict must be carefully selected, “yesterday was too early, tomorrow too late”, noted Lenin on the eve of the October Revolution.

What are the criteria regarding the ripeness for the appropriate moment for the insurrection and for the preparation of revolutionary forces for armed revolution? Lenin answered:

“In these circumstances, we must ask ourselves, not only whether we have convinced the vanguard of the revolutionary class, but also whether the historically effective forces of all classes—positively of all the classes in a given society, without exception—are arrayed in such a way that the decisive battle is at hand—in such a way that: (1) all the class forces hostile to us have become sufficiently entangled, are sufficiently at loggerheads with each other, have sufficiently weakened themselves in a struggle which is beyond their strength; (2) all the vacillating and unstable, intermediate elements—the petty bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeois democrats, as distinct from the bourgeoisie—have sufficiently exposed themselves in the eyes of the people, have sufficiently disgraced themselves through their practical bankruptcy, and (3) among the proletariat, a mass sentiment favouring the most determined, bold and dedicated revolutionary action against the bourgeoisie has emerged and begun to grow vigorously. Then, the revolution is indeed ripe; then, indeed, if we have correctly gauged all the conditions indicated and summarised above, and if we have chosen the right moment, our victory is assured” (68).

Answering the accusation of the opportunists of the II International that the Bolsheviks are “violating history” and supporting Blanquism, Lenin wrote:

“To be successful, insurrection must rely not upon conspiracy and not upon a party, but upon the vanguard class. That is the first point. Insurrection must rely upon a revolutionary upsurge of the people. That is the second point. Insurrection must rely upon that turning-point in the history of the growing revolution when the activity of the advanced ranks of the people is at its height, and when the vacillations in the ranks of the enemy and in the ranks of the weak, half-hearted and irresolute friends of the revolution are strongest. That is the third point. And these three conditions for raising the question of insurrection distinguish Marxism from Blanquism.” (69)

The Insurrection’s success presupposes some specific conditions regarding the correlation of forces, as well as the organizational capacity of the insurrectionary masses.

The Bolsheviks’ tactics during the period between April and October 1917, constitutes an important example of drawing more general conclusions on the issue of insurrection. On July 1st 1917, 500 thousand people went out onto the streets of St Petersburg. The vast majority of the protestors held flags and placards adopting the Bolsheviks’ slogans:

“Down with the war!” “Capitalist Ministers must leave!” “All power to the Soviets”. A political crisis exploded within the ranks of the bourgeois government coalition, which culminated with the participation of 7 regiments of the army of the capital in the demonstrations. However, the Soviets were still under the control of the Mensheviks- SRs, all the army and the rural areas (i.e. the peasants) supported the opportunist coalition and would not support the overthrow of the provisional bourgeois government. As Lenin noted, the

class hatred of the working class had not reached the point of being directed not only against the capitalists but also against their opportunist supporters, who were participating in the bourgeois government.

The Central Committee of the Bolsheviks called the working class of St. Petersburg not to proceed to an armed demonstration-insurrection, but the masses went out onto the streets and the Bolsheviks became the head of the movement in order to give it an organized and peaceful character and mainly to ensure the organized retreat of the masses before the armed repression of the movement, which is what happened.

An insurrection that has not matured already may also be an equally devastating error, as well as its delay when it is mature. Lenin, on September 13th 1917, when the conditions for insurrection existed, argued: *"Hence these conditions exist, however, to refuse to treat insurrection as an art is a betrayal of Marxism and a betrayal of the revolution."*

To show that it is precisely the present moment that the Party must recognise as the one in which the entire course of events has objectively placed insurrection on the order of the day and that insurrection must be treated as an art, it will perhaps be best to use the method of comparison, and to draw a parallel between July 3-4 and the September days (70)".

At the critical moments, some days before the beginning of the insurrection of October 25th (November 7th according to the modern calendar) 1917, in several urgent letters to the Central Committee of the Party, Lenin criticized its delay and its hesitation regarding the organization and deployment of all the forces of the Party according to the insurrection plan, the taking of all technical and practical measures needed. He revealed not only the crucial character of the correct evaluation of the moment for the beginning of the insurrection, but also of the formation of a complete political-military plan of action and a political-military group for the revolution:

"In order to treat insurrection in a Marxist way, i.e., as an art, we must at the same time, without losing a single moment, organise a headquarters of the insurgent detachments, distribute our forces, move the reliable regiments to the most important points, surround the Alexandriusky Theatre, occupy the Peter and Paul Fortress,¹ arrest the General Staff and the government, and move against the officer cadets and the Savage Division¹² those detachments which would rather die than allow the enemy to approach the strategic points of the city. We must mobilise the armed workers and call them to fight the last desperate fight, occupy the telegraph and the telephone exchange at once, move our insurrection headquarters to the central telephone exchange and connect it by telephone with all the factories, all the regiments, all the points of armed fighting, etc.

Of course, this is all by way of example, only to illustrate the fact that at the present moment it is impossible to remain loyal to Marxism, to remain loyal to the revolution unless insurrection is treated as an art (71)"

Already from September, 29, 1917, in his letter titled "The crisis has matured", Lenin replied in an aggressive way to those Bolsheviks that with several pretexts (that the 2nd Congress of the Soviets should take place first and that the decision for insurrection should be taken there) had a reserved or negative stance regarding it.

"There is a tendency, or an opinion, which favours waiting for the Congress of Soviets, and is opposed to taking power immediately, is opposed to an immediate insurrection. That tendency, or opinion, must be overcome.

Otherwise, the Bolsheviks will cover themselves with eternal shame and destroy themselves as a party.

For to miss such a moment and to "wait" for the Congress of Soviets would be utter idiocy, or sheer treachery.

[...]

To "wait" for the Congress of Soviets would be utter idiocy, for it would mean losing weeks at a time when weeks and even days decide everything. (72)".

on the eve of the October Revolution, on October 24th, 1917, Lenin, in his letters to the Central Committee called on the Party to lead in a decisive way and with audacity the armed insurrection:

"In fact it is now absolutely clear that to delay the uprising would be fatal.

[...]

History will not forgive revolutionaries for procrastinating when they could be victorious today (and they certainly will be victorious today), while they risk losing much tomorrow, in fact, they risk losing everything.

If we seize power today, we seize it not in opposition to the Soviets but on their behalf.

The seizure of power is the business of the uprising; its political purpose will become clear after the seizure.

It would be a disaster, or a sheer formality, to await the wavering vote of October 25. The people have the right and are in duty bound to decide such questions not by a vote, but by force; in critical moments of revolution, the people have the right and are in duty bound to give directions to their representatives, even their best representatives, and not to wait for them.

This is proved by the history of all revolutions; and it would be an infinite crime on the part of the revolutionaries were they to let the chance slip, knowing that the salvation of the revolution, the offer of peace, the salvation of Petrograd, salvation from famine, the transfer of the land to the peasants depend upon them.

The government is tottering. It must be given the death blow at all costs.

To delay action is fatal (73)"

The insurrection is accompanied by a long lasting or short "civil war" (class war), according to the reaction of the bourgeoisie, between two armed enemy powers: the working class and its allies against the bourgeoisie and its supporters.

Under these conditions, the communist party must readapt all its functioning.

"In a period of civil war the ideal party of the proletariat is a fighting party. This is absolutely incontrovertible [...] The argument that guerrilla warfare disorganises the movement must be regarded critically. Every new form of struggle, accompanied as it is by new dangers and new sacrifices, inevitably "disorganises" organisations which are unprepared for this new form of struggle. Our old propagandist circles were disorganised by recourse to methods of agitation. Our committees were subsequently disorganised by recourse to demonstrations. Every military action in any war to a certain extent disorganises the ranks of the fighters. But this does not mean that one must not fight. It means that one must learn to fight." (74)

The three-year heroic epic of the Democratic Army of Greece (1946-1949), which constituted the climactic moment of class struggle in Greece, confirms this Leninist heritage. KKE became a fighting party, adapting to the needs of the direction of armed struggle. Despite its weaknesses, errors and the final outcome, the Democratic Army of Greece was a necessity imposed by the sharpening of the class struggle. It was a combative response to the offensive of the class enemy, both local and foreign. This combative stance was a legacy for the relations of the KKE with working class and popular masses, for the defence of their immediate and general needs and rights, a struggle imposed and vindicated. It is certain that, under the current conditions, the issue of insurrection has more complex demands because it is a conflict against a more experienced and technologically equipped enemy.

In the Programme of the Party it is noted:

"The socialist revolutions of the 21st century, compared to the bourgeois revolutions of the 18th and 19th century and even to the socialist revolutions of the 20th century, will face a much more organized repressive machine, more technologically developed means of information and mass destruction.

They will deal with the mechanisms of the capitalist state's violence which are integrated into inter-state structures, like NATO, the Euro-army, Europol, the European Gendarmerie etc.

Despite the technological development, the human being does not cease to be the decisive factor in using and dealing with these mechanisms. On this basis, the workers' and people's activity has the potential to nullify these means and use the new technologies in favour of the revolutionary movement." (75).

The principles of the stance of the KKE towards imperialist war

In the Programme of the KKE it is noted:

"In the instance of Greece's involvement in an imperialist war, either in a defensive or aggressive war, the Party must lead the independent organization of the workers'-people's struggle in all its forms, so as to lead to the complete defeat of the bourgeois class, both the domestic one and the foreign invader, and link it in practice with the conquest of power. A workers' and people's front, using all forms of struggle, must be formed on the basis of the initiative and the guidance of the party. This front will have the following slogan: the people will bring the liberation and the way-out from the capitalist system, which as long as it prevails brings war and "peace" with the gun to the people's head." (76).

Lenin revealed that in an imperialist war, in a war directed by the bourgeoisie, the working class, regardless of the country it is located in, has nothing to gain, can not expect anything positive from the victory of the one or the other side and has no reason to "choose" an imperialist: *"The question of "the success of which side is more desirable" meant asking "the success of which bourgeoisie is more desirable". [...] Marx was working on the problem at a time (note: in 1859) when there existed indubitably progressive bourgeois movements, which moreover did not merely exist, but were in the forefront of the historical process in the leading states of Europe. Today, it would be ridiculous even to imagine a progressive bourgeoisie, a progressive bourgeois*

movement, [...]. The old bourgeois "democracy" of these two key states has turned reactionary" (77).

The position of communists before each war is arrived at by determining its character, its aim: *"We Marxists do not belong to that category of people who are unqualified opponents of all war. We say: our aim is to achieve a socialist system of society, which, by eliminating the division of mankind into classes, by eliminating all exploitation of man by man and nation by nation, will inevitably eliminate the very possibility of war."* (78).

Communists support revolutionary wars, class wars against the bourgeoisie of every country, as October Revolution in Russia in 1917, the struggle of the Democratic Army in 1946-1949 in Greece, socialist revolutions in the 20th century.

The way out from the war is in the interests of the working class and the popular strata as a whole, it is connected to the struggle for workers' power. *"It is necessary, of course, to fight for the speediest termination of the war. But only if a revolutionary struggle is called for does the demand for "peace acquires proletarian meaning. Without a series of revolutions, so-called democratic peace is a philistine utopia."* (79).

The consistent struggle against war should always be combined with the struggle for power in each country. To the extent that *"we understand the inevitable connection between wars and the class struggle within the country; we understand that war cannot be abolished unless classes are abolished and Socialism is created.."* (80). Lenin also noted: *"Only after we have overthrown, finally vanquished and expropriated the bourgeoisie of the whole world, and not merely in one country, will wars become impossible. And from a scientific point of view it would be utterly wrong—and utterly non-revolutionary—for us to evade or gloss over the most important things: crushing the resistance of the bourgeoisie—the most difficult task, and one demanding the greatest amount of fighting, in the transition to socialism"* (81).

The question if a war is right or wrong has nothing to do with the question of whether it is a defensive or offensive war (literally), but is related to which political line the war is an outcome of: *"As if the question were: Who was the first to attack, and not: What are the causes of the war? What are its aims? Which classes are waging it?"* (82).

Under conditions of an imperialist war, the working class has something to gain only from the defeat and overthrow of the bourgeoisie of its country, noted Lenin: *"This is axiomatic, and disputed only by conscious partisans or helpless satellites of the social-chauvinists."* (83).

The revolutionary workers' movement is not indifferent towards the instance of a foreign intervention or occupation, does not abstain from resistance. On the contrary, it is at the frontline of the workers' people's struggle, by organizing its own armed action, independently of the defence organized by the bourgeoisie for the defence of the interests of capital, so that the way out from the war leads to the victory of workers' power.

Working class and bourgeoisie are fighting from different starting points. For the working class and the poor popular strata, war and occupation is the extension of capitalist exploitation, a result of the economic and political domination of capital. The working class struggles against misery, repression and the violence of the occupier, the intensification of exploitation, against international imperialist agreements. Its "homeland" is a country rid of

capitalists, outside imperialist coalitions, a homeland where the working class will be the owners of the wealth produced and will have the power.

The war of the bourgeoisie for its own "homeland"- independently of whether it allies with the foreign occupation or it resists- will be again for the interests of the monopoly groups, for the restoration of an agreement regarding the redivision of the markets that will serve the national monopolies and not workers' interests.

The experience from the struggle against Nazi occupation during the period 1941-1944 in Greece, but also in other countries shows that the armed conflict, within the framework of the anti-occupation struggle, between the armed section of the alliance of the working class with poor popular strata of the rural and urban areas (ELAS- Greek Popular Liberation Army) and the armed sections of the bourgeoisie, whether collaborating with the Nazis ("Security Battalions", "X" etc.), or fighting against them (e.g. EDES-National Republican Greek League, "Royal Greek Army of the Middle East") is inevitable.

In the case of Greece's involvement in a war, the working class and the popular strata must take the situation "into their own hands", make the way out of the war their own issue and also call on the working class of the attacking country to do the same, focusing their attention and weapons against the real enemy, the bourgeoisies of their countries, in order for the war to take on features of class conflict for the liberation of both peoples from exploitation. In this way, proletarian internationalism, simultaneous communication with the revolutionary movement in other countries will be expressed.

Under conditions of imperialist war, the political vanguard of the working class, its party, has to reveal the necessity for class unity of the workers, of the alliance with popular forces, the internationalist dimension of the working class and the duties that flow from this. The stance towards war is a stance towards class struggle for socialist revolution, towards the struggle for the transformation of this war into an armed class struggle, the "only war of liberation", as Lenin characterized it. In such a war, communication, common slogans, and common action with the revolutionary movement of other countries constitutes an important precondition for the perspective of the outbreak and victory of the socialist revolution in many more countries, the possibility of another type of cooperation or union of countries, on the basis of social ownership and central planning with proletarian internationalism.

The Communist Party uses all forms of work, legal and illegal, is at the frontline in order for the working class to constitute its own centre of organization of the struggle for the exit from war, the conquest of its own power. It organizes the working class inside the workplaces and the units of production against the capitalists, their parties and governments, their war and their agreements for "peace". As regards the workers' front of struggle for the exit from war, the aim is to express the coalition of the working class with the popular strata of the city and the rural areas. The Party is alert in order for the workers' movement to constitute not only a pole of rallying for the working masses, but also a support and a hope for the popular strata, from the first days of the war, to influence the stance of the soldiers from the popular families.

The experience of two imperialist world wars, but also the contemporary experience, reveals that at the beginning of conflicts and in the first period of the war, the bourgeoisie with its slogans and propaganda intends to influence and win over large sections of the working class and the popular strata, to create a "national euphoria". The stance of the popular strata in countries at the top of the imperialist pyramid (e.g. of the USA) that accept imperialist wars and the occupation of foreign countries in the name of reactionary pretexts, like the defence of "democracy", of "human rights" and modernization, the "fight against terrorism", is characteristic.

It is certain that a difficulty will be expressed regarding the adoption of the revolutionary line at the beginning. Even in the Bolshevik party similar vacillations were expressed during the February revolution, regarding the character of the continuing war of the bourgeois Provisional Democratic Government. It was not understood that the struggle of the working class for the overthrow of the Tsar did not ensure the will and the consistency for exit from the war in order to put an end to death, starving and absolute misery for the popular masses. Such vacillations were expressed through the difficulty regarding the full acceptance of the revolutionary line of Lenin. It is characteristic that generally correct decisions taken by the II International on the character of the war and moreover on the stance towards it were later violated by the stance of many parties that surrendered to the bourgeois political line and led to the bankruptcy of the II international. However, war objectively shakes bourgeois power, when the conditions which it brought to the lives of the working class and other popular strata influence their attitude, and create the preconditions for a sudden rupture with, undermining and opposition to the bourgeois parties, as well as the fake slogans and ideological constructs, the institutions of bourgeois power, in their consciousness.

Under these conditions, ideological and political action of the communists, their intervention in the masses aims to make them more revolutionary.

Imperialist war means a split within imperialism, a facilitation of the destabilization of bourgeois power, it shakes bourgeois institutions as well as their capacity to manipulate and repress, and the militant mood of the masses is liberated. This situation must be correctly evaluated and utilized by the revolutionary forces, by correctly directing the working class and the popular forces towards the way that constitutes the only way out for the satisfaction of their own needs, their own interests, towards the culmination of class struggle, the final conflict for the conquest of power. The revolutionary movement must combat open or concealed opportunism.

From the beginning, even before the official beginning of conflicts, revolutionary forces must be prepared, must inform all the people and call on them to be prepared and alert. They must reveal widely the consequences for the working class and the poor popular strata from participation in the war, which as an element of capitalist exploitation; to pose the issue of the exit of Greece from imperialist alliances (e.g. NATO etc.); to demonstrate the character of war as the massacre of the peoples for the redivision of the markets, for the interests of the monopolies; to show that those who steal the sweat of the working class under conditions of "peace", send it to war in order to be killed for a new division of the profits; to reject and condemn any attempt to "legalize" through parliamentary processes the choices of the bourgeoisie

(e.g. Approval of war credits etc.). A front against nationalist and irredentist slogans is necessary, in order to isolate either fascist or non-fascist, nationalist influences that, either directly or not, work in the direction of forming a "pro-war current".

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Chapter Three

Socialism – Communism: the society that the KKE struggles for.
What are the basic scientific laws-of-cause of the communist society?

Communism is the society in which the division into classes has been abolished, a *classless society*.

In the communist society *all* the means of production and the products belong to the society.

The *basic economic law of communism* is that the purpose of production is to satisfy the needs of society to a constantly increasing level, or in other words, the extended satisfaction of the social needs.

When there is social ownership of the means of production and central planning, socialized labour becomes directly social, which means that it does not confirm its social usefulness through the market, but the social needs are calculated in advance, and according to these, the division of labour in the various fields of social production and social services is carried out, and every individual's labour power participates accordingly.

The product of directly social labour does not take the form of a commodity, production is not commodity production, the products are not produced in order to be exchanged, hence the law of value is not valid in the communist mode of production.

*"Within the comrades' society, which is grounded on the common ownership of the means of production, the producers do not exchange their products. The same is the case with the labour that has been spent for the production of products – it is not presented here as the value of these products, as an innate quality they have, because now, in contrast to the capitalist society, individual labour exists directly, and not indirectly, as constituent elements of the labour as a whole."*⁸⁴

The time spent on labour in order to cover the social needs, for the production of the sum of products (or for the product of one branch or for a unit of the product) is not identical with the *socially necessary labour time* that consists the measure for exchange of equivalents (law of value). In the communist mode of production the spending of labour power (the distribution of workers within fields and businesses etc) is *planned in advance* according to the social needs.

Central planning is a scientific law of the communist production, it is a social relationship that is determined by the social ownership of the means of production. It expresses the way the direct producers are connected to the means of production, the control of the direct producers over what and how much is to be produced and how it is to be distributed to the various branches of production, how much of the product is intended for the extended reproduction, for the satisfaction of the social needs through social services and for the direct distribution to the working people, so that the planned development of the forces of production can be realized. Each plan of the Central Planning, setting the goals of production, distributes material means and labour power, connects the branches of production and determines the proportions between them, plans the production of the means of production and the training and specializing of the labour force, satisfies the needs for its reproduction, approaches more or less the needs of the extended proportional development. The distribution of the social product is governed by the basic

economic law of communism, the relationship between social ownership, the central planning and workers' control.

The distribution of the social products is made based on the following principle: "From each according to his ability and to each according to his needs."

Some of the oldest social contradictions that constituted the reason for class differentiation, like for example the contradiction between intellectual and manual workers, or the contradiction between the city and the countryside, have already been or are on the way to being resolved.

For the ultimate prevalence of the communist relations, a huge leap in the development of the forces of production is required, a breakthrough first of all concerning the formation of the "new forces of production" as Engels noted: *"Society liberated from the restrictions of capitalist production can go much further still. By generating a race of producers with an all-round development who understand the scientific basis of industrial production as a whole, and each of whom has had practical experience in a whole series of branches of production from start to finish, this society will bring into being a new productive force which will abundantly compensate for the labour required to transport raw materials and fuel from great distances".*⁸⁵

For the irreversible transition to communism, the domination of the communist relations in the largest part of the planet or at least in the basic/most important states is a necessary precondition. The history of the development of human societies shows that there is a tendency of transition from smaller to larger scale forms of the organization of social life. Capitalism brought about a great internationalization compared to all the other socio-economic formations, an internationalization that cannot overcome the nation – state basis of the formation of capitalism, while it takes on reactionary characteristics since it serves the perpetuation of the capitalist relations of production. The way for states out of the capitalist system is accompanied by the formation of an internationalization of another type between the socialist states.

The existence of two different systems of internationalization that are based on different socioeconomic systems means sharp manifestation of the class struggle at an international level. The irreversible dominance of communism presupposes the positive outcome of the class struggle in favour of the communist forces, the overcoming of the national limits, of the antagonisms and contradictions. As Lenin noted, every effort to construct communism on a national level is the on one hand necessary, but will be objectively incomplete and restricted, since integrated communism requires the cooperation and common effort of the proletarians of all the states.

In communism, the elimination of the classes results in the withering away of the state, i.e. the need for the existence of a political power, a state's violence enforcing mechanism, coercion.

The organization of society loses its political character, it will not require the exercise of violence by one class against others, while the workers' bottom up participation in the management of the situation and control of production functions will have become predominant. The proletarian state is not "eliminated", it withers away.

That is to say the tasks/duties of the organization of society (planning and control) continue to exist but lose their political character (i.e. the character of

the imposition of the will of one class on the others) though preserving its technical organizational character.

What does it mean that socialism is the first, immature phase of communism?

The struggle of the new against the old.

Like every socioeconomic formation, communism is born, develops and matures. This is what happened with the slave system, feudalism and capitalism. Socialism is the first phase of the communist socioeconomic formation; it is not an independent socioeconomic formation. It is immature, early communism.

Socialism is communism as it has come out of bowels of capitalism, it is communism that relies on the economic basis that it has inherited from capitalism:

*"What we have to deal with here is a communist society, not as it has developed on its own foundations, but, on the contrary, just as it emerges from capitalist society; which is thus in every respect, economically, morally, and intellectually, still stamped with the birthmarks of the old society from whose womb it emerges".*⁸⁶

In socialism, not all the preconditions have been formed yet for the complete elimination of the classes. The direct abolition of private ownership (the capitalist exploitation) over the concentrated means of production and their socialization is only the basic precondition for the construction of communist relations. Capitalists have been overthrown and lost their property but continue to exist as a force and seek counterrevolution, there are small individual producers, as well as important differentiations within the working class itself.

Lenin underlined the following regarding the preconditions for the elimination of classes:

*"Clearly, in order to abolish classes completely, it is not enough to overthrow the exploiters, the landowners and capitalists, not enough to abolish their rights of ownership; it is necessary also to abolish all private ownership of the means of production, it is necessary to abolish the distinction between town and country, as well as the distinction between manual workers and brain workers. This requires a very long period of time. In order to achieve this an enormous step forward must be taken in developing the productive forces; it is necessary to overcome the resistance (frequently passive, which is particularly stubborn and particularly difficult to overcome) of the numerous survivals of small-scale production; it is necessary to overcome the enormous force of habit and conservatism which are connected with these survivals."*⁸⁷

As it is noted in the programme of the KKE: *"In socialism every remnant of the previous modes of production have not yet been eradicated and the material conditions have not been formed so that the new mode of production fully takes on its communist character, so that the principle "from each according to his ability to each according to his need" enters completely into force. Initially there remain forms of individual and group ownership that constitute the basis for the existence of commodity-money relations. On the basis of its economic immaturity, there still continue to exist social inequalities,*

stratifications, significant differences or even contradictions, such as those between city and countryside, between intellectual and manual workers, between workers with a high and low level of specialization. These contradictions must be eradicated, gradually and in a planned way.”⁸⁸

In the lower phase of the communist socioeconomic formation, socialism, the development of the forces of production imposes the law of distribution of the social product “from each according to his ability and to each according to his labour”.

This happens because the development of the forces of production does not permit the access to the whole social product according to one’s needs, but also because important differences in labour are still preserved. The contradiction between manual and intellectual labour has not been overcome, and heavy, monotonous manual work continues to exist, and thus the communist consciousness has not fully developed yet for the working population as a whole, which means that wide and complete communist consciousness and attitudes regarding directly social labour have not yet been formed.

The measure of labour is labour time, i.e. the time each individual contributes to the production of the total social product.

From the beginning of socialist construction an important part of the social needs is satisfied according to the needs through free and public provision (education, health etc.).

Another part of the social product which exists in limited quantity or requires more time to be produced is distributed through the “labour income”, the size of which as well as the “prices” of the products are determined by Central Planning and this is reminiscent of exchange, i.e. the market, only in terms of form.

The products of social production belong as a whole to the society, they are social property. These products are neither produced nor distributed as commodities. The law of value does not regulate proportions in socialist society; it is not a law of this society. It is an alien element to socialism; it is in contradiction to Central Planning and social ownership.

However in socialism, immature communism, apart from the main socialist production there still exists individual or group (cooperative) commodity production based on the group (cooperative) ownership of limited means of production.

This means that to the extent that all the means of production have not been socialized, some forms of individual and group ownership continue to exist (e.g. in USSR there were individual farms and cooperatives), because of the inadequate development of the forces of production. Their products are exchanged as commodities with the products of direct social production and are governed by the law of value, the function of which, however, is restricted by the operation of Central Planning: determining the price production plans for the cooperatives’ products, exploitation of other economic tools (e.g. taxes).

Although individual and cooperative production is regulated by social ownership and central planning it still constitutes a contradiction that has to be surpassed through the conversion of production as a whole to directly social production. That is to say in the course of development of socialism, every

form of individual and cooperative ownership of the means of production and products must be converted into social production.

In socialism the law of value also governs the exchange of products (commodities) between the socialist society and the capitalist societies (which we can consider as separate commodity producers). The eradication of this phenomenon will come as a result of the eradication of commercial transactions between socialist and capitalist societies, with the overthrow of capitalism in the most advanced societies and with the creation of economic relations between different socialist states on the basis of mutual assistance and planning.

The eradication of differences between the worker of direct social production and the small commodity producer, the conversion of everyone to workers in t socialized production, is a long term task and requires the planned, total reorganization of the economy.

During this period, small commodity production continues to have a double nature and waver between the proletariat and the bourgeois class. The experience from the construction of socialism in the 20th century showed that the first step towards this direction is the organization of the small commodity producers in cooperatives, as a transitional form, aiming for the conversion of their production from commodity to directly social production. This process has besides proved to have its contradictions. The construction of the new society confronts pre-socialist remnants that have their roots in the deep commodity past, private ownership and the corresponding ideology. It confronts capitalist encirclement: *"If the exploiters are defeated in one country only—and this, of course, is typical, since a simultaneous revolution in a number of countries is a rare exception—they still remain stronger than the exploited, for the international connections of the exploiters are enormous."*⁸⁹ Precisely because in socialism, class based differences and contradictions still remain, the class struggle continues in other forms and by other means, with the total elimination of classes being the final goal. For this reason, the necessity of the existence of the state, the dictatorship of the proletariat, is maintained.

Lenin underlined that the dictatorship of the proletariat means that *"Only a definite class, namely, the urban workers and the factory, industrial workers in general, is able to lead the whole mass of the working and exploited people in the struggle to throw off the yoke of capital, in actually carrying it out, in the struggle to maintain and consolidate the victory, in the work of creating the new, socialist social system and in the entire struggle for the complete abolition of classes"*.⁹⁰

Socialist construction constitutes a period of revolutionary transition from capitalism to developed/mature communism. It is not a linear course, but a course that includes the danger of a setback. *"Socialist course contains the possibility of a reversal and a retreat backwards to capitalism, as the experience from the counterrevolutionary overthrow in the USSR and the other socialist countries showed. Retreat is in any case a temporary phenomenon in history. The transition from an inferior mode of production to a higher one is not a straightforward ascending process. This is also shown by the very history of the prevalence of capitalism."*⁹¹

What were the causes of the counter-revolution in the USSR?

Right after the counter-revolution, the KKE began an effort to study the causes that led to the defeat of the communist movement. The result of this effort, as far as issues of socialist economy in the USSR are concerned, is reflected in the Resolution of the 18th Congress of the KKE.

These basic conclusions do not cancel the need for further study of several issues determined/set by the 18th Congress.⁹²

The course of the USSR constituted the historically first attempt of construction of communist relations. The socialist character of this course arises from: *The abolition of capitalist relations, the existence of socialist ownership and the subordination of cooperative ownership to it (no matter eventual contradictions), Central Planning, the workers' power and the unprecedented gains in favour of the workers.*

These are not cancelled by the fact that since a specific period and on, the Party gradually lost its revolutionary characteristics and thus it became possible for the forces of the counter-revolution to dominate inside the Party and the power in the 1980s.

We characterize the events of 1989-1991 as the climax of the victory of the counterrevolutionary course that had already started a long time ago. Besides, it was not accidental that these developments were supported by international capitalism, nor that socialist construction, especially during the period of the eradication of capitalist relations and foundation of socialism until the World War 2, is in the focus of ideological and political attacks by international imperialism.

Socialist construction began after the enormous destruction of the First World War and in the devastating conditions of civil war. It faced the imperialist encirclement and later the devastation of the Second World War, while capitalist powers like the USA didn't face war on their own territory – on the contrary it overcame the economic crisis of the 1930s through war.

The huge economic and social development that was achieved in conditions of the first historical attempt at socialist construction proves the superiority of the communist relations of production. The course of construction of the new society in the USSR was determined by the ability of the Bolshevik Communist Party to fulfil its revolutionary and leading role. First and foremost, to work out and form the necessary revolutionary strategy at each time, to cope with the internal class struggle, the international correlation of forces and opportunism, to provide an effective response to the new requirements and challenges of the development of socialist-communism.

By the Second World War, the new base of the society was formed: Socialist production on the basis of the Central Planning was dominant, and capitalist relations were abolished. Class struggle for the abolition of the exploiters was taking place successfully, and spectacular results were achieved concerning the improvement of social prosperity.

Following the Second World War, socialist construction entered a new phase. The Party was faced with new requirements and challenges concerning the development of socialism-communism, as well as class struggle at an international level. We consider the 20th Congress of the CPSU (1956) to be a turning point, since it reflected a clear opportunist shift on matters relating to socialist construction and the strategy of the international communist movement.

The struggle that took place before the congress and continued afterwards, ended in favour of the revisionists-opportunists, with the result that the Party gradually began to lose its revolutionary characteristics. In the economy, the views of the supporters of the market dominated, i.e. those who argued that the law of value is a law of socialism and can be used to cope with the problems of the socialist economy, that the incentives for "business profits" should thus be strengthened.

As far as the issue of the state is concerned, the thesis that the socialist state had transformed from dictatorship of the proletariat into an "all-people's state" was adopted, on the basis of the denial of the class struggle in conditions of socialist construction. On the issue of the strategy of the international communist movement, the thesis of "peaceful co-existence" between capitalism and socialism was adopted, as well as the thesis of the "peaceful parliamentary transition" to socialism.

We regard as responsible for the prevalence of the opportunist theses important theoretical and political weaknesses which were also expressed within the consistent current in the CPSU that despite its generally correct direction, could not give complete answers to theoretical issues and political practice. Let alone that in their analysis there were also theoretically wrong theses (e.g. that the products of personal consumption of the socialized sector are commodities).

The application of the economic reforms in the 1950s and 1960s led to: the weakening of Central Planning, the reinforcement of contradictions between cooperatives and socialized production, the separation of individual interest from the social interest, the sharpening of income differences, the enrichment of some sections of the working people i.e. the reinforcement of those forces that had an interest in putting a brake on the extension of the communist relations. That is to say a social force was formed (those with a management role in the socialized production and the cooperatives, a section of cooperative peasants) that initially set obstacles to socialist construction. This force dominated politically in the Party and socialist power, where the workers' and peoples participation and workers' control had loosened. The resolution of the 18th Congress on Socialism estimated that: "*The so-called "shadow capital", the result not only of enrichment through enterprise profits, but also of the black market, of criminal acts of embezzlement of the social product, sought its legal functioning as capital in production, i.e. the privatisation of the means of production, the restoration of capitalism. The owners of this capital constituted the driving social force of the counterrevolution. They utilised their position in the state and party mechanisms. They found support in sectors of the population which were more vulnerable, due to their objective position, to the influence of bourgeois ideology and to wavering, e.g. a significant part of the intelligentsia, sections of the youth, such as the university students. These forces, directly or indirectly, influenced the Party, strengthening its opportunist erosion and its counterrevolutionary degeneration, which was expressed through the policies of "perestroika" and sought the institutional consolidation of capitalist relations. This was achieved after perestroika, with the overthrow of socialism.*"⁹³

In the 1980s, with perestroika, opportunism fully developed into a traitorous, counterrevolutionary force. The consistent communist forces that reacted during the final phase of the betrayal, at the 28th CPSU Congress, did not

manage in a timely manner to expose it and to organize the revolutionary opposition of the working class.

What are the programmatic directions of the KKE on the formation of the socialist economy?

The KKE, studying the positive and negative experience of socialist construction in the USSR, as well as the course of socialist construction in other countries, studying the course of the class struggle in Greece, the very history of the party, studying the Greek reality, proceeded to the 18th Congress and following that to the 19th Congress for the elaboration of more specific directions concerning the socialist economy.

In the Program of the KKE the following basic principles are posed: *"In the beginning, the new mode of production is formed, which basically prevails through the complete abolition of capitalist relations, of the relation between capital and wage labour.*

- The means of production will be socialized: in industry, energy-water supply, telecommunications, construction, repair, public transport, wholesale and retail trade, import-export trade, the concentrated tourist – restaurant infrastructure.*
- Land and the capitalist agricultural cultivations will be socialized.*
- Private ownership and economic activity in education, health-welfare, culture, sports and mass media will be abolished. They will be organized exclusively as social services.*
- Industry and the largest part of agricultural production will be carried out under relations of social ownership, Central Planning, workers' control over the whole spectrum of management and administration.*
- Labour power will cease being a commodity. The use of alien labour, i.e. wage labour, by those who still possess isolated means of production in sectors that have not been compulsorily socialized will be abolished e.g. in crafts, agricultural production, tourism-restaurants, in certain auxiliary services.*
- Labour force, means of production, raw materials and other industrial materials and resources, will be used in the organization of production, social and administrative services via Central Planning."* 94

The KKE, taking into account the Greek reality as well as the direction that socialist construction must have in relation to the agricultural economy, that is its conversion to agricultural-industrial production, elaborated some more specific directions: *"State production units will be created for the production and processing of agricultural products as raw materials or consumer products."*95 The cultivators that do not own any land will be integrated in these socialist units of agricultural and livestock production through Central Planning. The land is socialized: *"The measure of the socialization of land excludes the possibility of land being concentrated, the change of its use and its commercialization by individual or cooperative agricultural producers."*96 In Greece, given the high level of mechanization of the agricultural production and the extensive existence of land ownership, redistribution is not required for the use of the land by the direct producers. The problem of the extensively fragmented land can be solved with strong motivations for them to join the agricultural cooperative: *"which will have the right to utilize the socialized land*

as a means of production. The integration of small farmers in productive cooperatives will be carried out on a voluntary basis. The incentives for the participation in cooperatives are: the reduction of the cost of production through collective cultivation work and collection of agricultural products; the protection of agricultural production from certain natural phenomena through the state infrastructure and scientific and technical support;

..... Cooperative agricultural production is subordinated to some extent to Central Planning, which determines the part of the production and the price set by the state at which the produce is collected by the state, as well as the prices, at which the produce is sold in the state-organized popular markets.”

97

Agricultural products are concentrated, stored, conserved and given for consumption through a central state mechanism.

As it is noted in the Program of the KKE: *“To the extent that labour is socialized through productive cooperatives with the use of mechanized means of production and collective infrastructure, the pre-conditions will be created for direct integration into social ownership and full integration into the Central Planning. In this direction the contradiction between the city and countryside, industrial and agricultural production, will be eliminated. Those who previously worked in the cooperatives will be benefited from the improvement of their working and living conditions.”* 98

The measure of cooperatives constitutes an element of a necessary compromise in order to integrate poor self-employed farmers into the process of socialist construction.

In the Program of KKE the maintenance of some individual self-employed owners is also foreseen in several branches of the economy where socialization is not immediately possible, on the precondition that they will not hire any alien labour power.

Central Planning *“prioritizes the production of means of production which determines the development of productive capability and the technological equipment as a whole and social services. In the final analysis, it determines the ability of the expanded reproduction and the rise of social prosperity. Each specific plan must increasingly express the scientific laws of Central Planning and in this way approach the objective proportions of the expanded socialist accumulation and social prosperity.*

Central Planning aims, on a medium and long term basis, to develop in a generalized way the ability to perform specialized labour, as well as interchanges in the technical division of labour, to achieve the generalized development of labour productivity and the reduction of labour time, for the prospect of eliminating the differences between executive and supervisory labour, between manual and intellectual labour.” 99

The realization of the scientific Central Planning in industry, administrative and social services will rely on the use of all technological capabilities and the corresponding scientific achievements.

The development of Central Planning and the extension of social ownership to all branches gradually make money unnecessary, not only as regards its content but its form as well, as a proof of an individual's contribution to social labour and as a means of distribution of the social product that is distributed according to labour. The role of the Central Bank changes, the latter acquiring

a role on the exercise of general social accounting in connection to the respective institutions of the Central Planning.

Concerning the formation of the stance of socialist power in international relations, it is referred in the Programme of the KKE that:

“Socialist construction is incompatible with the participation of the country in imperialist unions, such as the EU and NATO, IMF, OECD; with the existence of USA-NATO military bases. The new power, depending on the international and regional situation, will seek to develop inter-state relations of mutual benefit between Greece and other countries, especially with countries whose level of development, particular problems and immediate interests may ensure such a mutually beneficial cooperation.

The socialist state will seek cooperation with states and peoples who objectively have a direct interest in resisting the economic, political and military centres of imperialism, first and foremost with the peoples who are constructing socialism in their countries. It will seek to utilize every available breach which might occur in the imperialist “front” due to inter-imperialist contradictions, in order to defend and strengthen the revolution and socialism. A socialist Greece, loyal to the principles of proletarian internationalism, will be, to the extent of its capabilities, a bulwark for the world anti-imperialist, revolutionary and communist movement.” 100

Aiming at the satisfaction of the extended social needs, a series of measures are to be taken for the creation of state social infrastructure like e.g. restaurants in workplaces, schools, infrastructure for rest and leisure, welfare institutions – high level infrastructure that protects, cares and ensures personal dignity for people that can not look after themselves due to age (underage or elderly people) or due to illness (people with special needs).

Public and free preschool education and uniform twelve-year education are ensured, all the preconditions are created for the development of the socialist cultural creativity, an exclusively public and free system of Health and welfare is established.

Basic social needs (education, health-welfare) will be exclusively free, while another part of them will be covered by a relatively small part of the “money-income acquired through labour” (accommodation, energy – water supply – heating, transport, food).

The Programme of the KKE, responding to the question of how this “money-income acquired through labour” is to be determined, answers as follows:

“Labour time in socialism is the measure of the individual contribution to social labour for the production of the total product. It operates as a measure for the distribution of these products of individual consumption which are still distributed “according to labor”.101

Individual contribution is not estimated on the basis of the distinction of labour into “simple” or “complex”, “manual” or “intellectual”. Labour time is determined by the plan based on the total needs of social production, on the organization and function of social services. The special needs of social production for the concentration of the labour force in areas and branches are also taken into account, special social needs such as maternity, special needs of disabled and other people, as well as the individual attitude towards the organization and execution of the production process are also taken into account.

In the Programme of KKE it is specified that the preconditions for the development of the vanguard communist attitude vis-à-vis the organization and execution of labour in the unit of production are created with *"with the reduction of purely unskilled and manual labour, the reduction of labour time, in parallel with access to educational programs, leisure and cultural services, participation in workers' control. The form of money incentives is rejected.....The planned development of the productive forces in the communist mode of production will increasingly free up more time from work, which will be utilised to raise the educational-cultural level of working people; to allow for their participation in the realization of their duties regarding workers' power and management of production, etc. The communist attitude towards directly social labour depends on the all-round development of man as the productive force in the new type of society which is constructed and on the development of the communist relations."*¹⁰²

What are the programmatic directions of the KKE for the establishment of the socialist state?

The working class, as the leading social force, bearer of the communist relations of production, also objectively expresses the interests of the non – proletarian social strata, concerning the prospect of their turning into workers of the social production. *"Only the proletariat — by virtue of the economic role it plays in large-scale production — is capable of being the leader of all the working and exploited people, whom the bourgeoisie exploit, oppress and crush, often not less but more than they do the proletarians, but who are incapable of waging an independent struggle for their emancipation"*¹⁰³, Lenin. It is historically unprecedented that the dictatorship of one class (the proletariat) expresses the interests of the majority of the population, whereas all the previous political powers expressed the imposition of the interests of the minority over the majority.

In this sense the state begins to "wither away" since the first steps of the socialist construction, it is no longer a state in the sense of the word per se, i.e. a state that has been formed in the context of exploitative societies.

After all, Engels noted that the economic duties of the dictatorship of the proletariat form the economic basis for the withering away of the state: *"The first act by virtue of which the state really constitutes itself the representative of the whole of society – the taking possession of the means of production in the name of society – this is, at the same time, its last independent act as a state."*¹⁰⁴ While Lenin noted that *"the dictatorship of the proletariat is not only the use of force against the exploiters, and not even mainly the use of force. The economic foundation of this use of revolutionary force, the guarantee of its effectiveness and success is the fact that the proletariat represents and creates a higher type of social organisation of labour compared with capitalism. This is what is important, this is the source of the strength and the guarantee that the final triumph of communism is inevitable."*¹⁰⁵

In the Programme of the KKE, the revolutionary workers' power is analyzed:

"The socialist power is the revolutionary power of the working class, the dictatorship of the proletariat. The working class power will replace all the bourgeois organs, which will be smashed by the revolutionary activity, with new organs that will be created by the people."

The revolutionary working class power requires a high level of organization with all means available. It requires workers' control in the exercise of the administration of the industrial units above all in the sectors of strategic importance so that the working class power carries out its creative, social, economic and cultural work under all conditions.....

The fundamental principles of the revolutionary working class power arise from the objective position of the working class in the socialized production process, which has not achieved a unified consciousness of its social role.

The fundamental principles of the new power are in total opposition to the old, bourgeois power because the socialized labour renders the private ownership over the means of production obsolete.

The extent and the forms that the revolutionary working class power uses for the repression of the counterrevolutionary activity depend on the stance of the political and social organizations towards the two conflicting forces, the working class and the capitalist class.”106

The democratic character of the dictatorship of the proletariat is based on the fact that it is historically the first political power that draws the exploited masses into the governance of the society, while suppressing the exploiters. It relies on the participation of workers, on their control. Lenin, answering those that launched an attack against the dictatorship of the proletariat and had the bourgeois democracy as their criterion, noted that: *“The dictatorship of the proletariat, i.e., the organization of the vanguard of the oppressed as the ruling class for the purpose of suppressing the oppressors, cannot result merely in an expansion of democracy. Simultaneously with an immense expansion of democracy, which for the first time becomes democracy for the poor, democracy for the people, and not democracy for the money-bags, the dictatorship of the proletariat imposes a series of restrictions on the freedom of the oppressors, the exploiters, the capitalists.”107*

The dictatorship of the proletariat, in terms of institutions and functions, is a state “type Paris Commune” or “Soviet type” i.e. the power is exercised through organs created by the revolutionary struggle of the working class and its allies, in which legislative, executive and judicial power are joined together. These organs consist of elected and recallable representatives of the working people, chosen by the workers themselves through elections. The cells of workers’ power are the production units, the workplaces, where the social and workers’ control over the direction [of production] is exercised.

These organs remain representative, but parliamentarianism as a separate system is abolished, the separation of legislative and executive power and the privileged position of MPs and state employees are abolished too.

Those elected that participate in the organs of revolutionary power are not Professional MPs, are not cut off their work obligations.

Democratic centralism is the fundamental principle for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, a principle that ensures the subordination of the minority to the will of the majority of the society, the unity of will and action of the society for the realization of the socialist construction.

The experience in the Soviet Union showed that the dictatorship of the proletariat relies on the mobilization of the working masses, so that the directives of the Party will be embraced by the wider masses.

The socialist state as an organ of class struggle, which continues with other forms and under new conditions, does not have merely a defensive repressive

organizational function. It also has a creative, economic, cultural, educational function under the leadership of the communist party. It expresses a higher form of democracy whose chief characteristic is the active participation of the working class and generally of the people in the formation of socialist society, in the resolution of the old contradictions and the social inequalities, in the control of the management of the productive units, of the social and administrative services of all the organs of power from the bottom up. The exercise of criticism of decisions and practices which obstruct socialist construction, the unhindered denunciation of subjective arbitrariness and bureaucratic behaviour of officials, and other negative phenomena and deviations from socialist-communist principles will be ensured.

The basis of the workers' power is the obligation of all people who are capable of working to work –at the age designated by the law- and through their work to exercise their rights and obligations towards the organs of power. At the same time, the organs of power themselves and the working class state as a whole guarantee work, which corresponds to their specialization or re-specialization, regardless of their educational level, the linguistic, cultural, religious background, for everyone.

The foundation of workers' power is the productive unit, the social services, the administrative unit, the productive cooperatives.

The direct and indirect working class democracy, the principle of control, of accountability and the right of recall is based on the Assembly of the working people.

In socialist power the right to vote means the right of the working people to elect and be elected in all the organs of power, to control and recall the councillors and representatives, a right that can only be deprived due to an implementation of criminal-disciplinary law.

The working class power expresses its alliance with the self-employed and the farmers that participate in cooperatives, providing the ability of their separate/independent representation through their Councils. Pensioners vote for the same Councils respectively. These Councils have a transitional character as they correspond to transitional forms of ownership, with the perspective of the integration of these strata into the directly social production. The character of power as power of the working class is ensured by the composition of the regional and central organs, where the self-employed and cooperative farmers are represented.

The struggle for the establishment and development of a new society is carried out by the revolutionary working class with the Communist Party as their leader that takes advantage of the laws of movement of the socialist – communist society. From this stems the superior role of the subjective factor here in comparison to all the previous socioeconomic formations, where human activity was governed by the spontaneous imposition of the social laws on the basis of the spontaneously developed relations of production.

The scientific and class character of the Communist Party's political line is thus a necessary precondition for socialist construction. To the extent that these elements are lost, opportunism develops which, if not confronted, evolves into a counterrevolutionary force.

The Communist Party, as the Party of the working class that holds power and as its ideological and political vanguard, plays a leading role in the organs of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Only the working class vanguard, i.e. the most conscious section of it with unwavering class orientation is able to consistently express the historical mission of the working class in the task of the construction of the classless, communist society. It can build the unity of will and action of the working class so that it acquires the role of the leading force of the socialist society.

Lenin argued that: *"the dictatorship of the proletariat cannot be exercised through an organisation embracing the whole of that class, because in all capitalist countries (and not only over here, in one of the most backward) the proletariat is still so divided, so degraded, and so corrupted in parts (by imperialism in some countries) that an organisation taking in the whole proletariat cannot directly exercise proletarian dictatorship. It can be exercised only by a vanguard that has absorbed the revolutionary energy of the class."*¹⁰⁸

He also explained the need of an ideologically powerful party in relation to the complex duties of socialist construction:

*"The dictatorship of the proletariat means a persistent struggle—bloody and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic, educational and administrative -- against the forces and traditions of the old society. The force of habit in millions and tens of millions is a most formidable force. Without a party of iron that has been tempered in the struggle, a party enjoying the confidence of all honest people in the class in question, a party capable of watching and influencing the mood of the masses, such a struggle cannot be waged successfully."*¹⁰⁹

The leading role of the party in the dictatorship of the proletariat means that through its organizations, it guides the organs of power of the proletariat, the repression mechanisms, the army, the trade unions, the cooperatives, the mass organizations and of course the organization and management bodies of the direct social production etc. It acts with the aim of mobilizing, attracting the working class and the allied strata in a mass way, through their participation in the trade unions, the working collectives etc, the control of power, of the management of production, of planning etc. It introduces the ability of scientific prediction, of planned action for the creation of the new communist relations in all the organs of workers' power.

As is natural, the "top" of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the government, the supreme organ of the people's deputies consists of leading cadres of the party *"As the ruling Party,"* said Lenin, *"we could not but merge the Soviet 'top leadership' with the Party 'top leadership'".* ¹¹⁰

This is a relationship imposed according to scientific law, which is realized not by acquiring the title communist, but by justifying it in practice.

The rise of the revolutionary consciousness of the masses of the working class is first of all determined by the reinforcement of the communist relations of production and by the level of the workers' participation. It is on this material basis that ideological work and the impact of the revolutionary party and superstructure must be based.

On the other hand though, the reinforcement of the communist relations of production presupposes the conscious action of the working people. Of course consciousness is not completely consolidated within the people with the victory of the revolution, however this needs to be achieved subsequently. This is solved by the vanguard intervention of the Communist Party. It is thus important to develop the level of consciousness of the party, the revolutionary

consciousness of the vanguard, so that it is always at a higher level than the mass consciousness generally reflected by the economic relations formed in each period.

The members and the cadres of the KKE and its Youth will participate in all forms of society's organisation and exercise their role as ideological-political leaders, with self-sacrifice, selflessness and without any economic privilege or any other privileges.

The members of the Youth of the KKE, of KNE, act accordingly among the students and the school students under the political guidance of the organs and the forces of the party e.g. in education, in the workers' army, in the groups for the protection of the revolution etc.

The role of the members and the cadres of the KKE is constantly being judged –confirmed or negated- in practice. This requires them to achieve a higher level of theoretical, scientific, technical knowledge so as to contribute to the ideological and political maturation of the working class for its new role as the leading force of socialist –communist construction.

The recognition and the realization of the leading role of the party is the result of its revolutionary ideological political and organizational formation which is constantly judged in practice. The dialectical relationship between revolutionary theory and revolutionary practice is continually being judged.

The Communist Party is the main factor for introducing revolutionary consciousness into the masses. From here stems the necessity for the party to be of a high theoretical and ideological level, to struggle unwaveringly against opportunism, in conditions of capitalism, and of course even more so in conditions of socialist construction.

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Chapter Four

The struggle against opportunism

What is opportunism?

Opportunism has strengthened in the current conditions, after the counterrevolutionary events of 1989 – 1991 and the deterioration of the situation within the international correlation of forces, the imperialist aggression based on the extensive counterrevolution.

The consistent and relentless struggle against opportunism constitutes an essential precondition of the revolutionary character of the communist party. By the term opportunism we mean the trend to deny the revolutionary principles of the communist movement, the adjustment of the Communist Party under the "pressure of the current developments", giving up on the revolutionary political theory and practice. It is the result of the impact and the penetration of bourgeois and petty bourgeois ideology inside the revolutionary working class movement.

At a theoretical level, basic features of opportunism are revisionism and dogmatism. The basis of those expressions is the non – dialectical materialistic perception that leads either to the revision of fundamental theoretical principles or absolutizes theses and elevates to the level of a

scientific law a political line of the working class movement in a certain historical period.

By the term revisionism we mean the unscientific denial – rejection of basic principles of Marxism – Leninism, considering them to be outdated, the denial of the general validity of the laws concerning the class struggle. Revisionism as a direction was formed at the end of the 19th century with Bernstein being its most prominent representative. The summary of Lenin concerning the revisionist opportunist line of Bernstein is characteristic:

“The essence of the “new” trend, which adopts a “critical” attitude towards “obsolete dogmatic” Marxism, has been clearly enough presented by Bernstein [...]

... the demand for a decisive turn from revolutionary Social-Democracy to bourgeois social-reformism was accompanied by a no less decisive turn towards bourgeois criticism of all the fundamental ideas of Marxism.” ¹¹¹

The epistemological root of revisionism is the inability to understand that development occurs in a dialectical way both gradually as well as with leaps that in any case proceed between contradictions and through contradictions, that its advancing course includes zigzags, temporary setbacks. Any one-sidedness, any fossilization of thought, any exclusively one-sided attachment to one side of an issue can cause ideological confusion, even though we cannot claim that every ideological confusion and every political mistake constitutes a conscious opportunist choice. Certainly, the early detection of the political mistake and its open acknowledgement and correction is a precondition in order to avoid its evolution into an opportunist deviation. Certainly, Marxism along with dialectical materialism as its weapon can embrace and understand the entire wealth of development. However,

“...the masses learn from life and not from books, and therefore certain individuals or groups constantly exaggerate, elevate to a one-sided theory, to a one-sided system of tactics, now one and now another feature of capitalist development, now one and now another “lesson” of this development.

[...]The revisionists regard as phrase-mongering all arguments about “leaps” and about the working-class movement being antagonistic in principle to the whole of the old society. They regard reforms as a partial realisation of socialism.” ¹¹²

Revision concerns theoretical and political theses, founding and operational principles of the Party.

The basic criterion concerning class divisions (the ownership relations of the means of production), scientific laws of socialist revolution and construction, social ownership and central planning as communist relations, the leading role of the CP as the organised ideological – political vanguard of the working class, are revised. Usually, revision is justified by projecting the pretext of national or regional peculiarity. There are many cases when opportunism passes from the theses of proletarian internationalism to the theses of bourgeois cosmopolitanism, while under conditions of imperialist war it does not hesitate to adopt the “patriotic” pretexts and slogans invoked by domestic the bourgeois class that conducts the war.

Various revisionist theses deny the reactionary character of the contemporary era of capitalism, imperialism, as the era of transition from capitalism to socialism. In certain phases of capitalist development they absolutize the trend of the formation of imperialist interstate unions of capitalist states and

they bring to the forefront ancient theories of ultra – imperialism of Kautsky (see the theories of globalisation projected some years ago).

In fact, they adopt bourgeois theories that deal with imperialism as an aggressive external policy and not as contemporary capitalism, overlooking the economic characteristics of monopoly capitalism – capital export, monopoly competition for the redistribution or the distribution of new markets through war – they classify as imperialist states only those at the top of the imperialist pyramid, that can initiate, organise and conduct imperialist wars.

The various zigzags of bourgeois policies, different changes in the tactics followed by the bourgeois class can cause in various ways the strengthening of revisionism, of opportunism.

Once again we turn to Lenin:

“If the tactics of the bourgeoisie were always uniform, or at least of the same kind, the working class would rapidly learn to reply to them by tactics just as uniform or of the same kind. But, as a matter of fact, in every country the bourgeoisie inevitably devises two systems of rule, two methods of fighting for its interests and of maintaining its domination, and these methods at times succeed each other and at times are interwoven in various combinations. The first of these is the method of force, the method which rejects all concessions to the labour movement [...] the method of irreconcilably rejecting reforms.” ¹¹³

“The second is the method of “liberalism”, of steps towards the development of political rights, towards reforms, concessions, and so forth. The bourgeoisie passes from one method to the other not because of the malicious intent of individuals, and not accidentally, but owing to the fundamentally contradictory nature of its own position. Normal capitalist society cannot develop successfully without a firmly established representative system and without certain political rights for the population, which is bound to be distinguished by its relatively high “cultural” demands.

[...]In consequence, vacillations in the tactics of the bourgeoisie, transitions from the system of force to the system of apparent concessions have been characteristic of the history of all European countries...” ¹¹⁴

Therefore, a turn towards “concessions”, political rights, can prove to be particularly dangerous leading to the subordination of the revolutionary party to bourgeois reformism, as well as its conversion into its appendage.

“Not infrequently, the bourgeoisie for a certain time achieves its object by a “liberal” policy, which [...] is a “more crafty” policy. A part of the workers and a part of their representatives at times allow themselves to be deceived by seeming concessions.” ¹¹⁵

Correspondingly the policy of systematic force against the proletariat and its ideological and political vanguard, the revolutionary communist party used by the bourgeois class, exerts pressure in order to subjugate it to bourgeois legitimacy, in order to liquidate the party or to make it to suspend the operation of its organisations or even dissolve them.

Certainly all kinds of bourgeois governments, either in parliamentary conditions or not, always use simultaneously all the methods that have as their distinct target the strengthening of the opportunist pressure or wavering.

The “rapid metamorphoses” depending on socioeconomic developments and the course of class struggle is a characteristic feature of opportunism. Thus, during the first period of the counterrevolution various opportunist forces declared that the “communist movement” is obsolete, while others glorified the

EU or adopted ultra – imperialist theses and the need for the modernization of capitalism. During the capitalist economic crisis, several opportunist forces that have severed the ties with the Communist Party due to their rupture in the previous period, are rediscovering their “communist identity”, Lenin, the Bolsheviks, they are declaring the goal to overthrow capitalism in favour of socialism etc.

The basic element of the opportunist approach is the detachment of the economy from politics and the elevation of politics as the main element of this relation. Therefore, opportunism finds the cause of the manifestation of scientific laws of capitalism i.e. economic crisis, imperialist war in the choices deriving from the Programmes, the ideological “shade” (liberalism or neoliberalism, Keynesianism, or neo-keynesianism) and the management capability of the bourgeois parties.

Usually, opportunism coincides with the Keynesian (state expansive) form of bourgeois management and projects itself as the consistent political representative of this theory and declares the ability (through this kind of management) of capitalism to evolve into socialism.

The state and its institutions are treated neutrally, in a non-class way or with a changeable class content that is determined by the parties that have the parliamentary majority. The process for socialism is projected as a long-lasting course of “ruptures and conflicts” with a “parliamentary majority” as a leader and a “government of the left” on the terrain of capitalism.

Hence, opportunism in the political context glorifies reforms, reformist illusions, governmentism and the denial of revolution. The Bernstein’s view at the beginning of the 20th century is characteristic, because he considered that “The movement is everything, the final goal is nothing”. Lenin noted that during his time the goal of opportunists was:

“Social-Democracy (note of the author, until 1917, the revolutionary labour movement was known by the term social-democracy) must change from a party of social revolution into a democratic party of social reforms.

[...]the demand for a decisive turn from revolutionary Social-Democracy to bourgeois social-reformism was accompanied by a no less decisive turn towards bourgeois criticism of all the fundamental ideas of Marxism [...].

If Bernstein’s theoretical criticism and political yearnings were still unclear to anyone, the French took the trouble strikingly to demonstrate the “new method” [...]. Millerand has furnished an excellent example of practical Bernsteinism [...]. If Social-Democracy, in essence, is merely a party of reform and must be bold enough to admit this openly, then not only has a socialist the right to join a bourgeois cabinet, but he must always strive to do so

[...] And the reward for this utter humiliation and self-degradation of socialism in the face of the whole world, for the corruption of the socialist consciousness of the working masses – the only basis that can guarantee our victory – the reward for this is pompous projects for miserable reforms, so miserable in fact that much more has been obtained from bourgeois governments!” ¹¹⁶

The disputing of the role of the working class in today’s capitalist society as well as in future socialist society is a significant characteristic of opportunism.

Such a dispute is presented with many different forms. Usually, a systematic effort to vulgarize or to distort the criterion that determine the concept and the extent of working class is taking place, a distortion that arises either by limiting the working class in order to include only manual workers and only the

workers in manufacturing or by extending it in order to include employees that do not sell their labour power to the capital (physical or mental).

Opportunism does not give up on its intervention within the working class – trade union movement, reinforcing the reformist direction and the “governmental” illusions, and places particular emphasis on the so-called “new social movements”. These are initiatives and actions of interclass character that mobilize section of young workers, youth, in which parts of the intermediate strata play a dominant and basic role.

Opportunism leads to class conciliation through the subordination of the working class movement to a section of the bourgeois class in the name of coalitions and manoeuvres. Furthermore, this is also expressed as a trend to underestimate the differences between the working class and the allied strata. Opportunism denies the leading role of the party, the founding principles of the CP. The domination of opportunism within the CP de facto signifies the alteration of the revolutionary theses and operational principles of the CP. De facto, in that case, democratic centralism cannot exist, since the ideological and political unity of the Party is disturbed. History has proven that as long as the opportunist view exists as a minority within the CP then it asserts the “freedom to promote” different opinions, the “freedom of criticism”, and when this view dominates then it attempts to impose discipline to the opportunist line. The operation with organised trends, factions within CPs, where revisionism and opportunism has dominated, demonstrates this lack of ideological-political unity. Historical experience has demonstrated that there cannot be both revolutionary and opportunist forces in the same party, the rupture is inevitable and the retreat from this break by the representatives of the revolutionary current de facto means compromise with opportunism.

The social root of opportunism

Opportunism cannot be fought within the ranks of the communist movement and there no step can be taken towards the solution of the practical duties of the communist movement without understanding the socioeconomic roots of opportunism.

Specifically, the general economic conditions that gave birth to opportunism are related to the formation of imperialism, as capitalism that rots and dies.

Marx, while studying the formation of the stock company is referring to a “new economic aristocracy”, to “a new kind of parasites” that deal with the issue and trading of stocks. However, the parasitic character does not concern the bourgeois class exclusively during the era of imperialism. Alongside the stockholders – parasites there arises a stratum of bourgeoisified workers, the “labour aristocracy”.

Lenin demonstrated the specified relationship between opportunism and imperialism, monopoly capitalism. The monopolies, due to their economic strength, are able to use a part of the surplus value extracted from the exploitation of working class in order to buy off a section of the working class and to form a stratum of labour aristocracy that becomes the social support of imperialism. Lenin made the following analysis: *“This stratum of workers-turned-bourgeois, or the labour aristocracy, who are quite philistine in their mode of life, in the size of their earnings and in their entire outlook, is the principal prop of the Second International, and in our days, the principal social*

(not military) prop of the bourgeoisie. For they are the real agents of the bourgeoisie in the working class movement, the labour lieutenants of the capitalist class, real vehicles of reformism and chauvinism. In the civil war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie they inevitably, and in no small numbers, take the side of the bourgeoisie, the "Versaillese" against the "Communards"." ¹¹⁷

The social basis of opportunism is *"...An entire social stratum, consisting of parliamentarians, journalists, labour officials, privileged office personnel, and certain strata of the proletariat, has sprung up and has become amalgamated with its own national bourgeoisie, which has proved fully capable of appreciating and "adapting" it."* ¹¹⁸

Lenin had as a starting point the notices of Marx and Engels concerning the British proletariat. Engels, in his letter to Marx in 7th of October 1858 concerning the British proletariat wrote: *"...the English proletariat is actually becoming more and more bourgeois, so that the ultimate aim of this most bourgeois of all nations would appear to be the possession, alongside the bourgeoisie, of a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat."* ¹¹⁹

Lenin mentioned that Engels on 12th of September 1882 wrote the following to Kautsky: *"You ask me what the English workers think about colonial policy. Well, exactly the same as they think about politics in general: the same as what the bourgeois think. There is no workers' party here, there are only Conservatives and Liberal-Radicals, and the workers gaily share the feast of England's monopoly of the world market and the colonies."* ¹²⁰

In his work Lenin generalised the aforementioned theses of Marx and Engels concerning, as was natural for that period, Britain, namely the labour movement of the country that already demonstrated in a distinctive way the features of imperialism.

Lenin wrote regarding this issue: *"But it has been a peculiar feature of England that even in the middle of the nineteenth century she already revealed at least two major distinguishing features of imperialism: (1) vast colonies, and (2) monopoly profit (due to her monopoly position in the world market). In both respects England at that time was an exception among capitalist countries, and Engels and Marx, analysing this exception, quite clearly and definitely indicated its connection with the (temporary) victory of opportunism in the English labour movement."* ¹²¹

Lenin's analysis on the labour aristocracy and its relationship with the decisive domination of monopolies in economic life demonstrated the economic essence of opportunism as a phenomenon of social and political life:

"The distinctive feature of the present situation is the prevalence of such economic and political conditions that are bound to increase the irreconcilability between opportunism and the general and vital interests of the working-class movement: imperialism has grown from an embryo into the predominant system; capitalist monopolies occupy first place in economics and politics; the division of the world has been completed. [...] Opportunism cannot now be completely triumphant in the working-class movement of one country for decades as it was in Britain in the second half of the nineteenth century; but in a number of countries it has grown ripe, overripe, and rotten, and has become completely merged with bourgeois policy in the form of "social-chauvinism"." ¹²²

The expansion of the “labour aristocracy” cannot be considered in a static way as a social phenomenon that only concerns certain advanced capitalist economies or certain sectors of the economy or even certain companies. Additionally, it can not be determined by the level of wages. What is required is the comparative examination between sections of the working class in a sector or a country and correspondingly the comparative examination at the level of international capitalist economy, based on the class characteristics as a whole (i.e. role within the social organization of labour).

Every one-dimensional approach that, for example, absolutizes the criterion concerning the wage level, obscures the issue (of defining the labour aristocracy). For example, a specialized highly paid worker that works in unhealthy working conditions in a mine, that has an executive and not a management role and intense working conditions can not be classified as being part of the labour aristocracy.

In addition, each section of the working class that due to various material factors and class origin has a petty bourgeois perception and life stance can not be confused with and classified as “labour aristocracy”.

The wage level does not coincide in several cases with the total income of the employee-worker. A part of the additional income can be ensured from various sources independent of salaried labour (small agricultural production, individual commodity production provision of services concerning the exchange of labour with wage i.e. employee-doctor that at the same time has a personal office, property leasing etc). there must be an examination of whether the employee-worker performs executive work or if he performs supervisory work of an intermediate character, meaning neither management nor executive.

During his era Lenin marked that the phenomenon of “labour aristocracy” is also connected with the way that an “employee” worker acquires their wage. It is also connected with the expansion of the state monopoly after the war and the concentration and centralization of capital in strategic sectors of the economy.

During the 2-3 first decades after the Second World War, considering the relative stabilization and the capitalist development, a multi-facetted state apparatus in all aspects of social life was formed and increased the capabilities for and the extent of the buying off of sections of the working class.

The “Labour aristocracy” appeared and was established in countries for the first time, while capitalist development was spreading and deepening all over the world. It is characteristic i.e. its expansion in Greece through the management apparatuses of EEC/EU Programmes. Essential and typical forms of formation of the contemporary “labour aristocracy” are the paid seats of trade unionists in various Social and Economic Committees. Even more extensively this phenomenon was connected to the direct capital exports from Greece during conditions of market liberation and the capitalization of the former Balkan socialist countries.

The basic estimation that imperialism has the capability to generalize the phenomenon of the differentiation within working class and the “labour aristocracy” in even more countries has been fully confirmed.

At the same time it must not be forgotten that during the domination of monopolies, during conditions where production has been socialized with

giant leaps, the increase of working class within the total population is accomplished through its expansion by sections of the intermediate strata that are proletarianized and they carry bourgeois prejudices, habits and life attitudes. Therefore, today i.e. the expansion of capital relation within former self-employed doctors, lawyers, engineers etc. impacts in a manifold way and in many ways. These forces due to their class origin are objectively more susceptible to petty bourgeois perceptions that cause vacillations at each critical moment during the development of the class struggle, they are dominated by psychology of rapid vicissitudes in each turn of the struggle, by over – optimism and impatience that alternates with disappointment, lack of discipline and faith in the organized struggle, fear of revolutionary changes, illusions concerning the improvement of living conditions with few or no sacrifices etc. This trend is particularly being reinforced during the conditions of the prolonged and deep capitalist economic crisis, where massive destruction and proletarianization of these kinds of strata is taking place, and it is strengthening even more due to the negative changes in labour relations (abolition of permanence) within former state companies in production (energy, telecommunications, mass transport, manufacture).

The sudden entrance of politically immature masses into the working class movement and in combination with the rapid changes in their economic condition can cause sudden spasms in the labour movement or an even greater retreat.

In his article, “Differences in the European Labour Movement”, Lenin while examining the causes of the international development of opportunism and reformism, mentioned: *“One of the most profound causes that periodically give rise to differences over tactics is the very growth of the labour movement. If this movement is not measured by the criterion of some fantastic ideal, but is regarded as the practical movement of ordinary people, it will be clear that the enlistment of larger and larger numbers of new “recruits”, the attraction of new sections of the working people must inevitably be accompanied by waverings in the sphere of theory and tactics, by repetitions of old mistakes, by a temporary reversion to antiquated views and antiquated methods, and so forth. The labour movement of every country periodically spends a varying amount of energy, attention and time on the “training” of recruits.”* ¹²³

The expressions of opportunism

The expressions of opportunism are usually separated into “right”, “left” and “centrist”. To begin with, it must be clarified that there is no pure expression of opportunism and that all the expressions of opportunism are a mixture of “right” or “left” deviation, but it must also be clarified that the term “right” opportunism concerns the open stance in favour of the submission of the CP to the bourgeois class while glorifying governmentalism and denying the revolutionary struggle. It constitutes the dominant form of the expression of opportunism from which the Communist Movement has historically suffered.

According to Lenin, a treacherous form of the expression of opportunism is the so called “centrism”. Kautsky is the most prominent representative of this current. “Centrism” as a current, as an individual direction of socialism made its appearance in 1914. However, its roots lie in an earlier period. At the beginning of 20th century Kautsky, a theoretician of German social –

democracy was largely combating the revisionist ideas of Bernstein, expressed through a series of articles and speeches in the congresses of social – democracy. However, Kautsky even during these times never posed the critical issue of the complete organizational separation from revisionism; he showed tolerance and compromised with the existence of two directions within the party.

In 1914 the abscess of opportunism burst open and resulted in social – chauvinism. The social – chauvinists, during the imperialist war “defended their homeland”, they voted for the war credits, and they took part in governments. Kautskyism as a direction expressed the effort to rescue the unity with opportunism; hence it was named “centrism”. Lenin gave the following description: *“Kautsky reconciles in an unprincipled way the fundamental idea of social-chauvinism, recognition of defence of the fatherland in the present war, with a diplomatic sham concession to the Lefts—his abstention from voting for war credits, his verbal claim to be in the opposition, etc.”* ¹²⁴

The Kautskyists did not deny the revolution in words, but they refused to do what Bolsheviks did during the 1st World War, to call upon the workers: *“...to break with the opportunists and exert all their efforts to strengthen, deepen, extend and sharpen the incipient revolutionary movement and demonstrations”, because “Revolution never falls ready-made from the skies, and when revolutionary ferment starts no one can say whether and when it will lead to a “real”, “genuine” revolution.”* ¹²⁵. On their part, the Kautskyists denounced the Bolshevik tactics as “utopia”, “adventurism” and «madness». Lenin answered that: *“When we are told that these “Russian tactics” [...] are not suitable for Europe, we usually reply by pointing to the facts. On October 30, a delegation of Berlin women comrades called on the Party’s Presidium in Berlin, and stated that “now that we have a large organising apparatus it is much easier to distribute illegal pamphlets and leaflets and to organise ‘banned meetings’ than it was under the Anti-Socialist Law.... Ways and means are not lacking, but the will evidently is”*

Had these bad comrades been led astray by the Russian “sectarians”, etc.? Is it these comrades who represent the real masses, or is it Legien and Kautsky? [...].

The workers are already demanding “illegal” pamphlets and “banned” meetings, i.e., underground organisations to support the revolutionary mass movement. Only when “war against war” is conducted on these lines does it cease to be empty talk and becomes Social-Democratic work.” ¹²⁶

After the outbreak of the October Revolution Kautskyism – centrism advanced into a new phase. Kautsky issued the book entitled *Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, opportunistically distorting Marx’s teachings concerning the dictatorship of the proletariat; he also turned against the Bolsheviks and accused them of imposing the autocracy of the leaders etc.

The Kautskyists left the German Social – Democratic Party (SPD) and formed the separate Independent German Social – Democratic Party (USPD) and as such they played a specific role in the defeat and suppression of the German Revolution of 1919. They later re-joined Social-democracy and constituted its “left” section.

During the decade of the 1920s, in conditions of the rise of the revolutionary movement, “right” opportunism triggered the unprocessed “left” reaction, as

an anti – dialectical dogmatic polemic against “right” opportunism”. The history of the international communist movement confirms the links between the vehicles of “right” and “left” opportunism.

Lenin analysed the causes of appearance of left “dogmatism” in 1920. It was a period when the revolutionary wave that was shaking a series of European countries as an inevitable result of the imperialist war had not yet subsided.

The October Revolution and the example of Bolsheviks demonstrated to the vanguard workers in a series of countries that bolshevism, its theory, its strategy and political practise constituted an international model. Lenin formulated the importance of the above conclusion: *“At the present moment in history, however, it is the Russian model that reveals to all countries something—and something highly significant—of their near and inevitable future. Advanced workers in all lands have long realised this [...] Herein lies the international “significance” (in the narrow sense of the word) of Soviet power, and of the fundamentals of Bolshevik theory and tactics.”* ¹²⁷

On this basis, Bolsheviks accomplished a work of huge importance before the 2nd Congress of the Communist International, in order for the class-oriented line to prevail, as indeed it did. It was a period when the treacherous role of social-democracy had been proven throughout the four years of the imperialist war as well as throughout the revolutionary uprisings in Germany, Hungary and elsewhere. In a series of countries, i.e. Germany and Italy, under the burden of the negative correlation of forces in favour of “right” opportunism, the “left” communist revolutionaries made certain ultra-left mistakes such as refusing to participate in the parliament and the trade unions where the treacherous social – democracy was dominant, or even the refusal of manoeuvres, as a position of principle etc.

Lenin in his work *Left-Wing Communism: an Infantile Disorder* expressed sharp criticism in these views thus helping the Communist Parties in this way to correct their ultra-left mistakes.

Today, all these characteristic features as a whole do not concern these forces that were characterised as “ultra-left” at that time by the Communist Movement. Certainly, the contemporary “left” opportunist current does not constitute an “infantile disorder of communism” – as characterised by Lenin during his era – and has been differentiated even in comparison to the current of the decades of the 1960s and 1970s. Its difference with the right opportunist forces is that at the level of declarations it projects the objective of the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and the construction of socialism – communism. It is particularly noted the impact of certain “anarchist – autonomist” and “antiauthoritarian” views, concerning the formation of the physiognomy of contemporary “left” opportunism, as well as the even more intense influence of neo – trotskyist, other “right” opportunist currents and euro – communism.

Contemporary “left” opportunism appears using “left” slogans, but it leads to nihilism and the denial of the socialist construction and the communist movement of the 20th century. Its forces do not hesitate to negotiate their position with social – democracy and “right” opportunism, to attack consistent CPs and to accuse the KKE of sectarianism. They are willing allies in the “anti – neoliberal” fronts in the past as well as in “anti – memorandum” fronts today and objectively contribute to the assimilation and the compromise with the bourgeois political line.

The formation of the strategy of the communist movement and the struggle against opportunism

Beginning from the period when Marx and Engels wrote the Communist Manifesto until the Paris Commune of 1871, opportunism could not be considered to have the characteristic features that it acquired during the later period of capitalism. During that period the main objective was the ideological, political and organisational separation of the working class from the bourgeois class and the petty bourgeois strata, in conditions when even the bourgeois revolutions had not yet been completed.

Marx and Engels conducted from the very beginning an ideological struggle attempting to contribute to the maturation of the political movement of the working class in an unrelenting struggle against various bourgeois and petty bourgeois views concerning socialism. The working class movement at that time was still young, was taking its first steps and was under the political and ideological guardianship of the bourgeois class.

Marx and Engels, fighting against all those trends, revealed their class roots, they criticized their basic dogmas and they demonstrated the utopian character of the reformist pursuits.

The debate between Marx and Engels against the petty bourgeois reformist socialist theory of Pierre – Josef Proudhon ¹²⁸ was very notable. Proudhon expressed the illusions of the broad mass of small holders, principally ruined and highly indebted farmers and hardworking small craftsmen of the city. He considered as being necessary the examination of measures aiming to maintain small ownership and the creation of a society consisted of “equal” private commodity producers. His utopian theory led to the conclusion that social revolution (namely the abolition of feudal remnants and the overcoming of salaried labour) was possible with peaceful means, based on the cooperation between the proletariat and the bourgeois class, and for that reason he declared abstention from any kind of political struggle.

Marx and Engels also fought against the reformism of British trade-unions, known simply as *trade – unionism*. *Trade – unionism* accepted that capitalist relations were permanent and attempted to improve through reforms the position, inside the capitalist system, of the workers organised within the trade unions. Their action was limited to the struggle for the improvement of the conditions of the sale of labour power and they did not aim to overthrow the capitalist system. The *trade – unionist* political line was an expression of the bourgeois political line within the working class movement under the influence of bourgeois ideology.

Lassalleanism, particularly within the German working class movement, was one of the most important obstacles that the propagation of the scientific revolutionary theory faced. Marx and Engels dealt with this form of reformism for the first time during the decade of 1860. This trend developed within the German working class movement and was connected to the activity of a political mass organisation, the General German Workers Association.

Lassalle ¹²⁹ rejected the necessity of the socialist revolution and considered that a peaceful transformation of the bourgeois state via the widespread electoral right was possible.

Marx in his letter of 9th of April 1863 to Engels mocked Lassalle by writing: *"I received his (note the author: Ferdinand Lassalle) of the open reply [...] He solves the wages v. capital problem 'with delightful ease' (verbotenus). The workers, that is, are to agitate for general suffrage, after which they are to send people like himself into the Chamber of Deputies, armed 'with the naked sword of science'. Next they organise workers' factories, for which the state advances the capital and, by and by, these institutions spread throughout the country. This, at any rate, is surprisingly new!"* ¹³⁰

The decades between the years 1871 – 1914 were the period of the development of the stockholder capitalist ownership that results in the large capitalist company, the monopoly; it is the era of the complete domination and decline of the bourgeois class.

It is a relatively "peaceful" period between the two rival classes, bourgeois and working class. The period of bourgeois revolutions during which the working class emerges in the forefront ended with the defeat of the first proletarian revolution of the "Paris Commune". The bourgeois power was stabilized and the working class retreats from its participation in the revolutionary struggle.

During these decades it was exactly when the social-democratic parties, typical of the Second International were formed.

These were parties that included both the revolutionary as well as the compromising trends.

The most important landmarks of these years were the following: The Gotha Congress of 1875, which was held after long controversies and debates, namely a compromise including both the supporters of Eisenach and the supporters of "Lassalleanism" in favour of the formation of the Socialist Workers' Party of Germany (later Social – Democratic). The formation of the Second International in 1889, as well as the adoption by the German Social Democratic Party in 1891 of the well-known Erfurt Programme, that was in essence a model for the entire Second International.

The history of the international communist movement reaffirms the appraisal expressed by Lenin concerning the social – class root of opportunism as well as his analysis concerning its epistemological root. While Lenin, based on the analyses of Marx, defined the social and class basis of opportunism, other Marxist revolutionaries like Rosa Luxemburg paid attention only to the epistemological root of opportunism. This kind of absolutization as an examination that is narrowed exclusively on the epistemological preconditions of opportunism was used as an alibi to explain the coexistence along with opportunism in the old parties of the Second International and also created the perception that the victory over opportunism can be achieved without rupture, only through ideological struggle against it and finally reinforced the illusions about the real character of opportunism. For many years opportunism accumulated inside the social democratic parties as an abscess, until the moment it burst at the beginning of 1st World War in 1914. The necessity of the ideological, political and organisational separation from opportunism was established by Lenin based on his analysis of its social – class oriented basis. At the same time, he revealed the one-sided, eclectic, dogmatic, anti – dialectical character of revisionism and opportunism.

At the beginning of the 1st World War opportunism appeared as social – chauvinism almost throughout the whole of the revolutionary working class movement and led the Second International to its complete and unmitigated

bankruptcy. The absolute ideological, political and organisational separation between the revolutionary forces and the compromised forces of social - democracy was needed in order for the revolutionary working class movement to emerge acquiring the ideological, political and organisational form of the communist movement.

Lenin was the ideological, political and organizational leader of the separation. In his article in the newspaper *Sotsial-Demokrat*, n.36, of 9th of January 1915, entitled "What Next? ..." he referred to the duties of the proletarian parties against opportunism and social – chauvinism and declared:

"Typical of the socialist parties of the epoch of the Second International was one that tolerated in its midst an opportunism built up in decades of the "peaceful" period, an opportunism that kept itself secret, adapting itself to the revolutionary workers, borrowing their Marxist terminology, and evading any clear cleavage of principles. This type has outlived itself. If the war ends in 1915, will any thinking socialist be found willing to begin, in 1916, restoring the workers' parties together with the opportunists, knowing from experience that in any new crisis all of them to a man (plus many other spineless and muddleheaded people) will be for the bourgeoisie, who will of course find a pretext to ban any talk of class hatred and the class struggle?" ¹³¹

In this article Lenin described the way that working class learned to utilize important means of struggle such as parliamentarianism and other legal possibilities, the foundation of mass organisations for the economic and political struggle, proletarian press for broad distribution etc.

At the same time he highlighted that this era gave birth to the trend of the denial of the class struggle, as a struggle for power, the denial of socialist revolution, the general denial of illegal organisations, the propagation of "social peace" and the recognition of bourgeois patriotism.

In the Theses of the Second Congress of Communist International, the formation of which Lenin contributed decisively to, there is the following assessment concerning that long period: *"From this originates the adjustment of parliamentary tactics of socialist parties concerning the legal activity of bourgeois parliaments, the continuously increasing importance concerning the struggle in order to introduce reforms within the context of capitalism, the prevalence of the so-called "minimum" programme of socialist parties and the use of a "maximum" programme that aimed at a remote "final objective". On this basis the symptoms of parliamentary competition, of corruption and of the open or hidden treachery of the primary interests of working class were developed."* ¹³²

During the conditions of the War of 1914 – 1915, of *"such a great turn in history"*, Lenin considered as imperative that *"the attitude towards opportunism cannot remain the same as it has been"*. ¹³³

The stance of opportunist social democracy towards war and towards the bourgeois class of its native country was a defining element. Lenin argued that during the conditions of crisis (economic and political crisis that was brought by the war) the workers' parties – then social democratic –should proceed to illegal action to exploit the crisis and the psychological attitude of the workers in order to *"rouse the people and hasten the downfall of capitalism"*

¹³⁴

He noted characteristically: *"The course of history cannot be turned back or checked—we can and must go fearlessly onward, from the preparatory legal working-class organisations, which are in the grip of opportunism, to revolutionary organisations that know how not to confine themselves to legality and are capable of safeguarding themselves against opportunist treachery, organisations of a proletariat that is beginning a "struggle for power", a struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie."*¹³⁵

The polemics of the communist movement, the Communist International (CI) against the consolidated and treacherous social – democracy (Second International) was intense throughout the decade of the 1920s.

However it must be noted that this kind of polemics were not always accompanied by the corresponding practical action because it divided social-democracy into "right" and "left" forces. This kind of division expressed the wavering concerning the stance towards Social - Democracy that prevailed within the CI parties. This wavering was reflected the corresponding struggle inside the CI parties concerning the formation of its strategy.

The view that it was imperative for the CPs to have an alliance policy with social – democratic parties in order to detach working class forces which were following the latter. However, historical experience proves that sections of the popular base of other parties can only be convinced through ideological-political front against both the bourgeois political line and opportunism.

The CI, despite its efforts, could not resolve contradictions concerning the formation of a unified strategy for the Communist Parties.

The retreat of the revolutionary upsurge that took place in the following years, as well as the persistent enormous influence of Social – Democracy within the working class masses, posed the issue of what rallying line should be used by the CI in these conditions.

After its 3rd Congress (1921), the CI elaborated gradually the political line of the "United Front" between the workers who followed the communists and those who followed social democracy. The Executive Committee (EC) of CI discussed and finalized the resolution of the 18th of December 1921. In the resolution it was noted that: *"When we are referring to a united working class front we should mean the unity of all workers willing to struggle against capitalism"*¹³⁶. The discussion concerning the character and the role of the united front continued with disputes within the EC of CI and also inside the CPs. One trend rejected the idea of the United Working Class Front and at the same time a series of right-wing elements within the communist movement tried to interpret the united front as being a strategic and without principles agreement with the Second or the Second and a half¹³⁷ International.

In 1922 a meeting between representatives of CI, Second and Second and a half International took place. The delegation of CI, consisted of C. Zetkin, N.

Bukharin, K. Radek, and made unacceptable retreats and pledged that the death penalty would not be imposed on the 47 SRs who were guilty actions against soviet power and the murder of communists, and also that during their trial delegations of all three Internationals were allowed to be present.

Lenin, criticising these retreats remarked that: *"The representatives of the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals need a united front, for they hope to weaken us by inducing us to make exorbitant concessions"*¹³⁸.

During the following period, concerns developed within the ranks of the CI concerning the possibility of forming "Workers' Governments" as governments

of the "United Front". The 4th Congress (1922) concluded by defining 5 types of workers' governments that could be formed as well as the stance of communists towards them:

"1. A liberal workers' government, such as existed in Australia and is possible in Britain in the near future.

2. A social-democrat 'workers' government' (Germany).

3. A workers' and peasants' government. Such a possibility exists in the Balkans, Czechoslovakia, etc.

4. A workers' government with communist participation

5. A genuine proletarian workers' government, which can be created in its pure form only by a Communist Party. [...]

The first two types are not revolutionary workers' governments, but camouflaged coalitions between the bourgeois class and counterrevolutionary forces. In critical moments such governments are tolerated by the feeble bourgeois class in order to fool the workers concerning the real class character of the State or in order to disorient the proletariat, aided by corrupted leaders, in order to gain some time. Communists cannot participate in such governments. On the contrary, they must reveal relentlessly in front of the masses their real character...

Communists attempt that their objective will be embraced by workers that do not understand the necessity of dictatorship of proletariat, social democrat workers, Christian socialists, those who are not members of the party and members of the trade unions. Therefore, communists agree that under certain circumstances and with certain guarantees they can support a non-communist workers' government. In the same time, communists speak openly to the masses that the establishment of a genuine workers' government cannot be possible without revolutionary struggle against the bourgeois class.

The other two types of workers' governments (the workers' and peasants' and the workers' government with communist participation) are not dictatorship of the proletariat but wherever they are formed can be suitable as a start for struggle for this kind of dictatorship. Only a government, consisting of communists, can be the genuine incarnation of the dictatorship of the proletariat." ¹³⁹

Confusion prevailed in many sections of the CI and within the ranks of the CPs "right" opportunist ideas started to strengthen in confrontation with "ultra-left" trends of denial of the immediate struggle objectives within the Communist Parties' Programmes.

During the 5th CI Congress (1924) a debate started concerning the character of the workers' and peasants' government, especially regarding the Balkan and Eastern European countries. Officially, the view that workers' and peasants' government could be formed in conditions of bourgeois democracy was rejected and this kind of government was essentially acknowledged as the dictatorship of the proletariat. At the same time, during the Congress, problems emerged within the Communist Parties and all the "right" theses which emerged in this period were condemned as well as the trotskyist theses, whose representatives were driven out of the CI's ranks.

In these conditions the need to form a unified Programme of the CI emerged and could be further specialized by its national sections, the CPs of each country with unified criteria. This issue was to be dealt with by the 6th Congress of the CI (1928).

Before and during the Congress a struggle emerged against the “right” opportunist theses proposed by N. Bukharin.

In the Congress there appeared scepticism and struggle concerning the character of the revolution in the various categories of countries and especially regarding those with relatively delayed capitalist development (with peasants still dominating within the economically active population) and the colonies.

Therefore, the 6th Congress came to the following Resolution:

“The variety of conditions and ways by which the proletariat will achieve its dictatorship in the various countries may be divided schematically into three main types.

Countries of highly-developed capitalism (United States of America, Germany, Great Britain, etc.), having powerful productive forces, highly centralised production, with small scale production reduced to relative insignificance, and a long established bourgeois-democratic political system. In such countries the fundamental political demand of the programme is direct transition to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

[...] Countries with a medium development of capitalism (Spain, Portugal, Poland, Hungary, the Balkan countries, etc.), having numerous survivals of semi-feudal relationships in agriculture, possessing, to a certain extent, the material pre-requisites for socialist construction, and in which the bourgeois-democratic reforms have not yet been completed. In some of these countries a process of more or less rapid development from bourgeois democratic revolution to socialist revolution is possible. In others, there may be types of proletarian revolution which will have a large number of bourgeois-democratic tasks to fulfil.

[...] Colonial and semi-colonial countries (China, India, etc.) ,have the rudiments of and in some cases a considerably developed industry-in the majority of cases inadequate for independent socialist construction-with feudal medieval relationships, or “Asiatic mode of production” relationships prevailing in their economies and in their political superstructures. And, finally, countries where the principal industrial, commercial and banking enterprises, the principal means of transport, the large landed estates (latifundia), plantations, etc., are concentrated in the hands of foreign imperialist groups. The principal task in such countries is, on the one hand, to fight against the feudal and precapitalist forms of exploitation, and to develop systematically the peasant agrarian revolution; on the other hand, to fight against foreign imperialism for national independence.

[...] In still more backward countries (as in some parts of Africa) where there are no wage workers or very few, where the majority of the population still lives in tribal conditions, where survivals of primitive tribal forms still exist, where the national bourgeoisie is almost non-existent, where the primary role of foreign imperialism is that of military occupation and usurpation of land, the central task is to fight for national independence. Victorious national uprisings in these countries may open the way for their direct development towards socialism and their avoidance of the stage of capitalism, provided real and powerful assistance is rendered them by the countries in which the proletarian dictatorship is established.” ¹⁴⁰

The correctness of transferring to the conditions of the 1920's the elaboration of “two tactics of social democracy” concerning tsarist Russia of 1905, even

for countries with unresolved bourgeois – democratic issues (i.e. persistence of monarchy), like Greece is an issue for investigation. The objective assessment concerning the semi – feudal relations within the agricultural production of these countries in order to be considered as the main feature that characterises them also needs to be further investigated.

In the Interwar period social – democracy openly acquired the characteristics of a bourgeois party aiming to govern in the context of the bourgeois political system. Its sections (Second and Second and a half International) merged in a united International that gradually gave up on the remaining revolutionary declarations and adopted theses concerning organised capitalism and the gradual transition to capitalism through reforms.

It played a leading role in anti – communism, acting as a catalyst concerning the rise of fascism in a series of countries. Indeed a series of fascist forces emerged through the ranks of social – democratic parties.

The rise of fascism in a series of countries had a manifold impact on the communist movement and CI.

Great concern emerged concerning the interpretation of this phenomenon and the confrontation against it on the part of the communist movement in conditions of the capitalist economic crisis and intensification of preparations for a new imperialist war alongside the sharpening of the inter-imperialist contradictions. Nevertheless, the imperialists have as a common goal the crushing of the Soviet Union. The fascist forces gave their orientation an intense anti-communist character while characterising the treaty between Germany and Japan in 1936 the “Anti-CI treaty”.

Concerns and discussions developed within the ranks of CI which are also recorded by the CI historians (those who participated within its ranks). The view that dominated was the one concerning the need to form a broader antifascist Popular Front (PF) that could achieve the government through parliament in order to prevent the emergence of fascist governments and at the same time this could prevent the concentration of the most aggressive forces against USSR.

Reflecting the debate within the ranks of the CI, the 7th Congress (1935) resolutions provided certain “safeguards” namely i.e. that the formation of Popular Front government would be a result of the sharpening of the class struggle etc.

However, in practise, these resolutions opened the road for unconditional agreements with social – democratic and bourgeois parties, for uncritical support for bourgeois governments in the context of the imperialist war, and despite the opposite direction of the EC of the CI, the discussion concerning the unification of Communist Parties with Social Democratic Parties etc. started.

Practical experience showed that the policy of the Popular Front could neither confront the rise of fascism nor, of course, stop the war.

During this period opportunism was expressed also within the lines of the CP of USSR in the form of Trotskyism and Bukharinism. Both basic “oppositional” trends that developed during the decades of 1920 and 1930 within the RCP (b), absolutized (jointly) the elements of backwardness in soviet society and opposed the course of socialist construction, when on the basis of the steps taken towards the development of productive forces the issue arose of the complete abolition of capitalist relations and the promotion of Collectivization

in agricultural production. This opposition was based on the view that socialist construction in the USSR presupposed the victory of socialism in the advanced capitalist west (Trotsky) or on the view that considered the coexistence of socialist and capitalist relations as being something long-term and that the former could overcome the latter through the development of productive forces by using commodity-money relations (Bukharin).

The struggle against those or similar theses was not limited to those decades, but it extended throughout the entire period of socialist construction.

In the middle of the war (1943) the CI decided its self – dissolution.

A negative development concerning the international communist movement was the absence of a centre for the coordinated elaboration of a revolutionary strategy for the transformation of the struggle against imperialist war or foreign occupation into a struggle for state-power, as a common duty concerning every CP in the conditions of its own country.

Irrespective of the reasons which led to the dissolution of the CI, there is an objective need for the international communist movement to formulate a unified revolutionary strategy, to plan and coordinate its activity against the international imperialist system.

This entire development showed that in countries of Central and Eastern Europe the antifascist struggle led to the overthrow of bourgeois power, with the decisive support of the popular movements by the Red Army. However, in the capitalist West, the C.P's did not elaborate a strategy for the transformation of the imperialist war or of the national liberation struggle into a struggle for the conquest of state-power. They appeared deficient in the face of the flexibility of bourgeois class in their own countries to form alliances in order to defend its power (state-power) and to have time to regroup its international alliances. After the war the communist movement had to confront a new situation. In the Essay on the History of KKE, Vol.2, 1949 – 1968, approved by the Nationwide Conference the following assessment is expressed:

“Problems existing in the beginning of 1950s (i.e. overestimation of the correlation of forces in favour of socialism, absence of a unified centre of international communist movement) grew thanks to the domination of the “right” opportunist deviation which was completed at the 20th Congress of CPSU.

[...] The thesis and practice of “peaceful competition between the two socioeconomic systems” caused great ideological – political damage within the Communist Parties and popular movements. Objectively, it prettified capitalism and it strengthened the false view that, at least, for a long historical period of time the two systems could coexist and compete peacefully.

[...] the aforementioned principle, as interpreted and realized mainly by the 20th Congress, was a part of the strategy of the so-called “democratic road to socialism”. Consequently, this was not only a CPSU strategy but also a strategy adopted by many other CPs and above all by the “Eurocommunist” parties.

[...] The underestimation of the forces of imperialism and the mistaken assessment regarding the character of imperialist economic unions, like the European Economic Community (EEC), as well as the overestimation of socialist forces contributed to the lack of awareness of factors and dangers

concerning capitalist restoration, not only for the socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe, but even for the USSR as well.

[...] Underestimation was expressed also towards the unified strategy of capitalism against socialist states and the working class movement within capitalist states, despite the existing and sharpening inter-imperialist contradictions.

[...] Communist Parties of capitalist states did not pose in their Programmes that socialism was timely, so they did not consider it as a strategic aim.

They generally proclaimed the necessity of socialism. However, while forming their political line they posed governmental objectives that objectively did not serve a strategy of concentration and organisation of forces, which would have as its objective the complete general conflict and rupture against the bourgeois power in conditions of a generalized economic and political crisis in its own country. Strong parties in Western Europe even reached the point of social-democratization in the form of "Euro-Communism". Therefore, the negative impact exerted on the CPSU by Communist Parties of strong European capitalist states should not be underestimated.

Communist Parties in capitalist states appeared incapable of dealing with the flexibility of the bourgeois class which formed alliances to defend its power and to re-organize its international alliances in good time. They posed as their political goal the formation of "anti-monopoly democratic governments", in the form of either a clearly parliamentary reform route or in the form of an intermediate stage in the revolutionary process.

[...] In the long term, many Communist Parties followed the road of class collaboration even at a social level, in the context of the trade union movement.

Opportunist pressure towards communist movement was caused by various social, political and ideological reasons, whereas especially in the capitalist states there were three distinctive factors:

- 1. The existence and the role of an extended labour aristocracy, hence the expansion of the social base in support of the monopolies, a fact that was underestimated.*

- 2. The numerous agricultural and generally petty bourgeois elements that swelled the ranks of working class movement, after losing their means of productions.*

- 3. The longstanding period of bourgeois parliamentarianism with strong apparatuses of assimilation."* ¹⁴¹

"Euro Communist" opportunism, having theses like the acceptance of the EEC, operated as a disorienting and compromising factor and within the labour movement it supported the line of class collaboration in the name of defending national interests. So, it was not a coincidence that during the 1970s the strike weapon was greatly weakened.

The bourgeois classes were barely affected by the conditions of economic crisis at the beginning of the 1970s. The absence of a corresponding unified revolutionary strategy, policy and action within the labour and trade union movement left margins for the strengthening of "left" opportunism". Within the youth, the most marginalized and sidelined sections of the working class, the proletarianized sections of the intermediate strata, the ruined self-employed, perceptions and actions, the following found fertile ground: "spontaneous" action, trotskyist factionalism, "left" justification for the consent towards

imperialist EEC, in the name of the “ultra-imperialist” stage of capitalism, the multinationals and consequently the transfer of the class struggle from the national to the regional level. Other “left” reactions against European and soviet opportunism acquired the form of the Maoist ideological – political current developed inside the CP of China. The Maoist current is not absolved because of certain criticisms expressed against the 20th Congress of CPSU at the beginning of the 1960s. Its line in its entirety is judged as negative due to its stance against socialist construction in USSR, characterising it as social – imperialist, its approach to the USA and the inconsistency on issues of socialist construction (i.e. recognition of a national bourgeois class as an ally in favour of socialist construction). Gradually, the communist parties of socialist construction lost their revolutionary characteristics at a theoretical and political level as well as in relation to the working class. The international communist movement was divided and could not evaluate and consequently elaborate a correct line of confrontation against the flexible strategy of American imperialism that was corrupting and deepening the rupture between the CPSU and the CP of China.

The new phase of transformation of right opportunism into open counterrevolutionary treachery in the 1980s expressed in the 27th (1986) and the 28th (1989) Congresses of the CPSU was not a bolt out of the blue.

Subsequently, the counterrevolutionary overthrow of socialist construction in the USSR and Central and Eastern Europe marked a heavy defeat and retreat of communist forces. It gave a new dynamic to the penetration of bourgeois ideology in the ranks of political working class movement. The trend of compromise and assimilation acquired a new form and depth. It led all communist parties to a deep crisis and in certain cases to their self – liquidation.

The experience of the KKE in confronting opportunism

Lenin defined the duty of confronting opportunism as an essential precondition in order for the Party to fulfil its revolutionary objectives: *“Unless the revolutionary section of the proletariat is thoroughly prepared in every way for the expulsion and suppression of opportunism it is useless even thinking about the dictatorship of the proletariat. That is the lesson of the Russian revolution which should be taken to heart by the leaders of the “independent” German Social-Democrats, French socialists, and so forth, who now want to evade the issue by means of verbal recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat.”*¹⁴²

Initially, opportunism does not appear as an organized ideological political current. Historical experience has proven that opportunism initially appears under the surface in various ways and usually utilizes objective problems that appear in the development of the struggle of the labour movement.

The watering down of the operational principles of party constitutes the basis for gradual sliding into opportunist theses.

It appears at moments when the developments and the needs require the adjustment the movement’s tactics to the new conditions.

The trend of underestimating the difficulties, overestimating the successes, underestimating the complexity and the long-term nature of the struggle and

vice versa, a trend of disappointment, compromise with the difficulties, absolutization of the failures and retreat from class struggle is expressed by opportunism.

Opportunism develops and matures in such a way. In the beginning a tactical mistake or even a more serious mistake concerning the principles of the Party may occur that can be transformed over time into a deviation and finally it can become a political current, an overall direction. This issue does not mean that all mistakes made by the CP are due to an opportunist attitude, or desire to compromise. However the Party is judged by its ability to correct its mistakes. Otherwise, the mistakes are consolidated and objectively lead to deviation.

In its process of formation and maturation within the CP or the movement, opportunism utilizes revolutionary declarations and conceals its disagreements concerning the principles of the CP with various tactical disagreements in the name of the revolution. It can be expressed as: Submission to the negative correlation of forces in the name of tactical action, the abstraction or equation of strategy with tactics, detachment of individual goals from strategy.

There are several times when the responsibility for the development and imposition of opportunism belongs to the trends that compromise and seek reconciliation with it. Relentless, unwavering struggle against opportunism is a requirement for the CP to promote its strategy, to consolidate its role as the ideological and political vanguard of the working class.

In order to deal with opportunism the party must have the ability:

- To subordinate its entire activity to its revolutionary defined strategy.
- To be ready to theoretically interpret developments, new elements from the standpoint of ideologically defending theoretical principles and the ability to explain in a class way the new phenomena.
- To conduct theoretical elaboration regarding the conclusions on the political action and operation of the party.
- To ensure the constant enhancement of the general ideological – political level of the Party, the relationship of the party forces with Marxist – Leninist theory.
- To safeguard the relation between the party and working class and the corresponding working class composition of the party.
- To ensure the ideological, political and organisational independence of the Party concerning any alliance policy and to realize that struggle is conducted in the framework of the alliance.
- To have the right relationship between the vanguard and the working class – popular masses: Neither submission to the consciousness of the masses nor being cut off from them.
- To ensure the operational principles of the party, democratic centralism, criticism and self-criticism and collectivity.

The KKE managed to endure and to take steps towards its ideological – political and organisational regroupment due to the fact that a great part of its cadres and members did not bow to the calls of counterrevolution during the end of the 1980s.

It had as a legacy the tradition of conflict against bourgeois power through the struggle of Democratic Army of Greece in 1946-1949. It confronted revisionism and euro – communist opportunism in 1968 despite the fact that after the 6th Plenum of 1956 a right-wing opportunist turn had occurred within

the Party also due to the direct negative interference of the CPSU and other 5 fraternal parties using the pretext of serious strategic mistakes and weaknesses.

Historical experience has shown that when inconsistencies exist between declarations, programmatic goals and the direct political line for their realization, when there is no consistency between words and actions then the inconsistencies that occur are resolved at the expense of the “revolutionary declarations”.

The historical experience of the KKE has shown that every expression of the effort of opportunism to dominate within the Party takes on characteristics of factional work. This factionalism was obvious in the developments that prepared the 6th Plenum of 1956 (factionalism that was also supported by the CPSU leadership) and during the case of the 12th Plenum of 1968 as well as during the crisis that the party experienced during the period 1989 – 1991.

Opportunism should not only be identified with certain individuals that lead or express an opportunist deviation. Its confrontation does not concern solely the Party's stance towards these individuals, which of course must be decisive.

There must always be an identification of the deeper cause and the reasons that led to the development of this deviation. I.e. the leading forces in the effort of dissolution of KKE or its transformation into a euro communist party do not have the exclusive responsibility for a series of opportunist choices like the condemnation of the struggle of DSE as sectarianism, the dissolution of the illegal party organisations or even the participation of the KKE in the formation of EDA.

Consequently, decisive confrontation against these forces by expelling them from the Party is an imperative, an immediate necessity but it did not confront the root of the problem.

Additionally, experience shows that the existence of reflexes concerning the confrontation of openly right-wing opportunism, the effort of mutation or dissolution of the Party is an important element that was not lost throughout Party's entire history even during the period when right-wing opportunist turn was dominant, as expressed in the 6th Plenum of 1956.

However, it has been proven that these reflexes alone are not enough. As long as the main problem is not confronted, namely the issue of elaborating revolutionary strategy and political line, then the strategic gaps that are formed in the future will invigorate opportunism's potential to seek domination within the Party.

As it is noted in the Essay on the History of KKE, vol. 2, 1949 – 1968: *“It is borne out that opportunism and factionalism consider open criticism, self – criticism, collectivity, revelation of real problems to the members of the Party, trust in their judgement, control over the implementation of the decisions and democratic centralism in general as their enemies.”*¹⁴³

The conflict against opportunism does not cease as long as the social causes of its genesis still exist and exert pressure for adaptation to the system. *“The stance against opportunism equals the stance against the bourgeois class of one's own country”* as Lenin said.

Pressure towards the loss of the ideological, political independence of the Party is not always expressed directly by the bourgeois class and its apparatuses (Mass Media, state suppression etc.) but it is also brought into its ranks by its own forces, or is reproduced as opportunist pressure by forces

that split from the communist movement and continue to pressure its organised forces or indeed by the circle of the party's political influence. Frequently in the past, the alliance with opportunism (with social democracy for a historical period) was realized in the name of unity of working class or in the name of alliance between working class and poor popular strata. The political unity of working class can only be accomplished by the rallying of working class around its Party. Numerous parties expressing the general interests of working class regardless of how they describe themselves can not exist.

Based on these facts the Political Resolution of the 19th Congress of the KKE made reference that: *"In the conditions of monopoly capitalism there emerge opportunist political parties and groups with various forms which split from the KKE and have different positions with it in several issues above all in the main political issue, that of "reform or revolution". The KKE cannot carry out any political cooperation with these political forces. This holds true regardless of the manoeuvres that the opportunist political forces carry out in conditions of the movement's rise adopting slogans that seem to be in favour of the people. Their political proposal for the problem of the power is integrated in the framework of the management of the capitalist system."*¹⁴⁴

Today the KKE projects the necessity of victory against opportunism, the confrontation against opportunism regardless of the electoral strength of its political expressions. The opportunist political line today impedes the disengagement of working class and allied forces from supporting the bourgeois political line. The line of "unity of the left", of the alliance aiming for a "left government" is a line of assimilation. The defeat of this line will facilitate the broader working class masses to judge with class-oriented criteria the political parties, to acknowledge the class-based character of their problems, to be aware of the necessity of the struggle in order to change the character of power.

The struggle against opportunism also concerns the conditions when new masses come to dispute and struggle against any governmental policy, the conditions of the economic crisis and even more the conditions of bourgeois political instability and the revolutionary upsurge. The appropriate ideological political preparation is necessary in order to neutralize the traps of the bourgeois class that utilizes opportunism as well. Today, in these conditions, in Greece it has been demonstrated that the emergence of SYRIZA as one of the main pillars for the reformation of the social democratic pole, having as its perspective the bourgeois government, strengthens the trends for the regroupment of other opportunist political forces with the aim of "establishing the third pole within the left", while these forces have as their main feature the stance of tolerance toward or even support for a "left government" on the terrain of capitalism.

The CP must steadily and consistently expose the inconsistencies, wavering and the adventurism of opportunism, even when the opportunist forces declare their fidelity to the overthrow of capitalism.

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Chapter Five

The duties of the KKE under non revolutionary conditions. *The regroupment of the labour movement.*

The basic duty of the communist party in places where masses (of the youth, women's organizations, cultural associations and more) gather and first of all in the trade unions, is the organized, systematic action and political work of communists in order to achieve a connection with the masses, educate them in political struggle, in the struggle for power.

The 2nd congress of the Communist International highlighted that the dictatorship of the proletariat is the complete expression of the domination of all the workers and *« all toiling and exploited people, who have been disunited, deceived, intimidated, oppressed, downtrodden and crushed by the capitalist class, »*¹⁴⁵. And, therefore, the preparation of the proletarian dictatorship *“should be started everywhere and immediately, among others things, with the following means: In all organisations, unions and associations without exception, and first and foremost in proletarian organisations, but also in those of the non-proletarian toiling and exploited masses (political, trade union, military, co-operative, educational, sports, etc., etc.), groups or cells of Communists should be formed—preferably open groups, but underground groups as well, the latter being essential whenever there is reason to expect their suppression, or the arrest or banishment of their members on the part of the bourgeoisie; these cells, which are to be in close touch with one another and with the Party centre, should, by pooling their experience, carrying on work of agitation, propaganda and organisation, adapting themselves to absolutely every sphere of public life and to every variety and category of the toiling masses, systematically educate themselves, the Party, the class, and the masses by means of such diversified work.*

*[...] We must learn to approach the masses with particular patience and caution so as to be able to understand the distinctive features in the mentality of each stratum, calling, etc., of these masses.»*¹⁴⁶.

As Lenin explained the relationship between the communist parties and the trade unions, he highlighted the fact, that unions were a huge advance for the working class while in the early stage of the development of capitalism.

They contributed to the overcoming of the fragmentation of the working class and also to the creation of some new cells of class-based association.

But when the supreme form of class unification and workers, the Party, started to form, the unions inevitably started to show *«certain reactionary features, a certain craft narrow-mindedness, a certain tendency to be non-political, a certain inertness, etc”* He went on to say that: *«the development of the proletariat did not, and could not, proceed anywhere in the world otherwise than through the trade unions, through reciprocal action between them and the party of the working class.»* (147).

There is no wall between the economic and the political struggle.

Marxism connected the economic to the political struggle of the working class, considering them as an integrated and unified struggle. That perfectly suits the current situation, where the material premises for the concentrated means of production to become social property are more mature than ever. In contemporary capitalism, the gap between the capacity of modern scientific and technical achievements to fulfil the social needs and the fact they do not do this is more than obvious.

For example, on the one hand the capacity for the construction of earthquake resistant houses and on the other hand the millions of homeless people and the «unavailable» (unsold or confiscated) houses because of the crisis in capitalist production. Objectively today, the rapid aggravation of capitalism's main contradictions imposes that the economic struggle must not be separated from the political struggle, on the contrary it must be unified and in

addition to this there is a great need for the deepening of the ideological fight in the labour and trade union movement.

Lenin characteristically said: *"Every class struggle is a political struggle.[2] We know that the opportunists, slaves to the ideas of liberalism, understood these profound words of Marx incorrectly and tried to put a distorted interpretation on them. (...) The Economists believed that any clash between classes was a political struggle. The Economists therefore recognised as "class struggle" the struggle for a wage increase of five kopeks on the ruble, and refused to recognise a higher, more developed, nation-wide class struggle, the struggle for political aims (...) It is not enough that the class struggle becomes real, consistent and developed only when it embraces the sphere of politics. In politics, too, it is possible to restrict oneself to minor matters, and it is possible to go deeper, to the very foundations. Marxism recognises a class struggle as fully developed, "nation-wide", only if it does not merely embrace politics but takes in the most significant thing in politics—the organisation of state power.»*¹⁴⁸

In their era, Marx and Engels highlighted in the Communist Manifesto, that the party fights not only for "the attainment of the immediate aims and interests of the working class, but in the present movement, it also represents the future of that movement.»¹⁴⁹

Today, in the era of monopoly capitalism, of the necessity for socialist revolutions, this position acquires particular significance.

In order for the working class to be able not only to fight consistently and effectively for its economic demands/interests, but also –and most significantly of all– to fulfil its major and final goals, it has to conduct a complete ideological and political struggle, which only a Communist Party can organize, orient, conduct. This can be achieved through the independent action of the Party, and also through the action of the members of the CPs in the labour and trade union movement.

The trade unions, as a form of organization for the working class, are organizations for the economic struggle of the working class. In the trade unions, in contrast with the Communist Party, working class masses participate with a different level of consciousness and obviously with different ideological and political influences-views. The influence of the bourgeois politics intensified inside them especially after the old workers' parties (social-democratic) turned into bourgeois parties. Although the unions due to their nature are not able to carry out independent politics, their activity objectively has political characteristics. It depends each time on the correlation of forces in them, either in favour of the workers' or the bourgeois political line.

For instance, the leaderships of GSEE (General Workers' Confederation of Greece) and ADEDY (Supreme Administration of Greek Civil Servants' Trade Unions) have supported since 1990 and still support the policy of capitalist restructuring, narrowing the «demands» down to chickenfeed for the workers.

So, these trade unions became supporters of the anti-worker political line, they lost their class character, even as workers' organizations fighting for the defence of the terms of the sale of labour power to the capitalists. They turned into vehicles for the assimilation of the working masses, which followed them. This development came as a consequence of the longstanding corrosion of the labour movement by old and new opportunist currents. It is also a consequence of the fact that parties with working class roots, which held the

majority in the highest trade union bodies, turned them into pillars of the bourgeois policy, gave the bourgeois liberal parties new opportunities to broaden their influence in the labour movement (for example, the party N.D. in Greece). Today they foster together the illusion, that a governmental management to get out of crisis is possible, that there is a pro-people version of the E.U.

The activity of bourgeois and opportunist forces in the trade union movement of the working class forms a political current, which aims to manipulate the consciousness and stance of the working class. It is the main obstacle to the labour movement acquiring mass characteristics, to the strengthening of the militant pole in its ranks and to the isolation of the employer and government-led trade unionism.

Today, the rallying of members and friends of the KKE together with other militant workers-employees against the employer and government-led trade unionism, against the disorientating intervention of manipulation, constitutes PAME (All-Workers' Militant Front), through a coherent framework of struggle and demands.

All the communists need to be active in the unions aiming through the workers' economic struggle to contribute to their political maturation as well, to their greater readiness for battle against the enemy class of the capitalists and their power.

Part of the duties that communists in the trade union movement have is the ideological-political propaganda for the need to develop the struggle and organization in order to take the power.

The Party has to contribute with its ideological-political activity to the formation of anti-capitalist consciousness, to the political awakening of the working-class forces, through their experience. They have to realize for example, that the consistent defence of the right to social security means the conflict against capital, the monopolies, imperialist unions, the parties and governments, which serve them openly or covertly.

The intervention of the communists needs to contribute to the overcome of sectoral, enterprise level insularity that arises from the objective functioning of capitalism, to advance solidarity between different sections of the working class and their common action.

The organization and politicization trade union activity that sets goals incorporated in a coherent framework, requires a confrontation against craft sectionalism, which narrow the struggle and demands only to a single enterprise, regional or sectoral level. This sectionalism weakens even the protection for rights already gained, weakens the class unity of the working class, which is a precondition for partial and general gains. Experience shows that even the reversal of a dismissal requires a general mobilization.

The intervention of the communists in the trade union movement should not remain restricted to pointing out the problems or denouncing the enemy or the exposure of specific demands and proposals in order to solve the working class's problems. It must reveal to all the working people the mechanism of exploitation, the production of surplus value, to educate the working class in the irreconcilable struggle against the capital, and to form its demands in this direction. To reveal that the capitalist crisis is the consequence of capital over-accumulation, of the capitalist mode of production itself. To ferociously combat the bourgeois management in all its forms, the traditional liberal or the

social-democratic, in the Eurozone and the rest of the E.U, where imperialist unions are co-responsible for the new increase of unemployment and impoverishment, for the intensification of governmental violence and repression. To put forth demands that come into conflict with capitalist profitability.

The intervention of the communists in the concentrated sections of the working class in every sector of the capitalist economy (for example, tourism) requires the monitoring and deep knowledge of the developments in the sector itself. On that basis, it is possible to propagandize with better argumentation the political programme of the KKE, to make use of the workers' experience so that they better comprehend the necessity of social ownership, central planning, what does it mean that only very few seize the real existing social wealth, how a sector can develop in the direction of satisfying the needs of the popular strata in order to achieve social prosperity. On that basis to specify the possibility of an alliance with the self-employed, the common anti-monopoly struggle.

The struggle of the working class for the collective labour agreements has to be widened with goals concerning free public education, medical care and prevention, universal public social security, against state repression, against the imperialist wars, a struggle which objectively turns into struggle with a political content, aimed against the bourgeois state, bourgeois parties, imperialist mechanisms, it permeates all fronts of struggle of the working class, it develops within the organized forms of activity of the labour movement, the trade unions, the committees of struggle etc. *"The trade union movement is a school, however classes should now be more advanced in comparison to the first period of action of the trade unions. If, during the first period, it was a primary school, then now it should be at least a high school. Amateurism cannot take us far."* (150)

The negative consequences of the economic crisis do not definitely and spontaneously lead to the rise of the class struggle. The abrupt worsening of the situation of the working class due to the economic crisis has a contradictory effect on consciousness. The responsibilities of the Communist Party for the preparation of the rise of the movement increase.

Under conditions of economic crisis, there is an increase of the discontent and the tendency of petty bourgeois forces, of the higher sections of the working class that have a higher income and of workers in public administration to protest.

The issue of the regroupment of the labour movement, in order to orientate the protest and to turn it towards a radical direction, is critical. The intervention of the Communist Party for the rise of the class struggle must not only deal with the level of maturity of the masses, but also the intervention of the bourgeoisie, its mechanisms, the parties of power, the reformist and opportunist political forces.

The regroupment of the labour movement has as a precondition the organization of new masses in the trade union movement that is class-oriented, the marginalization of the governmental and employer-led leaderships in the trade union organs, as well as the revelation-marginalization of new interventions for the reformation of "government-led trade unionism", its connection to the new governmental formation, e.g. to a future government of SYRIZA. It has as a precondition the foundation of new

class-oriented trade unions in new sectors and companies, as well as flexibility to new forms of organization, e.g. strike committees, committees of struggle, committees against dismissals and their connection to a general framework of struggle and action, to the sectoral trade union and to the class – oriented pole, PAME. It mainly has as a precondition the organization of workers with low salaries, young workers, immigrants, women. Through such a direction, PAME will be reinforced as a class-oriented pole to the trade union movement.

Today, it is not enough for the movement to have some partial positive aims. What determines the effectiveness of the movement, its role in a positive prospect, is the ideological and political framework that supports the goals of the struggle. “Unity around the problem” or “struggle against the problems”, in general, is not enough. What is important is the ideological framework in which such demands are integrated, and the ideological positions that permeate them, i.e. the ultimate goal of the struggle. The labour movement, due to the demands of the struggle itself, has to acquire an anti-capitalist orientation, it has to develop a front of confrontation against bourgeois perceptions and ideological constructs, reformism and opportunism, based on the experience it draws from the class struggle, mass struggles. Ideological, political, economic struggles are carried out in a unified way, they are not separated from each other by walls.

In this framework, the class-oriented trade union movement of the working class must be at the frontline of initiatives that help in the direction of the social alliance with the poor farmers and self-employed. Initiatives that also include solidarity, e.g. the presence of PAME at the demonstrations of the farmers, however, at the same time, contribute to the unification of the struggle under a common framework against the monopolies and imperialism. Intervention for the regroupment of the workers’ movement means intensification of the ideological and political intervention of the communists above all in the mass organizations of the working class, in order to make them understand the need to come into conflict not only with every government, but with the class character of power, to make them understand the necessity of changing the class which has the power, for the working class to be at the frontline of the overthrow of the power of the monopolies in order to obtain its own power in alliance with the poor popular strata.

In order for the Party to be able to play its role in the awakening of the working class and the orientation of the trade union movement, it must develop its work, the formation of Party Base Organizations, mainly in sectors, large workplaces, mainly in big factories and shopping centres.

The implementation of such a direction presupposes that the entire Party focuses its intervention on the working class.

The People's Alliance. Its character

It is not easy to draw the popular sections of the intermediate strata to the working class under revolutionary conditions, unless the preconditions have already been formed in non-revolutionary conditions. Lenin defined the criterion for the formation of a line to rally the popular forces with the working class:

"The issue is to know how to implement this policy so as to raise and not lower the general level of the proletarian awareness, the revolutionary situation and the ability to struggle for victory" (151)

The KKE in its 19th Congress elaborated the line of the People's Alliance, namely how to strengthen the alliance of the working class with the popular sections of the intermediate strata in urban and rural areas during non-revolutionary conditions. As is referred to in the Political Resolution of the 19th Congress, it is becoming clear that it has to be an alliance of social forces, which is formed inside the movement:

«The People's Alliance, expresses the interests of the working class, the semi-proletarians, the self-employed and the poor farmers who cannot accumulate capital, of the youth and the women from the working class popular strata in the struggle against the monopolies and capitalist ownership, against the assimilation of the country in the imperialist unions.

The Peoples' Alliance is a social one and has movement characteristics in a line of rupture and overthrow."(152)

The line for the People's Alliance explains the direction this development of the common action of the working class with the popular strata should take, so as to serve today the establishment of the revolutionary front under revolutionary conditions, to help to alter the correlation of forces, to prevent the working class and the popular forces from being trapped in the different versions of the bourgeois political line (see: "unity around the problem", anti-neoliberal rally, anti-memorandum alliance etc.), to help the maturation of the understanding regarding the need to overthrow the power of the monopolies and the capitalist relations of production. As is referred to in the Political Resolution:

"The People's Alliance answers the issue regarding the organisation of the struggle for the repulsion of the barbaric anti-labour anti-people measures, with the concentration of forces and a counterattack struggle, so as to achieve some gains in the course of the struggle for the overthrow of the power of the monopolies. The People's Alliance has a clear antimonopoly anti-capitalist orientation. It promotes the rupture with the imperialist unions, it fights against the imperialist war and the participation in it. It acts in order to strengthen the rallying of anti-monopoly anti-capitalist social forces, it seeks the struggle to be directed towards working class-people's power. The People's Alliance directs its struggle against the repressive mechanisms." (153)

It is an alliance with a specific political orientation and not just a coordination of organizations of the movement, and it is not formed only on the basis of trade union criteria. It should though be expressed within the trade union movement, it should be based upon trade union struggles and it should constantly attempt to attract new unions and mass organizations of the working class and its allies into its ranks. It must be from the outset established with such criteria that would facilitate and serve the purpose of forming the army of tomorrow's revolution. So, in the political Resolution of the Congress it is clarified that:

"The People's Alliance adopts the socialization of the monopolies, of all the concentrated means of production, central planning and workers'-social control. It adopts the disengagement of Greece from the EU and NATO, from every kind of relation with the imperialist unions. It aims at the abolition of the

*foreign bases, of the presence of foreign troops and police forces in Greece on various pretexts.»*¹⁵⁴

The KKE acts within the People's Alliance with its organized forces involved in various organizations of the movement, in the various forms of organization of the working class and the popular strata. The People's Alliance is not an alliance of political parties or political organizations. If in the course of the class struggle political forces that express positions of petty bourgeois strata and adopt the anti-capitalist, anti-monopoly character of the alliance appear, then members of these forces can cooperate with communists within the movement and the alliance. Objectively, there will be a struggle regarding the character and the perspective of People's Alliance with these forces.

The joint action of the KKE with such political forces will be expressed within the ranks and the struggles of the People's Alliance, which has as its base the workplaces and neighbourhood, with the trade union, the general assembly, the struggle committees as its organizational forms. A united political vehicle, a united electoral formation and a parliamentary group can not be established with these forces, because it is impossible for there to be a common programme for power and a common understanding of how to achieve it. Otherwise, the independence and the *raison d'être* of the KKE will be lost.

It is clear from its character that the People's Alliance cannot participate in elections for Parliament, for EU the Parliament or for local government.

In current conditions the People's Alliance is enhanced through the united action framework of the class-oriented trade union movement of the working class - PAME, the antimonopoly rally of the urban self-employed -PASEVE, the rally of struggle of poor farmers-PASY, the radical women's movement-OGE and the militant movement of students-MAS. In this direction, it is an important duty to strengthen the People's Committees as forms of expression of this common action at a local level, as well as the promotion of common action also at a sectoral level.

The experience from the history of the KKE from its alliance policy, as regards the political collaboration of EDA (United Democratic Left, 1951-1967) and the «Coalition of Left and Progress» (1989-1991) leads to the conclusion that is formulated in the 2nd volume of the Essay on the History of the KKE :*"The independence of the KKE is a matter of principle, an expression of the historical role of the working class and its need to independently establish its ideological-political and organizational vanguard as the leading force in the struggle for the overthrow of bourgeois power and the establishment of worker's power."* (155) Any form of alliance between the working class and the popular strata should not negate the ideological, strategic, political and organizational independence of the KKE.

The pursuit of an alliance with other political forces that have a common political or electoral programme, in reality means a loss of the political independence of the Party, which of course will end in the loss of its organizational independence.

The KKE does not have many programmes, it does not have a minimum or a maximum "programme", neither adopts any "transitional programme", nor does it have an electoral programme. It does not have a political programme that could be implemented on the terrain of capitalism, and this is a reason why it cannot form a common programme with other parties and political forces.

The Programme of KKE contains its strategy for the overthrow of capitalism and the construction of socialism. Its immediate political line serves this strategy.

The stance of the KKE towards the bourgeois Parliament and the bourgeois government

Lenin generalizing the experience of the October Revolution in 1917, and in 1905, formulated the revolutionary tactics of the Party towards the bourgeois parliament. The participation of the Party in the bourgeois elections and the stance in Parliament must serve the extra-parliamentary action, its strategy:

"... the participation in the parliamentary elections and the struggle from the stand of the Parliament is mandatory for the Party of the revolutionary proletariat just to educate the backward sections of the class, to awaken and enlighten the delayed, poor and uneducated masses of the country. As long as you will not have the power to dissolve the bourgeois parliament and any other type of reactionary institution, you are required to work within these, precisely why there are still workers that are stultified by the priests and by the suffocating atmosphere of the isolated villages"(156).

The purpose of the participation of communists in bourgeois elections and in bourgeois parliament is their utilization for the purposes of propaganda and political discussion against the power of capital, the governments and the political parties, as well as the opportunist parties.

The participation of the communists in parliament must not foster illusions about its role, but on the contrary it must expose the role of the parliament as a tool of capital's power.

For this reason the 2nd Congress of the Communist International encouraged the Communist Parties to make proposals in the parliament not having as a criterion that they be vote through (i.e. adapted to the realism of capitalist profitability), but in opposition to the interests of capital, highlighting that the communist members of the parliament are not legislators but propagandists.

The KKE has tabled law proposals concerning working class and popular needs and their treatment by the parliamentary majority demonstrates that the bourgeois parliament neither can nor wants to take measures which negatively affect the strategy of capitalist profitability.

In any case, however, the Party must not restrict the class struggle inside the walls of the parliamentary system or consider the struggle in Parliament as being the supreme, the decisive form of struggle, to which the others are subordinated, because anyone who supports this *"... takes in reality the part of the bourgeois class against the proletariat"* (157)

On the issue of participation in or abstention from bourgeois elections in periods of revolutionary situation, Lenin argued:

"The objective correlation of the classes, their roles(financial and political)outside and inside the representative bodies of the given type, the outburst or the recession of the revolution, the correlation of the extraparlimentary and the parliamentary means of struggle- these are the most important, the basic objectively clues that must be taken into consideration in order to come to the tactic of the abstention or participation, not based on our "sympathies" but based on Marxist critic" 158

The mass support of the bourgeois and opportunist parties by the working class and other oppressed popular forces is the expression of their ideological-political manipulation by capitalist power. This problem is faced by every Communist Party in its country, in whatever elections, as long as it has a political line of conflict and rupture. In these conditions the Communist Party seeks to expand its political influence, i.e. to detach the greatest possible section of the working class and popular forces from bourgeois manipulation. This means that it should struggle for the correct voting criterion: To neutralize the view- not only the pure bourgeois view but also the opportunist - that the workers-employees, the poor farmers and the self-employed toilers, and the unemployed people should vote for their own government. To convince them that on the contrary they should vote for their own workers'-people's opposition, that the role of communist, workers'-people's delegation in Parliament is to expose the exploitative nature of power, to place obstacles to the functioning of the bourgeois political system, to impede the formation of governments, to reveal the class character of old and new parties, either neoliberal or social-democratic.

In the Political Resolution of the 19th Congress of the KKE there is the following reference:

"Through its systematic and multi-facetted activity, the KKE must contribute to the electoral battles (parliamentary elections, elections for the European Parliament, and local government elections) so that the vote for the KKE by sections of workers and poor popular strata expresses not only the desire to support a political force which consistently struggles for the people's problems, but also a class choice aimed at weakening the bourgeois political system, the bourgeois governance. Every crack in the bourgeois governance should reinforce the direction for the overthrow of bourgeois power and capitalist ownership. The realistic proposal of the KKE for the way out of the crisis in favour of the people, the only proposal which is opposed to the positions of all the bourgeois parties - liberal, social-democratic and those of the so-called "left government" - must be widely highlighted among the people." 159

The stance of the KKE towards the bourgeois state defines its stance towards parliament and bourgeois government, the state bodies of local government. The government is a structural element-tool of each political power. The possibility of a temporary government of workers-farmers was formulated by Lenin for conditions, where Tsarist power had not been overthrown. In the current conditions, in conditions of established bourgeois power and with an organized bourgeois state, the aim of such a transitional government essentially means a period of cooperation with forces of the bourgeoisie.

Historically, the first "left" or "labour" governments, i.e. social-democratic parties' government or collaboration of social-democrats with bourgeois parties (even with neoliberal), were formed as a manoeuvre of the bourgeois power under conditions of a revolutionary uprising, aiming to relieve the increasing discontent. Such a government was the final government of Kerensky in Russia, in September of 1917 (where SRs and Mensheviks had the majority of votes), the government of the social-democrats against the German Revolution in 1918.

Lenin, in reference to Kerensky's government, argued that on several occasions the "coalition governments" of labour and bourgeois parties constituted a solution for the bourgeoisie.

In the years that followed, the goal of a government (left or workers' government) on the terrain of capitalism, without a revolutionary overthrow, with goal of forming a programme of transitional measures, was adopted by the Communist Party as an intermediate target that would facilitate the struggle for socialist revolution, while satisfying a series of popular demands. International experience has shown that despite the intentions of Communist Parties, no government on the terrain of capitalism could become a springboard for the rise of the revolutionary movement; on the contrary it helped to strengthen parliamentary illusions, the abandonment of the revolutionary line.

The stance of the Party which rejects the participation in a government of bourgeois management is an important legacy for the future, for the ideological-political emancipation of the working class. The mass confrontation against "parliamentary illusions" of broad sections of the working class, as well as against the illusion that a "left" bourgeois government can deal with the consequences of the crisis in favour of the popular strata is an essential precondition.

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INSTEAD OF AN EPILOGUE

“The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.”

“PROLETARIANS OF ALL COUNTRIES UNITE!”²⁵

²⁵ K. Marx- Fr. Engels, The Communist Manifesto, p. 69,

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