

NEGATION OF NEGATION

Theoretical organ of the Communist Workers' Union (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist)

The "leftism" and fight for unity the communists



N° 6 DECEMBER 2022

Magazine

NEGATION OF NEGATION

THEORETICAL ORGAN OF THE COMMUNIST WORKER UNION (MLM)

DECEMBER 2022

Edited by the Communist Workers' Union
(Marxist-Leninist-Maoist)

Cover photo: V.I. Lenin
delivering a speech at the II
Congress of the Third International. In
this congress, the Bolshevik leader
started the fight against
“leftism” as a deviation from the
communism.

www.revolucionobrera.com

e-mail: contacto@revolucionobrera.com

blogrevolucionobrera.blogspot.com

Colombia • South America

Index

Presentation	5
Introduction	7
Raising the Big Red Flag of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism!	13
In defence of the negation of negation as one of the general laws of dialectics	33
In Defence of the MLM Theory of Imperialism	45
1. <i>On the fundamental contradiction of imperialist capitalism</i>	46
2. <i>The most important contradictions of imperialism and the principal contradiction</i>	50
3. <i>The periods of agony of imperialist capitalism</i>	65
4. <i>The main contradiction today</i>	72
5. <i>The two currents of the World Proletarian Revolution and the theory of "fusion"</i>	74
6. <i>On the "single hegemonic superpower" and "three worlds" theory</i>	81
On Semi-feudalism and Semi-coloniality	89
1. <i>Mao's theory of semi-feudal semi-colonial social formation</i>	89
2. <i>The coincidence of the theory of semi-feudalism with the theorists of neo-liberalism regarding capitalist land rent</i>	99
Epilogue	103

Presentation

Today we deliver to the working class in Colombia and to the International Communist Movement a new issue of our theoretical magazine Negation of Negation also dedicated to the struggle for the international unity of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists, as have been the three previous issues, on this occasion in polemic against "leftism".

In the plans of the Steering Committee of the Communist Workers Union (mlm) it was planned to be published last November, before the International Maoist Conference promoted by the Coordinator for a Unified Maoist International Conference -CCIMU- took place; however, due to different internal difficulties it was not possible to meet the stipulated deadline, although several of the articles date from those days.

We know that the Conference promoted by the CCIMU was held and that in these days its conclusions will begin to be known. An event to which our organization was invited but which it was not possible to attend because, as was publicly stated, the proposal presented by the comrades of the CCIMU as bases for discussion did not correspond to the current situation of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists; that is to say, it did not represent a basis of common general unity, which would allow to continue the struggle around the divergences which for now are legitimate within the revolutionary communists and did correspond to the positions of a certain shade, considered erroneous by our organization. The unwavering defense of the evident errors pointed out, the attacks and insults uttered by the followers of that "leftist" nuance only ratified our assessments.

The realization of the event promoted by the CCIMU and the Declaration that emerged from it, where statements criticized by us are suppressed, does not change the need to fight in depth against the erroneous conceptions defended by the comrades and therefore the content of the present issue of Negation of Negation is still valid, as urgent as the struggle for the unity of the International Communist Movement in a new Communist International, only possible with the demarcation in the whole general line with opportunism in its different varieties.

In this special issue the reader will find a refutation to the "leftist" ideas and attacks made by the comrades defending the proposal of bases of discussion presented by the CCIMU and which refer to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as a new, third and higher stage of the development of Marxism; to the general laws of dialectics and in particular to the negation of negation; to some questions of the imperialist system and the world proletarian revolution; which constituted and continue to be important problems of the debate.

Commission of Theoretical Struggle - Communist Workers Union (mlm)

December 2022

Introduction

« The objective conditions of the world are excellent for the revolution and urge the international unity of the communists, a question that can only be consciously solved by them if they subordinate their group interests to the interests of the World Proletarian Revolution.»¹.

The *Communist Workers Union (mlm)* of Colombia, on principle defends the need for the international unity of the revolutionary communists, today, Marxist-Leninist-Maoists, because the international character of the workers movement, of its struggle and objectives demands it; because it is the indispensable condition to carry to triumph the World Proletarian Revolution against the imperialist system. The Program of the *Union* expresses this need and the commitment to work for the construction of a new Communist International based on Marxism-Leninism-Maoism; recognizes the historic role played by the *Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM)*, and its collapse due to a revisionist line (whose main representative today is avakianism, which as international opportunism has done historically, also declared unsubstantial and insufficient for this epoch, fundamental pillars of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, of its scientific conception and method and of the historical experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat); recognizes the urgent need, due to the situation of the class struggle in the world, to overcome the bankruptcy of RIM: *marching towards a new International Conference of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists* that assumes the role of world leading political center and whose orientations are internationally respected with communist discipline.

In line with this programmatic orientation (of struggle for the international unity of communists, a unity that in essence consists in drawing a clear demarcation between revolutionary Marxism and opportunism, unity at the service of revolutionary practice to enhance the leading role of communists in the class struggle), the VIII Assembly of the Union, held in October 2009, approved *A Call to the Communists of all countries: To Prepare a New International Conference of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists!* which in its final part states:

«Aware of the excellent situation and the need for this new Conference, and faithful to its internationalist convictions, the VIII Assembly of the Communist Workers Union (Marxist Leninist Maoist) places at the disposal of this, the most urgent immediate internationalist task, all its forces, instruments and resources, and calls upon the revolutionary communists, the Marxist Leninist Maoists of all countries, to prepare a new International Conference that paves the way towards the Communist International of a new type, the main instrument for the triumph of the World Proletarian Revolution».

In April 2013, the Executive Committee of the Communist Workers Union (mlm), supported by the Call made by the VIII Assembly, exhorted the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists left to unite efforts in the struggle against Avakian revisionism (main danger to the unity of the

1 From article *¡POR UNA CONFERENCIA INTERNACIONAL UNIFICADA O CONJUNTA DE LOS MARXISTAS LENINISTAS MAOÍSTAS! ¡ADELANTE!*. Comisión de Lucha Teórica – Unión Obrera Comunista (mlm) - diciembre 2019.

ICM) and in the struggle to isolate and force centrism to define itself, drawing a clear demarcation of camps in the General Line. Such was the content of the document UNITE US AND LET US DRAW A CLEAR LINE OF DISTINCTION BETWEEN MARXISM AND REVISIONISM! taking into account that there is a general basis of unity in principles among the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists, manifested in the wide deployment of theoretical struggles and denunciations of parties and organizations of various countries against Avakian revisionism, which despite their dispersion, attacked in common the revisionist targets and defended in common the validity of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and its application to the most fundamental current questions of the imperialist world and of the World Proletarian Revolution. A general basis of unity that allows to unite to fight for the clarification of the remaining divergences and to advance to the outline of a General Line. Consistent with its call, the Union made a special effort to present in 2016 the *Proposal for the Formulation of a General Line for the Unity of the International Communist Movement*.

But, while skepticism and tacit rejection of this proposal prevailed, the objective situation of the class struggle underwent astonishing changes in the historical tendency of the revolution against the imperialist world system, with the characteristic of the weakness, also astonishing, of the communist element, which prevents it from channeling the rebellion and insubordination of the spontaneous mass movements against the established reactionary order. Such an objective situation, forced the Union to reconsider its proposal to assume the General Line as the yardstick for the immediate unity of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists, which although it is urgent due to the needs of the transformation of the objective movement, that is, due to the urgent responsibilities or inescapable tasks that the class struggle imposes on the conscious element, the conditions of crisis of the movement, characterized by the lack of unity in its ideological definitions and political tasks, and by a great weakness and dispersion of its forces, aggravated by isolation and sectarianism, do not make it possible to resolve the immediate unity of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists around a General Line.

It is necessary to recognize that the international unity of the communists is not a prurience in itself, but a necessity of the World Proletarian Revolution, because:

«It is well known that the process of the international unity of the communists, since the times of the League of Communists and through the experiences of three Internationals, of the Moscow Conferences, of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement... is a process of the conscious movement that obeys the necessity imposed by the objective process of the contradictions of capitalism, and since the beginning of the 20th century, by the imperialist phase of agony and decomposition of capitalism in which its contradictions are sharpened, and especially the world contradictions of imperialism. Likewise the international unity of the communists is a process of the conscious movement urged by the needs of the world proletariat and the peoples of the world, that is, of the social forces of the World Proletarian Revolution»¹.

But the crisis of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist movement does not mean the existence of an absolute division, but a relative division on a great base of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist unity, determined by the demarcation with opportunism in general and with avakianist neo-

1 *Ídem.*

revisionism in particular; base of unity that gives a floor to the struggle of parties and organizations representative of diverse shades, delimited by important and necessary divergences to resolve, but that can be dealt with if the objective reality of the conscious movement is accepted, if it is recognized that they are divergences among communists not with opportunists, and if the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist method is applied to correctly deal with the contradictions within the communists.

In consideration of the above, the Communist Workers Union (mlm), decided to propose a Unity Platform, striving to express in it, the general basis of unity of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists, which makes possible their immediate unification in a Single International Conference, as a new condition that allows to develop the struggle of lines over the divergences, to decide a common internationalist political action, and to organize a leading international center¹.

This position presented publicly since the end of 2019, is the one that forced the Steering Committee of the Communist Workers Union (mlm) to pronounce itself, when the Coordinator for a Unified Maoist International Conference -CCIMU, made public in January 2022, a document entitled For a Unified Maoist International Conference! - Proposal on the balance of the International Communist Movement and its current General Political Line, which later appeared without signature on the site <https://ci-ic.org/es/> under the title PROPOSAL - UNIFIED MAOIST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE (CCIMU) - POLITICAL DECLARATION AND PRINCIPLES [Basis of discussion].

A simple *Pronouncement* was published in the portal www.revolucionobreroa.com on January 25, 2022, centered on making the comrades of the CCIMU see that their proposal gives priority to the particular interests of their shade in the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist movement, over the common and general interests of the masses and of the world proletariat that demand the international unity of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists, with the urgency imposed by the objective situation of the contradictions of imperialism and the orphanage of communist leadership in the rise of the world class struggle, as it is read textually:

«...we consider that the proposal presented by the comrades of the Coordinating Committee for a Unified Maoist International Conference -CCIMU, does not correspond to the current situation of the Marxist Leninist Maoists; that is, it does not represent a common general basis of unity, to continue the struggle around the divergences that for now are legitimate within the revolutionary communists, since such a proposal only expresses the position of a particular shade of the communist movement. ».²

1 This position was published in December 2019 in the article *¡POR UNA CONFERENCIA INTERNACIONAL UNIFICADA O CONJUNTA DE LOS MARXISTAS LENINISTAS MAOÍSTAS! ¡ADELANTE!*. Took place at the International Preparatory Meeting held in Italy in January 2020. It was reaffirmed in the editorial *¡POR UNA ÚNICA CONFERENCIA INTERNACIONAL MARXISTA LENINISTA MAOÍSTA!*, published on website *Revolución Obrera* in May 2020. In February 2022, was published *PROPUESTA DE PLATAFORMA DE UNIDAD*.

2 *Unión Obrera Comunista (mlm)*. “Pronunciamiento sobre la Propuesta acerca del balance del Movimiento Comunista Internacional y de su actual Línea Política General”, *Revolución Obrera*, 25 de enero de 2022. Disponible en la web: <https://www.revolucionobreroa.com/internacional/mci/pronunciamiento/>

Accepting that a general *basis of unity* is shared with the nuance represented in this case by the CCIMU, in the proposed Bases of discussion a series of divergences are expressly manifested, for which reason, in front of some of them, the most important ones, in the Pronouncement critical positions were expressed: 1. *On the exact denomination of the science of the revolution*; 2. *On the fundamental contradiction, the main contradiction and the main aspect of the contradiction*; 3. *On the fusion of contradictions and the dissolution of the class struggle in the oppressed countries*; 4. *On the single hegemonic superpower and the theory of the three worlds*; 5. *On the erroneous method of avoiding the concrete analysis of the concrete situation*.

Although the comrades of the *Communist Party of Turkey/Marxist Leninist Party - TKP/ML*, had previously published a critical evaluation of the proposal, and later a comrade of the *International Commission of the PCm - Italy* and later the *Construction Committee of the Maoist Communist Party of Galicia*, it was the Pronouncement of the Steering Committee of the Communist Workers Union (mlm), which became the target of the theoretical artillery of the defenders of the proposal *Bases of Discussion*.

Since then, against the Union's Pronouncement, have been published:

- *DESLINDANDO Y PRECISANDO – Poder Proletario Organización Partidaria MLM – Colombia 5 de marzo de 2022.*
- *DEFENSA DEL MAOISMO I, II y III - INTERNACIONAL COMUNISTA Periódico Internet Marxista-Leninista-Maoísta*
- *La tesis del Capitalismo Burocrático es una tesis marxista-leninista-maoísta - Partido Comunista de Colombia (Fracción roja)*
- *Respuesta al Pronunciamiento de la Unión Obrera Comunista (UOC) sobre la Propuesta del Comité Coordinador para la Conferencia Internacional Maoísta Unificada (CIMU) - Partido Comunista de Colombia (Fracción Roja) - Julio de 2022*
- *NUESTRA DEFENSA DEL MAOÍSMO - Poder Proletario Organización Partidaria MLM – Colombia 29 de septiembre de 2022.*

Documents where their authors try to support the erroneous theories criticized in the Union's *Pronouncement*, resorting to the old and twisted method of falsifying the opponent's positions in order to "refute" them and, mainly on the part of the newspaper *Communist International*, adorning their argumentation with a bunch of insults, which as a whole is an unacceptable style in a discussion between communist comrades.

It is up to us to respond to this concentric attack, keeping ourselves in the position of considering our divergences as contradictions within the people; therefore, fighting for the international unity of the communists with a sincere treatment of comrades, convinced that the present situation of the World Proletarian Revolution demands, not an International Conference to maintain and deepen the division among the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists shoring up their weakness and political impotence, but a *SINGLE MARXIST-LENINIST-MAOIST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE* that will be a firm step forward in the construction of a New Communist International based on Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, and that in the immediate future, will become a proletarian bastion to face the great challenges of the imperialist world and the revolution, as we declared in January 2020:

« To fight for a single International Conference of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists of the world is also an unavoidable obligation of the communists because of their

responsibility to be the conscience and the leadership of the class struggle of the proletariat at world level and of the struggle of the countries, nations and peoples oppressed and super-exploited by imperialism in association with the lackey and reactionary ruling classes.

To fight for a single International Conference of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists of the world is likewise a firm step in the solution of the problem of the political impotence of the communists, whose dispersion has contributed to opportunism and reformism to fulfill their objective of diverting the mass movement from its revolutionary path and perspective.».

Theoretical Struggle Commission - Communist Workers Union (mlm)

Colombia, November 2022

Raising the Big Red Flag of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism!

Against the great split in the *International Communist Movement* - ICM - caused by *Krushchovist revisionism*, a great struggle led to the great regroupment of the world Marxist-Leninist movement around the *Proposition on the General Line of the International Communist Movement*, also known as the 25-Point Charter published on 14 June 1963. This formidable banner enriched the communist consciousness and revolutionary impetus, radiated and strengthened since 1949 by the triumph of the New Democratic Revolution in China. The World Proletarian Revolution, whose Era had been inaugurated in 1917 with the triumph of the Great October Revolution in Russia, reached a higher level of expansion, marked by the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China (1966-1976), which as part of its internationalist work massively spread to all countries the works of the classical masters of the world proletariat, the theory of communism of Marx and Engels, of Lenin, Stalin and Mao Tse-tung, understood as Stalin defined it: The theory is the experience of the workers' movement of all countries, taken in its *general aspect*¹.

As in many countries, also in Colombia in the 1960s, there was a great divide, division and struggle between the followers of the revisionism of the *Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU)* and the Marxist-Leninists aligned with the *Communist Party of China (CPC)* led by Chairman Mao Tse-tung. The Marxist-Leninist leaders of the Restructuring of the old communist party (revisionist) into the *Communist Party of Colombia (M-L)* in 1965 were advocates of and guided by the theories of Maoism, learned from the experience of the Chinese Revolution, and had the guidance and support of the CPC. Even in 1974, when the Party (M-L) split, one of the fractions adopted the name *Tendencia M-L-M*. It was common to turn to the selected works of Mao Tse-tung, for the study of Marxist-Leninists; it was not uncommon to call oneself *Maoist*, or to found *Maoist* organisations.

Years later, when the struggle against the crisis of the communist movement in Colombia began, triggered by the division of the Party, but above all, by the defeat in 1976 of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in China, the theoretical journal *Contradicción*, founded in 1989, in its work against confusion, lack of definition and theoretical ignorance, defended *Marxism-Leninism-Maoism*, but not yet with a deep understanding of the significance of the contributions of Maoism to the development of *Marxism-Leninism*.

That is why *Contradicción* magazine saluted, endorsed and adopted as its own the *Declaration* of 26 December 1993 on the occasion of the centenary of the birth of Chairman Mao Tse-tung, when the *Revolutionary Internationalist Movement -RIM-* announced: *with a deep sense of our responsibility, we declare before the international proletariat and the oppressed*

¹ *Los fundamentos del leninismo – J. V. Stalin – 1924.*

masses of the world that the ideology that guides us is Marxism-Leninism-Maoism Long live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism!

This was the official and public communication of the result of nine years of discussion, analysis, study and research, in which the position of the *Communist Party of Peru -PCP-* led by *Chairman Gonzalo* played a transcendental role, as stated in the *Declaration*:

«During this same period the parties and organisations of our Movement and RIM as a whole have been engaged in revolutionary struggle against imperialism and reaction. Most important has been the advanced experience of the People's War led by the Communist Party of Peru which has succeeded in mobilising the masses by the millions, sweeping away the state in many parts of the country and establishing workers' and peasants' power in these areas. These advances, in theory and practice, have enabled us to deepen further our understanding of proletarian ideology and on that basis to take a transcendental step, the recognition of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as the new, third and higher stage of Marxism.(Emphasis added)».

That is why, since 1998 when the *Communist Workers' Union (mlm)* was founded, it has inherited the defence of the Declaration Long Live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism!, whose essential content permeates its Ideological Line, its Programme, its Statutes and the various courses of the National Cadres' School dedicated to teaching the fundamentals of Marxism. A declaration wielded as a weapon of combat against opportunism, especially in the theoretical struggle against Prachandist and Avakyanist neo-revisionism.

We assume that since no signature is specified, the author of the three documents *In Defence of Maoism* is the *Communist International* newspaper. At the beginning of the first one, it says:

«Our newspaper Communist International has opened the section Debate Tribune for discussion. As the above-mentioned positions have already been published in this section, this time we want to debate mainly on the position of the UOC against the proposed Bases for Discussion and its thinly veiled counterposition to Maoism as the third, new and higher stage of the scientific ideology of the international proletariat, and in doing so we will necessarily refer, directly or indirectly, to the criticisms and observations made by the others».

From the outset, two vague statements: one, *the UOC's position against the proposal of the Bases of Discussion*; and the other, *its thinly veiled counterposition to Maoism as the third, new and higher stage of the scientific ideology of the international proletariat*.

The first statement is inaccurate, as we have not rejected in absolute terms the proposed *Basis of Discussion*, as stated in our pronouncement of 25 January 2022:

«We welcome the effort made by the comrades of the Coordinating Committee for a Unified Maoist International Conference - CCIMU in presenting a proposal to take balance of the *International Communist Movement and its current General Political Line*, as it corresponds to the need to advance the unity of communists and to the different pronouncements calling for a Unified International Conference of Marxist Leninist Maoists of all countries».

The comrades of the CCIMU recognise the *necessity* of the international unity of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists, but they have not understood, or refuse to admit, the *objective situation* of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist movement, united, for example, in the fundamental demarcation from revisionism (and particularly Avakyanist neo-revisionism), in the Leninist understanding of imperialism and its historical place, in the conviction of the inevitability of the triumph of the World Proletarian Revolution, of the necessary Dictatorship of the Proletariat and under it, the continuation of the revolution, for the transition of society to communism... But it is also a movement divided by some misunderstood questions of principle, by differences in the rationalisation of historical experience, by divergences in the appreciation of the present situation and the tasks of the communists... Hence, by the subjectivism of its thinking, by its anti-Maoist method of evading the concrete analysis of the concrete situation, the proposal of the *Bases of Discussion* ignores the real situation of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist movement, in the face of which, our statement affirms:

«In this sense, we consider that the proposal presented by the comrades of the Coordinating Committee for a Unified Maoist International Conference -CCIMU, does not correspond to the current situation of the Marxist Leninist Maoists; that is to say, it does not represent a common general basis of unity, to continue the struggle around the divergences that for now are legitimate within the revolutionary communists, because such a proposal only expresses the position of a particular shade of the communist movement».

And when we say *position of a particular nuance of the communist movement, we recognise it as such a nuance, not as an opportunist line*; that is, a nuance with which, together with other Marxist-Leninist-Maoists, we have a fundamental basis of unity. So much so, for example, that we fully agree with the statement in Bases for Discussion on the general situation of the ICM:

«The International Communist Movement is the vanguard of the international proletariat. The main problem today for the ICM is the dispersion of forces and the main danger remains revisionism».

In spite of having the advantage of the existence of a fundamental *basis of unity* of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist movement, in spite of the urgent political need to expressly and organisationally unite this movement, the CCIMU that proposes the Bases for Discussion chooses to sacrifice the struggle to unite what can be united against the common enemy, in order to impose as a general line its characteristic conceptions of the defending shade of "*Gonzalo Thought*", which instead of uniting the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist movement, divides it. This is the reason for the critical positions in our Pronouncement on the proposed *Bases for Discussion*.

In this respect the comrades of *the Communist Party of Colombia (Red Fraction)* in their reply to us state:

«The UOC comrades do not recognise several of the key developments of Maoism such as: contradiction as the only fundamental law of dialectics, bureaucratic capitalism, new democratic revolution as the necessary first stage of revolution in the oppressed nations and - although we do not develop it here - the conception of people's war and its being central to Maoism. These are matters of principle, they are an essential part of Maoism, which cannot be considered differences of

nuance, but an ideological nucleus around which all communists must unite through the two-line struggle, through criticism and self-criticism within the International Communist Movement»¹.

Of course, the m-l-m movement is not divided over matters of detail, but as we have just expressed above, it is also a *movement divided over some misunderstood questions of principle, over differences in the rationalisation of historical experience, over divergences in the appreciation of the present situation and the tasks of communists....* The present debate is part of exposing erroneous ideas and theories, and striving for unity around the truth, around what is correct, not through conciliation, nor by trying to coexist with opportunist tendencies or lines as was imposed at the end of RIM's existence; but through criticism and self-criticism, persuasion, ideological struggle, and in the end, through the struggle of lines. This is the m-l-m method of dealing with the contradictions among the people, the divergences among communists. One reads in the comrades' reply, for example, that it is taken as a principle that "every oppressed country makes the revolution of new democracy necessary", which means that it is taken for granted that a country, because it is oppressed, is semi-feudal; here the theory of Marxism ceases to be a guide to action and is reduced to a dogma, and knowledge of objective reality to a formal philosophical statement. And yet, recognising that we have a great divergence on this question, our position is to unite on the fundamental basis of unity that exists as Marxist-Leninist-Maoists, which will enable us to treat this and all other divergences as contradictions within the people.

Returning to the second statement at the beginning (its thinly veiled counterposition to Maoism as the third, new and higher stage of the scientific ideology of the international proletariat), it is inaccurate because we have unity with the proposal of *Bases of Discussion* when it refers to the development of Marxism as follows:

«...the ideology of the proletariat insurrected (sic) and developed in the crucible of the class struggle in three stages: 1) Marxism, 2) Marxism-Leninism and 3) Marxism-Leninism-Maoism».

«In short, Marxism in its first stage will establish Marxist philosophy or dialectical materialism, Marxist political economy and scientific socialism. Lenin developed Marxism and elevated it to a second stage, Marxism-Leninism».

«Chairman Mao Tsetung, developing Marxism-Leninism, raises Marxism to its highest peak by turning the theory of the proletariat into Marxism-Leninism-Maoism».

This is the correct way to call the three stages of development of Marxism, because it corresponds to its content, and is expressly in line with the *Declaration of RIM* in 1993. In that sense, the statement of the *Communist International* newspaper is false because it induces the twisted idea that we *veiledly* deny the third, new and higher stage of the development of Marxism in Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

Our central divergence and discussion in this respect is against the reductionist conception of the proposed *Basis of Discussion*, which is manifested in the fact that, to the

¹ *Respuesta al Pronunciamento de la Unión Obrera Comunista (UOC) sobre la Propuesta del Comité Coordinador para la Conferencia Internacional Maoísta Unificada (CIMU) - Partido Comunista de Colombia (Fracción Roja) - Julio de 2022.*

correct recognition of *Marxism-Leninism-Maoism* as the third, new and higher stage of development of Marxism, they attach the erroneous addendum *mainly Maoism*. In the course of the discussion, it is necessary to unravel the incorrect method of the comrades in the polemics.

In Defence of Maoism (I) states: Through the action of the PCP within RIM, RIM came to recognise Maoism as the new stage of Marxism in 1993. This is not exactly what was recognised in RIM, as can be read in the 1993 Declaration:

«These advances, in theory and practice, have enabled us to further deepen our understanding of proletarian ideology and on that basis to take the momentous step of recognising Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as the new, third and higher stage of Marxism».

«In the course of the Chinese revolution Mao had developed Marxism-Leninism in many important fields. But it was in the crucible of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution that our ideology took a leap and the third great milestone, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, fully emerged. From the higher plane of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism the revolutionary communists will be able to understand even more deeply the teachings of the previous great leaders and even the early contributions of Mao Tsetung will acquire a deeper significance».

Why the interest of *Bases of Discussion* and its defenders in redefining - in a veiled way - the exact position of the *Declaration* of RIM in 1993? In assigning to RIM something that it did not conclude in the *Declaration* expressly dedicated to the question of the third, new and higher stage of Marxism?

As quoted above, it is correctly stated in *Bases of Discussion*: *For more than 170 years, counted from the 1848 Manifesto of the Communist Party, the ideology of the proletariat insurrected (sic) and developed in the crucible of the class struggle in three stages: 1) Marxism, 2) Marxism-Leninism and 3) Marxism-Leninism-Maoism*. But here, after a full stop, it is no longer Marxism-Leninism-Maoism that is the third, new and higher stage, but: *Maoism is the all-powerful scientific ideology of the international proletariat, all-powerful because it is true; the third, new and higher stage of Marxism; the present-day Marxism that we uphold, defend and mainly apply*. (Bolding ours)

Is the all-powerful scientific ideology of the proletariat, the third, new and higher stage of the development of Marxism, reduced to *Maoism* alone? If so, the comrades should declare openly and frankly: the 1993 *Declaration* of RIM is wrong! It is not Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, but only *Maoism*, that is the third, new and higher stage of Marxism! And therefore, the scientific development of Marxism is reduced to *Maoism*!

Evidently, there is in *Bases for Discussion* *eclecticism* about the development of Marxism; on the one hand, they defend the correct theoretical understanding: Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is the new, third and higher stage of the development of Marxism; but on the other hand, they claim that this stage of development is *only Maoism*; and then they integrate it into an equally eclectic formulation: the third, new and higher stage of Marxism is Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, mainly *Maoism*. And it is said by those who often claim to reject the revisionist thesis that "*two become one*".

A confused theoretical conception, which the *Steering Committee of the Communist Workers' Union (mlm)*, in its *Pronouncement*, criticised by pointing out in a few lines, firstly that it is a mistake, and secondly by indicating the purpose of such a stratagem:

«We start from the adoption of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as a new, third and higher stage of Marxism, and we even admit the denomination Maoist for propaganda purposes, however, we consider the expression "mainly Maoist" erroneous as it corresponds to the pretension of making Maoism a "synthesis" of communism and reducing scientific socialism to the contributions of Mao Tse-tung».

A fraternal criticism, without appealing to falsify their position and without insults, but which provoked the fiercest responses, full of distortions and insults.

Does rejecting the erroneous attachment *mainly to Maoism* mean that we disregard the role and significance of Chairman Mao Tse-tung's contributions to the development of the science of Marxism by elevating it to a third, new and higher stage? No! On the contrary, we appreciate and defend the valuable contributions of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist member parties of RIM, especially the PCP, in systematising the contributions of Maoism to the development of the three integral parts of Marxism, in its forging and creative application in the practice of the revolution in China, in the face of universal problems of the World Proletarian Revolution, in the unceasing struggle against opportunism, especially Chinese and international revisionism, contributions which the Declaration of '93 masterfully synthesised.

The eclectic conception of the problem is persistent in the documents of the comrades, who, motivated to defend and justify the erroneous formulation of the *Bases of Discussion*, sometimes end up making it worse.

«And how is our ideology going to unfold as a dialectical process? Through great leaps; three great qualitative leaps with Marx, Lenin, Chairman Mao Tsetung. But these three great qualitative leaps could not be understood without other great, medium and even small leaps.

They are three concatenated stages of development of Marxism which are expressed and written thus: Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. They are three stages, one Marxism, two Leninism, three Maoism, that is what defines Marxism-Leninism-Maoism»¹.

«Reasoning in absolutes leads nowhere. Where it says "principally", they mean "only". In doing so, they are unaware that, among the constituent parts of a phenomenon, some necessarily influence or determine more than others; that is to say, there are some that are principal and others that are secondary»².

«And all this as part of something superior and principal: it synthesised and sanctioned Maoism as the third, new and superior stage of our proletarian

1 *En defensa del Maoísmo (I) – periódico Internacional Comunista.*

2 *DESLINDANDO Y PRECISANDO – Poder Proletario Organización Partidaria MLM – 05 marzo 2022.*

ideology, giving us the all-powerful weapon indispensable for making revolution today: Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, primarily Maoism»¹.

«The word principal does not describe something unique or sufficient, it is an adjective that precisely presupposes the existence of others that are indispensable. Identifying principal as unique leads to problems of one-sidedness, to metaphysical thinking»².

From these statements it is inferred: that the stages of the dialectical development of Marxism are no longer *Marxism*, *Marxism-Leninism*, *Marxism-Leninism-Maoism*, but *Marxism*, *Leninism*, *Maoism*; that Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is not the new, third and highest stage of the process, but "the three concatenated stages", that is, the whole process; that of the "constituent parts" of this phenomenon, Maoism is the "principal" and "determinant" over Marxism and Leninism which are "secondary"; and that the UOC (mlm), given its "one-sidedness", "metaphysical thinking" and uneducatedness, is incapable of understanding the difference between "mainly" and "only", is incapable of understanding the nonsense.

In the face of the comrades' evident eclecticism towards the development of the scientific ideology of the proletariat, their understanding of the process and their loyalty to the 1993 Declaration is in doubt. Undoubtedly the comrades are very confused about the role, the contributions, the contributions, both of Leninism to the development of Marxism and its leap to Marxism-Leninism (second stage), and of Maoism to the development of Marxism-Leninism and its leap to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (third stage). The comrades prefer the delight of rambling on and on:

«Here, too, you are clearly denying the universal value of the development of Marxism-Leninism made by Chairman Mao Tsetung, by reducing it to mere contributions, for if they are mere "contributions..." you are denying the universal value of the development of the ideology of the proletariat made by the Chairman, you are denying Maoism as the third, new and higher stage of Marxism»³.

Stalin, who laid the foundations of the meaning of *Leninism*, with the authority he had as the master of the international proletariat, dared to speak of Lenin's contribution (today he would have to dodge the anathemas of the defenders of "*Gonzalo Thought*"):

«To expound the foundations of Leninism is not yet to expound the foundations of Lenin's world outlook. Lenin's world outlook and the foundations of Leninism are not, by their volume, one and the same thing. Lenin is a Marxist, and the basis of his world outlook is, of course, Marxism. But it by no means follows from this that the exposition of Leninism must begin with the exposition of the foundations of Marxism. To expound Leninism is to expound what is peculiar and what is new in Lenin's works, what Lenin contributed to the general treasury

1 *Respuesta al Pronunciamiento de la Unión Obrera Comunista (UOC) sobre la Propuesta del Comité Coordinador para la Conferencia Internacional Maoísta Unificada (CIMU) - Partido Comunista de Colombia (Fracción Roja) - Julio de 2022.*

2 *Ídem.*

3 *En defensa del Maoísmo (I) – periódico Internacional Comunista.*

of Marxism and what is naturally associated with his name. It is only in this sense that I shall speak in my lectures of the foundations of Leninism»¹.

«Leninism is the Marxism of the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolution. Or more precisely: Leninism is the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution in general, the theory and tactics of the dictatorship of the proletariat in particular. Marx and Engels acted in the pre-revolutionary period (we mean the proletarian revolution) when there was not yet developed imperialism, in a period of preparation of the proletarians for the revolution, in the period when the proletarian revolution was not yet directly and practically inevitable. On the other hand, Lenin, a disciple of Marx and Engels, acted in the period of developed imperialism, in the period when the proletarian revolution is unfolding, when the proletarian revolution has already triumphed in a country, has destroyed bourgeois democracy and inaugurated the era of proletarian democracy, the era of the Soviets. That is why Leninism is the further development of Marxism»².

Stalin formulates precisely the *Leninist development* of Marxism, highlights and argues its fundamental questions: the historical roots of *Leninism* or the question of imperialism, the method, the theory, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the peasant question, the national question, strategy and tactics, the party, the style of work, compiled in the Lectures published in the pamphlet *Foundations of Leninism*, and which he develops in his later writings, mainly in struggle against Trotskyite opportunism. From the very beginning of his exposition, he stresses that Marxism is the world outlook of Leninism, he recognises the difference of these stages of the process, without diluting the continuity and coherence of the process, without reducing Marxism to "the secondary" of *Leninism*:

«The strength and vitality of Marxism-Leninism lie precisely in the fact that it takes as the basis for its practical action the demands of the development of the material life of society, without ever detaching itself from the real life of society»³.

«The strength and vitality of Marxism-Leninism lie in the fact that it is based on a vanguard theory which accurately reflects the demands of the development of the material life of society, and which places the theory at the level it deserves and considers it its duty to make full use of its power of mobilisation, organisation and transformation»⁴.

Similarly, Mao Tse-tung, in all his works when he refers to the scientific ideology of the proletariat, does not say Leninism simply or mainly Leninism, but *Marxism-Leninism* as a science, a guide of thought, fundamental principles. For example, in his well-known article *Let Us Reform Our Study* - 1941, he exhorted:

«As regards the education of cadres at work or in schools for cadres, the policy of taking the study of the practical problems of the Chinese revolution as the centre

1 *Los fundamentos del leninismo* – J. V. Stalin – 1924.

2 *Ídem.*

3 *Historia del Partido Comunista (Bolchevique) de la U.R.S.S – Comité Central del P.C. (B) de la U.R.S.S. – edición de 1939.*

4 *Ídem.*

and the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism as the guide will be established, and the method of studying Marxism-Leninism in a static way and without connection with life will be discarded».

And what can we say about the historic document of general demarcation from revisionism, *The 25-Point Charter or Proposition on the General Line of the International Communist Movement*? where from beginning to end the content and revolutionary character of the fundamental theses of Marxism-Leninism (not only of Leninism, nor of mainly Leninism) are defended, in struggle against the revisionist understanding that undermines its revolutionary edge and essence. For example, in point 24, on the question of the revolutionary Party and its task of leading the revolution, he says::

«If it is not a party which is capable of thinking and judging for itself and acquiring an exact knowledge of the tendency of the different classes in its own country through serious research and study, and which knows how to apply the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism and integrate it with the concrete practice of its own country, but a party which blindly repeats the words of others, copies the experience of others without analysis, and takes turns following the baton of certain people from abroad, in other words, a party which is a mixed salad in which there is everything: revisionism, dogmatism and other things, except Marxist-Leninist principles».

In short, the great masters of the proletariat, Stalin and Mao Tse-tung, understood, recognised and proclaimed the Leninist leap in the development of Marxism, without falling into the absurdity of reducing this development to Leninism, and never referred to this second stage of development with the misleading formulation "Marxism-Leninism, mainly Leninism".

The Communist Workers' Union (mlm), assimilating the teaching of the masters, has defended and expressed this:

«Against social-chauvinist and Kautskyite opportunism, the Bolshevik Communist Party - under the leadership of the great teacher of the proletariat Lenin - rose up to lead the defence of Marxism and internationalism in the International Communist Movement. Leninism shattered the revisionist theories of Bernstein and Kautsky, imposed in the Second International; it gave ideological foundation to the triumph of the proletarian revolution in Russia, to the new world organisation of the proletariat, the Third International or Communist International; and it developed revolutionary Marxism in the conditions of the imperialist phase or new Era of the World Proletarian Revolution, raising it to a new and higher stage: Marxist-Leninism»¹.

It is claimed by our contradictors that not accepting their "mainly Maoism" means that the UOC (mlm) "denies the development of Marxism-Leninism made by Chairman Mao Tsetung in its three integral parts". False! Here the comrades slip into one of the variants of the opportunist method in polemics: falsifying the opponent's positions, as a poor means of defending their own and evading the central questions of the debate. As we have stated

¹ *Propuesta de Formulación de una Línea General para la Unidad del Movimiento Comunista Internacional – UOC (mlm), Revista Negación de la Negación No. 5, agosto de 2016.*

before, we have defended without hesitation, without conditions, without restrictions, the Maoist development of *Marxism-Leninism*, raising it to a new, third and higher stage, *Marxism-Leninism-Maoism*, as proclaimed by RIM in 1993, in a simple and masterly way, summarising in the scope allowed by a declaration, the developments of Maoism to the three integral parts of Marxism, making clear the relationship between Maoism and the third stage, *Marxism-Leninism-Maoism*, a relationship which the squire comrades of the CCIMU and their erroneous position in *Bases of Discussion*, have turned into a real muddle, in the attempt to impose mainly Maoism as the current ultra-development of the scientific ideology of the proletariat. Regarding this relationship, the 1993 Declaration says in some of its paragraphs:

«But Maoism is not only the sum total of Mao's great contributions. It is the comprehensive and all-embracing development of Marxism-Leninism to a new and higher stage. Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is an integral whole; it is the ideology of the proletariat synthesised and developed to new stages, from Marxism to Marxism-Leninism to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, by Karl Marx, V.I. Lenin and Mao Tsetung, on the basis of the experience of the proletariat and humanity in the class struggle, the struggle for production and scientific experimentation. It is the invincible weapon that enables the proletariat to understand the world and transform it through revolution. Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is a universally applicable, living and scientific ideology, constantly developing and further enriched through its application in making revolution as well as through the advancement of human knowledge in general. Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is the enemy of all forms of revisionism and dogmatism. It is all-powerful because it is true».

«Today, without Maoism there can be no Marxism-Leninism. In fact, to deny Maoism is to deny Marxism-Leninism itself. Every major milestone in the development of the revolutionary ideology of the proletariat has met with fierce resistance and has only achieved recognition through intense struggle and through its application in revolutionary practice. Today the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement declares that Marxism-Leninism-Maoism must be the command and guide of the world revolution».

Note the great difference between the understanding of the problem by the *Marxist-Leninist-Maoists* in the 1993 Declaration, and that of the Maoists in the Basis of Discussion. Both recognise the role of Maoism in the leap to the new, third and higher stage. However, RIM concluded "Marxism-Leninism-Maoism must be the command and guide of the world revolution", while the Maoists of the "Gonzalo Thought" camp state: "We understand that the defence of Chairman Gonzalo implies fighting in the most consistent way to put Maoism as the only command and guide of the new great wave of the world proletarian revolution, which is already developing". Undoubtedly, they are just a nuance of the movement, and it is not by chance that the different variants defending "Gonzalo Thought" coincide in defending the erroneous adjective "mainly Maoism"; such is the case of a recent publication of the PCP (LOD), where in some of its paragraphs they state::

«That great stage of the world proletarian revolution gave us Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, mainly Maoism, which is still in full force»¹.

«We uphold Maoism as the new, third and higher stage of the ideology of the proletariat, we strive for it to be the command and guide of the world revolution, we fight for the regrouping of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist communist parties and we proclaim that making revolution is the task of the peoples of the world»².

For our part, we stand firm in defending *RIM's Declaration Long Live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism!*, the essential content of which we reaffirmed in *Negation of Negation Magazine* No. 5 of 2016, referring to the *Maoist defence* of Marxism-Leninism and its great struggle against modern revisionist hrushchovist revisionism:

«Again, a great struggle against opportunism allowed the development of revolutionary Marxism to a new and higher stage: Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. The Maoist defence of the principles of Marxism Leninism, of the historical experience of the Proletarian Revolution, of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, of the construction of socialism and of the role of Stalin, adhered to the Leninist line on international experience: to take it critically and check it for themselves».

The correct position of RIM in its 1993 Declaration, regarding the development and leap of the science of the proletariat, to its new, third and higher stage, *Marxism-Leninism-Maoism*, is defended by different parties and organisations, since then and in the present debate with *Bases for Discussion*, as can be seen in the following brief paragraphs:

From the comrades of the *Communist Party of Turkey / Marxist-Leninist*:

«While Leninism is the Marxism of the era of imperialism and proletarian revolutions, Maoism is justifiably the development of proletarian revolutions and the unceasing continuation of revolutions under the dictatorship of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. After weighing Mao's contributions against the present level of Marxism, the most correct approach is to express it as Marxism-Leninism-Maoism»³.

From the comrades of the *Communist Party of India (Maoist)*:

«Since the focus of this document is Maoism, the basic principles of Marxism and Leninism are briefly discussed in this paper as an introduction to the Marxist-Leninist fundamentals. Comrade Mao Tse-Tung not only firmly based himself on these fundamentals but also defended and developed them to a qualitatively higher third and new stage. Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (MLM) is therefore the continuity of the thought of our great Marxist masters and is also an integrated whole. Although in our view there is no difference between Marxism-Leninism-Maoist Thought and MLM - there is no Chinese Wall that can separate them - we

1 *HACER LA REVOLUCIÓN ES LA TAREA DE LOS PUEBLOS DEL MUNDO - Comité Central Partido Comunista del Perú - octubre 2022.*

2 *Ídem.*

3 *Marxismo-Leninismo-Maoísmo Contemporáneo – Partido Comunista de Turquía/Marxista-Leninista [TKP/ML] – (Verano de 1998).*

have adopted Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as the third and new qualitatively higher stage because it is more rigorous in scientific terms»¹.

From the comrades of *the Communist Party of Afghanistan (Maoist)*:

«This claim that ratifying Maoism at the 1993 RIM enlarged meeting was merely formal is unfounded. The fact is that the 1993 RIM enlarged meeting was an unprecedented historic achievement in which Maoism was ratified by the vote of the vast majority of the representatives of the Maoist parties present, including the observer-participant representative of the PCP. Subsequent negative developments in RIM, including negative developments within the PCP (the seeds of which had existed in RIM members, including the PCP, earlier) cannot and should not be the reason to deny the above-mentioned leading role»².

From the comrades of *the Communist Party of the Philippines*:

«China is now under the domination of the monopoly capitalists who seek to erase the memories of the socialist revolution. In the face of the CCP's attempt to revise history and distort Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, the CPP considers it a crucial task for the revolutionary proletariat throughout the world to study the victories of the Chinese people in their national socialist and democratic revolutions, to draw lessons and apply them in the revolutionary struggle in the era of the revival of the socialist revolution.

Long live the victory of the Chinese people's revolution in 1949! Raise high the banner of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism! Make the national democratic and socialist revolution throughout the world!»³.

From the critique of the comrades of *the Communist Party of Turkey/Marxist-Leninist* on the document *Bases of Discussion*:

«MARXISM-LENINISM-MAOISM OR MAINLY MARXISM-LENINISM-MAOISM?

This debate, which took place almost simultaneously with the acceptance of Maoism as the third stage of Marxism-Leninism, is nothing new to us. In recent years, we have given answers as to which of these definitions is correct for us or why we should use one or the other. It is Marxism-Leninism-Maoism that we consider correct and insist on using. We address the question in the context of the contributions made to the three main components of Marxist theory in the struggle for proletarian power, which has continued from the formation of Marxism as a theory of proletarian liberation to the present, and we name the question on the basis of this unbroken continuity. Although it seems a consistency in itself to place special emphasis on Mao in the sense that Marxism reached its peak with Mao's contributions since its emergence, on the other hand, we can refer to the fact that even Mao himself refers to it as Marxism-

1 *¡ENARBOLAR BIEN ALTO LA BANDERA ROJA DEL MARXISMO-LENINISMO-MAOÍSMO! – Comité Central (P) Partido Comunista de la India (Maoísta) – 21 de septiembre 2004.*

2 *Un vistazo a la Declaración Internacional Conjunta de los Ocho Partidos y Organizaciones Maoístas Latinoamericanas – Partido Comunista (Maoísta) de Afganistán – junio de 2018*

3 *Conmemorar los 70 años de la victoria de la revolución china en 1949 – Partido Comunista de las Filipinas – 1 de octubre 2019.*

Leninism when describing Marxism. Therefore, it is more correct for us to use the MLM definition, which expresses the continuity and that Mao took Marxism-Leninism further, rather than making a definition that would mean putting Mao in a different place from them»¹.

From the critique of the comrades of the *Maoist Communist Party - Italy* to the document *Bases of Discussion*:

«The revolutionary ideology on the basis of which to convene the International Conference is Marxism-Leninism-Maoism »².

«Our party calls itself the Maoist Communist Party, but it does not share the use by the forces that wrote the document of the expression "mainly Maoism" which goes against the understanding that the ideology of the proletariat is organically an indivisible whole with respect to what is already universally acquired by the revolutionary practice of the proletariat: Are the Marxist analysis of capital, the historical and dialectical materialist method, the Marxist analysis of the state, etc., in their universal aspects no longer valid today (nor will they be valid until capitalism is defeated)? in their universal aspects are no longer valid today (nor will they be valid until capitalism is defeated)?

The same can be said of the universal contributions of Leninism and Maoism to Marxism, which today are represented only by the definition of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism»³.

«We think that a functional "basis of discussion" for the call should take the formulation "Marxism-Leninism-Maoism" and place it as a demarcation against revisionism »⁴.

From the critique of the comrades of the *Construction Committee of the Maoist Communist Party of Galicia* of the document *Bases of Discussion*:

«Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. On "mainly Maoism".

From our perspective, the "Statement of Policy and Principles" for CIMU should be changed on several points. First of all because it is a constant in this document to follow the formula "mainly Maoism". This expression contains two important dangers that have led us to lose our way if we are not careful. The first danger is that we are carried away by the repeated forms of memory which are more characteristic of religion than of proletarian science. To learn a phrase by heart is not to understand, let alone internalise, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism»⁵.

1 EL PLANTEAMIENTO DE NUESTRO PARTIDO SOBRE EL PROYECTO PREPARADO - TKP/ML – 6 de enero 2022.

2 Algunas críticas al documento "¡Por una Conferencia Internacional Maoísta Unificada! - firmado por Un camarada de la Comisión Internacional - PCm – Italia – 31 de mayo 2022.

3 Ídem.

4 Ídem.

5 Sobre la Conferencia Maoísta Unificada (CIMU) - Comité de Construcción del Partido Comunista maoísta de Galiza – CCPCMG – 6 de junio de 2022.

«The other reason for not using the formula "especially Maoism" is that it makes it difficult for us to understand that in every advance of proletarian science there is a continuity and a rupture at the same time»¹.

«Rupture and continuity is a constant in the history of Marxism, just as it is in the natural sciences of bourgeois academia, where this process of rupture and continuity also occurs. All this exposition leads us to understand why the term "Marxism-Leninism" and not simply "Leninism", or "Marxism-Leninism mainly Leninism" is the correct one»².

«As we see Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is the result of a succession of rupture and continuity with Marx, but the reality is that continuity is essential»³.

It is evident that among the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist parties and organisations, there is a wide divergence over the erroneous adjective "mainly Maoism" to the new, third and higher stage of the development of revolutionary Marxism, *Marxism-Leninism-Maoism*. The comrades who have come to the defence of "mainly Maoism", while trying to justify this erroneous adjective, insist on declaring that they do not intend to synthesise the development of Marxism into Maoism, although in their argumentation they repeatedly contradict this statement, as is demonstrated in this discussion

As far as the development of the science of the proletariat is concerned, central to our critique is the rejection of the position of Bases of Discussion to add "mainly Maoism". This is an error, which goes against the historic declaration of RIM in 1993 "*Long Live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism!*", an error that divides *Marxist-Leninist-Maoists* and shows that on this question, the proposal of Bases for Discussion is the position of the nuanced defender of "Gonzalo Thought" and does not represent the common basis of unity of recognising Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as the new, third and higher stage of the development of the scientific ideology of the proletariat. In the face of errors like this, and considering that the divergence is between *Marxist-Leninist-Maoist* communists, not with opportunists, we take up Lenin's words, when in 1922, rejecting the treachery of the social-chauvinists, he referred to Rosa Luxemburg's mistakes and that communists sometimes make mistakes too, evoking the lines of a fable: *just as eagles sometimes fly lower than hens, but hens can never soar as high as eagles!* We therefore call on the comrades of the CCIMU and the defenders of the error pointed out, to recognise it self-critically and correct it by renouncing the addition "mainly Maoism". Such must be their honest attitude in the struggle for the unity of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists!.

In addition to the central question in this part of the discussion on the development of Marxism, comrades have mixed in other issues, which, though secondary and forcibly involved, oblige us to refer to the more poisonous ones, making the necessary clarifications.

The comrades of the newspaper Communist International state: From the very name of the Communist Workers' Union of Colombia (Marxist Leninist Maoist) or UOC (mlm), *their*

1 *Ídem.*

2 *Ídem.*

3 *Ídem.*

conception contrary to Marxism and its dialectical development is already expressed, because by calling Marxism Leninism Maoism in abbreviations mlm, what they call "science of the revolution", without the hyphen of separation between the different phases, they are indicating that Marxism does not develop by leaps but following a flat development, lineal¹.

To appeal to the acronym in the name of the organisation in order to derive the judgement expressed in the quotation is a grotesque pretence on the part of those who presume to be know-it-alls and criticise the bringing of arguments by the hairsbreadth. If this were so, it would call into question the conceptions of all the parties that barely mention an (m) in their names, and of those that still use (m-l), and what to say, of those that do not add any initial to their name. In the first place, this diversity in the names of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist organisations and parties expresses the present state of the movement, its dispersion. It is quite different when the movement manages to centralise its organisation and is governed by centralised decisions on the names of the parties, as happened at the Second Congress of the Communist International, which, in the 21 conditions defined for joining the Communist International, decided that the parties should change their title to the Communist Party of that country (section of the Third Communist International). It also happened in the great regroupment of the anti-revisionist Marxist-Leninist against Krushovist, which, although it did not succeed in formalising an international organisational centralisation, the parties generally agreed to add to their name the initials (m-l), which became the international distinctive name of the revolutionary communist parties, as opposed to the revisionist communist parties

In the second place, the judgement derived by the comrades of the *Communist International* newspaper from the name of the Union is a completely subjective lucubration, alien to the reality of our conception, which has been clearly reaffirmed in the present discussion. It is a short-sighted ruse, in the vain and crawling intention of placing us outside and against Marxism. It deserves no further comment.

The comrades of the newspaper *Communist International*, in their document In Defence of Maoism (I), decide to devote a special chapter to another slander against the Union: the comrades pretend to strip Marxist ideology of its character of scientific ideology of the proletariat, reducing it only to "science of the revolution" (...) "*The UOC aligns itself with and is in reality taking as its masters the revisionists Althusser and Kautsky, pretending to reduce our ideology to "science..." to "scientific socialism", making at bottom bastard concessions to the bourgeoisie*". Here is a professorial disrespect on the part of the defenders of "Gonzalo Thought", with their very usual unfounded and malicious accusations, which above all show the extent of their repugnant sectarianism, unacceptable in a discussion among Marxists. They are completely untruthful in their accusations.

Beginning with the slander of claiming to "reduce the ideology of the proletariat to scientific socialism", it is elementary knowledge among Marxist-Leninist-Maoists that scientific socialism is one of the integral parts of Marxism, integrally interrelated with political economy and dialectical materialist philosophy; that scientific socialism was the negation and overcoming of the fantasies of the old utopian socialism, because it discovered the economic and political laws of the development of capitalism and explained the nature of wage-slavery under that system, because it demonstrated the inescapable tendency of

¹ *En defensa del Maoísmo (I) – periódico Internacional Comunista*

social development towards a new socialist and communist society, because it found the social force capable of directing that transition and its means of realising it, the proletarian revolution

Therefore, *scientific socialism*, besides being one of the integral parts of Marxism, is associated with the general theory and programme of the proletarian revolution, as Engels and Lenin do:

«And scientific socialism, the theoretical expression of the proletarian movement, is called upon to investigate the historical conditions and thus the very nature of this act, thus instilling in the class called upon to make this revolution, the now oppressed class, the consciousness of the conditions and the nature of its own action»¹.

«*Marxism* is the system of Marx's conceptions and doctrine. It continues and brilliantly crowns the three main ideological currents of the 19th century, which belong to the three most advanced countries of mankind: classical German philosophy, classical English political economy, and French socialism, linked with French revolutionary doctrines in general. The admirable coherence and integrity of his conceptions - qualities recognised even by his opponents - which together constitute contemporary scientific materialism and socialism as the theory and programme of the working-class movement in all civilised countries of the world, oblige us to sketch briefly his conception of the world in general before setting out the essential content of Marxism, that is, Marx's economic doctrine.»².

As for the other specious assertion, of trying to strip Marxist ideology of its character as the scientific ideology of the proletariat, reducing it only to the "*science of revolution*", this is speculation based solely on the fact that we frequently use the expression science of the proletarian revolution (as the classics of Marxism have also called it), which, far from the imagination of the comrades, reaffirms and emphasises the scientific character of proletarian ideology. They claim "*that the UOC is trying to obscure the terms of the debate*", but they have the nerve to hurl at us the astonishing offence of being disciples of Althusser and Kautsky, an outrage that can only be expected from charlatans without a trade, not from comrades who call themselves mainly Maoist; it is clear that they know little of that part of Maoism which refers to the treatment of the contradictions within the people. Once again we reject their filthy accusations.

It is you comrades of the *Communist International* who erect a Chinese wall between the science of the proletarian revolution and the scientific ideology of the proletariat. This is another fringe you have attached to the central debate: scientific ideology vs. the science of revolution. And the best thing to do here is to appeal directly to the words of the classics, of the masters of the international proletariat.

«We owe to Marx those two great discoveries: the materialist conception of history and the unveiling of the secrets of capitalist production. With them

1 *Del Socialismo Utópico al Socialismo Científico* – F. Engels – 1880.

2 *Folleto Carlos Marx* – V. I. Lenin – 1914 ELE.

socialism became a science; the task is now to develop it in all its details and all its connections»¹.

«Since it is not even possible to speak of an independent ideology, elaborated by the working masses themselves in the course of their movement, the problem is only: bourgeois ideology or socialist ideology »².

«Marx's doctrine arouses throughout the civilised world the greatest hostility and hatred of all bourgeois science (both official and liberal), which sees in Marxism something like an "evil sect". And no other attitude can be expected, for in a society built on class struggle there can be no "impartial" social science. In one way or another, all official and liberal science defends wage slavery, while Marxism has declared a relentless war on wage slavery. To expect an impartial science in a society of wage-slavery would be the same puerile naivety as to expect impartiality from manufacturers as to the desirability of raising the wages of the workers, to the detriment of the profits of capital»³.

«The theory of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin is universally applicable. It is not to be regarded as dogma, but as a guide to action. To study Marxism-Leninism is not simply to learn its terminology, but to study it as a science of revolution. It is not only to understand the general laws laid down by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin as a result of their extensive study of real life and revolutionary experience, but also to learn the position and method they adopted in examining and solving the problems of the revolution »⁴.

«Communism is the complete ideology of the proletariat and, at the same time, a new social system. It differs from any other ideology and social system, and is the most complete, progressive, revolutionary and rational in human history»⁵.

«Armed with Marxist-Leninist theory and ideology, the Communist Party of China has brought to the Chinese people a new style of work, which consists mainly of integrating theory with practice, maintaining close links with the masses of the people and practising self-criticism »⁶.

«The Communist Party of China, having made a calm appraisal of the international and domestic situation in the light of the science of Marxism-Leninism, realised that all attacks by internal and external reactionaries should not only be but could be smashed »⁷.

«Marxism is the science of the laws of the development of nature and society, the science of the revolution of the oppressed and exploited masses, the science of the victory of socialism in all countries, the science of the building of communist

1 *El Anti-Dühring – F. Engels – 1877.*

2 *¿Qué Hacer? - V. I. Lenin – 1902.*

3 *Las Tres Fuentes y las Tres Partes integrantes del Marxismo – V. I. Lenin – 1913.*

4 *El papel del Partido Comunista de China en la guerra nacional – Mao Tse-tung – 1938.*

5 *Sobre la Nueva Democracia – Mao Tse-tung – 1940.*

6 *Sobre el gobierno de coalición – Mao Tse-tung – 1945.*

7 *La situación actual y nuestras tareas – Mao Tse-tung – 1947.*

society. Marxism, as the science that it is, cannot remain stagnant: it develops and perfects itself »¹.

The comrades of the *Communist Party of India (Maoist)*, too, put the problem so simply and so clearly that they make a mockery of the "clever" speculation of *In Defence of Maoism (I)*:

«Marxism emerged, as the science of the laws of motion of nature, society and human thought, as the science of revolution, at a moment in history when the proletariat had made its appearance as a revolutionary class capable of determining the destiny of society, including its own destiny. Marxism is the ideology of the proletariat, which was later synthesised and developed into new and higher stages. From Marxism it developed into Marxism-Leninism. Subsequently, it developed further in the form of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. It is not a science belonging to a certain field of knowledge, but a science representing a whole global philosophical system, political economy, scientific socialism and the strategy and tactics of the proletariat for understanding and transforming the world through revolution»².

The comrades of the *Communist International* newspaper, besides speculating on an artificial contrast between the scientific ideology of the proletariat and the science of the proletarian revolution, add statements that do compromise their scientific understanding of the ideology of the proletariat, such as...: Despite claiming that it is a "developing science" they deny the need for the development of the core of our ideology, which is Marxist philosophy... and to authorise themselves, they quote some paragraphs from Chairman Gonzalo and head them with a statement to the same effect: *Chairman Gonzalo in his Seminar on Philosophy (1987), makes a summary or synthesis of the development of the core of our ideology, Marxist philosophy....*

To claim that philosophy is the core of proletarian ideology is simply anti-Marxist, anti-Leninist, anti-Maoist. It is seen that their insistence that Maoism is the main thing, while Marxism and Leninism are secondary, leads them to "forget" the fundamentals of Maoism. Suffice it to repeat Lenin's words quoted above, to resolve this delusion: The admirable coherence and integrity of his conceptions - qualities recognised even by his adversaries - which together constitute contemporary scientific materialism and socialism as the theory and programme of the working-class movement in all the civilised countries of the world, oblige us to sketch briefly his conception of the world in general before setting out the essential content of Marxism, that is, Marx's economic doctrine. A fundamental idea of Marxism, which our rank and file militants assimilate in their process of joining the organisation, but which it seems is unknown to or has been revalued by the intellectual know-alls, mainly Maoists, the same ones who in their concentric attack against the Union, say that: *The document Basis of Discussion for the CIMU is extremely clear and is quite simple; but, that, never being able to lower our positions, they imply some basic knowledge of Marxism and how we apply it to the current reality (...)* Next, the comrades of the UOC show their total lack of understanding of what they read, like metaphysicians that they are, they mix up the concepts to

1 *En torno a algunas cuestiones de la lingüística* – J. V. Stalin – 1950.

2 *¡ENARBOLAR BIEN ALTO LA BANDERA ROJA DEL MARXISMO-LENINISMO-MAOÍSMO!* – CC PCI (M) – 2004.

entangle the discussion and the clarification of the problem... So, who are the ignorant ones? Who embroil the debate?

The comrades of the *Communist International* newspaper have added to the central debate the lie that the Union is trying to strip Marxist ideology of its character as the *scientific ideology of the proletariat*, but if one only denounces the hoax, one discovers that it is they who are weak in their understanding of this scientific ideology!

Thus, we end this first aspect of the debate with the proposal of the *Bases for Discussion*.

Commission for Theoretical Struggle - Communist Workers' Union (mlm)

Colombia, November 2022

In defence of the negation of negation as one of the general laws of dialectics

Under the title *In Defence of Maoism*¹, the comrades of the Coordinating Committee of the Unified Maoist International Conference (CCIMU) pretend to "fix accounts" with our *Pronouncement*² on the *Proposal on the Balance of the International Communist Movement* and its *Current General Political Line*³, document which the CCIMU itself had drawn up as a basic proposal for the unity of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist organisations and parties. One of the points under discussion is the philosophical question, in particular the third law of dialectics: the negation of the negation. A polemic which is not new as we shall see later.

The CCIMU comrades begin by misrepresenting our position on dialectics, claiming that we deny the law of contradiction and counterpose it with "our" (sic) law of the negation of negation:

«They are denying the law of contradiction. They are in their self-imposed mental prison: "triplism" counterposing their "negation of negation" to contradiction as the only fundamental law of the dialectic of the incessant transformation of eternal matter».⁴

And again they falsify our position by saying that we maintain that the law of the negation of the negation is the "fundamental law of dialectics":

« [...] the development of Marxist philosophy by Chairman Mao on the law of contradiction must be made clear and the thesis of those who maintain the "law of negation of negation" as a fundamental law of dialectics comparable to contradiction must be countered with concrete examples of the synthesis according to Maoism».⁵

1 El documento *Defensa del Maoísmo*, fue publicado en tres entregas en el periódico virtual *Internacional Comunista* los días 23, 24 de julio y 13 de septiembre de 2022.

2 UNIÓN OBRERA COMUNISTA (MLM). "Pronunciamiento sobre la Propuesta acerca del balance del Movimiento Comunista Internacional y de su actual Línea Política General". *Revolución Obrera*, 25 de enero de 2022. Disponible en la web: <https://www.revolucionobrera.com/internacional/mci/pronunciamiento/>

3 COMITÉ COORDINADOR DE LA CONFERENCIA INTERNACIONAL MAOÍSTA UNIFICADA. "Propuesta acerca del balance del Movimiento Comunista Internacional y de su actual Línea Política General". *Internacional Comunista*, 4 de enero de 2022. Disponible en la web: <https://ci-ic.org/es/2022/01/04/por-una-conferencia-internacional-maoista-unificada-propuesta-acerca-del-balance-del-movimiento-comunista-internacional-y-de-su-actual-linea-politica-general/>

4 CCIMU. *Defensa del Maoísmo (I)*. Disponible en la web: <https://ci-ic.org/es/2022/07/23/defensa-del-maoismo-i/>

5 *Ibíd.*

The accusations that we fall into "triplism" and move away from "philosophical monism" will be dealt with later. First, let us see where we really stand in relation to the laws of dialectics, "the laws" being understood as Engels defined them in the *Anti-Dühring*: "Dialectics is nothing more than the science of the general laws of the movement and evolution of nature, human society and thought". In our *Pronouncement on the CCIMU Unity Basis Proposal*, we affirm that:

«[...]in the claim to reduce the general laws of motion to contradiction, interpreting its character of being the most fundamental law of dialectics, or the core or essence of dialectics, as meaning that it is the "only law of dialectics"». ⁶

That is to say, we do not deny that the law of unity and the struggle of opposites is the fundamental law of dialectics, what we reject is the assertion - as the CCIMU does - that, because it is the fundamental law of dialectics, this means that it is the "only law". We consider that apart from the law of contradiction there is the law of change of quantity and quality, and the law of negation of negation, but the comrades of the CCIMU wrongly understand that, because we affirm that the law of contradiction is not the only law, we are saying that it is not the fundamental law. At the heart of this polemic is the rejection of the law of negation of negation by the CCIMU and the "mainly Maoist" Marxist-Leninist-Maoist organisations and parties. This position is defended in the aforementioned document *Defence of Maoism*, but not before falling into several inconsistencies.

The CCIMU considers that to maintain the existence of three general laws of dialectics is to fall into "triplism" and affirms that "*with Chairman Mao we arrive at philosophical monism*". This is how they describe this shift from "triplism" to "monism"⁷:

«Marx and Engels said three, one is the main one; Lenin, deepening the problem, developing it, said: contradiction is the key; Chairman Mao went further, he said: "the only fundamental law is contradiction"». ⁸

Since Marx and Engels argued that there were three laws of dialectics, for the CCIMU, the first masters of communism must have been "triplists" in philosophy. In the case of Lenin and his contributions to dialectics, it is true that the Russian revolutionary deepened the study of dialectics and pointed out that the core of dialectics was the law of contradiction, but the CCIMU in wanting to argue for a move from "triplism" to "monism" fall into their first inconsistency. In one of the polemical documents we are told that:

«Lenin reaffirmed materialist monism and advanced monism in dialectics, leaving the task of deepening it to future generations of Marxist-Leninist revolutionaries». ⁹

6 UNIÓN OBRERA COMUNISTA (MLM). "Pronunciamento sobre la Propuesta acerca del balance del Movimiento Comunista Internacional y de su actual Línea Política General". *Revolución Obrera*, 25 de enero de 2022.

7 In this polemic we use the term "monism" in inverted commas, not because we oppose monism in philosophy, i.e. the primary determinant of matter over idea, and the latter as an extension of the former, but because the comrades of the CCIMU transfer the question of "monism" to refer to the laws of dialectics.

8 *Op. cit.*

According to this, Lenin had already reaffirmed "monism" and left it to others to deepen it, but as we saw above, the CCIMU says that "*with Chairman Mao one arrives at philosophical monism*"; if it is with Mao that one arrives at philosophical "monism", how is it that Lenin had been able to reaffirm "monism" in dialectics many years earlier? Moreover, in his *Philosophical Notebooks* - a text quoted by the CCIMU in this polemic - Lenin recognises, apart from the law of contradiction, the law of the negation of the negation, and not only that, but he shows several elements of dialectics:

- «1) The OBJECTIVITY of the consideration (no examples, no divergences, but the thing itself)..
- 2) the full totality of the multiple RELATIONSHIPS of that thing with others.
- 3) the DEVELOPMENT of that thing (respective of the phenomenon), its own movement, its own life.
- 4) the contradictory internal TRENDS (and aspects) in that thing.
- 5) the thing (phenomenon, etc.) as the sum and UNITY OF CONTRARIES.
- 6) the STRUGGLE, regarding the unfolding of these opposites, contradictory tendencies, etc.
- 7) the union of analysis and synthesis - the breaking down of the separate parts and the totality, the summation of those parts.
- 8) the relations of each thing (phenomenon, etc.) are not only multiple, but general, universal. Each thing (phenomenon, process, etc.) is linked to ALL OTHERS.
- 9) not only the unity of opposites, but the TRANSITION of EACH determination, quality, trait, aspect, property, to EACH other.
- 10) the infinite process of discovery of NEW aspects, relationships, etc.
- 11) the infinite process of deepening man's knowledge of things, phenomena, processes, etc., from phenomenon to essence and from the shallower essence to the deeper essence.
- 12) from coexistence to causality and from one form of connection and interdependence to another, deeper, more general form.
- 13) the repetition, at a higher stage, of certain features, properties, etc., of the lower, and
- 14) the apparent return to the old (negation of negation)
- 15) the struggle of content with form, and vice versa. The rejection of form, the transformation of content.

9 CCIMU. *Defensa del Maoísmo (II)*. Disponible en la web: <https://ci-ic.org/es/2022/07/24/defensa-del-maoismo-ii/>

16) the transition from quantity to quality and vice versa. (15 and 16 are examples of 9).¹⁰ [Bold typeface is ours]»

Again, how could Lenin assert a dialectical "monism" if he recognised the law of the negation of the negation, and we have already seen that for the CCIMU only one who recognises only one law of dialectics is a philosophical "monist"? We point out the incoherence of the CCIMU, and at the same time we reject the stupidity of thinking that one falls into "triplism" by recognising that there are other laws apart from the law of contradiction.

Likewise, their inconsistency is reflected in referring to the character of the other laws of dialectics, especially the law of the negation of the negation. These are sometimes referred to as "*derivations*" of the law of contradiction:

«[...] the guideline is dialectics and the only fundamental law of dialectics is contradiction and the others are derivations».¹¹

By contrast, elsewhere they say that the law of negation of negation as such "*does not exist*", hence they rather disdainfully point out that it is "*our*" law. To substantiate their position, the CCIMU comrades quote from a document attributed to Chairman Mao entitled *Talk on Philosophy*. This document is said to be notes recorded from a talk Mao held with some comrades of the Communist Party of China on 18 August 1964, in which the Chinese communist leader says:

«Engels spoke of the three categories, but for my part I do not believe in two of them. (The unity of opposites is the most basic law, the transformation of quality and quantity into each other is the unity of the opposites quality and quantity, and the negation of the negation does not exist at all)».¹²

Mao's assertion that the negation of the negation does not exist, and that the law of quality and quantity is nothing but the expression of the unity of the opposites quality and quantity, is what the comrades of the CCIMU cling to in order to reject the other two laws of dialectics. Although these were the notes of a third party who was present at this alleged talk and this text is not included in his Selected Works which were published under Mao's own supervision, we will not enter into doubts about the veracity of this document, but Mao's assertion that the law of negation of negation does not exist contradicts Mao's own work and thought. It is enough to have first-hand knowledge of his earlier writings and one can see several examples of how the law of negation of negation is evident in Mao's thought.

This rejection of the law of negation of negation by some is not a recent phenomenon, but is of long standing within the labour movement. In the 1990s, comrade Aureliano S., in his reply to the criticisms of the law of negation by Avakian and other leaders of the Revolutionary Communist Party of the USA (to which we will return later), briefly outlined

¹⁰ V. I. Lenin. "Resumen del libro de Hegel *Ciencia de la Lógica*". En: *Cuadernos Filosóficos*. México: Editorial Librerías Allende, 1974. p. 209-210.

¹¹ *Op. cit.*

¹² Mao Tse-tung. "Charla sobre filosofía", *Servir al Pueblo*. Disponible en la web: <https://serviralpuebloperiodico.wordpress.com/2022/08/08/charla-sobre-filosofia-mao-tse-tung/>

this course of rejection of the third law of dialectics and the defence of this law by revolutionary Marxism:

«It is not the first time that the negation of the negation has been attacked, nor the first time that dialectical materialism has been accused of being "metaphysical" for using this Hegelian "gibberish". Already in his time Dühring, who claimed to find the "fundamental form of all actions in the existence of the world and its essence" in the "antagonistic universal schematism", raged at the mere mention by Marx of the negation of the negation. The answer was given to him at length and in detail by Engels in the *Anti-Dühring*. Similarly, Lenin took up the polemic on the negation of negation with Mikhailovsky in the work *Who are the Friends of the People...* in 1894. ».¹³

And at least since the 1970s and within the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) itself, this erroneous idea of rejecting the law of the negation of the negation, based on Mao's alleged words in the lecture on philosophy, has become widespread. The English Marxist philosopher Nick Knight refers to this polemic in the introduction to his book *Mao Zedong on Dialectical Materialism: Writings on Philosophy*, in which he states that Mao rejected the name "negation of negation", but did not reject its philosophical essence:

«[...] Mao's rejection of the "negation of negation" was a rejection of the title, rather than the substance of this philosophical category, which sought a nomenclature more in keeping with his predilection for perceiving a unity of opposites in all things and processes».¹⁴

In support of his argument, Knight cites several texts by Mao in which he proves that Mao refers to the negation of negation, for example, in his critique of Wen Hui Bao, Chairman Mao uses this law of dialectics to explain the changes in Chinese politics:

«The Journalists' Association called two meetings, the first a denial and the second a denial of the denial, and the fact that this has taken place in little more than a month indicates the rapidly changing situation in China».¹⁵

In his speech at the second session of the 8th Congress of the Communist Party of China, Mao explains how the negation of negation manifests itself in the development of thought:

«Things will always go in the opposite direction. The dialectics of Greece, the metaphysics of the Middle Ages, the Restoration... It is the negation of the negation. It is also true in China. The hundred scholars who expressed

13 Aureliano S. *La negación de la negación*. Colombia: Ediciones Ave Fénix, 2012. p, 12-13.

14 Nick Knight's Discussion of Mao's Supposed Rejection of the Concept of the "Negation of the Negation". *Massline*. p. 3. Disponible en la web: <https://massline.org/Philosophy/Others/Knight-Mao-NegOfNeg.pdf>

15 Mao Tse-tung. *Wen Hui Pao's Bourgeois orientation should be criticized*. 1 Julio de 1957. Disponible en la web: https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-5/mswv5_64.htm

themselves in the time of the States Warriors were dialectics. The classics of the feudal era were metaphysics. Now dialectics is promoted». ¹⁶

Mao's shift to the law of negation, according to Knight, came later when Mao decided to replace the name "negation of negation" with "negation-affirmation", which is not a rejection of the philosophical essence of this law, but of the title it is given. Knight gives the reasons for this change of name to Mao's negation of negation:

«What we have here is merely a change of title, since the substance of the concept remains unchanged. The concept of "negation of the negation" assumes that the factor negating the negative (e.g. the negation of feudalism by capitalism) will initially constitute a positive factor, the affirmative. However, over time, its positive character will be transformed into its opposite, the affirmative will become the negative, as a new and historically progressive force emerges to challenge it. This cycle, of negation, affirmation, negation, as described by Mao in August 1964, is no different in essence from that described earlier by himself and other Marxist philosophers, including Lenin and Engels, under the rubric of the "negation of negation". Mao's demonstrable predilection for linking and using oxymoronic categories (life and death, truth and falsehood, materialism and idealism, right and wrong, finite and infinite, advanced and backward, to name a few) suggests that he would not have been sympathetic to a formula that described a contradictory process and yet seemed to link like with like: negation of negation. By renaming the concept "affirmation and negation", Mao was able to leave the substance of the concept unchanged and, at the same time, to bring its title into line with the widespread idea that the unity of opposites exists in all things and processes». ¹⁷

This statement by Knight that Mao replaces the name "negation of negation" with "negation-affirmation" and that he does not reject the philosophical essence of the negation of negation, is confirmed by Mao himself when in 1958 in a resolution on the methods of work he mentions the three laws of dialectics and when he mentions the law of the negation of negation, he replaces it with the name "affirmation and negation”:

«The laws of the unity of opposites, of quantitative to qualitative changes and of affirmation and negation will be universally and eternally maintained. [Boldface our own]». ¹⁸

Even in the same *Talk on Philosophy* - where Mao states that the law of negation of negation "does not exist" - in expounding the development of society, he shows how the

16 Mao Tse-tung. *Speeches at the Second Session of the Eight Party Congress. 8-23 de mayo 1958. Disponible en la web: https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-8/mswv8_10.htm*

17 Nick Knight's *Discussion of Mao's Supposed Rejection of the Concept of the "Negation of the Negation"*. *Massline*. p. 5.

18 Mao Tse-tung. *Sixty Points on Working Methods- A draft resolution from the Office of the Centre of the CPC. 2 de febrero de 1958. Disponible en la web: https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-8/mswv8_05.htm*

negation of negation unfolds, its philosophical essence in history, this cycle of negation, affirmation and subsequent negation:

«Slave society was the negation of primitive society, but with reference to feudal society it was, in turn, the affirmation. Feudal society constituted the negation in relation to slave society, but was at the same time the affirmation in reference to capitalist society. Capitalist society constituted the negation in relation to feudal society, but it is, in turn, the affirmation in relation to socialist society».¹⁹

But although the law of the negation of the negation is manifested in that same *Talk on Philosophy* - to which the comrades of the CCIMU cling like a burning nail - and in Mao's entire work, the "mainly Maoists" fail to notice its manifestation in the philosophical thought of the Chinese revolutionary. Again, this polemic is not new. In 1967, Comrade Nagalingam Shanmugathasan, a leader of the Ceylon Communist Party who knew Chairman Mao personally, warned the communists that Mao did not deny the law of quantitative and qualitative change, nor the law of negation of negation:

«Comrade Mao Tse-tung has systematically studied the laws of Marxist-Leninist dialectics and developed Lenin's thesis contained in his work *On the Question of Dialectics*. Comrade Mao Tse-tung does not deny the law of quantitative and qualitative change or the law of negation of negation. Engels had dealt with all these things in his *Anti-Duhring*. But what Comrade Mao Tse-tung does point out clearly is that, of these three laws, the most basic is that of the law of contradictions, the law of the unity of opposites».²⁰

On the other hand, the CCIMU comrades resort to gibberish in order to justify their rejection of the law of negation of negation, but which, as is the case with each of their "arguments", ends up being once again incoherent. In one part of his above-quoted text from *Defence of Maoism*, we are told that Mao refers to the law of contradiction as the "fundamental" one and that this means that it is the only law; if Mao recognised that there are other laws apart from the law of contradiction, he would not have written "fundamental", but "principal":

«In "The Practice", in "The Contradiction" and in his "Talk", why did he say "only fundamental law", why did he put it like that? Because there is no other, and if there is no other, how can there be a principal one? Do you understand the reason? If there were several, it would be principal, but it is the only one; we could talk about principal if we are talking about derived laws, in that case, yes, but the essence of the problem is that it is the only fundamental law».²¹

19 Mao Tse-tung. "Charla sobre filosofía", *Servir al Pueblo*. Disponible en la web: <https://serviralpuebloperiodico.wordpress.com/2022/08/08/charla-sobre-filosofia-mao-tse-tung/>

20 N. Sanmugathasan. "Mao Tse-Tung's Contribution to Marxism-Leninism", *Liberation*. Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 5. Disponible en la web: <https://www.marxists.org/history/erol/sri-lanka/mao.pdf>

21 CCIMU. *Defensa del Maoísmo (I)*. Disponible en la web: <https://ci-ic.org/es/2022/07/23/defensa-del-maoismo-i/>

As can be seen, for the CCIMU "fundamental" is synonymous with "unique" and is different from the term "principal". This same idea is repeated again in the third part of *Defence of Maoism*:

«Chairman Mao, on the only fundamental law of dialectics, does not say main but only, that is to say that there are no others». ²²

And as is usual with the CCIMU comrades, they end up contradicting themselves, since, in that same third part of *Defence of Maoism*, they affirm that Engels: "He made it clear that the principal of the three was the second, i.e. the law of contradiction". They themselves cannot agree whether the law of contradiction is "principal" or "fundamental". Fundamental is not synonymous with "unicity" as the CCIMU comrades believe.

But the "mainly Maoists" go further, they not only try to confuse by this gibberish around the word "fundamental", they even believe that because Mao recommended paying attention to contradiction, he was calling for the study of the law of contradiction only and that it was therefore a sign that there is only one law of dialectics: "[...] dialectics is the study of contradiction, of the law of contradiction and not of any other law of dialectics». ²³

As mentioned above, the rejection of the law of the negation of the negation is of old origing, and also manifested itself within the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM), where its main promoters were the chiefs of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA, headed by Bob Avakian. It is not a brand new idea of the comrades of the CCIMU, it is the same old metaphysical wine now presented in new packaging and called "mainly Maoism". However, the comrades of the CCIMU, out of ignorance or malicious intent, try to pass off our position in philosophy as the same as that of the revisionist Avakian:

«The revisionist Avakian, the revisionist leader of the RCP (USA), who is opposed to the definition of Maoism, questioned on which page Chairman Mao had written such and such a thing, and was told that the problem was not one of reading but of understanding, of comprehending the whole of Chairman Mao's theoretical and practical work.

[...] The comrades of the UOC, like Avakian, pretend to be masters of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism in dialectics, after they changed the name of their theoretical journal "Contradiction" to "Negation of Negation", of course because they consider this a law of dialectics comparable to the law of contradiction, wanting to give lessons on the subject». ²⁴

Besides, they dare to lie about the history of the Communist Workers' Union (mlm), because the journal *Contradiction* was not a journal of the organisation as they claim, but a theoretical journal that preceded it. The CCIMU says that Avakian opposed the law of contradiction as the only law of dialectics and therefore defended the law of negation of

²² CCIMU. *Defensa del Maoísmo (III)*. Disponible en la web: <https://ci-ic.org/es/2022/09/13/defensa-del-maoismo-iii/>

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

negation, for that reason, Avakian "questioned himself by asking on which page Chairman Mao had written such and such a thing", What is true in the history of the International Communist Movement is that Avakian and the leaders of the RCP-USA rejected the law of the negation of negation (as does the CCIMU) and asserted that the law of contradiction was the only law of dialectics. Lenny Wolff, one of the leaders of the RCP (USA), in the book he wrote in the early 1980s to train the new militancy in the basic concepts of "communism", goes against the third law of dialectics: «[...] the "negation of negation" - to put it frankly - does not exist. There are so many phenomena which in no way correspond to the "negation of the negation" that it can in no case be rightly called a general law». ²⁵ Next, Wolff quotes an article by Avakian, in which the "chairman" of the RCP(USA) chastises Engels (and incidentally Marx) for having fallen into this Hegelian "determinism":

«This, to me, is a smell of predetermination and the notion of the immutable essence of things. Mao opposed this kind of thinking when he pointed out that heredity and mutation are a unity of opposites. Engels himself says several sentences later that it is not possible to "grow good barley" without knowing how to do it - which is true, but who says that growing barley is the "characteristic" of barley and the proper way of negating it, and that grinding it is not? (Apparently) man and nature have hitherto done more of the former than the latter with the barley grain, but is this something that cannot be changed? Or could the barley grain not be changed in another way? Finally, when Engels insists: "The first negation must therefore be of such a nature as to make the second possible... This will depend on the special character of each concrete case", he includes a metaphysical element in his explanation of the dialectic. He adds "in grinding a grain of barley, in crushing an insect, I undoubtedly perform the first act, but I make the second impossible". The second, as if there were an obligatory, necessary, "characteristic", predetermined "second act". Here we see how the concept of the "negation of the negation" enters into antagonism with the true fundamental law of dialectical materialism, the unity of opposites (contradiction)». ²⁶

Where else will we read other such objections against the negation of the negation? Ah, yes, these are the same objections of the CCIMU, who, after accusing us of being "metaphysical" and "lacking in understanding", say that in defending the negation of negation we are introducing "the need for a superior external force to guide the course of processes" ("notion of the immutable essence of things", Avakian would say):

«[...] the comrades of the UOC show their total lack of understanding of what they read, like the metaphysicians they are, they mix up the concepts in order to muddle the discussion and the clarification of the problem. They oppose their law of the "negation of the negation" to the only fundamental law of dialectics,

²⁵ Lenny Wolff. *La Ciencia de la Revolución: una introducción*. Colombia: Ediciones Cuadernos Rojos, 2011, p. 62.

²⁶ Bob Avakian. "Más sobre la cuestión de la dialéctica", *Obrero Revolucionario*, No. 95, 6 de marzo de 1981. Citado por Lenny Wolff en: *La Ciencia de la Revolución: una introducción*. Colombia: Ediciones Cuadernos Rojos, 2011, p. 62.

saying that this supposed law indicates the direction or "indicates the direction of the movement", this is apriorism [...] and introduce the necessity of a superior external force that orients the direction of the processes; this is teleologism or finalism, the same that leads to or hides fideism in philosophy».²⁷

Who, then, are those who shake hands with "the revisionist capitoste of the RCP(USA)"? We insist, the rejection of the negation of the negation is not a new phenomenon, before the "mainly Maoists", before Avakian, Eugene Dühring had spoken out furiously against this Hegelian "gibberish", accusing Marx and Engels of thinking that this law of dialectics acted as a "midwife of history" ("*a superior external force*" says the CCIMU), to which Engels answered him:

«[...] In characterising the process as the negation of the negation, Marx does not at all think that this proves that the process is historically necessary. On the contrary: after having proved historically that the process has indeed been realised in part and that it must be realised in part, he characterises it in addition as a process which is realised according to a certain dialectical law. That is all. And so Herr Dühring again commits a falsity of attribution when he asserts that the negation of negation must here serve as a midwife by which the future emerges from the womb of the past».²⁸

Engels' *Anti-Dühring* is a recognised work in the workers' movement and worthy of study for every revolutionary, and in this polemic the comrades of the CCIMU have referred to it, but it is clear from their positions that they have omitted much of what is set out there, especially in Engels' fierce defence of the negation of negation in the face of Dühring's accusations that hearing the word "negation of negation" produced «internal convulsions in him»:

«To try to prove something to a crass metaphysician like Herr Dühring by means of mere dialectics would be as much wasted labour as Leibniz and his disciples had in proving to the mathematicians of the time the propositions of the infinitesimal calculus. The differential produced in them the same inner convulsions as the negation of the negation produces in Mr. Dühring, in which, as we shall see, he plays a certain role».²⁹

What is this "role" played by the "negation of the negation"? Well, it is the general law which indicates the direction of movement and which manifests itself in various spheres of social and natural life. Engels stressed the importance of this law of dialectics in the following way:

«It is a very general law, and therefore of very wide and important effect, of the development of nature, history and thought; a law which, as we have seen,

27 CCIMU. *Defensa del Maoísmo (II)*. Disponible en la web: <https://ci-ic.org/es/2022/07/24/defensa-del-maoismo-ii/>

28 Federico Engels. *Anti-Dühring. La subversión de la ciencia por el señor Eugen Dühring*. México: Editorial Grijalbo, 1968, p. 124.

29 *Ibíd.*, p. 125.

manifests itself in the animal and vegetable world, in geology, in mathematics, in history, in philosophy, and to which Herr Dühring himself has to submit without knowing it in spite of all his pulls and resistance».³⁰

And not only Dühring, but also the CCIMU, who, even if they reject the "negation of negation" have "*to submit without knowing it despite all its pulls and resistances*". Now then, what is the reason for this rejection by some communists of the law of the negation of negation? We do not think it is because they uncritically take on board what they read in the so-called philosophy lecture; there must be a deeper explanation for this abandonment of revolutionary positions on philosophical ground. In the 1990s, comrade Aureliano gave some objective reasons why this shift in relation to dialectics occurred:

«[...] the defeat of the proletariat in Russia was presented as an unforeseen event. Much more so the defeat of communism in China has led to the conviction that these were unforeseeable events and turns, that the social movement has no direction, no tendencies of development and that therefore a part of the dialectical conception of Marxism, precisely the one which most explains the direction of the movement, is no longer valid, that this general law had to be "taken" out of the general arsenal of dialectics and brought into line with the official positivist science which imperialism has locked up in the universities».³¹

And it is no wonder that at the present time, when the International Communist Movement is in a stage of organisational dispersion, theoretical confusion and political impotence, these ideas persist that matter and society have no direction, no tendencies, that they are going nowhere. But this is not so, matter possesses movement. "*Fall on your backs, if you didn't know that!*" says the CCIMU recognising the movement of matter, and they add that the process of development "*is spiral*", and we agree, but they forget to add that the spiral development is an expression of the law of negation of negation as Lenin said:

«[...] This idea, as formulated by Marx and Engels on the basis of Hegel, is much more complete, much richer in content than the usual theory of evolution. It is a development which, it seems, repeats stages already travelled, but in another way, on a higher basis («negation of the negation»), a development, so to speak, in a spiral and not in a straight line.»³²

Moreover, to recognise the three laws of dialectics and not just one does not imply that the law of contradiction is the fundamental one, nor does it imply falling into "triplism" as opposed to philosophical "monism" as the CCIMU claims. The dialectical laws do not run separately, to think in that way is to fall into "triplism", since dialectics is not conceived as a unity with its laws and its multiple elements (16 Lenin pointed out). Comrade Aureliano explained at the time to the leaders of the RCP(USA) how the three laws of dialectics are manifested in the movement of matter, an explanation that is useful in these times when the

³⁰ *Ibíd.*, p. 131.

³¹ Aureliano S. *La negación de la negación*. Colombia: Ediciones Ave Fénix, 2012. p. 12.

³² V. I. Lenin. *Carlos Marx (Breve esbozo biográfico, con una exposición del marxismo)*. Disponible en la web: https://www.marxists.org/espanol/lenin/obras/1910s/carlos_marx/carlosmarx.htm

"mainly Maoists" come to promote the same anti-Marxist ideas that the Dühring, the Mikhailovskis, the Avakians have propagated against dialectics, and specifically, against the "negation of negation", and in particular, against the "negation of negation":

«When dialectical materialism says movement, it means, fundamentally, matter that moves for a determined cause (self-movement originated by the unity and struggle of its contradictory aspects, forces, tendencies), in a determined way (leaps in its development that are the reciprocal exchange of quality and quantity) and in a determined direction, in space and in time (succession of negations, in which aspects of the negated are conserved and there is an apparent return to the old)». ³³

³³ *Op. cit.*, p. 32-33.

In Defence of the MLM Theory of Imperialism

In the [Statement of the Communist Workers' Union \(mlm\) in January 2022](#)¹ the main errors in the proposal put forward by the comrades of the *Coordinating Committee for the Unified Maoist International Conference (CCIMU)* were frankly pointed out, showing that they did not correspond to the existing basis of unity for a real Unified International MLM Conference.

Since 2009 *the Communist Workers' Union (mlm)* has insisted on the necessity and the possibility of marching to a new *International Conference of Marxist-Leninist-Maoists*, not because of the twisted interpretation made by the comrades of *Poder Proletario Organización Partidaria MLM de Colombia*, of wanting to put two into one, but because there is an objective basis for unity, not only published explicitly by the Communist Workers' Union (mlm) in the [Propuesta de Plataforma de Unidad](#)² in May 2022, but also manifests itself in the proposal presented by the comrades of the *CCIMU* where it is clearly expressed in the following terms:

«The line of demarcation between Marxism and present-day revisionism consists of: 1) whether or not to recognise Maoism as the third, new and higher stage of Marxism and the need to fight revisionism and all opportunism; 2) whether or not to recognise the need for revolutionary violence, as people's war, to make revolution in one's own country; 3) whether or not to recognise the need to demolish the old state apparatus and replace the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie with the dictatorship of the proletariat; 4) whether or not to recognise the need for the revolutionary party of the proletariat; 5) whether or not to recognise the need for the revolutionary party of the proletariat; and 6) whether or not to recognise the need for the revolutionary party of the proletariat».³

A correct general formulation which demarcates with all forms of opportunism, to which we would only have to add: to recognise or not to recognise that we live in the epoch of imperialism and world proletarian revolution and to recognise or not to recognise the necessity to continue the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is the existing common general basis, arising from the struggle against the revisionism of the "Prachanda road" and the "new Avakian synthesis". A general basis of unity on which it is possible to continue the two-line struggle around the divergences in order to reach a higher

1 *Sobre la Propuesta acerca del balance del Movimiento Comunista Internacional y de su actual Línea Política General ¡Por una Conferencia Internacional Maoísta Unificada!* <https://www.revolucionobrero.com/internacional/mci/pronunciamiento/>

2 *Propuesta de plataforma de unidad* <https://www.revolucionobrero.com/internacional/mci/unidad-3/>

3 *CCIMU, ¡Por una Conferencia Internacional Maoísta Unificada! – Propuesta acerca del balance del Movimiento Comunista Internacional y de su actual Línea Política General*, <https://ci-ic.org/es/2022/01/04/por-una-conferencia-internacional-maoista-unificada-propuesta-acerca-del-balance-del-movimiento-comunista-internacional-y-de-su-actual-linea-politica-general/>

level of unity and to advance to the demarcation along the whole general line. Fighting for unity, or splitting in order to unite, has been a banner raised high for more than two decades by the *Communist Workers' Union (mlm)* as demonstrated by its work in the journal *Negation of Negation*, especially its issues 3 and 4 against revisionism and centrism and its issue 5.: [*Propuesta de Formulación de la Línea General para la Unidad del Movimiento Comunista Internacional*](#)⁴ presented for the consideration of Marxist-Leninist-Maoists in 2016.

Unfortunately, the pretension of the comrades who share the particular postulates expressed in the *CCIMU* proposal, to impose them at this time as the basis of unity of a *Unified International Conference*, becomes an obstacle to unity and the arguments expressed in their various documents make it necessary to speak out.

In this section, we will refer to the errors noted concerning the fundamental contradiction of imperialist capitalism and its most important contradictions, the "fusion" of the class struggle in the national struggle, the so-called "single hegemonic superpower" and the theory of the "three worlds", because in them a position is expressed which does not correspond to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, the class science and practice of the proletariat, but which corresponds to the petty bourgeoisie, as was expressed in the January Pronouncement.

1. On the fundamental contradiction of imperialist capitalism

Undoubtedly, we Marxist-Leninist-Maoists share Lenin's premise that:

«Imperialism is a special historical phase of capitalism. Its specific character has three peculiarities: imperialism is 1) monopoly capitalism; 2) parasitic or decomposing capitalism; 3) moribund capitalism ».⁵

Hence, imperialism has been correctly characterised as the antechamber of socialism, dying capitalism ready to be buried by the World Proletarian Revolution, this being the dividing line to differentiate between Marxism and revisionism on the question of imperialism.

However, when it comes to the deeper understanding of these definitions, we find different interpretations. That is why, faced with our defence that one and only one contradiction constitutes the fundamental contradiction of capitalism throughout its existence, between *the social character of production and the private character of appropriation*, the comrades defending the *CCIMU proposal* accept this precision of Marxism in words, but end up renouncing it and contradicting with their polemical interpretations, the extensive and profuse quotations they bring from the masters of the proletariat. In other words, the comrades accept the letter of Marxism but discard the method of Marxism.

To recite the masters acknowledging such a contradiction but then to bring in quotations from the masters and from documents of the *International Communist Movement*

4 *Propuesta de Formulación de la Línea General para la Unidad del Movimiento Comunista Internacional* <https://revolucion obrera.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/nn5-esp.pdf>

5 *Lenin, El imperialismo fase superior del capitalismo, 1916.*

- ICM to say that "there are four fundamental contradictions of imperialist capitalism" is to hide behind the two-line struggle to justify the abandonment of Marxism.

We are going to focus on the arguments of the comrades of the *Communist Party of Colombia (Red Fraction) -PCC (FR)* from now on- because they have made an effort to try to defend them and we will only make a few references to the arguments of other comrades. The comrades say correctly quoting Mao, in *On Contradiction*:

«In applying this law [the law of contradiction. N.E.] to the study of the economic structure of capitalist society, Marx discovered that the fundamental contradiction of this society is the contradiction between the social character of production and the private character of property. This contradiction manifests itself in the contradiction between the organised character of production in individual enterprises and the anarchic character of production in society as a whole. In terms of class relations, it manifests itself in the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat».⁶

They then correctly refer to Lenin's statement that capitalism had reached its imperialist phase "*which he characterised as monopolistic, parasitic and dying, the last phase of imperialism and the prelude to socialism*".

They go on to quote Stalin's statement in *Foundations of Leninism* on the most important contradictions of imperialism, complementing his argument with the *Proposition on the General Line of the International Communist Movement*, in which the idea of the most important contradictions is abandoned in favour of the idea of fundamental contradictions:

«The CCP, under Chairman Mao's leadership, exposed the fundamental contradictions of the contemporary world in the famous Chinese Charter (1963), which was precisely part of the "Polemic on the General Line of the International Communist Movement"».⁷

In order to come to the following conclusion:

«As we saw, Chairman Mao and the CCP spoke of the fundamental contradictions of the contemporary world. Moreover, we understand that both Lenin's and Stalin's reference to the contradictions of imperialism as the "deepest", "profound", "principal" contradictions can be understood as "fundamental"».⁸

Later, they express their understanding of the phenomenon:

«On the basis of Chairman Mao's statement, our Party understands that the fundamental contradiction of capitalism - between the bourgeoisie and the

6 *Partido Comunista de Colombia (Fracción Roja) – Respuesta al Pronunciamiento de la Unión Obrera Comunista (UOC) sobre la Propuesta del Comité Coordinador para la Conferencia Internacional Maoísta Unificada (CIMU)*
<https://ci-ic.org/es/2022/07/12/partido-comunista-de-colombia-fraccion-roja-respuesta-al-pronunciamiento-de-la-union-obrera-comunista-uoc-sobre-la-propuesta-del-comite-coordinador-para-la-conferencia-internacional-maoista-unif/>

7 *Ibíd.*

8 *Ibíd.*

proletariat - "*and the essence of capitalism, determined by this contradiction, will not disappear until the process is completed*", that is, until private property, the state and social classes are abolished, in other words, only with the establishment of communism on the face of the earth will this contradiction cease to exist.»⁹

Here the comrades make a somersault and jump from the fundamental contradiction of the capitalist system between *the social character of production and the private character of appropriation* (i.e., the contradiction of the economic basis characteristic of that mode of production, between the productive forces and the social relations of production) to its manifestation on the social terrain as the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

This is no small matter, for when one abandons the dialectical materialist method, one ends up not knowing what one is doing or what the results of one's action will be. It is true that the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, like all other contradictions arising from class differences inherited from the past, will be definitively resolved in communism with the abolition of private property and classes. But the fundamental contradiction of capitalism between the social character of production and the private character of appropriation will be resolved in socialism, the first stage of communism, where the social character of production is brought into accord with the social character of property, and it is this new quality which makes it radically different from capitalism. It is on this basis that the economy can be planned and thus the anarchy of production and other consequences of capitalism, especially the crises of overproduction, disappear, as the historical experience of the construction of socialism shows. Obviously, as historical experience also shows, it is necessary and a priority to continue the revolution in socialism in order to prevent the social surplus from being appropriated again by an exploiting class and capitalism from being restored.

Returning to the problem of the fundamental contradiction, there is no doubt that the "25-point charter" or "*Chinese Charter*" of 1963 is inaccurate in posing four fundamental contradictions. But to realise an error and not correct it is liberalism, and to persist in it leads to abandoning the field of Marxism, which is where the comrades of the *CCIMU* and the defenders of their proposal are sliding into.

The fact is that in the case of the comrades, once the differences between one contradiction and another have been "erased", or the fundamental contradiction of imperialist capitalism has been made to "disappeared", the way is clear for speculation and nonsense. The comrades of *PCC (FR)*:

«However, we understand that in the New Era of the World Proletarian Revolution (WPR), all the contradictions of capitalism are sharpened and others emerge, thus configuring 4 fundamental contradictions as explained in the Proposal of the Coordinating Committee: capitalism-socialism, bourgeoisie-proletariat, inter-imperialist and oppressed nations-imperialism, the latter being the main one. These contradictions do not deny or contradict the fundamental contradiction of capitalism established by Marx, but are an expression of the

⁹ *Ibid.*

deepening of this and the other contradictions of capitalism as it passes into its imperialist phase and as the history of society enters a New Era, the era of the World Proletarian Revolution».¹⁰

It is true that in the era of imperialism and world proletarian revolution all the contradictions of capitalism are sharpened, and it could not be otherwise since imperialism is dying capitalism. However, they confuse the analysis with the "4 fundamental contradictions" which "neither deny nor contradict the fundamental contradiction". In the end, the comrades trying to rely on Marx end up renouncing Marxism. Once the comrades have "solved" the problem of the fundamental contradiction, they recite the letter of Marxism according to which, in every process there is always, in addition, a principal contradiction and do not hesitate to assert that during the whole epoch of imperialism this contradiction is between the oppressed nations and imperialism:

«And among these four contradictions, why is the main one that opposes the oppressed nations to imperialism? Because, as Lenin said, the characteristic feature, the essence of imperialism, is the division of the world into oppressor nations and oppressed nations, because the historical facts in the epoch of imperialism show that it is the sharpest contradiction on the world level, because there a handful of imperialist big bourgeoisie and their reactionary lackeys are opposed to the vast majority and the poorest of the popular masses - the makers of history - living in the Third World».¹¹

In the end the comrades really believe that the real fundamental contradiction is that between "oppressor nations and oppressed nations"; adding to the already confused idea of "the 4 fundamental contradictions which do not contradict the fundamental contradiction" another confusion to confuse the problem even more, because in regard to the characteristic feature and essence of imperialism, Lenin describes five as the characteristic features:

«1) the concentration of production and capital to such a high degree of development that it has created monopolies, which play a decisive role in economic life; 2) the merger of banking capital with industrial capital and the creation, on the basis of this "financial capital", of the financial oligarchy; 3) the export of capital, in contrast to the export of commodities, acquires a particularly great importance; 4) the formation of international monopoly associations of capitalists, which divide up the world; and 5) the completion of the territorial division of the world among the most important capitalist powers».

«... What is economically fundamental in this process is the replacement of free capitalist competition by capitalist monopolies. ».

«... The fundamental peculiarity of modern capitalism consists in the domination of the monopolistic associations of big business. ». (Our underlined)¹²

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Lenin, El imperialismo fase superior del capitalismo, 1916.*

The consequences of the rise of capitalist monopolies and the export of monopoly finance capital - the economic basis of the colonial and semi-colonial policy of imperialism - is the struggle for the division of the world and its division between imperialist countries and oppressed countries and nations. That this is the essential distinction in the relationship between countries in the phase of imperialism is not the same as saying that this is the fundamental characteristic of imperialism. Incidentally, and we shall return to this later, this *essential distinction* between imperialist countries and oppressed countries contradicts from the point of view of Marxism the reactionary "three worlds" theory which they claim to attribute to Mao Tse-tung.

To abandon the method of apprehending the fundamental contradiction which determines the character of the phenomenon or process can only lead to the abandonment of Marxism; it is metaphysics which leads to the arbitrary and one-sided highlighting of any of the accompanying contradictions and, above all, in the case of imperialism, to the failure to understand the causes and stages which have brought it to its present state of advanced agony.

In conclusion, our criticism of the proposal of the CCIMU comrades and their supporters remains correct:

«...the fundamental contradiction of the capitalist system between ever *more social production and ever more private appropriation* has marked its entire existence, is the deepest cause of its inevitable demise and can only be resolved by socialising the ownership of the means of production in socialism. Consequently there are not several fundamental contradictions as the comrades of the Committee assert in the proposal ».¹³

2. The most important contradictions of imperialism and the principal contradiction

Having clarified the problem of the fundamental contradiction of imperialist capitalism from the point of view of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, it is pertinent to focus on its most important contradictions and to specify the problem of the main contradiction

These most important contradictions, not the only ones, are the ones that have been highlighted since Lenin elaborated the theory of imperialism, and which the comrades of the PCC (FR) bring up by quoting Mao Tse-tung in *On Contradiction*:

«For example, when the capitalism of the epoch of free competition developed into imperialism, neither the nature of the two radically contradictory classes, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, nor the capitalist essence of society changed; But the contradiction between these two classes was sharpened, the contradiction between monopoly and non-monopoly capital arose, the contradiction between the metropolises and the colonies was sharpened, and the

¹³ *Sobre la Propuesta acerca del balance del Movimiento Comunista Internacional y de su actual Línea Política General* ;Por una Conferencia Internacional Maoísta Unificada!
<https://www.revolucionobrera.com/internacional/mci/pronunciamiento/>

contradictions between the various capitalist countries, originating in the inequality of their development, manifested themselves with special intensity; thus a special phase of capitalism arose: imperialism. Leninism is the Marxism of the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution precisely because Lenin and Stalin have correctly explained these contradictions and formulated the correct theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution to resolve them».¹⁴

Taking into account this legacy, together with the experiences of the triumph of the proletarian revolution in various countries, the temporary existence of the socialist camp and its subsequent disappearance, as well as the current situation of imperialist capitalism, it is precisely stated in the *Proposal for the Formulation of a Line for the Unity of the International Communist Movement* presented by the UOC (mlm) in 2016 for the consideration of Marxist-Leninist-Maoists, a text on which we will rely in full below and will not quote in order not to fatigue the reader:

«In the history of the International Communist Movement four contradictions are recognised as the most important - not the only ones - of imperialism, which inevitably determine the death of the capitalist system: the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, the contradiction between imperialist countries and oppressed countries, the inter-imperialist contradiction - of the imperialist countries among themselves - and inter-monopoly - of the monopolies among themselves - and the contradiction between the two systems, socialist and imperialist, latent after the dissolution of the former socialist camp. Since capitalism survives on the basis of the depredation of the only two sources of wealth, *labour power and nature*, the contradiction between society and nature has been highlighted since the end of the 20th century as the fifth important global contradiction of imperialism. The imperialist depredation of nature has sharpened this contradiction by endangering the very existence of humanity, on account of the profit for the imperialist bourgeoisie. It is indispensable to put an end to the cause of the destruction of nature: imperialist capitalism ».¹⁵

Consistent historical materialism demands not only an understanding of the economic basis of society and the social relations necessary for it, but also of the ideological and political superstructure, i.e. the social forces involved and thus, in the epoch of imperialist capitalism, the social contradictions and class struggle involved in the process, from which communists derive strategy and tactics.

What is the method that makes it possible not to get lost in the tangle of contradictions created by imperialism? The method exposed by Mao Tse-tung in 1937:

14 *Partido Comunista de Colombia (Fracción Roja) – Respuesta al Pronunciamiento de la Unión Obrera Comunista (UOC) sobre la Propuesta del Comité Coordinador para la Conferencia Internacional Maoísta Unificada (CIMU)*
<https://ci-ic.org/es/2022/07/12/partido-comunista-de-colombia-fraccion-roja-respuesta-al-pronunciamiento-de-la-union-obrera-comunista-uoc-sobre-la-propuesta-del-comite-coordinador-para-la-conferencia-internacional-maoista-unif/>

15 *Propuesta de Formulación de la Línea General para la Unidad del Movimiento Comunista Internacional*
<https://revolucionobrero.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/nm5-esp.pdf>

«In the process of development of a complex thing there are many contradictions and, of these, one is necessarily the main one, the existence and development of which determines or influences the existence and development of the other contradictions».¹⁶

But it must also be borne in mind that the fundamental contradiction develops in stages, characterised by a principal contradiction, and that "*especially in the epoch of imperialism and the proletarian revolution, the mutual influence and interaction between the various countries in the political, economic and cultural fields is extremely great*" (*Ídem*).

Marx's brilliant foresight manifested in the letter to Engels [on October 8, 1858](#)¹⁷, according to which, "*The real mission of bourgeois society is to establish the world market, at least in outline, and production adequate to the world market*", was already a fact at the beginning of the last century with the rise of imperialism and which Lenin describes in his classic work on the subject.

Everything since that time has been the process of expansion and deepening of capitalist relations of production and trade, and consequently of exacerbation of all the most important contradictions of imperialism, as well as of great revolutions in the midst of the death throes of a parasitic, decomposing and moribund system.

A reality that reaffirms the truth that imperialism is dying capitalism, is the antechamber of socialism, and therefore, the October Revolution carried out in the highest and last phase of capitalism, inaugurated the Era of World Proletarian Revolution.

In the course of the last decades and in the wake of the changes that have occurred, each new agonising episode of imperialist capitalism, in the midst of wars for the domination of strategic zones, sources of raw materials, direct investments, loans, defeat of the proletariat in Russia and China, collapse of social-imperialism, transfer of a large part of the industries of the imperialist countries to the oppressed countries... "theories" and names have arisen that obscure or evade the essence of the phenomena: "late capitalism", "underdevelopment", the "three worlds", the "third world", the "cold war", the "centre and the periphery", "neo-liberalism", "globalisation", the "north-south confrontation", the "global south and the global north", the "empire"...

The absence of research and analysis of the evolution of imperialism by communists, the lack of a Marxist explanation of the changes in the world, even before the collapse of Soviet social-imperialism in the early 1990s, gave way to rote phrases and the use of categories and names designated by bourgeois and revisionist intellectuals to "explain" what has not been understood. And while this article does not pretend to resolve this debt of the ICM, it is necessary to at least make clear some of the key issues to understand the current situation.

It can be argued that world production is integrated into a world economy as a result of the expansion and deepening of capitalist relations. This has been the requirement of

¹⁶ Mao Tse-tung *Sobre la Contradicción, Obras Escogidas, T. I. Ediciones en lenguas extranjeras Pekin, 1968.*

¹⁷ Carlos Marx-Federico Engels, *Correspondencia, Editorial Cartago.* <https://www.marxists.org/espanol/m-e/cartas/correspondencia-cartago.pdf>

monopoly capital in order to continue to generate profits. Large factories have moved from the imperialist countries to the oppressed countries where there is plenty of free labour power to be super-exploited, but this in turn leads to the need to adapt the world transport network and thus also to reorganise trade in order to reach the final consumer. This has been facilitated by the leaps in the application of science and technology, and the development of information technology, robotics and digitalisation.

Imperialist capitalism became an internationalised mode of production. If at the beginning of the last century the cartels divided and disputed above all the markets and adapted the production to the world market, today the monopolies not only divide and dispute the markets and adapt the production to the world market, but now the gigantic monopoly corporations divide and dispute the people themselves and adapt the markets to the world production, turning the imperialist capitalism into a world system that strengthens and expands the financial enslavement, oppression and colonialist plunder.

How has this process of expansion and deepening of imperialism been carried out?

One of the most powerful levers that has brought about the greatest changes has been the capitalists' need to counteract the decreasing trend of the rate of profit described in detail by Marx in *Das Kapital*, which explains how the incessant advance and development of the productive forces obliges the capitalists, in order to be able to compete and monopolise, to invest - constant capital - more and more exponentially in the modernisation of the means of production (be it technification, systematisation, robotics, artificial intelligence, etc.), to the detriment of investment in the purchase of labour power - variable capital - to the detriment of investment in the purchase of labour power (variable capital), to the detriment of investment in the purchase of labour power - variable capital.

It is necessary to take into account Marx's assessment that:

«The law of the progressive decrease of the rate of profit or of the relative decrease of appropriated surplus labour in comparison with the mass of materialised labour set in motion by living labour in no way excludes the possibility of an increase in the absolute mass of labour set in motion and exploited by the capital of society, and thus also of the absolute mass of surplus labour appropriated by it: nor that the capitals under the control of the individual capitalists have at their disposal an increasing mass of labour and, consequently, of surplus labour, even if the number of workers under their control does not increase».

(...)

"The very nature of the capitalist process of accumulation - which is but one aspect of the capitalist process of production - means, therefore, that the growing mass of the means of production destined to be converted into capital always has at its disposal a growing working population in the same proportion, surplus and capable of being exploited».¹⁸

18 Carlos Marx, *El Capital*, T. III, Sección tercera, *Ley de la tendencia a la baja de la cuota de ganancia*.

In other words, under capitalism, especially in its imperialist phase, technification displaces labour from being employed, passing directly into the ranks of the unemployed - the industrial reserve army - into "informal" work, an atrocious way of disguising unemployment, which is not a phenomenon exclusive to oppressed countries but to all countries.

In addition, and most importantly, according to Marx:

«This increase in the volume of value of constant capital - even if it only remotely expresses the increase which takes place in the real mass of the use-values which materially form this capital - is accompanied by the progressive cheapening of products. Each individual product in itself now contains a smaller sum of labour than in earlier stages of production, when the capital invested in labour represented an incomparably greater proportion of the capital invested in means of production».¹⁹

But likewise, the fall in the profit share does not go hand in hand with a fall or decrease in the mass of profits, on the contrary:

«The law according to which the fall in the rate of profit determined by the development of the productive force is accompanied by an increase in the mass of profit is also reflected in the fact that the fall in the price of the commodities produced by capital is accompanied by a relative increase in the masses of profit contained in them and realised through their sale».²⁰

This general law of capitalism indicates the incompatibility of social production with the private appropriation of what is produced, while the counter-tendencies that counteract it are the same ones that make it impose itself as a tendency. Counter-tendencies that have been zealously applied by the capitalists and more consciously by imperialist capital in the epoch of monopolies and the instruments and institutions that the imperialists attached to the UN or close to it have at their disposal: IMF, WB, WTO, OECD, ILO, etc.

Marx describes 6 counter-tendencies as follows: *1. increase in the degree of exploitation of labour; 2. reduction of wages below their value; 3. cheapening of the elements that make up constant capital; 4. Relative overpopulation; 5. Foreign trade; 6. Increase of capital-stock.*

The law of the falling tendency of the profit share and the application of the counter-tendencies described by Marx become more explosive, more predatory and more unbearable with the emergence of monopolies and the domination of parasitic finance capital in the phase of its decadence, decomposition and agony, no longer in the framework of one country but of the world.

With the chaining of all countries into the orbit of capital, regardless of the degree of development in each country, imperialism increased the *degree of exploitation of labour to an enormous degree by extending the working day and by intensifying labour itself.* A fact that is obvious in the oppressed countries, but can also be observed in the imperialist countries where the working hours of the migrants are longer than the formally established ones; it is

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

also masked in hourly work and recently in teleworking. As well as the intensity of labour itself in chain production and the increase in the pace of the belt, as in the rationalisation of processes and the improvement of the methods employed as in agriculture. The result is that the same or fewer workers produce more goods.

In this regard and the consequences for the working class, the example of Foxconn is demonstrative, where one can clearly see what Marx described in *Das Kapital* and explains one of the deepest causes of why China became an imperialist country:

It is no secret to anyone that Foxconn assembled the majority of iPhones and iPads for the US imperialist Apple and that other companies such as Sony, Microsoft, Nokia, HP, Dell and Amazon also outsourced their production to it. This symbol of Chinese prosperity employs around 800,000 workers in the world, around 400,000 of whom are concentrated in the Shenzhen production centre in Taiwan, where they are subjected to infernal working hours and rhythms, as well as fines and punishments for even talking, many of them living in buildings adjacent to the plants. The situation is such that between January and July 2010, 14 workers committed suicide by throwing themselves from the upper floors of the company. For their part, the capitalists, "alarmed" by the wave of suicides and the demands of the official unions linked to the pro-imperialist ILO, proceeded to barricade the empty spaces to prevent suicides, which did not prevent 4 new cases from occurring in 2011. The persistent strikes and demands of the workers and the threat of a collective suicide of 300 workers in 2012 forced to raise wages, reduce working hours, reduce the use of child labour, take care of the mental health of the workers and ironically, to include in the employment contract the clause of "prohibition of suicide".

The reduction of wages below their value, i.e. below the value of labour power, has its own name in the oppressed countries: super-exploitation. The chaining of all countries to world production has created the world army of proletarians free of ties; free to offer cheap and abundant labour for world capital in the subjugated countries and in the imperialist countries themselves, where part of this army of migrants is displaced and absorbed in the production of commodities and the reproduction of labour power. Without the organisation to limit competition, the workers are forced to submit to the infernal rhythm imposed by the capitalists and to sell their labour power below the conditions required to sustain themselves and the reproduction of the working class itself. In the imperialist countries, migrants in general are treated as second-rate workers with lower wages, but the squeeze on labour power becomes even more brutal with the so-called illegals, who constitute in some countries like the US 1 in 4, with even lower wages and without any possibility of improving their conditions under the latent threat of deportation.

The collapse of the Rana Savar Plaza building on 23 March 2013 made world news, not only because of the 1,130 workers killed, but because it once again exposed the appalling conditions of the mostly female workers in Bangladesh's garment industry. It was not the first tragedy, nor the last: in November 2012, 112 workers were burned to death at Tazreen Fashions, most of them women as well; a scene that was repeated in 2014 when in January a new fire caused eight deaths (two of them minors) in one of the supply factories of the Spanish company Inditex, world leader in the textile industry and owner of the Zara brand.

Factories hell and death traps, workers trapped behind barred windows and locked doors while working late into the night; violent suppression of trade union rights (trade union activists are blacklisted, beaten, subjected to arbitrary arrests and sometimes killed); sexual harassment and rape; compromises and deals between employers, political bosses and police... are complementary to the miserable wages where workers received wages of 28 euros per month, close to what a worker in Europe earns in one hour of work. And behind this horrendous situation are the imperialist companies: one of the thousands of T-shirts made in Bangladesh in one day is sold in Germany for 4.95 euros, of which the retailer pays the subcontract manufacturer in Bangladesh 1.35 euros.

But it is not only the workers in the Bangladesh garment industry who are the victims of the super-exploitation that causes fatal accidents to satisfy the voracity of the local capitalist subcontractors of the big clothing brands in Europe and the USA. On July 8, 2021, a fire broke out in a seven-storey building where fruit drinks, packaging material and plastic containers are manufactured. News reports said that of the 200 workers in the building at least 49 were burned to death and 3 more died when they jumped from the building, others were rescued from both the roof and the lower floors after doors were broken down by rescue workers. At least 16 children were reported missing. There were allegations that children as young as 11 were working in the factory.

There is also a direct link between the conditions of super-exploitation in the oppressed countries and the remittances of the proletarians in the imperialist countries, if one takes into account that the social relationship between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat is now not a purely national but a global problem.

According to the International Organisation for Migration IOM: 281 million migrants were counted in the world in 2020, equivalent to 3.6% of the world population (the ILO says that they constitute 4.4% of the world labour force). This means that remittances to their families are worth 702 billion dollars (more than 8 times the budget of Colombia). India, China, Mexico, the Philippines and Egypt were the top five remittance-receiving countries, although India and China were far ahead of the rest, with total inward remittances exceeding US\$83 billion and US\$59 billion respectively. The facts indicate that remittances contribute to sustaining the super-exploited proletarian families in the oppressed countries, but the conditions of most migrants are not much different and in some cases are worse than those of the proletariat in the oppressed countries, as the ILO hypocritically warns about forced labour in the 2017 International Labour Conference report:

« Although migrant workers represent only 4.4 per cent of the global workforce, they are at much greater risk of being victims of forced labour than other workers. According to the ILO's 2012 global estimate, 44 per cent of all victims of forced labour (9.1 million out of 20.9 million) had moved either within the country or to other countries. Forced labour may be more widespread in certain sectors, such as agriculture, domestic work, fishing and the electronics industry. The conditions under which children from developing countries migrate make them particularly vulnerable to child labour. In addition, under-age migrant workers are generally worse off than local under-age workers in terms of working conditions and access to education and health care. Many underage migrants also end up working in the agricultural or service sectors, such as domestic work, and

some are trafficked and forced into forced labour, which are among the worst forms of child labour». ²¹

The cheapening of the elements that make up constant capital, i.e. the depreciation of existing capital or the sustaining of production without the renewal of machinery and plant, manifested itself especially in the "import substitution", directed by the imperialists at the oppressed countries until the 1970s in the transfer of "obsolete" machines in the imperialist countries to the oppressed countries, where super-exploitation compensated for the average profit share of capital for the local bourgeoisie. This is still the case, even if the direct investments of foreign capital in the last decades overshadow the phenomenon. But even if this is not the case, the higher productivity of labour also occurs in the production of means of production, making the elements that make up constant capital (machines, tools and plant) cheaper, which is why in some concrete cases, even if the mass of elements of constant capital increases, their value remains unchanged or even decreases.

One of the reasons for the stagnation of industry in social-imperialist Russia, for its crisis and collapse, has to do precisely with the incessant transfer of capital to the development of the arms industry, while other branches of production remained stagnant while producing a high share of profit. State capitalism was able to plan production and channel research and investment into certain branches, because it could limit competition for a long time, something impossible in other countries, where competition from monopolies forces the development of productive forces.

Relative overpopulation, the reserve army, is inseparable from the development of the productive capacity of labour. It is not a phenomenon of the oppressed countries due to lack of capitalism as alleged by reformists and some communists, but the contrary. Marx says that:

«The more the capitalist system of production develops in a country, the more pronounced becomes the phenomenon of relative overpopulation. And this, in turn, is the reason why, on the one hand, the more or less incomplete subordination of labour to capital persists in many branches of production, and is maintained for a longer period than at first sight corresponds to the general state of development; this is a consequence of the cheapness and abundance of available or vacant wage-labourers, and of the greater resistance which some branches of production, by their nature, oppose to the transformation of manual labour into mechanised labour. On the other hand, new branches of production are opening up, especially in the field of luxury consumption, which are based precisely on that relative overpopulation which is often left vacant by the predominance of constant capital in other branches of production, and which, in their turn, are based on the predominance of the element of living labour, and

21 [OIT, Informe IV – Migración laboral: nuevo contexto y desafíos de gobernanza, 2017](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_550278.pdf)
https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_550278.pdf

which will gradually follow the same path as the other branches of production».²²

The considerable disproportion of variable capital to total capital causes the wage to fall below the average level and thus increases both the mass of surplus value and the rate of profit. Imperialism has made the growth of the reserve army even more drastic and has taken advantage of the "*cheapness and abundance of available or vacant wage-workers*" as well as of the relative backwardness of the other productive forces in the oppressed countries, cheapness which, as we have already said, means super-exploitation of the proletariat in the oppressed countries, and relative backwardness which in turn is reproduced in that it is compensated in super-profits for the imperialists and the native ruling classes.

The latest ILO report, dated July 2022, which takes the pandemic as a reference, shows the significance of relative overpopulation:

«Global unemployment is projected to stand at 207 million in 2022, exceeding its 2019 level by about 21 million. (...) Overall, key labour market indicators have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels in any of the regions: Africa, the Americas, the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, and Europe and Central Asia. For all regions, projections to 2023 suggest that full recovery will remain elusive. Europe and the Pacific regions are projected to come closest to that goal, while the outlook is more negative for Latin America and the Caribbean and South-East Asia. All regions face serious downside risks to their labour market recovery, stemming from the impact of the pandemic. Moreover, this situation is altering the structure of labour markets in such a way that a return to pre-crisis baseline levels may be insufficient to compensate for the damage caused by the pandemic».

«Job losses and falling labour income marked 2021, as in the previous year. Low and lower middle income countries have fared the worst. Moreover, people who already faced a disadvantage in the labour market - such as women, youth, older people and migrant workers - have experienced greater job losses than other groups».²³

The ILO's self-interested analysis hides the fact that the massive layoffs and the growth of unemployment in the world has been going on since 2008 despite the slight recoveries, although it was aggravated by the pandemic; furthermore, their figures hide the fact that in the official data of all the countries, the bourgeoisie does not count as unemployed the segment that gave up looking for work, and they make the underemployed and "informal" workers appear as part of the employed when in truth they are part of the relative overpopulation or reserve army. However, faced with the evidence of the facts they have to admit, as they do in *Panorama Laboral 2018, Latin America and the Caribbean* that labour informality is something structural in the countries of the area: they are 53.1% of the workers

22 Carlos Marx, *El Capital*, T. III, Sección tercera.

23 OIT, *Perspectivas Sociales y del Empleo en el Mundo*, 2022. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_848464.pdf

in the region, equivalent to 130 million people in 2016, a situation that worsened with the pandemic and according to some analysts now reaches 60%.

The consequences of permanent overpopulation is a constant downward pressure on wages and the generalisation of misery, because, ultimately, the army of unemployed in the oppressed countries, where there is no unemployment benefit, is supported by the active working class. A situation that is even more dramatic among women and youth. According to the aforementioned 2018 report: the rate of informal employment is higher among women (54.3%), among the young population (62.4%) and among the older population (78%), and is mostly concentrated in rural areas (68.5%).

In addition, it is necessary to examine the relative overpopulation and the development of capitalism in the countryside. Marx and Engels paid attention to differentiating the overpopulation corresponding to the proletarians who are discarded by capital because of age or occupational injuries and diseases, from the labour force which is drawn into or dismissed from production according to the ups and downs of capital investment, and the overpopulation which they called latent and which is constituted by the proletarian youth, and which arises permanently, both from the bankruptcy of the now so-called "enterprises", from home labour and from the capitalist development of agriculture.

Marx made it clear that every advance of capitalist production in the countryside leads to its depopulation; that is, the population decreases in absolute numbers as capital investment there increases. But capitalist production in agriculture also needs to guarantee surplus labour power (for temporary work such as at harvest time) and therefore keeps a part of the rural population "tied" to the land in smallholdings in the condition of semi-proletarians. For Marxism, therefore, the semi-proletarians of the countryside are considered part of the working class and constitute a part of the relative overpopulation.

This relative overpopulation is deceptive, even for some Marxist-Leninist-Maoist comrades who see only the appearance of the phenomenon and not the essence of it, for this working class population hides in the form of small landowners who are obliged to sell their labour power part or most of the year, and of tenant farmers with plots too small to be productive, who are forced to be hired as day labourers by the capitalists, at wages lower than those of permanent workers. The phenomenon is not exclusive to oppressed countries, nor can it be assimilated to semi-feudalism, as Marx demonstrates when he deals with the problem of land rent in *Das Kapital* and Lenin details in *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*. The depopulation of the countryside is indicative of the introduction of capitalist relations in the countryside and a permanent source of relative overpopulation which contributes both to the tendency to super-exploitation and to the fall in capital's share of profit.

On foreign trade, Marx says:

«When foreign trade makes the elements of constant capital or the basic necessities of life in which variable capital is invested cheaper, it helps to increase

the share of profit by raising the share of surplus value and reducing the value of constant capital». ²⁴

Marx does not focus on the repercussions of foreign trade, since it was, he says, "outside the scope of our investigation"; but he raises one of the most important problems of the imperialist phase of capitalism: *does the higher share of profit earned by capital invested in foreign trade, and mainly in colonial trade, contribute to the raising of the general rate of profit?*

Of course it does, and all the more so when, on reaching the imperialist phase, all the countries were chained together into a single world economy, and when the export of commodities was relegated to the background in order to give more importance to the export of capital.

Marx warned that:

«Capital invested in foreign trade can yield a higher rate of profit, first of all because there is competition here with commodities which other countries produce less easily, and this enables the more advanced country to sell its commodities above their value, but cheaper than the competing countries. When the labour of the more advanced country is valued here as labour of a higher specific weight, the rate of profit rises, since labour not paid as qualitatively superior labour is sold as such.

On the other hand, capital invested in the colonies, etc., can yield higher rates of profit in relation to the generally low level of development of the rate of profit in the colonial countries, and also in relation to the degree of exploitation of labour obtained there through the use of slaves, coolies, etc..» ²⁵

And if such a phenomenon was already visible under free competition capitalism, monopoly capital and parasitic finance capital, by enslaving the oppressed countries and chaining all countries into a single system of exploitation and oppression, have only generalised it and taken it to the extreme: they divide up the world to export commodities, as well as export machinery and capital through direct investments and loans. Now the world market demands the fight to the death for the sources of materials and spheres of influence, like the war for the labour power of the oppressed countries.

The ILO's 2016 study on *The impact of recruitment practices in the electronics sector on labour rights and temporary and other employment* sheds light on what foreign trade means in this era. As in all agencies of imperialism, imperialist super-exploitation and parasitism are dressed up with euphemisms claiming "fair globalisation", "decent work", "good practices", etc. that hardly reflect aspects of the horrifying situation to which imperialism has brought the forces that sustain society with their labour.:

«At the end of 2015, the electronics industry established on Mexican territory counted more than 800 companies employing some 600,000 workers. Most of them are foreign companies: 80% of them are US-based companies, and more than 90% of all production is exported to the United States. It is estimated that

²⁴ Carlos Marx, *ElCapital*, T. III, Sección tercera.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

more than 200,000 are employed in the electronics industry in Ciudad Juárez, on the US border, and they are said to earn some of the lowest wages in Mexico. Compared to manufacturing wages in China, Mexico is now estimated to be 40 per cent cheaper. Fifty-eight per cent of workers surveyed, many of them internal migrants, reported earning 114 pesos (US\$6) a day, far short of the basic food basket and reflecting a nominal decline of 5 per cent, although already low. Low wages were found to force workers to supplement their income with overtime and additional outside work». ²⁶

Increase of share-capital: Marx says that the progress of capitalist production led to a part of capital being invested exclusively as capital of interest and that, although invested in large productive enterprises, they only yielded small dividends. Consequently they had no great effect in levelling out the general share of profit; but if they entered into this mechanism the average profit would fall much lower.

However, as industrial capital merged with bank capital, giving rise to finance capital in the phase of imperialism, it became the king of capital and thus accelerated the falling tendency tendency of the profit share, revealing imperialist parasitism.

And if Lenin warned of the role of parasitic finance capital and the financial oligarchy, a century later its consequences are devastating.

The bourgeois intellectuals now call "financialisation" the much greater importance and weight of the activity of parasitic finance capital, which manifests itself in investments in shares and in the management of financial funds. Financialisation" is a word that hides the rise of new types of increasingly speculative financial instruments and the absolute increase of the profits of the - in Lenin's words - financial oligarchy in the economy as a whole.

As was to be expected, with the increase in monopolisation, the dominance of finance capital is strengthened. In 1992 Aureliano S. said:

«It is no longer the case, as it was at the beginning of the century, that the monopolistic situation of a few rich countries had brought about an accumulation of capital in gigantic proportions, an enormous "excess capital" which made possible and obliged the export of capital "abroad", to the backward countries.

It is now the case that capital has reached all the countries of the earth and that the accumulated "excess capital" is no longer only "excessive" in relation to the rich countries, but also in relation to all the backward countries». ²⁷

The theorists of "globalisation" have found in the conjugation or intertwining of finance capital, monopolies and the relationship between these and the capitalists in the oppressed countries - who now outsource much of the production, warehousing and transport - the so-called "global value chains" (GVCs), "value-added chains", "global

26 OIT.

https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---sector/documents/publication/wcms_541524.pdf

27 Aureliano S. *Las contradicciones del imperialismo en su agonía*, Revista Contradicción No. 8, 1992.

commodity chains" or "global production networks" (GPCs) to describe the relationships established by parasitic finance capital in recent times and the enslavement of world society.

The super-exploitation of the working class in the oppressed countries has been the main counter-tendency to the falling tendency of the profit share, while allowing the bourgeoisie of the oppressed countries a great accumulation of capital by making it excessive there as well. Linked to the big imperialist companies, monopoly sectors of the bourgeoisie have emerged in the oppressed countries that it is no longer correct to call them buyers, as is the case in India with the Ambani, TATA, Birla, Mittal and Hinduja groups, whose tentacles extend to all branches and sectors of the economy and even form part of the world monopoly elite, one of the most prominent examples of which is the Mittal Group, the world's leading steel monopoly; The same is true of Brazil and South Africa, all of them today members of the BRICS club, allied in world business with the Russian and Chinese imperialist bourgeoisie.

Even in small countries like Colombia, sectors of the bourgeoisie and capitalist landowners are part of this world elite: Grupo Sarmiento Angulo, Grupo Empresarial Antioqueño - GEA, Grupo Santodomingo, Grupo Ardila Lulle, to mention the most outstanding, have investments in all sectors of the economy ranging from financial corporations, insurance companies and banks to the production of confectionery, whose tentacles extend beyond the country: they exploit labour power in other oppressed countries and even make incursions with their capital into imperialist countries. GEA's Grupo Nutresa, for example, has 29 plants in Colombia; 1 in Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Dominican Republic, Malaysia, Philippines and South Africa; 4 plants in Chile; 6 in Central America, and 2 in the United States. The same is true of Grupo Argos of the same monopoly group: it has a presence in 20 countries in the Americas, with businesses in construction materials, energy and concessions; its most relevant operations are the cement plants in the United States, which include four cement plants and 139 concrete plants (Argos is the main Colombian investor in that country), four solar energy farms and a wind farm in Costa Rica, as well as the Mariscal Sucre airport in Quito, Ecuador. Its revenues in the first half of 2022 were more than 10.5 billion pesos, 43% of which corresponds to its foreign operations.

To evade these facts of reality does not correspond to consistent dialectical materialism, to the Leninist theory of imperialism, and in politics, it leads to mistakenly thinking of a "national" bourgeoisie subject to the imperialists, or merely "rentier" or intermediary, and to evade its real monopoly character and imperialist aspirations. The law of uneven development in imperialism, the displacement of some monopolies by others and the emergence of new ones and the collapse of others, is not an empty phrase of Lenin.

And what about the "rentierism" which some comrades see as the exclusive quality of the bureaucratic comprador bourgeoisie and feudal landlords in the oppressed countries? The big financial monopolies have taken over the world's labour force, the former state enterprises turning essential services into lucrative private businesses and even extend their tentacles to take over the best land in the world. Much of the struggle of peasants, rural communities and indigenous peoples today is not against the feudal lords of the land, but against the big native capitalists (bourgeoisie and landowners) and imperialist monopolies that ravage territories, communities, peoples and cultures in their unbridled appetite for profit.

The business is so appetizing and juicy that it even attracts the surplus capital of institutions such as Harvard University, taking the place of large "latifundistas" in Latin America. In 2007, part of their capital was moved to buy land in Uruguay, Chile, Argentina and Brazil, among others. The most important aspect is that part of these lands were bought from dispossessors who violently displaced peasants. One of the most notorious cases was the purchase of a 140,000 hectare estate in the state of Bahia in Brazil, acquired through the "subsidiary" Caracol Agropecuaria; the land was actually state property but was used by the peasants who were forcibly removed by a group of Brazilian landowners, who overnight were given the title deeds to sell it to the symbol of the imperialist intellectual elite²⁸.

All capitalists, both in the era of free competition and in the era of imperialism, but more so now the monopolies, use the power of the state to prop up their business, with unfair competition, shady deals and corruption being the norm, as well as the existence of that parasitic elite that Lenin said more than a century ago "lives by clipping the coupon". Imperialism is parasitic capitalism and this particularity has been accentuated over time and has spread to all countries. The parasites of the imperialist countries are little different from the parasites of the oppressed countries:

«"Monopolies," says Lenin, "oligarchy, the tendency to domination instead of the tendency to freedom, the exploitation of an increasing number of small or weak nations by a handful of very rich or very strong nations: all this has given rise to the distinctive features of imperialism which compel us to describe it as parasitic capitalism or a state of decomposition. As one of the tendencies of imperialism, the formation of "rentier states", of usurious states, whose bourgeoisie lives more and more at the expense of the export of capital and of "coupon-cutting", is becoming more and more evident. It would be a mistake to believe that this tendency towards decomposition rules out the rapid growth of capitalism. No; certain branches of industry, certain sections of the bourgeoisie, certain countries manifest in the epoch of imperialism, with greater or lesser intensity, either one or the other of these tendencies. On the whole, capitalism is growing incomparably faster than before, but this growth is not only more and more unequal, but the inequality is also manifested, in a particular way, in the decomposition of the countries where capital occupies the strongest positions (United Kingdom)».²⁹

As has been seen throughout this tour, our understanding of how imperialist capitalism works starts from the laws discovered since Marx and developed by Lenin and defended by Mao, which continue to operate because the living fundamental contradiction of the system is not an empty formula and dead letter, but the one that can indicate to us the advanced degree of parasitism, decomposition and agony in which imperialist capitalism finds itself.

28 Ver, [El fiasco de Harvard](https://grain.org/es/article/6079-el-fiasco-de-harvard-mil-millones-de-dolares-en-tierras-agricolas). <https://grain.org/es/article/6079-el-fiasco-de-harvard-mil-millones-de-dolares-en-tierras-agricolas>

29 V. I. Lenin, *El imperialismo fase superior del capitalismo*.

This is decisive because imperialism is not merely a heartless policy of the imperialist bourgeoisie and its lackeys against the peoples of the oppressed countries, as the petty bourgeois theorists argue, but a world system of exploitation and oppression.

Therefore, it is not a question of imperialism "belatedly" implanting capitalism in the oppressed countries and not developing "classical" capitalism, but of rescuing the revolutionary theory of imperialism as a world system of oppression and exploitation, and of investigating and understanding how it has subdued the old pre-capitalist relations and to what degree, in order to determine the tasks of the revolution in each country. It is of little use to recite Mao's analysis of colonial, semi-colonial and semi-feudal China in the 1930s and 1940s and use them as blinders to avoid seeing the changes that have taken place over the course of more than half a century.

The International Communist Movement can only advance if it sheds its prejudices and dares, as our masters did, to be as radical as reality and apprehend it by abandoning analogies, which only reveal the longing for an "articulated", "classical", "independent" capitalism, where a "harmonious" process of succession from the feudal to the capitalist mode of production takes place, where commercial capital is linked to agricultural and artisanal production to give life to manufacturing and from there to factory production, defeating the feudal lords and establishing free competition, the articulated internal market and the national bourgeois state, and where banking capital is gradually linked to industrial production to give life to finance capital...

The development of capitalism is the process of expropriation of the direct producers of their means of production as Marx demonstrated in *Das Kapital*. That is to say the process of dispossession of the peasants and artisans, in order to subject them to wage exploitation, and it has not been at all smooth, nor has it followed a "classical" line; all countries have their own history, although in all of them the process of dividing society into bourgeois, landlord, proletarian and petty-bourgeois has been and is still being carried out inexorably according to geographical, historical, cultural, customary, etc. conditions. Capitalism came into being by dripping blood, Marx said, and it continues to drip blood in its incessant dispossession of the direct producers and in the imposition of wage exploitation on them. That is the one thing that all countries have in common in their transition to capitalism.

Imperialism is dying capitalism and we must insist on it. It is a social economic regime that can only survive on the basis of expanding and deepening its own relations, undermining and destroying the old relations. So it is not correct to speak of "late" capitalism in the oppressed countries, but it is the capitalism of the imperialist phase of decadence. It is not a strange capitalism imposed from outside, but one that develops on the germs that society had already produced.

Lenin was not wrong and one can see the certainty of his judgement:

«The export of capital influences the development of capitalism in the countries in which it is invested, accelerating it dramatically. If, for this reason, such export can, to a certain extent, cause a certain stagnation of development in the

exporting countries, this can only occur at the expense of the further extension and deepening of the development of capitalism throughout the world».³⁰

Imperialism, as an internationalised mode of production, has chained all countries - with their specific modes of production - into a single world economy, where the economy of each country is a link in a single chain, which obeys and serves the production, realisation of surplus value, accumulation and centralisation of world capital. Ignoring that capitalism in each country is only an aspect of imperialist capitalism leads some communists to deny its real existence in the oppressed countries by resorting to the euphemism of calling it "non-classical", "deformed", "rare" or "bureaucratic", equivalent to the petty-bourgeois longing for an ideal, independent capitalism which is no longer possible. And in politics, denying the existence of capitalism in the oppressed countries leads to safeguarding the interests of the bourgeoisie against the interests of the proletariat.

In this sense, the recognition by the comrades of the *PCC (FR)* of our criticism, in the face of which the comrades of the *CCIMU* and others keep an unjustified silence, is meritorious:

«The comrades of the *UOC* criticise that the *CCIMU* proposal considers "that the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie only exists in the imperialist countries". We consider this criticism to be correct, we recognise that an error has been made here and we propose that the proposal be corrected on this point. It is undeniable that in the oppressed nations this fundamental contradiction exists and manifests itself on all levels of the class struggle and to forget it would lead us astray from the road to socialism».³¹

The result of the painful, brutal and violent course of imperialism has been the ever-increasing socialisation of the world productive process and the proletarianisation of world society. The efforts of billions of workers are socialised in a single productive process, crystallised even in the smallest commodities with the incorporation of the labour power of the workers of many countries. Likewise, the great migratory movements, the great displacements to the cities, the growing belts of misery -which stand as monstrous monuments to the irrationality of imperialist capitalism - multiply the class of proletarians, the most powerful productive and social force, the world army of the undertakers of dying capitalism, by the millions.

3. The periods of agony of imperialist capitalism

Returning to the particular polemic raised by the comrades of the *PCC (FR)* about the most important contradictions and how it is necessary to establish the periods of agony of imperialism, from the analysis of which the tactics of the international proletariat are derived, we assure that the comrades believe that the fundamental contradiction of imperialism is really the contradiction between the imperialist countries and the oppressed countries.

30 Ibid.

31 Partido Comunista de Colombia (Fracción Roja) – Respuesta al Pronunciamento de la Unión Obrera Comunista (UOC) sobre la Propuesta del Comité Coordinador para la Conferencia Internacional Maoísta Unificada (CIMU)

Comrades say:

«But let us return to the 4 fundamental contradictions of the New Age to express that we conceive of what the CCIMU proposal puts forward as follows: two of these contradictions, the inter-imperialist contradiction and the contradiction between imperialism and the oppressed nations, will be resolved in the 50-100 year period defined by Chairman Mao: the inter-imperialist contradiction and the contradiction between imperialism and the oppressed nations will be resolved in the 50-100 year period defined by Chairman Mao, i.e. with the sweeping away of imperialism by the peoples of the world; and the other two: capitalism-socialism, bourgeoisie-proletariat, will be the last to be resolved, at which point humanity will enter communism. We think that until imperialism is defeated, the contradiction between imperialism and the oppressed nations will be the main contradiction on a world level, which does not mean that another contradiction may temporarily become the main contradiction; we understand that in the next period centred on the construction of socialism and communism on earth, at that historic moment, the bourgeoisie-proletariat contradiction will become the main contradiction and with its resolution will come the death of capitalism and a new and golden communist era. (Bolding of the original).³²

To begin with, it must be pointed out that it is already a contradiction to affirm "*that until imperialism is defeated, the contradiction between imperialism and the oppressed nations will be the principal contradiction on the world level, which does not mean that another contradiction can temporarily become the principal contradiction*". If comrades think carefully about his statement, they will see that admitting, even temporarily, that any of the other contradictions occupies the principal place, this already indicates that the same principal contradiction does not always exist.

It is therefore possible to *differentiate periods* and, more importantly, it is necessary to do so in order to orient oneself correctly. If this were not admitted, it would be enough to say that the tactics of the communists would always be the same at all times, which is not true historically, but it would also fall into useless dogmatism by abandoning the *concrete analysis of the concrete situation, the living soul of Marxism*, and turning it into a dead letter.

The comrades then bring up a series of facts, all true and of great importance, especially those concerning the struggle of the peoples for their liberation and especially the people's wars led by the communists, in order to "prove" their "theoretical arguments" with facts - the quotations from the masters already mentioned above.

And from all this arsenal, the only thing they make clear is a great confusion: first of all, because the fact that one contradiction plays the role of the main one during a period does not mean that the others disappear. Always, throughout the whole epoch of imperialism, its most important contradictions have been sharpened: the class struggle between proletarians and bourgeoisie has not ceased, the inter-imperialist and inter-monopoly struggle has not abated, bringing with it wars of aggression against the oppressed countries in their fierce struggle, while the struggle of the oppressed countries has not abated either;

³² *Ibid.*

even the contradiction between the two systems, socialist and capitalist, ceased temporarily with the disintegration of the socialist camp, but it remains latent.

Not striving to understand reality as it is, but clinging to formulas, which are always useless, leads to one-sided and simplistic conclusions, in the case of the comrades to emphasise the contradiction between the imperialist countries and the oppressed countries; and in some petty-bourgeois ones the inter-imperialist contradiction because always, they say, the wars in the oppressed countries have been caused and promoted, including those of national liberation, by the division of the world between the imperialist countries, resorting to the facts of the interference of the social-imperialists in the wars of Vietnam, Cuba, Congo, Algeria, etc.

The dialectical materialist analysis of Marxism demands multilateralism and an understanding of what is the most salient and important characteristic feature that defines a period.

That is why it is not wrong to state, as the *UOC (mlm)* does, that 1903-1918 was a period characterised by the *main inter-imperialist contradiction*, when the domination of the monopolies, in a group of capitalist countries, transformed them into imperialist countries contending in the First World War for a new division of the already divided colonial world.

A change in the capitalist world that divided the labour movement. The social-democratic leaders of the Second International betrayed the world cause of the proletariat and adhered in chauvinist support to the bourgeoisie of their respective countries, backed by the centrist Kautsky and his theory of "ultra-imperialism", whose proclamation urged the abandonment of revolution, for the contradictions of imperialism would be resolved by "ultra-imperialist" union.

But likewise, against imperialist world war and social-chauvinist opportunism, the open defender of imperialism, Leninism demonstrated that imperialism is the highest and last phase of capitalism, the new Era of the World Proletarian Revolution, triumphantly inaugurated in 1917 with the *Great October Revolution* in Russia, ushering in the epoch of the world-wide collapse of capitalism.

These historical facts are recognised by the International Communist Movement as a concrete period.

From 1918 to 1948 was a period where the struggle between the monopolies stood out as the *main contradiction of imperialism*. The deep crisis of 1929 shook the whole system and led to the Second Imperialist World War, for another new division of the already divided world. After the end of the war, the imperialist world chain was broken again, this time in China, with the triumph of the *New Democratic Revolution*.

The great impetus which the triumph of the October Revolution gave to the struggle of the proletariat and the peoples of the world is well known and recognised. The existence of the USSR was in itself an example to be followed, and this influence was multiplied by the creation of the Communist International, the rise of Communist Parties in almost every country and the great workers' and peasants' struggles around the world.

However, the decisive aspect of the period was the *inter-monopoly contradiction*. Among other things, it was the American monopolies and US imperialism that were the great

beneficiaries of the reconstruction of Europe after the First World War and directly responsible for German armament and the rise of Nazism.

The Second World War was aimed at a new division of the world and the end of the USSR, but it meant the great defeat of imperialism and the burial of Nazi-fascism, where the proletariat succeeded in wresting a part of Europe from imperialism.

These undeniable facts defined a precise and special period in the long agony of imperialism without indicating the disappearance or attenuation of the other contradictions.

After the Second World War it is clear that a new period opened up from 1948 to 1958. A period characterised by a new triumph of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, strengthened by the advance of popular democratic revolutions in different countries, giving life to the Socialist Camp of more than a billion inhabitants.

This third period of the agony of capitalism was characterised by the *contradiction between the socialist system and the imperialist system as the main world contradiction*. This contradiction gave a formidable advance to the world revolution, showing materially the superiority of the socialist system over the outdated capitalist system.

The imperialists' plans to prevent the spread of revolution and to quell the struggle of the proletariat in the various countries in this period led them to establish what some call the "welfare state", to "prove" that imperialist capitalism was also capable of meeting the needs of universal education and health, social housing and other social achievements in the socialist camp. The state took over part of these needs and thus the big state enterprises came into being and with them, the race of state indebtedness.

In this period another imperialist policy towards the oppressed countries took place, at least in some regions, where what was called in Latin America "import substitution" was promoted; that is, the imperialist countries, especially the United States, facilitated and promoted the bourgeoisies of the oppressed countries to give a new impulse to big industrial production, without this implying an end to technological dependence and granting them the production of the means of production. For the peoples of the oppressed countries it meant a wave of dispossession of the peasants who were thrown into the urban slums and the hell of the factories.

In the face of the powerful advance of the Socialist camp and of the world revolution, modern revisionism, with its "three peaceful" and "two alls", emerges to the aid of imperialism, to blur the class character of the contradiction between the two systems, to undermine the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, to embellish imperialism, to deny the class struggle and the revolutionary violence of the wars that do resolve the contradictions between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, between the oppressed countries and the imperialist countries. In this period the USSR moved towards state monopoly capitalism, the fruit of the new revisionist bourgeoisie in power, transforming the socialist power into an imperialist power that begins to dispute the world with the American imperialists.

From 1958 to 1972, *the contradiction between the oppressor countries and nations and the oppressed countries and nations took on the role of the main world contradiction*, manifested in the wars of national liberation against the imperialist yoke and the revolutionary struggles

that shook Asia, Africa and Latin America. A period of the rise of the world revolution that raged, dragging the last strongholds of the national bourgeoisie into the struggle against imperialist domination and which has no parallel in the death throes of imperialism; nor can it be treated with the simplicity that leads the comrades of the *PCC (FR)* to compare this period with others.

A powerful movement inspired by the victorious epic of the Vietnamese people who confronted Japanese imperialist aggression during the Second World War until the signing of the surrender of the invaders in 1946; which continued the war against French colonialism until it was defeated at the battle of Dien Bien Phu in 1954, and culminated in the defeat of US imperialism in 1975 by reunifying the country and preventing the US attempt to divide the country as they had achieved years earlier in Korea.

Another factor that influenced and inspired this powerful movement of the period was the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China and the role played by the Communist Party of China in the struggle against Krushchevite revisionism and its rotten theories of the "three peaceful" and the "two alls", and in the spread of revolutionary Marxism in all countries.

It was precisely on 15 April 1958 that activists and political leaders met in Ghana (one year after its independence from British imperialism) for the First Conference of Independent African States. In addition to the hosts, representatives of the governments of Ethiopia, Liberia, Libya, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia, at that time the United Arab Republic (Egypt and Syria) and representatives of the National Liberation Front and the Cameroon People's Union took part. The Conference agreed to celebrate African Freedom Day, which five years later, at the Conference of Independent States, was renamed *African Liberation Day*.

In 1960, the bourgeoisie of the main oil producing and exporting countries of the time (Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait and Venezuela) founded OPEC in order to increase their share of profits by forming a new cartel, only this time the baton was not carried by the monopolies of the imperialist countries but by their "subjects" in the oppressed countries, who have since then repeatedly asserted their power, even selling oil above its value.

The expressions of the revolutionary struggle of the peoples were at the same time very varied and the number of organisations that arose and disappeared in this period was great; but to show the magnitude of what it meant, we must at least mention some of the most outstanding movements:

The FLN (1954) kept Algeria's war of liberation against the French colonialists alive until independence was achieved in 1962; the *coup d'état* against the king in Libya in 1969 led by Kadafi sealed that country's independence from the Italian imperialists; the Belgian Congo crowned its independence in 1959; the 1960s also saw the emergence of armed movements and organisations for the liberation of Palestine.

Latin America was the scene of struggles waged by various political and guerrilla movements: the 26th of July Revolutionary Movement brought Castro to power in Cuba in 1959; the FSLN guerrillas emerged in Nicaragua (1961); the FARC, ELN (1964), EPL (1965) guerrillas in Colombia; the ELN in Bolivia (1966); the MLN-Tupamaros in Uruguay (1965);

the EGP (1963) in Argentina; the MIR (1965) in Chile; the MR-13 of November in Guatemala (1962); ALN (1964) in Brazil; the ELN (1962) in Peru; the FALN (1962) in Venezuela...

In Asia the Naxalbari Uprising in India (1967) started the people's war; the NPA and the CPP (1967) started the people's war in the Philippines; the UNFL (United Front of National Liberation) (1964) started its actions in Manipur, liberation detachments and movements emerged in Indonesia, Malaysia...

In Europe the Provisional IRA emerged in Ireland (1969) and the Basque separatist organisation (ETA) in 1958 in the Spanish state... and even the Black Panther party (1966) appeared in the very bowels of the US imperialist beast, not to mention the French May 68 and other youth and workers' uprisings in different latitudes.

The inter-imperialist contradiction did not cease or disappear; however, the leading role of the struggle of the oppressed countries, peoples and nations during the 1960s brought the era of colonialism to an end, forcing the imperialists to adopt semi-colonial domination as a generality, which facilitated the interference of the US and Russian imperialists around the world; In turn, the national liberation movement in this period positively influenced the other contradictions of imperialism, but this impact was also minimised by the influence of the bourgeoisie and the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie who, by highlighting it unilaterally, overshadowed the class contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

The *fifth period*, from 1972 to 1990, was *characterised by the contradiction between the imperialist countries*; this was the main world contradiction, this time, concentrated in the inter-imperialist contradiction between the superpowers the United States and the Soviet Union.

In these years, capitalism experienced one of the *deepest* economic crises since the Great Depression of 1929; the state monopoly capitalism implemented by the Soviet social-imperialists also went into crisis: high inflation, foreign debt, low economic growth and unemployment.

Both powers developed monumental armament programmes, military invasions, all preparations for an imminent imperialist war, which did not break out because the crisis of Soviet social-imperialism broke out, a crisis which spread to its sphere of influence in the former countries of the Socialist Camp. The USSR decomposed and collapsed, a product of its own internal contradictions; the countries that constituted it became for the imperialist countries new territories to which to export capital and commodities, and to super-exploit the proletariat, serving - instead of war - to resolve one of the last crises in the world economy of imperialism.

In turn, the defeat of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in China and its subsequent opening to the imperialist world market helped to give a new lease of life to the moribund system, providing an outlet for surplus capital and giving the monopolies and finance capital cheap labour in large numbers to extend and deepen their world domination.

The contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie was overshadowed but there were important struggles such as, to mention only one of the most significant, the big strike of the 170,000 metalworkers in Brazil in 1979, defying the military dictatorship and forcing it, despite violent repression by the military forces, to raise wages considerably (with

biannual adjustments), incidentally, among the leaders of that strike was Lula Da Silva, the current president of Brazil.

The People's War initiated in 1980 in Peru led by the PCP was a ray of light after the defeat of the proletariat in China in 1976 and in the midst of the darkness of the crisis of the International Communist Movement; the deed led by comrade Gonzalo has a transcendental importance, because it served as a beacon and inspiration for the revolutionary proletariat to begin the reconstruction of its battered forces, to learn from its mistakes and to take up again the road to settle accounts with imperialism and reaction. A task still unfinished but which the present struggle for a new *MLM Unified International Conference* will allow to be completed in the present period.

Until then, the struggle against imperialism had been on account of contradictions that did not directly reflect the fundamental contradiction of imperialist capitalism. But since then, in 1990, the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie opened up as the main world contradiction of imperialism, the one that best and most concentrically expresses the fundamental contradiction of the system.

With the proletariat defeated in Russia and China, and the imperialists freed from the pressure of the social gains achieved under socialism, the field was open for dismantling the workers' gains in all countries and initiating what the bourgeois theoreticians called "neo-liberalism" and "globalisation", the new imperialist policy which opened the way to give artificial life for another period to the dying system by prolonging its agony.

Workers' strikes, which almost disappeared in the 1980s, reappeared in different countries in repulsion against the wave of privatisation of state enterprises; popular uprisings against hunger and unemployment like the piqueteros movement in Argentina; the powerful uprising of marginalised proletarians in Los Angeles, USA in 1992; general strikes in Europe and other countries against labour reforms....

It was a weak, dispersed and disorganised but tenacious and self-sacrificing resistance of the international proletariat against the anti-working class offensive of imperialism which imposed new conditions of super-exploitation, against the impotence of the communists who were struggling, both within RIM and outside it, to adopt Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as the third new and higher stage of Marxism, and to reorganise proletarian parties in the different countries. And it is precisely in the midst of these advances that our movement received the hard blow to the People's War in Peru with the capture of the leadership of the PCP in 1992, and a few years later the revisionist and capitulationist line emerged within RIM that would lead to the betrayal of the revolution in Nepal in 2006 and the bankruptcy of RIM.

The economic crisis of world capitalism that broke out in 2008 has confirmed and consolidated the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie as the main contradiction, determining a period where the extreme sharpening of the fundamental contradiction of the capitalist system is manifestly evident; and this may well be the period of the decline and burial of the imperialist world system, on condition of defeating those who keep the dying parasite on its feet: opportunism, headed today by post-MLM revisionism - false Marxism-Leninism-Maoism - the *main danger* for the international unity

of the communists, the unity of the vanguard, the unity of the Communist International, without which the triumph of the World Proletarian Revolution will take longer.

4. The main contradiction today

Just as it is not true that the main contradiction of imperialism has always been and always will be the contradiction between imperialist and oppressed countries, so it is not true today. The great uprisings, political strikes and even insurrections which have taken place in the present period, both in the imperialist countries and in the oppressed countries, confirm the confrontation of the world proletariat against the world bourgeoisie, being, finally, the contradiction which best and most concentrically expresses the fundamental contradiction of the system; the most decisive because of its direct manifestation on the terrain of the class struggle, and as such, the one with the greatest revolutionary influence on the other world contradictions of imperialism, the one that most helps the advance of the revolution and the progress of society, accelerating the transition to socialism.

The world economic crisis that began in 2008 has not ended to give way to a new impulse of imperialist capitalism; its "recoveries" for slight periods have been on account, especially, of the rescue plans aimed at the non-decisive sectors of the economy and at one or another branch of production, of unloading its consequences more viciously on the working class especially of the oppressed countries, all of which, objectively, creates conditions for a deeper fall. The repercussions of the crisis have been disastrous as they have brought the world social crisis to the extreme, which in turn was aggravated by the pandemic in 2020 and exacerbated by it. The economic crisis and the social crisis have been compounded by the environmental crisis.

The most important contradictions of imperialism, especially the world struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, have been sharpened, reaffirming their character as the main contradiction in the imperialist world today, both in extent and depth, where the vast majority of the world's population lives subjugated by the wage chain, accumulates misery amidst the wealth it produces, and supports with its labour power a few monopolist parasites who privately appropriate world production.

The bankruptcy of small and medium-sized landowners, as well as the ruin and displacement of millions of peasants by capitalism and wars, swell the ranks of the proletariat en masse, whose existence, threatened more and more each day by unemployment, benefit cuts, massive lay-offs and the lowering of real wages, unleashes its rebellion in mass mobilisations, strikes, general strikes, uprisings, against the crisis, against the "rescue plans", against the world system of wage exploitation, both in the oppressed countries and in the imperialist countries where the workers' movement is awakening again, not only of the industrial workers but of all the workers against a system that is not even capable of supporting its wage slaves, strangled by the imperialist parasite that appropriates all the social product.

The extent and depth of the world contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie clearly reveal that capital is a social relation where - for the first time in the agony of capitalism - the owners of capital and the owners of labour confront their forces on the world stage; a fact of the utmost importance for the World Proletarian Revolution, but of

little interest to many revolutionary communist comrades, tied to the analysis of another, earlier period, which no longer corresponds to the present world reality and the perspective towards which the objective tendencies of society are pointing.

Unfortunately, those who do not admit the periods that mark the agony of imperialism and reduce its contradictions to that between imperialist and oppressed countries end up ignoring the very existence of the class they claim to represent, as happens to the comrades of the CPC (FR), whose formal recognition of the existence of the proletariat in the oppressed countries disappears in the analysis of the current situation:

«The first decade of the 21st century also brought with it a great cyclical crisis of imperialism, the crisis of 2008, which sharpened the fundamental contradictions, visibly the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in the imperialist countries, fuelling the struggles for the defence of the gains won throughout the 20th century, particularly in Europe. Despite this, we do not see why the UOC claims that this crisis "confirmed and consolidated" the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat as the main contradiction in the world today, since the greatest weight of the crisis, as always, was laid on the shoulders of the masses of the third world where it also sharpened all the contradictions of the oppressed nations which exploded especially in the next decade».³³

Was it not the case that the proletariat also existed in the oppressed countries and that the CCIMU's proposal had to be corrected? Were not those "Third World masses" on whose backs the crisis was dumped mainly the proletarian masses? The comrades thus abandon class analysis, concealing the antagonistic class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie throughout the world.

Hence, with such a non-proletarian blinders on, they can only conclude:

«The great explosiveness of the masses all over the world in the last decade, especially in the third world, and particularly in Latin America, are convincing proof that we are living a revolutionary situation in unequal development. Yellow waistcoats in France, great popular uprisings in Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Colombia, the United States, Haiti, etc., confirm that the objective conditions are excellent for revolution and that, as our great masters said, the oppressed nations are the revolutionary storm zones of the world, they are the basis of the world proletarian revolution».³⁴

Not seeing the importance of the most important social relation of imperialist capitalism and only looking one-sidedly at countries and the opposition to imperialist domination and oppression, is to ignore such relevant facts as the biggest general strike in the history of imperialism, in a country where the majority of its population still lives in the countryside, like the one led by 250 million proletarians in India in November 2020, followed by one of similar magnitude carried out by the peasants. It is to ignore the

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*

importance of the insurrection of the workers in Kazakhstan, the strikes and violent confrontations of the workers in Spain, the strikes in England and other countries of Europe. It is not to understand the class character of the great uprisings that the comrades themselves mention....

To evade class analysis with statements about the revolutionary situation in unequal development and that "the oppressed nations are the zones of revolutionary storms in the world" is to cover one's eyes and not to want to see the countries as a whole and the protagonists, it is to not want to investigate why and against whom the uprisings and struggles of the hundreds of millions who are rising up against capitalist world exploitation are directed. Combats and uprisings that have not gone further, precisely because of the lack of clarity and impotence of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists and in most cases, because of the absence of their Party.

Regardless of wishes and will, the underestimation of the world contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is an erroneous and politically unfocused, ideologically idealistic position, and shocking as it may sound, it is a position common to the post-MLM revisionism of the RCP,USA whose underestimation of the weight of the proletariat derives from the denial of its leading role in the World Proletarian Revolution.

Finally, an issue that is of importance to communists at the present time is the tendency for the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie to be displaced by the inter-imperialist contradiction and the growing danger of a new world war, which must be prevented by revolution or transformed by communists into revolutionary war against the ruling classes.

The imperialist war in Ukraine, the joint military operations in different latitudes, the testing of new weapons and manoeuvres in Southeast Asia, the imposition of the war economy in the imperialist countries, the mobilisation and strengthening of the imperialist war machines in hotly disputed areas, the forced conscription... indicate that the world crisis is tending to be resolved by a new division of the world, which makes the unity of the international communist movement all the more urgent.

5. The two currents of the World Proletarian Revolution and the theory of "fusion"

We pointed out in our observations on the *CCIMU* proposal, the inaccuracy in the formulation of the two currents of the World Proletarian Revolution. And again, instead of accepting the accurate and correct criticism that it is not "just any revolutionary movement", the comrades defending the *CCIMU* proposal insist that it is correct, which becomes a stubborn defence of errors.

But apart from the exact terms, which correspond to the categories of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism to define phenomena precisely and a fortiori when it is a question of a proposed line for the International Communist Movement, the comrades insist on the basic error and "argue" for the alleged fusion of the two currents.

The comrades of Proletarian Power bring a quotation of Lenin's from the article *The Military Programme of the Proletarian Revolution (1916)* to say that even Lenin defended such

an unfounded idea, an idea supported by the comrades of the *PCC (FR)* who also extend the "arsenal" with another quotation taken from the *Report to the Second All-Russian Congress of the Peoples of the East (1919)*. Well then, faced with the "forcefulness" of the letter, we must make two observations:

The first has to do with the legitimacy of the translations and to warn that there are different versions (at least in English) of the texts quoted by the comrades, where it can be seen that in some they translate fusion, in others conjugation, in others combination.... Just to give an example, Akal Editor, taking from the translations of Editorial Cartago, translates "combination" in both quotations:

In *The Military Programme of the Proletarian Revolution* it says:

«In theory it would be totally wrong to forget that all war is nothing but the continuation of policy by other means. The present imperialist war is the continuation of the imperialist policy of two groups of great powers, and this policy was engendered and nourished by the whole of the relations of the imperialist epoch. But this same epoch must inevitably engender and nourish also a policy of struggle against national oppression and of struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, and therefore also the possibility and inevitability, firstly, of revolutionary national insurrections and wars, secondly, of wars and insurrections of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, and, thirdly, of a combination of both types of revolutionary wars, etc.» (Emphasis added).³⁵

In the *Report to the Second All-Russian Congress of the Communist Organisations of the Peoples of the East*, we read:

«Therefore, the socialist revolution will not be only, nor will it be primarily, a struggle of the revolutionary proletarians in each country against its bourgeoisie; it will not be a struggle of all the colonies and all the countries oppressed by imperialism, of all the dependent countries against international imperialism. In the programme of our party, adopted in March last year, we said, characterising the approaching international social revolution, that the civil war of the workers against the imperialists and exploiters in all the advanced countries is beginning to be combined with national wars against international imperialism. This is confirmed by the course of the revolution and will be confirmed more and more in the course of time. The same thing will happen in the East.» (Emphasis added).³⁶

The second is one of apparent delicacy, for the comrades evade a "small" detail: Lenin refers in both to the war; and not to the war in general as the comrades of the *PCC (FR)* understand it but to the war that was shaking the world; the first article was made in the fight against pacifism and the disarmament of the social traitors and vacillators; the second was addressed to the communists of the Russian East who had before them the immediate task of joining the struggle against the White armies used by the imperialists who sought to

³⁵ Lenin, *Obras Completas*, Tomo 24, págs. 84-85, Akal Editor.

³⁶ Lenin, *Obras completas*, Tomo 32, pág. 141, Akal Editor.

smash Soviet power and from which the Bolsheviks emerged victorious, helping to extend the revolution as far as Mongolia. In other words, Lenin was not posing the problem of the currents of the World Proletarian Revolution for a programmatic statement, but orienting the practical action of communists in the midst of the world war in which the Bolsheviks had, according to Lenin, "characterised the proximity of the international social revolution".

As is well known, in 1919 most of the White armies in Russia had been defeated, thus helping to consolidate the victory of the proletarian revolution; moreover, with the aggression of the imperialists through them, the struggle of the proletariat and the oppressed peoples of Western Europe and the East was encouraged. The Bolsheviks expected the triumph of the revolution in Germany (decisive for the triumph of the World Proletarian Revolution at the time) and the uprisings in France, England, Belgium... In the same article Lenin says: *"Everyone knows that the revolution is ripening in Western Europe, no longer by days but by hours, and that the same thing is happening in the United States and in England"*.

As can be seen, the world was convulsed by the world war. It was an exceptional situation in the history of humanity and in the struggle of the working class. It was an opportunity to launch the triumph of the World Proletarian Revolution in the midst of that war into which the imperialists had dragged the working class and the peoples of the world: it was only necessary to turn the guns around by leading the masses to war against their enslavers in the various countries. The comrades see only the letter of Marxism but make little effort to understand its method and content.

And indeed, as the comrades of the PCC (FR) point out, the problem is not merely one of terms, nor is it solved by the number of quotations pretending to authorise themselves in the masters, but in the analysis of the problem itself and making it clear who is wrong.

The first problem is simple and concrete: do the national struggle and the class struggle merge? In general we seem to agree that one is the interests of the class and the other is the interests of the nation and therefore, even in the oppressed semi-feudal and semi-colonial countries, where the proletariat must ally itself with the bourgeoisie, it must maintain its independence and self-determination, as well as fight attempts to disguise the bourgeois-democratic current as communist.

However, the comrades of the PCC (FR) with the same method of seeing no contradiction between "the 4 fundamental contradictions of imperialism and the fundamental contradiction of capitalism" see no contradiction between the fusion of the two currents of the World Proletarian Revolution and the difference between the class struggle and the national struggle. Between the orientation of Lenin and the Communist International regarding the two currents of the World Proletarian Revolution and the attitude of the workers' movement to the national and colonial problem; say the comrades:

«It is clear to us that we are dealing here with two ideas which are not opposed to each other. The first idea is that in the world proletarian revolution the two great forces - the international proletarian movement and the national liberation movement, the revolutionary wars of the one and the other - will merge into a single stream and thus sweep imperialism and world reaction off the face of the earth. The second idea is that communists must support the "national-

revolutionary" movements but must not merge with bourgeois-democracy but must maintain their class independence as a proletarian movement».

(...)

«In our opinion, the fusion of the two forces that are defining world history today takes place precisely because the proletarian movement is at the head of the national liberation movement, which is why the proposal of the Coordinating Committee of the ICUMU speaks of the former as a guideline and the latter as a base.».

(...)

«To underline this need for communists to support and unite firmly with national liberation struggles, we believe it is worthwhile - at the risk of going on too long - to quote the great Stalin and Chairman Mao on this question, especially in these times when some comrades point out that we must support those who claim to be anti-imperialist (and even Marxist-Leninist like armed revisionism) but in fact are not; while other comrades, instead of supporting, question the fierce resistance of the peoples of the Middle East against imperialist aggression».³⁷

And to argue for an idea foreign to Marxism they then bring in quotes from Stalin and Mao, in order to unilaterally and out of historical context emphasise why any "anti-imperialist" movement should be supported:

«The revolutionary character of the national movement, in the conditions of imperialist oppression, does not necessarily presuppose, far from it, the existence of proletarian elements in the movement, the existence of a revolutionary or republican programme of the movement, the existence of a democratic basis in the movement. The struggle of the emir of Afghanistan for the independence of his country is an objectively revolutionary struggle, despite the monarchist ideas of the emir and his supporters, because this struggle weakens, dismantles and undermines imperialism. On the other hand, the struggle of democrats and "socialists", of such "revolutionaries" and "radical" republicans as Kerensky and Tsereteli, Renaudel and Scheidemann, Chernov and Dan, Henderson and Clynes during the imperialist war was a reactionary struggle, because the result of it was to paint a rosy picture, to strengthen and give victory to imperialism». (From Stalin, Foundations of Leninism)

«Whatever classes, parties or individuals of an oppressed nation join the revolution, whether or not they are conscious of this point, whether or not they understand it subjectively, it is enough for them to fight against imperialism for their revolution to be part of the proletarian socialist world revolution, and

37 Partido Comunista de Colombia (Fracción Roja) – Respuesta al Pronunciamento de la Unión Obrera Comunista (UOC) sobre la Propuesta del Comité Coordinador para la Conferencia Internacional Maoísta Unificada (CIMU)

themselves allies of it. ». (Mao in *On New Democracy*, underlined by the comrades)³⁸

The first issue is that the comrades overlook the fact that in those days, the generality of imperialist domination was colonialism and the existence of socialism in the Soviet Union. Two historical "little details" to evade the living soul of Marxism and reduce it to a dead letter.

It is a fact that at that time the national liberation movement in general, regardless of what those who fought to free themselves from the colonial yoke thought, even the most reactionary rulers of the colonial countries, were breaking imperialist domination and the system as a whole, contributing objectively and regardless of whether they were anti-communist, to the strengthening of the new power of the proletariat, socialism, represented in the existence of the republic of the soviets.

From the materialist dialectic, it must be insisted that imperialism as an internationalised mode of production broke the autonomy of the modes of production in the different countries, including the feudal and semi-feudal oppressed ones, turning them into parts of world imperialist capitalism, including, influencing, transforming, wearing them down, exhausting them, in a world capitalist process of production, accumulation, concentration and extraction of surplus value by the world bourgeoisie from the world proletariat.

Likewise, imperialism left the old national problem as an internal question of some states without a floor, merging it with the new imperialist colonial problem, in the international problem of imperialist world oppression of the colonies and semi-colonies, making it part of the general problem of the proletarian revolution, of the international struggle of labour against capital, of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and Socialism.

It is not that two merge or fuse into one, on the contrary, one divides into two, that is why the two great currents of the World Proletarian Revolution are the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat of all countries and the revolutionary anti-imperialist movement of the oppressed countries. Both have imperialist exploitation and domination as their common target. Such is the identity of the contradiction between the two movements.

But they do not merge, dissolve or dilute one into the other because they are two contradictions of a different character: the struggle of the international proletariat is a social problem which cuts across nationalities, religions, races, cultures and customs, which is why the proletariat is internationalist; on the contrary, the national struggle encompasses the interests of the different classes of a nation; interests which cannot be merged. Such is its contradictory character.

Forgetting this issue or believing that they can be merged leads to errors in politics, such as emphasising and giving more importance to the national liberation movement, to the "anti-imperialist world fronts", than to the struggle of the world proletariat and the building of the Communist International.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

Likewise, not taking into account this differentiation leads to making mistakes regarding the struggles being waged in different parts of the world. With regard to the Middle East, as the comrades of the *PCC (FR)* say, it is right to support the fierce resistance struggle of its peoples, as of any people against imperialist aggression, such as that of the Palestinian people against the United States' dog of prey in the region, the Zionist state of Israel; as well as the heroic resistance of the Kurdish people; however, it has not been right to support the terrorist regime of Saddam Hussein, nor the ayatollahs when they overthrew the Shah in Iran, just as it has not been right to support the reactionary mercenary army ISIS, nor the Taliban.... because they are part of the inter-imperialist struggle, because they are instruments of the various imperialists in their struggle for domination of the region, and are not part of the national liberation movement.

Petty-bourgeois nationalism breaks or dissolves the unity of opposites between the anti-imperialist struggle and the class struggle. Its most dangerous form is disguised as socialist, in reality social-chauvinist, which in the name of Marxism tries to give an internationalist hue to nationalism. It serves imperialist politics, because it sows mistrust among the workers of different nationalities, divides and pits them against each other on the basis of nations, undermines their class independence and prevents their leading role in the anti-imperialist struggle.

This opportunist theory of social-chauvinism led to the criminal alliance of the Second International with imperialism against the workers' movement in the imperialist First World War. Even so, its theoretical refutation, the struggle and political denunciation made by Leninism, are today "forgotten" words and facts for the revisionism that emerged in the defunct Revolutionary Internationalist Movement -RIM-, where in the name of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, it repackaged the old Kautskyist conception -of reducing itself to the national struggle and renouncing the class struggle- into the "new" theory of "merging" the proletarian revolution and the national liberation movement "concentrating the attention" on the latter.

"Fusing the class struggle into the national struggle", the theory in vogue in revisionism today, is a revamped version of the old opportunism in the face of the national problem in the imperialist phase. The height of opportunist shamelessness is to ascribe such a theoretical absurdity to Lenin, who - from his *Teachings of the Commune* to his *Theses on the National and Colonial Problems*, unanimously adopted at the Second Congress of the Communist International - always denounced such a fusion as a fatal error for the proletarian revolution. The theory of "merging the class struggle into the national struggle" is an opportunist theory which takes up the reformist approach of the Second International to the national question, as an isolated, independent problem, unrelated to the general question of the power of capital, the overthrow of imperialism, and the proletarian revolution. It is a counter-revolutionary line, because it breaks and distorts the unity of opposites between the two currents of the World Proletarian Revolution. This is the same social-chauvinist line of European social democracy at the beginning of the 20th century, the same revisionist line of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union - CPSU - in the 1960s, the same revisionist line of the "new synthesis" of the Revolutionary Communist Party USA - RCP,USA - against the so-called "reification of the proletariat".

Even in the conditions of a national war against imperialist aggression, the class struggle is subsumed to the national struggle, but is not merged or dissolved in it; the proletariat can never renounce its class independence, its programme and self-decision within the united front. Any theory which attempts to deny the existence of class struggle is completely erroneous.

Finally, and although this is a special subject for another chapter, we must allude to some of the statements of the comrades of the *PCC (FR)*, who, with the aforementioned habit of taking the letter of Marxism, turn some statements, valid for certain epochs, into immutable truths.

The comrades say that in all the countries of the "third world" the proletariat must establish an alliance with the bourgeoisie in the united front "to defeat imperialist domination" because the New Democratic Revolution is needed in order to go on from there to socialism.

Back in 1915, Lenin said:

«Dialectics demands a complete analysis of the concrete social phenomenon in its development, and that the external and apparent be reduced to the essential driving forces, the development of the productive forces and the class struggle».³⁹

Well, as far as the national bourgeoisie is concerned, it is necessary to stick to the facts and to bear in mind that the end of the autonomy and isolation of the economies of each country, their linkage as part of a world economy in the imperialist phase of capitalism, and the utopia of the return to independent capitalism in the oppressed countries, constitute the material basis for the tendency of the bourgeoisie in the oppressed countries to become less and less nationalist and more and more pro-imperialist, constitute the material basis for the tendency of the bourgeoisie in the oppressed countries to become less and less nationalist and more and more pro-imperialist, because its class interest in profit, as noted in the opening part, when examining the tendency of imperialism towards its demise.

That was the experience in the 20th century of bourgeois factions and personalities who seized power in some Asian and African countries under democratic anti-imperialist banners, and then became tyrants in the service of imperialism. This is the current experience of bourgeois and petty bourgeois ruling sectors in some oppressed countries of Latin America, whose anti-imperialist discourse is apparent, of struggle against one imperialism and commitment to another in order to oppress and exploit the people.

The expiry of the old role of the bourgeoisie - economically progressive and politically revolutionary - and its general tendency in the oppressed countries to be the lackey class of imperialism, does not deny that in some feudal and semi-feudal oppressed countries, sections of the bourgeoisie, for the sake of political power and animated by their patriotic and nationalist sentiments, refuse the imperialist yoke, and are liable to be incorporated into the united front of the *New Democratic Revolution*, according to the concrete analysis of the concrete situation, where the Party of the Proletariat must pursue the policy of alliance with the bourgeoisie insofar as it is progressive, anti-imperialist and anti-feudal, and at the same

³⁹ Lenin, *El socialismo y la guerra*,

time fight against the reactionary tendencies of the bourgeoisie to compromise and collude with imperialism and the forces of feudalism. In all cases, it is incorrect to presuppose always and without analysis of the class structure, the existence of a national bourgeoisie in the oppressed countries.

6. On the "single hegemonic superpower" and "three worlds" theory

It is necessary to clarify some matters and to draw the attention of the comrades of the *CCIMU* and the defenders of its proposal to these problems which lead to renouncing Marxism-Leninism-Maoism by enthroning theories already defeated by Marxism by smuggling them in.

The comrades of *Poder Proletario* have rebuked us as improper treatment by pointing to a falsification of a quotation to attribute a wrong thesis to Mao and linking such a theory with the open enemies of Marxism, while questioning whether Avakian is an advocate of such an absurdity.

Starting with the latter and just to clear up doubts, in the RCP,USA's programmatic document which they call the Constitution, it is stated: "*The United States remained for now the 'only' superpower left in the world*".

Avakian in several texts consigns this idea, although in the face of the facts of the reality of the inter-imperialist dispute and the preparations for war, this idea has been abandoned and therefore only to recall a few quotations:

«It is very good for the peoples of the world that our party exists and that it works in this way, with this revolutionary orientation and goals in the belly of the beast, "the world's only superpower».⁴⁰

"the world's number one imperialist power" ("the world's only superpower").⁴¹

«All this is an expression of the various dimensions - and contradictory aspects - of "living in Tony Soprano's house" (which is another way of talking about the parasitism and privilege that exist for large sections of the population living in the world's number one imperialist power, the world's only superpower)».⁴²

As for the quote attributed to Mao by the *CCIMU*, the comrades of the *PCC (FR)* admit that they were not rigorous in copying the quote.:

«On this issue, the comrades point out that the draft incurs in an "inadmissible falsification" by attributing to Chairman Mao having said that US imperialism was a "single hegemonic superpower". It is true that an error of rigour has been committed here and must be corrected, but from there to saying that this is an

40 Avakian, *Ser audaces, "jugadores de primera", ser la vanguardia de a de veras.*
https://revcom.us/es/a/1207/ba_s.htm

41 Avakian, *Forjar otro camino.* <https://revcom.us/es/avakian/anotherway/otrocaminos6-es.html>

42 Avakina, *Todo lo que hacemos tiene que ver con la revolución.*
<https://revcom.us/es/avakian/makingrevolution2/makingrevolution-pt2-es.html>

"inadmissible falsification to defend a mistaken idea", there is a long way to go. It is not that the comrades of the Coordinating Committee conceive that this was a statement by Chairman Mao, it is that an editing error was made and something was quoted in quotation marks that was not verbatim. We say this because this part was taken from the International Declaration of the Fifth Meeting of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Parties and Organizations of Latin America, where Chairman Mao was paraphrased in part, but now, whoever edited the text, mistakenly introduced inverted commas that did not exist in the original». ⁴³

The lack of rigour is inadmissible in a document drawn up by a Committee which proposes it as the line of the International Communist Movement. But beyond the doubts and lack of rigour, the basic issue under discussion is whether or not it is agreed that the United States is the "sole hegemonic superpower" and whether or not this constitutes a concession to the Kautskyan theory of "ultra-imperialism".

In accordance with the good sense of comrades who recognise the inter-imperialist contradiction, we pointed out that there was no need to make such a concession in a statement which is proposed as a line for the unity of the International Communist Movement and which was related, not to MLM, but to bourgeois, petty-bourgeois and opportunist theories from which the conclusion of the invincibility of imperialism was politically derived and which led, among others, to the betrayal in Nepal. That is why we point out clearly and precisely:

«The comrades of the Committee try to distance themselves from these [bourgeois, petty-bourgeois and opportunist theories of "ultra-imperialism"] by juggling to show the existence of other imperialist powers, recognising the existence of the struggle between the various imperialist countries and defending the correct thesis of the inter-imperialist contradiction and the struggle for a new division of the already divided world. Something that can explain itself, showing one of the most important contradictions of imperialism in itself without the need to resort to "novel" theories that obscure the consciousness of the proletariat ». ⁴⁴

We thought that this was enough, but the defenders of the *CCIMU* proposal insist on clinging to the error and the comrades of the *PCC (FR)* try to demonstrate such a blunder:

«US imperialism emerged as the sole hegemonic superpower at the beginning of the 1990s, while social-imperialism went bankrupt, remaining only on a par with the former in terms of nuclear warheads. As reality shows, the economic, political, military, etc. power of American imperialism is superior to that of the US, of US imperialism is far superior to that of the other imperialist powers: it controls the world financial system; it is the biggest exporter of capital; it controls the world currency (the dollar dominates more than 60% of all transactions in the world and is far superior to any other currency); it has

⁴³ *Partido Comunista de Colombia (Fracción Roja) – Respuesta al Pronunciamento de la Unión Obrera Comunista (UOC) sobre la Propuesta del Comité Coordinador para la Conferencia Internacional Maoísta Unificada (CIMU)*

⁴⁴ *UOC (mlm)*

hundreds of military bases around the world (it is estimated that between 75-95% of all bases abroad are US bases); it brings many powers under its command, as in the war on Ukraine; it imposes policies and sanctions even on the other imperialist countries, etc.»⁴⁵

It is true that the USA occupies the main and leading place among the imperialist countries, economically, politically and militarily, and not just now; its rise began in the First World War and has been consolidated since the Second World War. However, the labour movement has never attributed to it that of being the "sole hegemonic superpower" because it understands the character of imperialism and the incessant struggle for markets, sources of raw materials, geo-strategic zones, etc., which provoke aggression and wars and push it to war for a new division of the world.

Equally, communists understand that in imperialism there is an unequal development of countries and that just as Britain was displaced by US and Japanese imperialism, and just as social-imperialism collapsed, so will US imperialism, either through the struggle of the proletariat and the peoples of the world, or through the inter-imperialist struggle itself, or the confluence of the two.

The data of world reality itself shows the rapid growth of Chinese imperialism, which is already displacing the "only" superpower in the economic field, if the data of its apparent strength is deflated to its real value; that although the US dollar is still the main currency in international trade, its power is broken, occupying at the moment (end of November) the ninth place after the Kuwaiti Dinar: 3.21 dollars; the Barein Dinar: 2.65 dollars; the Omani Rial: 2.59 dollars; the Jordanian Dinar: 1.41 dollars; the British Pound: 1.12 dollars; the Cayman Islands Dollar: 1.21 dollars; the Euro: 0.97 dollars; the Swiss Franc: 0.99 dollars and will surely continue to be displaced, facts that contradict the comrades claim that "it is far above any other currency". It is also true that the USA has the largest number of military bases in the world and still maintains control of NATO, but the attempts of the European imperialists to create their own military force are no less true. In other words, there is no "single" hegemonic superpower, but the decline of the leading role of US imperialism.

Our argument is correct, the formulation of the *CCIMU* comrades is wrong and makes an unnecessary concession to the bourgeois, petty bourgeois and revisionists in their attempt to make US imperialism look unbeatable. An idea that should have no place as a line of the International Communist Movement.

As for the theory of the "three worlds", the comrades of the *PCC (FR)* trying to ascribe to Mao this detestable Deng Xiaoping theory, make the error of the *CCIMU*'s proposal even greater.

Arguing that Mao did speak of the "three worlds" they bring a quote from notes which are "extracts" from a supposed record of Chairman Mao's talk with President Kenneth David Kaunda of Zambia in 1974. Such "excerpts" were published by the Chinese bourgeoisie in 1998. Interestingly, Mao's interview with Kaunda was widely publicised in the Chinese media, including the Peking Informs magazine, and neither there nor in any other Chinese

45 Partido Comunista de Colombia (Fracción Roja) – Respuesta al Pronunciamento de la Unión Obrera Comunista (UOC) sobre la Propuesta del Comité Coordinador para la Conferencia Internacional Maoísta Unificada (CIMU)

media is there any reference to such "three worlds". This same alleged quotation was the only "proof" found by the Hoxhaite revisionists to impute this reactionary theory to Mao:

«In my view, the USA and the Soviet Union constitute the first world; intermediate forces such as Japan, Europe and Canada make up the second world, and we are part of the third world". "The third world comprises a large population. All of Asia except Japan belongs to the third world; the whole of Africa belongs to the third world, and Latin America belongs to the third world as well».⁴⁶

After such a "proof", which turns Mao into an anti-dialectical revisionist who "ignores" the essential distinction between imperialist countries and oppressed countries, and "adopts" a theory which was clearly aimed at presenting the "second world" powers as friends of the "third world" and not as their bitter enemies, and not as their bitter enemies, the comrades go on to explain something that is not even mentioned in the *CCIMU* proposal, and so we ask about this "second world", which does not appear in a document that is proposed as a revolutionary line for the International Communist Movement, and they give us the following:

«Today, the first world is the United States and Russia, the former as the sole hegemonic superpower, Russia as the atomic superpower; the second world is made up of the second-order imperialist powers such as Germany, Japan, France, etc.; and the third world is made up of all the oppressed nations of Asia, Latin America, Africa and Eastern Europe».⁴⁷

And it is striking that China and England do not appear, surely they are among the etc., or perhaps China is included in "the oppressed nations of Asia". And according to this "brilliant" arrangement of forces, we are instructed about the contradictions they contain:

«This thesis of Chairman Mao allows us to define that the core of the main contradiction on the international level, oppressed nations-imperialism, is today in the struggle against US imperialism, the main enemy of the peoples of the world, but there is also contradiction with the other imperialist powers, a question that cannot be forgotten in order not to fall on the tail of one of them. The Third World is the basis of the world proletarian revolution, where the struggle of the majority and poorest part of the masses defines the main tendency in the world towards revolution. The countries of the first and second world are fighting each other for the new share of the spoils: the third world. The powers of the second world seek to become superpowers, to wrest the hegemony from US imperialism.».⁴⁸

First of all, they derive it is not known how "that the core of the main contradiction at the international level, oppressed nations-imperialism, is today in the struggle against US

46 Mao Zedong on Diplomacy. <https://michaelharrison.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Mao-Zedong-On-Diplomacy-1998.pdf>

47 Partido Comunista de Colombia (Fracción Roja) – Respuesta al Pronunciamiento de la Unión Obrera Comunista (UOC) sobre la Propuesta del Comité Coordinador para la Conferencia Internacional Maoísta Unificada (CIMU)

48 *Ibid.*

imperialism, the main enemy of the peoples of the world". Without resorting to the "brilliant" theory, they had already said that the US imperialism was the "sole hegemonic superpower". What role does Russia, the other superpower, play?

Secondly, they use a cheap jugglery: "but there is also contradiction with the other imperialist powers, a question which cannot be forgotten so as not to fall in line with one of them... The powers of the second world seek to become superpowers, to wrest the hegemony from US imperialism". What difference is there then between the "first" and the "second world" for the revolutionary tactics of the proletariat?

Ten Siao-ping at least was consistent in his reactionary theory, to argue that the "second world" played a progressive role and was an ally of the "third world" in the struggle against the "first world" represented by US imperialism and social-imperialism.

It is grotesque, first to turn Mao into a revisionist and second to make him appear as a vulgar charlatan.

The essential Leninist distinction between imperialist and oppressed countries - under imperialism - is diametrically opposed to the old and new social-democratic and revisionist theories; all heirs of the Kautskyist separation between the economy and the politics of imperialism, which reduce the difference to "rich and poor", "advanced and backward", "developed and underdeveloped" countries, restricting the struggle exclusively against the economic monopolies, without attacking the semi-colonial political power of imperialism; or merely against national oppression, evading the deep semi-colonial economic relations of the metropolises with the social economic formation of the oppressed countries. They deny the imperialist character of some countries, on the pretext of uneven development; or they pretend to pass them off as "progressive" imperialists, as does the anti-Leninist "Three Worlds Theory", concocted by the Chinese revisionists in the midst of the Cultural Revolution, but fraudulently presented yesterday and today as if it were the work of Chairman Mao and a fundamental part of Maoism.

All these theories have a common revisionist essence: to conciliate with imperialism, to prevent the union of the main forces of society against imperialism, to dampen the revolutionary impetus of the working and peasant masses in the oppressed countries, in short, to spoil the real anti-imperialist struggle, an integral part of the revolution of the proletariat in the imperialist countries as well as in the oppressed countries, by reducing it to "world resistance to imperialism", which in this, the Era of World Proletarian Revolution, is harmless to the imperialist countries and demoralising for the peoples of the oppressed countries.

Against this array of deception stands majestically the teaching of the triumphant Proletarian Revolutions of the last century, shattering the chains of national oppression, giving life to a Socialist Camp of countries truly independent of the networks of finance capital, and showing in practice how, under the rule of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, nations and countries united by relations of equality and co-operation can live together. The triumph of revisionism in Russia and China transformed them from socialist countries into imperialist countries, dissolved the Socialist Camp, restored national hatreds and semi-colonial imperialist domination. The defeat of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat is only temporary, its triumph is inevitable.

As we have seen in our defence of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist theory of imperialism, the comrades of the CCIMU and its defenders are wrong; they make concessions to bourgeois, petty-bourgeois and opportunist theories; consequently, their positions do not fully correspond to the point of view, nor to the method, nor to the class position of the proletariat.

In conclusion we would just like to reiterate and reaffirm what has been said throughout this polemic:

The triumph of capitalism, converted into a world system of oppression and exploitation, is the cause of its inevitable defeat, for it has not only forged throughout the length and breadth of the planet the class that will bury it, the class of the proletarians, it has also sharpened the class struggle in general, it has widened the differences between them, it has accelerated the proletarianisation of vast layers of the petty bourgeoisie; It has stimulated the desire for anti-imperialist struggle among the working masses of the world, on whom it has unloaded the burden of their exploitation and the opprobrium of their domination.

Finance capital - which dominates production, distribution, political and social life throughout the world - and the monopoly associations - which profit in their exclusive private interest from all the means of production, from all raw materials, from all territories and from the whole of human society - have carried exploitation and oppression to the extreme; but in their pursuit of profit, they have created the conditions so that once the chains imposed by monopoly finance capital have been broken, the social planning of production and the distribution of the means of life will satisfy the needs of society.

The imposition of monopolies in the capitalist economy has led to the political monopolisation of social life; the tendency towards freedom - typical of the dawn of capitalism - has been replaced by the tendency towards subjugation, the intensification of oppression of countries and nations. The tendency towards democracy, characteristic of the old bourgeois revolution, has been replaced by the tendency towards political reaction in every line and in every order, pushing the progressive forces into the stream of revolution. Hence, it is reactionary to conceive of the struggle against imperialism as a struggle exclusively against the economic monopolies, for that would be to aspire to a return to the first phase, which becomes an endorsement of imperialist oppression; And to conceive of it as a struggle only in the political domain - unrelated to the survival of world capital on account of the exploitation of world labour - is, besides being reactionary, the worst betrayal of the working class, because it means supporting capitalist exploitation, when the latter has accumulated capital to such an extent that it has become excessive, not only in relation to the imperialist countries, but in relation to all countries.

Capitalism itself has prepared humanity's passage to socialism, because it has created its *material conditions*: it has turned production into a social process, at the same time as appropriation into a private process; it has organised production into immense factories on a world scale, at the same time as it has plunged it into anarchy, thereby hindering the development of the productive forces under capitalist relations of production, and slowing down the development of society; It has concentrated wealth in the non-working minority of society and misery in the vast working majority of society, pushing the antagonism between

capital and labour to the limit; it has created the class of proletarians dispossessed of the means of production, whose historic mission is to bring the social character of production into correspondence with the social character of property, by resolving through *a political and social revolution the contradictions in which imperialist capitalism has embroiled the whole of society*. The bourgeoisie is a class historically powerless to resolve these contradictions, but moreover, it is incapable of guaranteeing the living conditions of its wage-slaves; therefore, *the existence of the bourgeoisie is incompatible with the existence of society, and its system, imperialism, is the death throes of capitalism and the antechamber of socialism*.

Contrary to the efforts of the apologists of imperialism, all the facts of the present day expose and confirm that *imperialism is capitalism in decomposition*, dying, the last stage of the capitalist system and the eve of the world socialist revolution; *the World Proletarian Revolution is therefore a consequence of the conditions of development of imperialism*. The dictatorship of finance capital must inevitably give way to the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

Commission for Theoretical Struggle - Communist Workers' Union (mlm)

Colombia, November 2022

On Semi-feudalism and Semi-coloniality

In the current debates in the international communist movement, the old discussion about the development of capitalism in the oppressed countries is once again gaining relevance. It is a discussion about the understanding of the character of society in the oppressed countries where it is clear that capitalist relations of production predominate and from which the tasks of the revolution, the strategy and tactics of the communists are derived. Some comrades maintain that, despite the changes that have taken place in the oppressed countries, the economic-social formation of these countries remains semi-feudal and semi-colonial, since imperialism has created an artificial capitalism, deconfigured as it pleases. We will examine this question in the light of the present stage of imperialist capitalism and confront the reality that the comrades maintain with the actual development of the capitalist mode of production. This is a far-reaching question because it determines the character of the societies of most of the oppressed countries and, consequently, the stage of revolution in them today.

Before embarking on a discussion of the character of the relations of production in the oppressed countries, it is imperative to outline issues related to definitional questions: What is a semi-feudal semi-colonial social formation according to Mao? What is capitalist agrarian rent? What is the correct Marxist-Leninist-Maoist methodology for dealing with the question of backward forms of land tenancy? We will begin with Mao's understanding of a semi-feudal semi-colonial society.

1. Mao's theory of semi-feudal semi-colonial social formation

Among the various writings in which Mao deals with the question of what is a semi-feudal and semi-colonial society, his *Analysis of the Classes of Chinese Society* (1926); *The Chinese Revolution and the Communist Party of China* (1939); and his *On the New Democracy* (1940) stand out. Although the study of Chinese society was never a finished object for Mao and the Chinese communists (it was constantly being analysed after the triumph of the Chinese revolution), we consider that these three texts contain the basis of his theory of semi-feudal and semi-coloniality, as well as the question of what is a comprador bourgeoisie.

In the text *Class Analysis of Chinese Society*, Mao first of all differentiates between the nature and character of the comprador big bourgeoisie and the nature and character of the middle or "national" bourgeoisie. In referring to the comprador bourgeoisie, we must understand this bourgeoisie to mean the bourgeoisie which serves the interests of foreign capital and is linked to it. To be even more precise: the comprador bourgeoisie is that which belongs to a country without relative autonomy and which is a purely parasitic class by guaranteeing external input (investment) in exchange for a return, without taking part in the productive cycles. Mao clearly defines the comprador bourgeoisie as "appendages of the international (imperialist) bourgeoisie" which is "totally dependent on it". In contrast, Mao argues, the middle or national bourgeoisie differs from the comprador bourgeoisie because it

represents capitalist relations of production. We must therefore keep in mind that the middle or national bourgeoisie is not simply a commercial, usurious or bureaucratic bourgeoisie, but an industrial bourgeoisie. Consequently, an industrial bourgeoisie cannot be a comprador bourgeoisie, i.e. the industrial bourgeoisie is characterised both as an exporter of capital and as an exploiter of labour power. This is a very important point because historical experience has repeatedly shown us how the industrial bourgeoisie itself needs the existence of markets for its growth and reproduction and cannot, therefore, be a comprador bourgeoisie by nature (at certain moments its role and role will be constrained either by the strength of the great imperialist powers or by the slow penetration of capitalism into this social formation and the coexistence of different relations of production).

In the 1939 text (*The Chinese Revolution and the Communist Party of China*), Mao defines very clearly the main characteristics of a feudal country. He lists the basic characteristics of a feudal society as follows:

"1) Predominance of the natural economy. The peasants produced not only the agricultural products they consumed, but also most of the handicrafts they needed. What the landowners and the nobility extracted from the peasants in the form of land rents was also destined mainly for consumption and not for exchange. Although there was exchange at that time, it did not play a decisive role in the economy as a whole.

2) The feudal ruling class - landowners, nobility and emperor - owned most of the land, while the peasants owned little or none. The peasants cultivated with their own implements the land of the landlords, the nobility and the imperial family, to whom they had to deliver, for their own consumption, 40, 50, 60, 70 or even 80 or more per cent of the harvest. The peasants were in reality serfs.

3) Not only did the landlords, the nobility and the imperial family live off the exploitation of the peasants by renting out the land, but the state of the landlord class also forced the peasants to pay taxes and tribute and imposed personal benefits on them in order to maintain a horde of officials and an army mainly to suppress them.

4) The apparatus of power that protected this system of feudal exploitation was the feudal state of the landlord class. If, in the period before the Chin dynasty, the feudal state was divided into rival principalities, later, when the country was unified by the first emperor of the Chin dynasty, it became an absolutist state with centralised power, although the feudal division remained to some extent. In the feudal state, the emperor was all-powerful. He appointed officials in various parts of the country who were in charge of military and judicial affairs, finances and state granaries, and he relied on the landlords and shenshi, the pillars of the entire feudal regime.

Under feudal economic exploitation and political oppression, the Chinese peasants lived from generation to generation as slaves, in misery and suffering. Tied to the yoke of feudalism, they had no personal freedoms. The landlords had the right to insult, beat and even kill at will the peasants, who were deprived of

any political rights. The extreme misery and backwardness of the peasants, a consequence of the ruthless exploitation and oppression to which they were subjected by the landlord class, is the fundamental cause of the economic and social stagnation of Chinese society for thousands of years.”¹

Mao therefore mentions here four basic identifying features: a self-sufficient subsistence economy and insignificant production for exchange, a feudal landlord class demanding feudal rent from the peasantry and maritime workers, a feudal state power financed by the collection of feudal rent, and a feudal state as protector of the feudal system of exploitation and oppression (here it is important to note that long before the debate on the nature of the absolutist state began among Marxist historians, Mao had made it clear that the feudal state can be characterised by a parcelling out of the state, but also by a centralised despotic and absolutist state power; the organisation of the state is not the *differentia specifica* of the identification of the character of the state).

Mao then describes the basic characteristic features of a semi-feudal semi-colonial society. This is all the more important, since the dogmatism prevailing in the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist movement has prevented many groups/organisations/parties from undertaking a creative study of the relations of production in their country, as well as the nature of their bourgeoisie. They cling to the 1963 General Line as if it were the tablets of Moses, to the detriment of assessments of the overall strategy and tactics of the revolutionary movement, questions which demand a continuously dynamic analysis of the subject. Let us see how Mao defines the basic characteristic features of a semi-feudal semi-colonial society.

First, Mao explains how the former feudal China was transformed into a semi-feudal and semi-colonial China, and how imperialism accelerated capitalist relations of production:

"Since the mercantile economy developing in Chinese feudal society already bore the germs of capitalism, Chinese society would have slowly become capitalist, even without the action of foreign capitalism. The penetration of foreign capitalism accelerated this transformation. Foreign capitalism has played a very important role in the disintegration of China's economic and social system: on the one hand, it has undermined the foundations of the natural economy and ruined the handicraft industry of the cities and the domestic handicraft of the peasants; on the other hand, it has accelerated the development of the market economy in town and country.

All this has not only led to the disintegration of the foundations of the Chinese feudal economy, but, at the same time, has created certain objective conditions and possibilities for the development of capitalist production, because the destruction of the natural economy has opened up a market for capitalism's products, and the ruin of large numbers of peasants and artisans has provided it with a market for labour".

¹ <https://www.marxists.org/espanol/mao/escritos/CRCCP39s.html#cls3>

Mao lists ten methods used by imperialism to subjugate China, which turned it into a semi-feudal and semi-colonial country. These methods are: (i) wars of aggression, (ii) unequal treaties, rights of use of Chinese ports, air routes, establishing their consular jurisdiction thus dividing China into spheres of influence, (iii) control of trade and ports making China a dumping ground for their goods, (iv) exploitation of cheap labour and raw materials from China hindering their national capitalist development (this point of Mao's alludes to the export of capital to China, (v) control of China's banking and finance and loans to the Chinese government, (vi) the creation of a comprador-usurious capitalist class to exploit the mass of peasants and workers in China, (vii) he reiterates that the allies of imperialism in China are the feudal landlord class and the comprador-usurious merchant class), (viii) military support to the Chinese government to suppress the Chinese masses, (ix) cultural aggression through educational institutions, sending Chinese students to study abroad, missionary work to build schools, hospitals, etc. , (x) a large part of semi-feudal semi-colonial China has become a full-fledged colony of Japan since 1939.²

Mao summarises the character of Chinese society by saying that the previous steps of imperialism, on the one hand, have accelerated the destruction of China's natural feudal economy and led to limited capitalist development, and on the other hand, have obstructed China's independent national capitalist development and turned it into a semi-feudal and semi-colonial country. For this reason, the comprador bourgeoisie has been defined as a merchant-usurious bourgeoisie, while the national bourgeoisie is an industrial bourgeoisie, much weaker in its political power and as an economic force, but representing the capitalist relations of production in China.

Mao then goes on to list the basic characteristic features of a semi-feudal semi-colonial country.

"Taking these two aspects together, we can see that China's colonial, semi-colonial and semi-feudal society possesses the following characteristics:

- 1) The foundations of the natural economy of the feudal era have been destroyed, but the exploitation of the peasantry by the landlord class, the basis of the feudal system of exploitation, not only remains intact, but, linked with the exploitation exercised by comprador and usurious capital, manifestly predominates in the economic and social life of China.
- 2) National capitalism has developed to a certain extent and plays a considerable role in the political and cultural life of China. However, it has not yet become the main form within its economic-social regime; it is very weak, and for the most part it is at least linked with foreign imperialism and internal feudalism.
- 3) The autocratic power of the emperor and the nobility has been overthrown and in its place has arisen, first, the domination of military warlords and bureaucrats belonging to the landlord class, and then the dictatorship of the alliance between

² *"Tesis sobre los movimientos revolucionarios en las colonias y semicolonias" de la Comintern y de Stalin sobre China.*

the landlord class and the big bourgeoisie. In the occupied areas, power is held by Japanese imperialism and its puppets.

4) The imperialists control not only the levers of China's financial and economic life, but also its political and military forces. In the occupied areas, everything is monopolised by Japanese imperialism.

5) China's economic, political and cultural development is extremely uneven because it is under the total or partial domination of many imperialist powers, because it has not really been unified for a long time, and because its territory is immense.

6) Under the double yoke of imperialism and feudalism, and especially as a result of the large-scale invasion of Japanese imperialism, the great masses of the people of China, particularly the peasants, are becoming poorer and poorer and even ruined in great numbers; they are living in hunger and cold and deprived of all political rights. Rare are the places in the world where one sees such misery and lack of freedom as the Chinese people know.

Such are the characteristics of colonial, semi-colonial and semi-feudal Chinese society..”³

The synthesis is very clear. The first point states that agrarian relations remain feudal because, although the old feudal natural subsistence economy has been destroyed, the exploitation of the peasantry by the landlords through feudal rent remains the basis of the relations of production in the countryside. In the same first point it is again made clear that the comprador bourgeoisie is by nature commercial-usurious and (therefore) bureaucratic.

In the second point, Mao makes it clear that capitalist relations have developed to a certain extent due to imperialist intervention, but that China nevertheless remains a semi-feudal and semi-colonial country because capitalist relations of production have not become the dominant relations of production. In other words, capitalism is not the dominant mode of production in China's social economy. This is the corollary of the fact that the comprador comprador commercial-merchant big bourgeoisie is in power in alliance with the feudal landlord class, while the national bourgeoisie is oppressed by imperialism and feudalism and is a hesitant ally of the revolution. At other points, Mao explains how imperialism controls the semi-colony financially and militarily; how the masses lack all political rights and therefore there are no bourgeois-democratic freedoms. There is no real political independence.

Another important characteristic of semi-feudal and semi-colonial society is the fragmentation of political power. In fact, this fragmentation is one of the reasons why Mao argued that the path of the Chinese revolution, and by extension that of all revolutions in semi-feudal and semi-colonial formations, could not be armed insurrection centred in the city, but a protracted people's war in which the cities would be surrounded by the villages. These are, briefly stated, the basic characteristic features of the semi-feudal-semi-colonial formation, according to Mao.

3 <https://www.marxists.org/espanol/mao/escritos/CRCCP39s.html#cls3>

Later in the essay, Mao again undertakes the analysis of the classes in Chinese society, while analysing the driving forces of the revolution. Here again, the description makes it clear that the commercial and usurious bourgeoisie is the comprador bourgeoisie; it rules in alliance with the feudal landlords under the tutelage of the imperialists. This is only possible for a commercial and usurious bourgeoisie that behaves like a commercial and usurious bourgeoisie. It is not possible for the industrial bourgeoisie because its development is against the interests of the feudal landlord class and therefore against total submission to imperialism.

In the 1940 text, *On New Democracy*, Mao also makes it clear in passing a couple of times that the comprador bourgeoisie is a bureaucratic and commercial-usurious bourgeoisie as opposed to the middle bourgeoisie which is the national bourgeoisie and represents capitalist relations:

"The Chinese national bourgeoisie, belonging to a colonial and semi-colonial country and being oppressed by imperialism, still has at certain periods and to a certain extent a revolutionary character, even in the epoch of imperialism, in the sense that it opposes the foreign imperialists and, as the Revolution of 1911 and the Northern Expedition testify, the governments of bureaucrats and military leaders of the country, and can ally itself with the proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie against the enemies which it is in the interest of all to fight."

Mao also refers to the fact that this national bourgeoisie has a dual character. On the one hand, at times it plays an anti-imperialist role because of the oppression it faces, while, on the other hand, it can also collaborate with the imperialists. He considers this dual character to be a historical characteristic of the national bourgeoisie and gives the example of the American bourgeoisie and the European bourgeoisie which shows how in the face of feudalism, it played a revolutionary role and when confronted with the rising tide of the movements of the working class and labouring masses, it took the side of reaction. This is a very important observation of Mao's also in the context of the different bourgeoisies of his time as well as today, which did not and do not even have today a vigour comparable to that of the American or European bourgeoisie. From the beginning they always presented a dual character. On the one hand, in the context of the national liberation movements, they fought for political independence against imperialism according to their own convenience and, on the other hand, they left no stone unturned in order to keep the mass movement in the sphere of their own interests. As Mao stated in his speech:

"We have the task of supporting the national liberation movements, that is, we must support the broad masses of people in Asia, Africa and Latin America, including the workers, the peasants, the revolutionary national bourgeoisie and the revolutionary intellectuals. We want to unite with so many people. But not with those who include the reactionary national bourgeoisie like Nehru..."⁴

Mao elaborates further:

⁴ (*Discurso en el X Pleno del VIII Comité Central, 1962*)

"But the imperialist countries do not like their neutral position, because they obtained their neutrality by shaking off imperialist domination. The neutrality of the nationalist countries is a position of independence, sovereignty and freedom of control. We in the socialist camp salute the neutral position of these countries, because it is favourable to the cause of peace and unfavourable to imperialist plans of aggression and war. We regard as friends the independent countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America and also those countries which have not yet achieved independence or are struggling for it. We support them." (ibid)

Mao considers it possible that there are countries which are neither imperialist nor semi-colonial colonies/semi-feudal semi colonies. This statement is fully in line with Lenin's view in his pamphlet *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*. Lenin argues that it is possible to have countries that are capitalist but not imperialist, giving as an example the case of Portugal.

From these three texts and from Mao's above-mentioned talks it is clear that (i) a semi-feudal and semi-colonial social formation is characterised by a limited development of capitalism and by the continued domination of feudal relations of production; the capitalist mode of production is subordinated to the feudal mode of production and to the imperialist domination implemented through the usurious commercial big bourgeoisie; (ii) the comprador bourgeoisie is, for the most part, a commercial and usurious big bourgeoisie "appendix of imperialism" and "totally dependent on it"; (iii) a bourgeoisie which is, for the most part, an industrial and financial bourgeoisie can never be comprador because it itself needs the markets. To be comprador is incongruous with its mainly industrial character. And (iv) it is possible that there are countries which are neither imperialist nor semi-feudal and semi-colonial, but which are relatively backward capitalist countries.

Also, following the analysis of our masters of the proletariat, we must briefly mention Marx's considerations on feudalism and capitalist ground rent.

Marx's analysis of capitalist basic rent is essential in order to understand the transition from feudal to capitalist relations in agriculture.

According to Marx, the essence of feudal relations is feudal rent. What is feudal rent and how does it differ from capitalist agrarian rent? Feudal rent is the form in which the surplus product or surplus labour of the peasant is appropriated by the feudal lords, mainly used for their consumption, while the peasants also produce mainly for their own consumption, rather than for sale. Feudal rent can take the form of labour rent, rent in kind or money rent. Money rent in itself is not necessarily capitalist rent. However, historically speaking, feudal rent has assumed the form of money rent on a considerable scale, especially when the transition to capitalism has begun.

What is capitalist land rent? Capitalist ground rent is the ground rent that arises when land is converted into a commodity and used for the production of commodities through the exploitation of wage labour. Where the landlord appropriates a share of the surplus value. This is the crux of the question of capitalist agrarian rent. The capitalist peasant or tenant farmer produces for the market and gives a part of the surplus as ground rent to the landlord.

The landlord in capitalism is the owner of the land and by that fact alone receives a share of the profit. It is also the case that the landlord. He carries on both agricultural production by investing capital and employing wage-labour, and in this case he appropriates not only the rent, but, like an industrial capitalist, he appropriates the surplus value created by wage-labour. He may also sometimes work in the fields, often with the labour of his family, but this does not essentially alter his character as a capitalist agricultural proprietor.

Marx speaks of three types of capitalist ground rent: absolute rent, differential rent-I and differential rent-II. Absolute ground rent exists because of the private monopoly of a non-produced resource, namely land. Differential rent I exists because of the difference in the productivity of land. Differential rent II exists because of differences in capital investment or successive capital investment in land.

In short, capitalist production in agriculture is mainly for exchange and using wage labour. Whatever the backward forms of exploitation or leasing of land may be, they can only slow down the speed of the capitalist transformation of agriculture, but they cannot stop it. Lenin showed this very clearly in the case of Russia and it can also be seen in the context of other countries today, as in the case of India or Brazil.

Finally, we also find in Lenin relevant points of study on the capitalist transformation of agriculture which we will briefly mention:

In studying capitalist agriculture from a dialectical point of view, we must refer to his work *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, especially if we are dealing with the development of capitalist agriculture in oppressed countries which are, as we revolutionary communists maintain, relatively backward capitalist countries.

In that work, Lenin speaks of two types of capitalist transformation of agriculture: the first is the Prussian way of agrarian reforms, the reformist way, in which feudal landlords are given the opportunity and sometimes forced to transform themselves into capitalist landlords. This way is also called junker transformation. The other way is the American way of land reforms. This is the revolutionary way in which the slogan "land for those who works it" is applied. Historically, we have seen these two ways in different parts of the world and also the mixture of both ways in some countries.

Lenin makes it clear that although the first way is reactionary, in terms of qualitative change of agrarian relations, it is also a transformation. Both ways transform feudal relations of production into capitalist relations of production. Capitalist transformation has historically taken place in both ways: by destroying the landed economy and by maintaining the landed economy but changing its character. In the Prussian way, change is slow and many feudal remnants survive for a long time, giving rise to complex backward forms of tenancy and the continuation of usury, albeit in a capitalist context. By the American way, change is rapid and revolutionary, sweeping away feudal vestiges in a revolutionary way.

Regarding the first way, i.e. the way of the gradual bourgeois transformation of the landlord economy, Lenin writes:

"Serfdom can be abolished if the feudal and landlord economy slowly evolves into the bourgeois economy of the junkers, if the mass of peasants become landless peasants and Knechts, if the masses are kept at a pauperised standard of living by

force, if small groups of Grossbauern, of rich peasants, inevitably emerge under capitalism from among the peasantry They have realised that the road to the development of Russia cannot be cleared unless the rusty medieval forms of land ownership are broken up by force..... They have given the kulaks carte blanche to rob the peasant masses... to ruin thousands of peasant farms, they have handed over the medieval village to be "pillage and plundered" by the money-holders. They cannot act otherwise, if they want to preserve their class rule, for they have realised the need to adapt themselves to capitalist development and not to fight against it (...) This way of development (...) demands generalised, systematic and unbridled violence against the peasant masses and against the proletariat..."⁵

It goes without saying that no revolutionary or communist would ever support this path of capitalist development. However, it is not a question of our support or opposition. We cannot ignore this process if it really takes place. We, as communists, must take note of it. The result of this path of capitalist transformation of agriculture is the ruin of the peasant masses, the creation of a class of landless wage labourers through the eviction of the tenant farmers, a class of rentier capitalist landlords and a class of rich peasants, agrarian bourgeoisie, both farmers and tenant farmers.

Lenin argues that there are three main characteristic features of capitalist agriculture:

- 1) the employment of wage labour and the appropriation of surplus value;
- 2) the commodification of the products of the peasantry and market relations;
- 3) the capitalisation of surplus value and the extension of reproduction in agriculture.

The commodification of peasant products also transforms the nature of land rent and tenancy. The lease may even retain its old form, while the content undergoes this transformation. Lenin argues:

"Capitalism penetrates into agriculture particularly slowly and in extremely varied forms." (Lenin, 1978, *Development of Capitalism in Russia*, Collected Works, Vol-3, Progress Publishing House, p. 178).

Lenin writes:

"America provides the most graphic confirmation of the truth stressed by Marx in *Capital*, Volume III, that capitalism in agriculture does not depend on the form of ownership or tenure of land. Capitalism encounters the most diverse types of medieval and patriarchal landed property: feudal, peasant allotment (i.e. peasant holdings in serfdom), clan, communal, state and other forms of land ownership. Capital takes over all of them, using a variety of forms and methods"..⁶

The study of a mode of production requires knowledge of how to analyse statistics that are organised in an obscure way, and therefore needs serious political and economic

5 (Lenin, 1978, *El programa agrario de la socialdemocracia en la primera revolución rusa, 1905-1907*, *Obras Completas*, Vol-13, Editorial Progreso, p. 422)

6 (Lenin, 1978, *Nuevos datos sobre las leyes que rigen el desarrollo del capitalismo en la agricultura*, *Obras Completas*, Vol. 22, Editorial Progreso, p. 22)

deciphering. Consequently, without such a thorough analysis, we are trapped in categories that create the impression that the character of agriculture is still semi-feudal or feudal. This becomes especially complex in those countries which have known the Prussian way of agrarian development. Lenin warned in advance against such confusion, with these words:

"For agricultural statistics to be compiled properly and rationally, the methods of research, tabulation, etc. would have to be modified to correspond to the forms of capitalist penetration into agriculture, e.g., the household farms would have to be put into a special group and their economic destiny mapped out."
(Lenin, 1978, *New Data on the Laws Governing the Development of Capitalism in Agriculture*, Collected Works, Vol. 22, Progress Publishing House, p. 22)

Lenin explains in great detail in his *The Development of Capitalism in Russia* that no form of land tenure is an insuperable impediment to the development of capitalism in agriculture. He also shows that another important feature of capitalist development in agriculture is the differentiation of the peasantry. What we have quoted and discussed here is sufficient to show the basic requirements of capitalist development in agriculture and also its basic characteristic features.

Summing up the points, and having gone through what the great universal masters of our class have to say, we can clearly maintain that property relations and the modes of extraction of surplus labour determine the mode of production. The essence of feudal relations of production is expressed in the form of feudal rent. Feudal rent can exist in the form of labour, specie and money. Therefore, monetary rent arose towards the end of the feudal mode of production because it could only develop with a considerable level of development of monetary circulation and the market mechanism of capitalism. Money rent provided a great deal of autonomy to the peasant, who could accumulate capital through increased production and a marketable surplus. However, Marx clarifies, any form of rent (even monetary rent) is feudal if the landlord-servant relationship exists; if agricultural labour is not free; if the feudal lord collects rent in the form of money, specie or labour; if the peasant is not free to make decisions affecting production; if the serf/tenant/peasant is not alienated from the means of production; if the feudal lord acts as a de facto, parcelled state with legislative, executive and judicial powers; if there is extra-economic coercion of the peasant; and, ultimately, if production is mainly for the consumption of the peasant family and the surplus is given without reward to the landlord. All these elements make the dominant relations of production feudal in character.

Marx further argues that the dominant criterion for the development of capitalist agriculture is the formation of the agricultural proletariat. This class of rural wage-workers is created through the process of separation of the owners from their means of production, which also simultaneously creates an internal market for capital. The internal market is created because labour-power itself becomes a commodity, the consumption resources of the peasantry under feudalism are now free for sale, the means of production are alienated from the producer and therefore have to be bought and sold. Production is geared to profit, to the market, to the self-valorisation of capital.

2. The coincidence of the theory of semi-feudalism with the theorists of neo-liberalism regarding capitalist land rent

One of the main errors of the supporters of the theory of semi-feudalism is due to the confusion of the concept of absolute land rent. This fact, by the way, coincides with the theories of neo-liberal theorists. In such theorising, the tenant farmer is considered on a par with the wage labourer, the only difference being that the wage of the former is not in cash but in kind. These gentlemen completely ignore the fact that the tenant farmer owns his means of production, invests capital, controls the work process and makes production decisions. This is because the neo-liberal economists do not know, or rather ignore, the concept of absolute ground rent. The capitalist rentier landlord (CRL) is called a capitalist farmer; the tenant is called a worker (wage labourer); and rent is confused with profit. The tenant sharecropper's share is arbitrarily called a wage (in cash or in kind, it doesn't matter!). The result of this muddle is that the neo-liberal economists only know the relationship between the capitalist landlord-farmer and the wage-labourer, and only understand the concept of profit, not rent.

Likewise, our theorists of semi-feudalism call this tenant as the quasi-labourer who is destitute, beggar, who has no control over production decisions and the labour process; who is, therefore, "unfree" under the yoke of "feudal" landlords and usurers. Evidently, they also do not understand the concept of absolute rent and confuse the capitalist tenant with the non-free and non-capitalist worker or quasi-labourer, almost a serf/forced labourer. Nor do they understand the role of usurers' capital in agricultural production under capitalism. For them, this tenant is an unfree and indigent labourer, and not a capitalist tenant who owns the means of production. The capital must be provided by the landowner and the sharecropper only provides labour. This indigent sharecropper receives only a meagre wage and the landlord gets a rent (as Ricardo says!). But if we look closely, what these theorists call "wages" is in reality the profit of the capitalist tenant; what they call "rent" is, in reality, the profit on the capital which the landlord has advanced in the form of interest.

For example, in the theory of bureaucratic capitalism the native sharecropper is conceptualised as someone who has little or no means of production, no savings, no means of survival, so he takes a "consumption loan" from the landlord. But, in reality, this "consumption loan" is nothing more than a wage advance that is deducted from the wage of the harvest share with interest. Apparently, what is called "rent" is, in reality, the profit on the capital advanced by the rentier capitalist landlord to the wage-earner. What is called by the semi-feudal theorists "tenant" is, in reality, labour; what is called "rent" is, in reality, profit; what is called "consumption loan" is, in reality, wage advance, which is subsequently adjusted by the harvest share wage with interest.

What occurs in the case of some countries described as "semi-feudal-semi-colonial" but which are in fact *backward capitalist countries* is that the absolute ground rent is taken by the capitalist rentier landlord (CRL), regardless of the fact whether he makes any advance of capital to the tenant as a loan or not. What he might take in return for any capital investment in land and production is no more than the interest on the loan advanced to the capitalist tenant. The tenant is not a wage-labourer. He produces surplus with his own

means of production, family and hired labour, his own investments in the land leased from the CCCL, in return for a rent which is a share of the surplus he produces over the cost of production which includes his cost of subsistence.

Now, capitalist agriculture can be dominated by the capitalist rentier landlord (CRL) or by the capitalist peasant landowner (CFL), depending on the conditions of production. The CRL can be transformed into a CFL when, through technological progress and land improvement, the rent increases so much that the CRL has enough capital to invest. However, this change is by no means irreversible as the CFL can transform back into CRL.

What is relevant about the preponderance of leasing in the agrarian economy is that it has nothing to do with the fact that this is tantamount to the existence of semi-feudal relations per se, as the theorists of semi-feudalism claim. Kautsky (when he was a Marxist), in his work on *The Agrarian Question*, gives ample evidence from late 19th century England, France, Germany, the United States and the North Atlantic Union, that with the development of capitalist agriculture, tenancy became more and more prevalent. It shows that in capitalist agriculture there are landlord farms (landlord peasant farms) and tenant peasant farms. The tenant peasant produces surplus on the rented farm with family and hired labour. Part of this surplus is transferred to the landlord in the form of rent, part to the usurer/creditor in the form of interest and the rest is pocketed as profit. The peasant landowner keeps the profit after paying the interest on the loan, if any, and the capitalist landowner keeps the rent. However, Kautsky points out that the property rights of the peasant landowner only become a formal legal reality with the development of capitalist agriculture. The peasant landowner needs more and more capital to compete on the market. He obtains it in the form of a mortgage loan on his property. In return for this loan he has to hand over the rent of the land to the mortgagee, who can be a state institution or a non-institutional creditor like the usurer. This, in effect, is the alienation of the producer from the land.

Kautsky explains it as follows: "The division between the landowner and the entrepreneur - though hidden behind particular legal forms - still exists. The ground rent which accrues to the landowner in the leasehold system ends up in the pocket of the mortgagee in the mortgage system. As the owner of the ground rent, the latter is thus the real owner of the land itself. On the contrary, the nominal owner of the land is a capitalist entrepreneur who collects the profit of the enterprise and the ground rent, and then pays the latter in the form of mortgage interest... the difference between the leasehold system and the mortgage system is simply that in the latter the real owner of the land is called a capitalist, and the real capitalist entrepreneur, a landowner. Thanks to this confusion, our peasants (one can read here the semi-feudal theorists), who in reality exercise capitalist functions, tend to be very indignant at exploitation by "mobile capital", i.e. the mortgagees who, in fact, play the same economic role as the landowner in the leasehold system." (p.225, *The Agrarian Question*, Kautsky).

He argues that through this process the landlord is not transformed into a proletariat, but into a tenant. He further explains: "*However, progress and prosperity in agriculture will inevitably be expressed in an increase in mortgage indebtedness, firstly because such progress*

generates an increasing need for capital and, secondly, because the extension of agricultural credit enables land rents to rise. (p.226, ibid). This capitalist transformation is often confused with the ruin of agriculture and leads some people to call for "saving the peasant". Lenin dismantles this illusion quite clearly and quotes Kautsky: "The protection of the peasantry (der Bauernschutz) does not mean the protection of the peasant's person (no one, of course, would oppose such protection), but the protection of the peasants' property. Incidentally, it is precisely the property of the peasants that is the main cause of their impoverishment and degradation. Hired farm labourers are now quite often in a better position than small farmers. The protection of the peasantry is not protection against poverty, but protection from the shackles which chain the peasant to his poverty." (Lenin, Review of Kautsky's Die Agrarfrage, p.267, ibid).

It is clear, therefore, that leasing in itself is not a sign of semi-feudal relations. As we have mentioned, Mao has clearly defined what he meant by semi-feudal relations. Mao argued that in pre-revolutionary China much of the land was under the ownership of the landlords, the nobility and the emperor. The peasants were forced to work as serfs; the foundations of the self-sufficient natural economy were being destroyed, but the extra-economic exploitation of the peasantry by the feudal landlord class was intact and linked with comprador and usurious capital. (Mao Tse-tung, Selected Works, Vol-II, 1976, p. 312-3)

Semi-feudalism for Mao was not a separate mode of production, but essentially the feudal mode of production in its transitional stage, or form, to capitalism, but a transition which was hindered by feudal landlords, comprador bourgeoisie and imperialism, and therefore could not be achieved without a New Democratic Revolution. Here what is of cardinal importance in analysing social formations is to see the feudal character of rent, the unfree labour of the serfs, the parcelled-up state in the form of legislative, executive and judicial powers of the feudal class, the domination of the comprador bourgeoisie and imperialism. Obviously, semi-feudal relations are a particular category of Marxist theory and political economy and cannot be imposed on the reality of the oppressed countries according to the whims of today's theorists of semi-feudalism. For example, can we say that in the oppressed countries the landlord-servant relation is the dominant form of agrarian relation? So-called bonded labour is a tiny percentage of rural labour worldwide. The absentee landlord is being replaced by hired labour cultivation. And even if there were no such substitution, this would not necessarily be a sign of feudalism.

Before concluding this section, it is necessary to mention the role of the bourgeoisie of the oppressed countries. The capitalist transformation of agriculture cannot be challenged with the rigid and antiquated frameworks put forward by the theoreticians of semi-feudalism. This is fundamentally because it is not possible to ignore the real role of the character of the bourgeoisie of these countries. The behaviour of the Brazilian, Indian or Philippine bourgeoisie over the last decades is by no means that of a merely comprador bourgeoisie. For example, the Indian state is a peculiar type of post-colonial capitalist state characterised by a bourgeoisie which is neither national (because it does not share any interest with the Indian people), nor comprador (because it is not only a servant and intermediary of the imperialists and many examples can be cited from the Suez Canal question, the Soviet Asia Maitri Sangh question, to the Copenhagen Summit, etc.), which show that it has taken independent political decisions, which show that it has taken independent political decisions in contradiction with the metropolitan imperialist

bourgeoisie) and even less an imperialist bourgeoisie (because the import of capital by the Indian bourgeoisie is much more than its export of capital, which has certainly been increasing over the last two decades). The character and role of the Brazilian bourgeoisie with regard to the BRICS shows that its international role is far from being that of a comprador bourgeoisie or one entirely subjugated to imperialism and that, within its limits, it aspires to be a regional actor already manifesting positions of predominance vis-à-vis other oppressed countries.

So, at this point, what is the character of these bourgeoisies?

Well, fundamentally they are characterised, in some clear cases, by 1) being junior partners of imperialism (not of a single imperialist country, but in the whole imperialist system); 2) being relatively independent politically (Turkey, Brazil and India), although economically dependent; 3) entering into contradiction with the bloc to which they belong, without renouncing their relative political independence and; 4) trying to balance and counterbalance their "national" class interests through negotiation between the different imperialists. The "unipolarity" ("single hegemonic superpower") of the imperialist system can only be a momentary phenomenon. As Lenin has shown, monopoly is accompanied by its dialectical opposite, which is competition, and this very dialectic causes the uneven development in imperialism and creates the revolutionary situation combined with other factors.

Epilogue

Comrades Marxist-Leninist-Maoists:

In response to the replies received from the comrades of the *Communist International newspaper, Poder Proletario - MLM Party Organisation*, and the *Communist Party of Colombia (Red Faction)*, we have substantiated the criticisms made in our Pronouncement of 25 January 2022 on the proposal of the CCIMU, *Bases for Discussion*.

We have referred to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (new, third and higher stage of the development of Marxism), to the general laws of dialectics, to some questions of the imperialist system and of the world proletarian revolution, since they represent the central problems of the debate, or raise the most important divergences with the positions of *Bases of Discussion*.

We return to the present discussion in the conviction that such divergences have the character of contradictions within the people, which is why we address them in accordance with the method and purpose expressed in the Introduction:

«...fighting for the international unity of the communists with sincere comradely treatment, convinced that the present situation of the World Proletarian Revolution demands, not an International Conference to maintain and deepen the division among the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists by shoring up their weakness and political impotence, but a SINGLE MARXIST-LENINIST-MAOIST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE that will be a firm step forward in the construction of a New Communist International based on Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, and that in the immediate future will become a proletarian bulwark to face the great challenges of the imperialist world and the revolution. ...»

In this context, the development of the discussion itself corroborates the general judgement of our *Pronouncement*:

«...we consider that the proposal presented by the comrades of the Coordinating Committee for a Unified Maoist International Conference -CCIMU, does not correspond to the current situation of the Marxist Leninist Maoists; that is to say, it does not represent a common general basis of unity, to continue the struggle around the divergences that for the moment are legitimate within the revolutionary communists, because such a proposal only expresses the position of a particular hue of the communist movement ».

In the method of discussion used by the comrades who promote and defend *Bases of Discussion*, we have been obliged, in the first place, to criticise subjectivism as a defect in the knowledge of the objective world, a defect protected by a dogmatic position which seeks

truth in formulas and not in facts; and in the second place, to reject the attempt to falsify our positions and to replace arguments with insults.

Insulting aggressiveness is not proper to the communist method of ideological struggle; it belongs to the opportunist method, both right-wing and right-wing, well known for being gentle doves with the class enemies and fierce tigers with the communists; and of course, a method very typical of "left" opportunism, which tries to resolve every contradiction as if it were with the antagonistic enemies without making the distinction that Chairman Mao Tse-tung rightly taught: contradictions of different character or nature are resolved by different methods.

By the way, the second aspect of the incorrect method of the comrades, we had already known about it at a large meeting in Brazil in 2016, to which we were formally invited, but before the presentation of our *Proposal for the Formulation of a General Line for the ICM*, the leaders of the event incited the treatment of "death to revisionism!" (In parentheses, if the position "Gonzalo Thought", pretends to "kill" revisionism, it means that it has not assimilated the a-b-c of the teachings and practices of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution to fight it).

Despite the grotesque and humiliating treatment received in Brazil - except for the workers' comrades whose hospitality was exemplary and internationalist - we did not denounce it publicly, first, hoping for some reconsideration from the hosts, who years later spoke with comrades from another organisation about a self-criticism, which we never received directly; and second, because in Colombia we are the ideological and political heirs of the Proletarian Line of the old PCC (ML), which denounced and confronted an opportunist "left" line headed by the Central Committee (which would later exculpate its sins of "leftism" in the arms of Hoxhaite opportunism and exchange guns for the tricks of the parliamentary tribune); opportunism which was combated without fear of death threats, as the extreme "leftists" are accustomed to do, who are fond of "killing" ideas. Parodying the words of Engels, we have the tough hide to withstand the stings of our own comrades in struggle; neither in Brazil 2016, nor now, are we intimidated by their grievances.

If at the end of 2020 we were surprised that some comrades of *Red Star - Switzerland*, supporters of "Gonzalo Thought", denounced the *Red Flag Committee of Germany* as social-imperialists and revisionists because of the treatment they gave to their differences, today we are no longer surprised that the same Committee and their colleagues of the newspaper Communist International, are making diatribes against *the Communist Workers' Union (mlm)*, but above all, they treat the comrades of the *Communist Party (Maoist) Italy* as enemies, because of manifest differences in the struggle for and organisation of a *Single Unified International Conference of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists*.

It is not surprising either that the comrades of the newspaper Communist International echo and format the provocative judgement made by the comrades of Poder Proletario: *the UOC tries to obscure the terms of the debate by seeking to ignore and contradict fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism*, and they add their quota of poison to it:

to which we add, they do not speak at all about their practice in Colombia, which would allow us to verify in practice the earthiness of what they maintain in the field of theory.

What an unheard-of prosecution, in a time of general crisis of the movement, of general political impotence of the revolutionary communists. We accept that our contribution during 24 years to the construction of the party in Colombia and to the struggle against the main danger to the unity of the ICM has been very modest. And who are the judges? The same ones of the "Gonzalo thought" line who since 1982 - 40 years ago! set out to unleash the people's war and to surround the cities from the unpopulated countryside, but who ended up surrounding the other prophet, the one of the "new synthesis". And who are the Colombian accusers? Comrades who think that party building in Colombia was born with them, and their real contributions to party building? Denigrating the work of the Union (some of them for more than two decades) and taking self-satisfaction in the misfortunes of others.

It's time to soar like eagles again, comrades of the CCIMU and its defenders!

It is time to subordinate the particular interests of group and hue to the pressing interests and needs of the World Proletarian Revolution!

Commission of Theoretical Struggle - Communist Workers' Union (mlm)

Colombia, November 2022

In this special issue the reader will find a refutation to the "leftist" ideas and attacks made by the comrades defending the proposal of bases of discussion presented by the CCIMU and which refer to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as a new, third and higher stage of the development of Marxism; to the general laws of dialectics and in particular to the negation of negation; to some questions of the imperialist system and the world proletarian revolution; which constituted and continue to be important problems of the debate.

**Commission of Theoretical Struggle
Communist Workers Union (mlm)**