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Conclusions from the strategy of the KKE in the 1940s  
in the light of the strategy of the international communist movement  
and of the conclusions from the socialist construction in the 20th century

Every major historical anniversary is an opportunity to combine the investigation of historical events with the scientific analysis of the present, the investigation of the trends and the scientific laws of the future social evolution. In this way, not only did Historical Science but also many other social sciences develop, as well as the theoretical approach of the passage from capitalism to communism, the composite theory of scientific communism with its achievements but also its imperfections.

We therefore consider the 100th anniversary of the foundation of the Communist International (CI) in March 1919 which is commemorated at the Meeting of the Parties of the European Communist Initiative in Istanbul, on 16 and 17 February 2019, at the initiative of the Communist Party of Turkey, as an important opportunity in this direction.

This anniversary coincides with a period in which the KKE has advanced the study of its history for an important period of time, i.e. from its foundation to the beginning of the 1950s, to a whole new level. This period includes the crucial decade of the 1940s. We call it crucial because the imperialist World War II was conducted during this period also on the territory of Greece, where the KKE led the most important part of the armed resistance- anti-fascist -liberating struggle against the occupation troops through the organizations of the National Liberation Front (EAM), the Greek People's Liberation Army (ELAS), the United Panhellenic Organization of Youth (EPON) in Greece, and the Anti-Fascist Military Organization (ASO) in the Middle East.

During the course of this struggle and especially during the period of the liberation, in October 1944, in Greece, conditions of a revolutionary situation were created, namely the conditions of a breakdown of the bourgeois power with a generalized economic and political crisis, with a weak functioning of the mechanisms of repression and the institutions of government which the bourgeoisie had in Greece, and therefore a weak ability to manipulate the workers'-peoples' majority.

On the other hand, the KKE held an important position and influence on the military, political and social organizations that dominated the liberated areas, but failed to exploit these conditions for a timely, properly planned confrontation with the bourgeois power, on its own initiative and aiming at the isolation of the bourgeoisie, its parties and foreign allies, to fight for the seizure of power. In other words, it did not manage to develop the armed liberation struggle into a socialist revolution in a conscious and planned way, a fact that cost the KKE and the social forces it represented - the working class, the poor peasantry and the intellectuals from the popular strata - a tough five years of armed attack by the bourgeoisie and its British-US allies, until they were able to re-establish bourgeois power.

The KKE studied its history "staring it in the eyes", without fearing the truth, according to Lenin's prompting. It communicated the conclusions not only to its members, but also to the public, it self-critically took the burden of the strategic mistakes and their theoretical background, since the KKE's actions at that time prove that it had no intention of submitting to capitalism.

We attribute to our party and its leadership have the main responsibility because we failed to realize the need to overcome any illusions about political co-operations with parts of the bourgeoisie that we considered being democratic, anti-fascist, "pro-peace". Of course this is our responsibility, because we proceeded to the Agreements of Lebanon and Caserta to form a National Unity Government and National Army, which essentially subjected the armed peoples' forces to the British-Greek bourgeois forces, abolished the peoples' organs that had been formed in the liberated areas, paved the way for a political regroupment of the bourgeoisie and an overthrow of the correlation of forces to the detriment of the workers' - peoples' forces. It is our responsibility because this illusion led the workers' - peoples' forces in the Battle of Athens in December 1944 to a position of defence rather than a position of attack, because we proceeded to the Agreement of Varkiza, handing over the weapons of ELAS.

Our Party was entrapped in the line of the so-called People's Democracy which, in terms of political objectives, included the abolition of the monarchy and the convening a Constituent Assembly in terms of bourgeois democracy. It had a one-sided front against military and other organizations that had collaborated with the fascist occupiers and not against the organizations and political parties - which certainly had succeeded to recover with the significant military aid firstly of the British and then the North American imperialism- that struggled to trap the KKE in order to neutralize its political and military influence, to restore the correlation of forces to the benefit of bourgeois power.

We believe that if the KKE had at that time the ideological and political maturity, it would correct its strategy "in the fire" of the class struggle in the years 1943-1945, and thus would create better conditions for an integrated support by the CPs in power, i.e. the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the CPs of the neighbouring Balkan countries. We think that this would be a much better contribution both to the struggle of the communist forces that were struggling to

construct the new society and also to their struggle against a new imperialist attack against them.

However, we cannot overlook that similar strategic mistakes were made in our neighbouring Italy as well as in other countries, perhaps with a less favourable correlation of forces.

We should refer to the relationship of our Party's strategic perception with the strategic perception of the CI during the 1930s and 1940s. We cannot ignore the impact of the strategy adopted by the 7th Congress of the CI on the strategy of the KKE (6<sup>th</sup> Congress of 1935). We cannot overlook the contradictory or purely inhibitory suggestions of the CPSU to the KKE in the period 1945-1947 in relation to the development of a generalized armed class struggle, but also in relation to the utopian political goal of the so-called "political normalization".

The KKE's course of struggle during World War II and the subsequent five years cannot be examined detached from the line of struggle of the international communist movement, a part of which consciously the KKE was, and regardless of the fact that the international communist movement did not have the structured form of the CI since 1943.

We should turn our concern to the common elements of the Programme of EAM concerning the separation of the very large capitalist property, especially of foreign monopolies, from capitalist medium-sized property as well as the property characterized as being of national orientation, with a similar attitude of a series of CPs that became parties in power after World War II, e.g. in Central and Eastern Europe, in China.

In this sense, we believe that the conclusions drawn from the study of the strategy of the KKE have roots in deeper conclusions regarding the strategy of the international communist movement, but also of theoretical issues of the socialist revolution and the socialist-communist construction. They are based, to a great extent, on the problems of the theoretical delay that concern both phenomena of capitalist development before World War II and the socialist construction in the USSR, reflected in the field of strategy.

Since the Interwar period, most CPs have not been able to confirm their ideological-political vanguard in practice. We should not be afraid to admit that they have not been able to lead in the development of the theory of revolutionary class struggle, and this has also negatively affected the development of the revolutionary strategy. This is the source of the crisis of the international communist movement, the inability to timely face opportunism before it matures into open treason within the CPs themselves, and turning them into vehicles of the counter-revolution, resulting in its victory in a series of countries of socialist construction.

Marx, Engels and Lenin studied in depth much smaller defeats of the revolutionary workers' movement, such as the Paris Commune, the 1905-1907 Revolution in

Russia, in order to reach to conclusions that would strengthen the revolutionary workers' movement.

We must do the same thing as CPs. We must study more profoundly firstly the history of the CI but also the subsequent forms of expression of the international communist movement in a more incisive way, e.g. the Information Office of the Communist Parties, the International Conferences of Communist and Workers' Parties.

The KKE is in such a process that has not yet been completed. At this meeting, we would like to express some concerns and present some first conclusions, aspiring to give a continuation, perhaps in 2019, by organizing an international communist seminar. These are:

The foundation of the Communist International 100 years ago certainly marked a huge historic leap in social progress with the victory of the October Socialist Revolution in Russia, in 1917.

Humanity for the first time entered the revolutionary process of passing from capitalism to socialism-communism. It dynamically, sweepingly entered to the pre-capitalist semi-feudal and even primitive communal remnants in vast Asia.

A decisive factor in this acceleration of social evolution was the ideological - political - organizational readiness and capacity of the Bolshevik Communist Party, as the vanguard of the workers' movement in Russia.

This ability and the level of maturity of the Bolshevik CP certainly had an impact on the foundation of the CI and the foundation of a series of CPs around the world. However, the process of starting the revolutionary passage from capitalism to socialism - communism in Europe proved to be particularly difficult. It required a timelier establishment of CPs in complete secession of the revolutionaries from social democracy, especially in countries such as Germany, Hungary, Finland, Italy, where revolutionary conditions were formed upon the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> Imperialist World War.

A series of workers' - peoples' and even armed uprisings in European countries, did not mature as socialist revolutions due to the weakness of the subjective factor, the lack of CPs with a corresponding elaborated revolutionary strategy. This was particularly evident in Germany during the period 1918-1923. It put its negative seal on the struggle between capitalism and socialism, at least in Europe.

During the inter-war period there was a dispute in the issue of strategy both within the organs of the CI and the organs of its national sections.

The CP's of the more mature capitalist societies could not cope with the necessity of the ideological, political and organizational readiness to pass from conditions of parliamentary legality into conditions of generalized economic crisis that brought about new political situations - fascist governments, imperialist military offensives etc. On the contrary, these CP's transformed into carriers of opportunistic pressure inside the CI, expressing liquidationist positions in the name of national strategy.

On the other hand, the Bolshevik CP was experiencing problems in the class struggle in conditions of socialist construction that were being expressed also as an internal dispute under the fear of a new imperialist offensive in the 1930's. Certainly, the internal social correlation, as well as the European correlation of forces requires a new higher level of theoretical elaboration, not only of the issues of the socialist construction but also of the strategy of the international communist movement in the conditions of the forthcoming decade of 1930. The generalization of the experience of the Bolshevik CP was not enough, since this concerned two revolutions or two stages of a unitary revolutionary process in a incomplete bourgeois state, and thus it was mainly addressed to China and India. The generalization of the possibility to detach bourgeois forces during the first revolution (or the first stage), from which the worker-farmer revolutionary forces would separate during the second revolution (or second stage) included taking risks.

The difficulties that the USSR was facing coming out of the civil war and the foreign intervention, with the consequences of the NEP that had followed, with the internal dispute regarding the medium-sized farmers that in a course was developed and strengthened by the debilitation of the kulaks, played a role and generalized further a certain tolerance towards the forces of private property.

We dare say that the difficulties of the class struggle in both sides of the revolutionary workers' movement - in the capitalist West and in the socialist construction - were not tackled with the adequate theoretical and political elaboration. And this concerns also fascism. The 7th Congress of the CI adopted the strategy of the Antifascist Popular Fronts, which before and after WWII claimed a government on the premises of capitalism as a transitional form towards workers' power. They pursued collaborations with social democratic political forces, even with bourgeois democratic ones, distinguishing the fascist enemy from the class enemy of the bourgeois class that was participating in imperialist war, was exploiting the working class, was begetting and utilized fascism. Likewise, they could not connect the armed anti-fascist liberation struggle with the struggle to conquer workers' power.

We believe that the afore-mentioned line of struggle would configure a more auspicious international correlation of forces for the defense of the Soviet Union against the fascist and every other kind of imperialist attack.

What we point out regarding the weaknesses of the subjective factor is also valid for the post-war era, despite the commencing of the process of socialist transition in countries of Europe where for their liberation and for the support of the CP's in power the Red Army and the whole USSR played a decisive role. In continuation, this process began also in countries of Asia, being China the most important; a process that eventually lost its dynamics, its revolutionary characteristics, but not without conflict.

In many cases, in China for example, but also in the majority of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (e.g. Poland, Hungary) the CP's showed tolerance towards small capitalist ownership, even more so towards private commodity

agricultural production, while later the commodity-money relations between the enterprises of the social sector were generalized (e.g. in the Soviet Union, China). These are the grounds upon which the social forces of counter-revolution developed and were strengthened.

In the last decade of the 20th century the counter-revolution prevailed: closing this first historical effort of passing from capitalism to socialism, as the immature stage of communism.

The weakness of the subjective factor is evident from the result. However, we must explore the grounds of the economic-social contradictions upon which this subjective weakness was developed. To seek, to discover common characteristics, social laws of cause that regulate the social setback either with the form of the victory of counter-revolution in countries where revolutionary socialist construction had begun or with the form of the defeat of workers' and people's uprisings and revolutions.

The KKE studying its own history in correlation with the history of the international communist movement, has cast the conclusions of its research in a congress decision - Resolution for the Socialist Construction in the 20th century, in the Volumes of the History Essay of the KKE. We have incorporated these conclusions in the elaboration of our Program.

We highlight the following issue as the fundamental one:

The working class is not sharing power with any other social force and this concerns also its allied forces such as the self-employed - particularly in agricultural production or in some limited services (e.g. sectors of beautification, cleaning, restaurants).

It is a fundamental programmatic position: one that defines the character of the workers' power, for the way that the workers organize themselves as a class that not only abolishes its exploiters, but also reconfigures itself, and develops as a dominant class that represents direct social production.

From this position stem the following:

The organization of the working class bottom-to-top, having the workplace as reference, and the General Assembly as its cell, electing representatives and delegates for the Workplace Councils and for the Branch-Sector Councils, councils that will have thorough competences - decision-making, application, control, observance of the socialist law in their respective place of responsibility.

The configuration of the revolutionary organs in their central level has no relation with a transmutation or an evolution of the bourgeois central organs (such as the Parliament and the Government).

That is why any conscious planned concession of rights to the self-employed is particular, distinctive, and has transitional character, e.g. Councils of farmer cooperatives, percentage of representation in the central organs of power.

The objective of the revolutionary workers' power is to organize and incorporate every person able for work in the direct social production or to social services, and consequently the planned abolition of private commodity production or services.

Not only labor force itself must stop being a commodity, but also its products: this means that in a planned manner the commodity-money relations will be abolished, the distribution of social production will be reformed with adjustments of accounting character that stem from the social necessary time of production, storing the product, from the general level of the modernly assessed needs and other particular social criteria, e.g. needs of children, women, aged persons, persons with chronic illness etc.

The objective of the revolutionary workers' power is not only to decrease labor time generally but also to transform labor from obligation in order to guarantee means of existence to a means of creation: from a mandatory act to a conscious need. Naturally, this requires a greatly broader and equal development of the productive forces, of all the parts of the socialist society: the abolition of inequalities and contradictions between manual and intellectual labor; between administrative and executive labor; between the city and the countryside with the urban modernization of every settlement and the connection of each unit of agricultural production with the industry. The planned abolition of private or cooperative ownership concerns also agricultural production. Besides, the modern scientific and technological breakthroughs can preserve the earth, the environment more generally, the land-worker and the agricultural product from natural catastrophes only through the widespread mechanization-automation and through centrally planned and configured infrastructures.

In the final analysis, the ideological - political - organizational role of the Communist party should be reaffirmed in the new conditions of revolutionary construction of the new society; in the configuration of the new social relations in all expressions of society; in all sectors of activity; so that the preconditions of the abolition of social inequalities are created, even inside the working class itself. Slowly but steadily the mechanisms of obligation of the class itself should be replaced with self-governing mechanisms.

The history of the Communist Movement in the 20th and 21st centuries highlights that we need to occupy ourselves deeper with the laws of cause that concern the Communist Party, its guiding role in the foundation, expansion, and complete domination of the new (communist) social relations; in the formation of the new type of worker as producer and administrator of the social product; as organizer and defender of social production and social property. This issue is related to laws of cause that concern the continuous renovation of the revolutionary vanguard, its expression in the guiding organs, its capability to recognize, evaluate and not tolerate opportunistic positions etc.

Despite the leaps during the first period of socialist construction, first and foremost in the Soviet Union and elsewhere, e.g. in China, the CP's in power neither in theoretical nor in practical political level were up to the challenge of forming the

new communist society, in giving the internal ideological-political and social battles in favor of communist construction.

In a course, the alignment of the opportunism of the CP's in the powerful countries with the opportunism of the CP's in power disarmed the workers' movement internationally, it transformed the movement into a spectator of the climaxing counter-revolution in the countries of socialist construction.

To sum up:

During the beginning of the 20th century, certain pre-capitalist remnants had as a result the delay in the configuration of a pure bourgeois power in countries such as Czar's Russia, China and others. This delay was expressed also by the existence of majority farmer populations in these countries, that even-though their uprising impetus could be pulled in with the proletarian revolution, later on this fact constituted an important burden in the construction of the new society, in overcoming the capitalist relations there, where they had not been yet configured.

On the other hand, in the countries of the then developed capitalism, the colonial exploitation and generally the exploitation of the productive forces and of the natural resources of other countries as a commodity, gave the possibility of a mass buy-out of the workers' movement, of incorporating the political workers' movement in the margins of bourgeois legality, in choosing forms of bourgeois power such as a bourgeois parliamentary system. This cultivated Utopian or even consciously opportunistic conceptions of "pro-peace" bourgeois political forces, of "consistent" anti-fascist bourgeois forces, by-passing the fact that capitalism itself is the womb of fascism, of every type of deviation from the bourgeois parliamentary system and of every kind of imperialist war.

This conclusion is a fundamental one for the ideological-political-organizational regroupment of the international communist movement. It concerns all the CP's in every continent. It concerns CP's in countries where already imperialist war is raging, such as in the Middle-East, or CP's around the Mediterranean, in the Balkans, where the imperialist contradictions and competitions, as well as the clouds of war, are foreboding.

We express our hope that this initiative of the CP of Turkey (TKP) for the holding of this Meeting will contribute in the development of the revolutionary strategic unity of the communist movement in our region, in Eurasia, internationally.