

In the aftermath of the recent Venezuelan elections, which re-elected President Nicolas Maduro for a third term, the struggle between the Chavista government of Maduro and the right-wing opposition is once again coming to a head. On the one hand, large sections of the people of Venezuela are frustrated at the prospect of the continuation of the Maduro regime, which despite promises of socialist transformation has never achieved anything more than social reforms, and shoved the burden of the economic crisis onto the backs of the poor and working-class. This is underscored by participation of working-class residents from popular neighborhoods such as Petare—long considered a bastion of Chavismo—in the anti-government protests, and statements from the Communist Party of Venezuela criticizing the government’s response to the election. On the other, a right-wing opposition backed by the US imperialists and allies who have disputed the results, which through its current figurehead Maria Corina Machado, who openly advocates for U.S. military intervention and for globalization, privatization, liberalization policies to control the material wealth of the country in the name of opposing socialism.

The truth is that there is no socialism in Venezuela, that the working-class is not in power, and the experiment of “Socialism in the 21st century” is a failure. Imperialism continues to sink its claws into the country. Yet for decades many on the Left, across Latin America and in the United States as well, have championed this experiment as a “new way” to avoid the “problems” that socialist revolutions in the past have failed to solve.

In an effort to clarify the true nature of “21st Century Socialism”, we have translated the piece *Venezuela and the Bourgeois Reformists of the 21st Century* from the pamphlet *Venezuela at the Crossroads* by the Communist Workers Union (MLM) of Colombia. Originally published at the height of the Maduro government’s economic and political crisis in the middle of the last decade, this unofficial translation has some minor edits meant to clarify and emphasize certain points made in the original document and better convey the original sentiment to an English-speaking audience.

Today, parties subscribing to some version of this “new” socialist theory hold political power in much of Latin America. Yet while these “pink” governments have to varying degrees taken up opposition to some of US imperialism’s most rapacious and blatantly oppressive policies in the region, can they really provide a solution to the deepening crises of imperialism that continue to destroy the workers and peasants of Latin America? Can they put an end to imperialism’s dirty wars on the continent and bring true sovereignty and independence to the nations and peoples? Do they offer a real alternative to the schemes of imperialist powers to keep all of Latin America as a neo-colonial possession?

The case of Venezuela is illustrative in that it provides us now over two decades of negative experience in this “21st century socialism” experiment. . At the same time, it continues to enjoy support from many working people and anti-imperialists both in Venezuela and internationally, who are correctly and staunchly opposed to US intervention and economic warfare, and who genuinely want to see socialism flourish. Regardless, it is the duty of communist revolutionaries to have a clear, sober, and materialist analysis, and leave no quarter to revisionism masquerading as socialism, which only serves to divert the revolutionary proletariat from its historic mission of sweeping away capitalism and imperialism from the face of the planet.

We hope that the publication of this document in English helps clarify the true nature of the revisionist ruling party of Venezuela, and commend the Colombian comrades for their important work analyzing the Venezuelan situation from the perspective of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. We hope this document is useful to those trying to understand the nature of the regime in Venezuela and the attitude of the revolutionary proletariat towards it. We welcome feedback and criticism on our translation, and hope

this document can help spark important discussions on modern revisionism within the communist movement and broader Left in the United States and internationally.

-100 Flowers Collective