

Joint Struggle of the Balkan Peoples against Imperialism and War

[A presentation of the Communist Party of Greece (m-l) at the International Meeting in Thessaloniki in March 2009, on the 10th anniversary of the imperialist bombing of Yugoslavia]

Dear comrades and friends from Greece and the Balkans,

This meeting is held in a period when contradictions have been sharpening throughout the world, especially these past few years. The recent financial and political crisis of the system sharpens contradictions even more and obliges social classes and groups and all political forces to clarify their stance on every issue that mankind faces.

Class contradictions between the working class and the bourgeoisie are sharpened. The ferocious attack of the capital, especially since the 80s and the collapse of the Eastern Europe and Soviet Union regimes, has taken the form of an avalanche. Achievements and rights gained by the hardest class fights of many decades are abolished. The right to full time, steady work, the eight hour working day, social security and healthcare are abolished while unemployment rates and expensiveness swell and poverty threatens working class households. Collective agreements are substituted by individual agreements and work relations are dominated by the most extreme forms of exploitation, paving the way for working and living conditions of the Middle Ages. Peasants are being wiped out and the countryside is devastated as a consequence of the anti-agrarian policies of the EU and of the governments that serve and organize them. All social strata are compressed downwards, pushed to poverty.

Immigrants, who comprise a big part of the working class of the country, find themselves in an even more difficult position since unemployment plagues them, lowers their wages and limits their rights. Besides, they are faced with racism and nationalism and this phenomenon may be reinforced in times of crisis. The answer to all that, lies in the joined fight of Greek and migrant workers.

Class barriers against the youth are hardened and present an unbearable cost for the working class families.

The attack launched by the capital is part and parcel of specific strategic goals and pursuits, none other but its absolute dominance on the working class, ideologically, politically and organizationally. The effort is to annihilate any potential for resistance; in order to use the work force when and as it pleases.

Contradictions between the imperialists and the peoples are sharpened throughout the world. Especially after the collapse of the Eastern Europe and Soviet Union regimes, imperialists headed by the U.S. escalate their activities in order to take up the vacant left by the collapse. At the same time, antagonisms among them concerning the redistribution of markets and influence spheres, is intensified. The strengthening of Russia leads to a retrieval of the status held by the U.S.S.R., and intensifies the rivalry with the asphyxiating pressure and initiatives of the U.S. clearly presenting their conflict as the main imperialist contradiction.

The initiative for global dominance belongs to the U.S. that escalates the attacks against the peoples, by military dominating countries and regions of strategic importance that will serve their pursuits. Within this framework, they reinforce and broaden their military presence; they set up military bases wherever their interests dictate so. Moreover, they escalate war raids to occupy strategic regions, sowing death to the peoples and destruction to the lands. The Balkans, with Yugoslavia as a central point, Afghanistan and Iraq have all dearly paid the bloody price of imperialist brutality. Thus, the U.S. has come forth as the greatest enemy of the peoples, the greatest criminal against mankind.

The working class and the peoples worldwide can and must co-ordinate their struggle against the U.S. imperialism. The aim of this struggle should be the defeat of the U.S. in the places where they slaughter peoples; they destroy countries and regions and lead the working masses to live in squalor. They must be defeated in Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine, and Lebanon along with the murderous Israeli Zionists. They must be defeated in the Balkans where they caused a bloody war, broke up Yugoslavia and are creating new protectorate states.

OUST IMPERIALISTS, NATO AND THE EU FROM THE BALKANS

The Balkans has always been a field of fierce antagonism among imperialist powers. After the collapse and the ten year war and breakup of Yugoslavia, the region is dominated by the U.S. Both the old and the new countries that are formed are dependent mainly on the American imperialists. Their course of joining NATO and the EU depicts the terms of this dependence. On the one hand, since the bourgeois classes of the Balkan countries do not really lean on the real people's interests and on the real national interests, they relied on nationalism and chauvinism (and fed them in order to fortify their interior front). On the other hand, they sought the favor and support of the imperialists. In fact, they actually fell prey to imperialists and fully aligned with their demands.

In this context, the Americans reinforce and broaden their military presence in the region and set up new military bases everywhere in order to make the countries launching points of military and war operations in a series of regions.

The network of military bases that the US has set up all over the world in dozens of countries confirms their might and their potential for global dominance. Furthermore, it obliges the peoples of the world to fight against them and sustain multiple attacks from a variety of agents. The Iraqi resistance, many years since the smashing of the U.S. in Vietnam, has actually proved that the road of the U.S. to global resistance is not paved with roses and that the peoples even in conditions of negative co-relations can effectively resist and block the expansion of the U.S. war machine. The people of Lebanon have proved the same thing and so have the people of Palestine in Gaza, with their heroic resistance against the Israeli Zionists, the lackey of the U.S. in the Middle East.

After the collapse of 89-91, the U.S. use every means possible, political means, blackmails, threats, even war, in order to reinforce their status in the international scene and occupy and dominate new areas such as the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq through war raids and operations.

In this direction, they promote the expansion of NATO eastwards in view of debilitating and surrounding Russia. Thus, new countries of the Eastern Europe and the Balkans are joining or are in the process of joining NATO and the E.U.

The strategy of restructuring the American bases and generally the American military presence concerning Europe and the Balkans has various aspects. It mainly includes the translocation of certain bases from Western to Eastern Europe while expanding NATO. Of course the spearhead is the establishment of the 'anti-missile umbrella' in Poland and the Czech Republic.

In the Balkans, the military bases in Greece and Turkey that have been in operation for decades, are reinforced and updated e.g. the base in Souda, Crete and those in the south east Turkey. The Greek bourgeois class and its political personnel, and the governments either of PASOK or of New Democracy, gave the country away to the demands of the Americans for the bombardment of Yugoslavia. The American military bases were used both in war raids in the Balkans and for the strengthening of raids in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Besides the bloodshed of the Balkan peoples the U.S. set up military bases in every country of the region and imposed their military presence.

In Albania they have set up three military bases in the north part of the country.

In Romania and Bulgaria the procedure of establishing military bases was accelerated after their joining NATO in 2004. But the U.S. used the military bases of the two countries during the invasion in Afghanistan and Iraq.

In Kosovo, after the bombardment of the Serbian territory in 1999, they set up the second biggest base they have worldwide. That is Camp Bondsteel which the Americans call 'the great lady of bases.'

In FYROM the first base was established during the war in Bosnia in 1992 and was named Camp Able Sentry.

In Bosnia Herzegovina the Americans hold a base in Tuzla.

The bourgeois classes of the Balkan countries and their political personnel show phenomenal subjugation and are always eager to play dirty roles for the U.S. sake and align with the demands of their bosses. They are extremely nationalist and chauvinist and can be used by the NATO imperialists in various opportunistic activities. Therefore, they become dangerous to their peoples and to the neighboring peoples.

The duty of the Balkan peoples and especially of the left revolutionary forces is the building of friendship and solidarity among the peoples of the region. It is the fortification of the anti-imperialist, antiwar struggle. It is the joined action, the joined fight to oust military bases and imperialists from the Balkans. This has to be the aim of the working and people's movement in every country. And the movement has to become strong so that the bases become the loop that will strangle them. The Balkan peoples have in the past developed joined fights, always against

the same enemies, the imperialist conquerors. They have fought for the same ideals, national independence, freedom and progress and they will do so once more. They will again offer hope and perspective to the people's revolutionary, anti-imperialist struggles.

We can resist, we can win.

Communist Party of Greece (marxist - leninist)