

8th International Conference

Contribution of Partija Rada, Serbia & Montenegro

Party of Work Country Report for the 8th International Conference of MLPO

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In order to understand better the ups and downs of the class struggle up to now one has to study the historical example of Yugoslavia. E.g. the entire period from the emergence of the working class in Yugoslavia, its people's liberation struggle, the victory of the socialist revolution and the later degeneration by Tito-revisionism, the victory of nationalism up to the disintegration of Yugoslavia.

The analysis of Tito-revisionism is already part of the history of the working class movement, and the practice has impressively confirmed the correct positions of Marxist-Leninists, who had combated this counterrevolutionary course.

For this reason we do not deal extensively with this period, but analyze only the core issues of the causes of the conflicts in Yugoslavia.

We hold the view that the roots of this conflict can be traced back to the year 1948, to the time of the coup by the Tito-clique and the transition from the positions of proletarian internationalism to bourgeois nationalism, which finally led to open nationalism, chauvinism and confrontation between bureaucratic nationalist elites

Afterwards Yugoslavia was materially and financially rewarded by the imperialists very much, especially as the imperialist strived to make it a "shop window" in front of the socialist block. Yugoslavia became a bulwark of imperialism against the Soviet Union during the cold war, and later against social imperialism.

Our starting point is the realization that all events in the Yugoslavian regions have their roots in the 50-ies of the last century, so that war and disintegration in the 90-ies are only the result of a historical process. In these events also external factors played a part. The end of the cold war and the end of the rivalry between the two blocks also meant the end of the assistance from the imperialists – a fact that only accelerated and deepened the economic crisis.

In the final phase of this process Pan-Serbian nationalism played a key role, not because it distinguishes itself from other nationalisms, but because the regime in Belgrad under the leadership of Slobodan Milosevic disposed of the biggest concentration of material and military power, making its appetite even greater. The war lasting for 10 years caused more than 100,000 casualties, nearly half a million refugees and the destruction of innumerable cities and villages as has been known.

This war had shown again that the most rabid nationalists are capable of coming to an understanding, if their interests are at stake. The best example for this are the secret negotiations between the Serbian and Croatian leadership about the division of Bosnia and Herzegovina during the war operations on the territory of Croatia.

The Party of Work holds the view that the key point of the confrontation is still the unsolved national question of the Albanians in the Kosovo. The policy of Belgrad towards the Kosovo is an extremely reactionary and colonialist one, independent of the question of who is in government. It governs the Kosovo as one of its provinces and considers the Albanians as a hostile and inferior people. Even after the invasion of the NATO into Kosovo the regime in Belgrad tried to delay the question of independence as long as possible by taking advantage of the contradictions among the imperialists, in order to get control of the Kosovo. Presently the regime in Belgrad is exploiting the events in Kosovo to stabilize itself

politically at home. It tries to mobilize the people on the basis of a unified “patriotic” platform and offers its services to the imperialists as ally.

For Marxist-Leninists it was surely one of the most difficult decisions to recognize the intervention of the imperialist NATO-alliance as an act that in the short term was in the interest of the peoples of Yugoslavia. This intervention contributed to stop the bands of soldiers of Milosevic in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. Our party assumes that there was no other power which was in the position to stop the war, push back the nationalists and prevent the further spreading of nationalist conflicts. For us the question is whether it is in the interest of the peoples to continue the war or whether the imperialists can push through their interests with the military intervention. Undoubtedly, the price for this decision is rather high, either concerning the liberation of the Albanian people and the situation of the other peoples of Yugoslavia – subordination and full dependence from imperialism and the presence of NATO-forces on the territory of former Yugoslavia.

Here we come to the most important question for Marxist-Leninists: Why is the situation of the working class on the territory of former Yugoslavia so difficult and why does it not put up resistance worth mentioning to the komprador bourgeoisie and the attacks of multinational capital at the moment?

Considering the situation in Serbia and Montenegro we can make out the following causes:

In the ideological field:

- crushing of the revolutionary party and persecuting of Marxist-Leninists during the 50 years of the existence of Yugoslavia in connection with the influence of revisionism and anti-communism on the working class;
- dissemination of cooperate and petty-bourgeois-anarchist (Prudonov) ideas by the so-called “workers’ self-administration”;
- dissemination of nationalism with fascist elements in the second half of the 80-ies as a “way out” for the workers of their deteriorating situation and bad social status in the second Yugoslavia.

In the economic field:

- preventing the complete transition of the working class from small peasants to industrial workers;
- preventing trade-union and other forms of workers’ organizations outside of the control of the leadership of the enterprises;
- indeed the working class has been brought into extreme poverty, the consequences of the war and the collapse of the economy bring them to the streets as lumpen proletariat and into a political depression;
- there is a growing number of unemployed people (more than 48,000, according to fragmentary official statistics for the first half of 2004), and the workers are in a situation in which they are forced to fight for survival in the grey zone of criminals;
- actually the economy is being pressed down and serves the interpenetration by Western capital by means of privatization or selling out of enterprises. Jobs are created only in the privatized enterprises, in which the employees are deprived of all rights;
- during the last 10 years nearly nothing has been invested due to wars and their consequences. Too working class too was not further trained for mastering the new technologies. Thus, the “technological backwardness” is another ground for the “surplus labor”, which is useless for the newly founded enterprises;
- the multinational capital (it is also with regard to its size relatively small due to the “instable political situation”) has good conditions for an undisturbed expansion. The weak “nation state” and also the small “national capitalists” have no chance to offer resistance. The unorganized working class as well can (cannot?) defend the remains of the formerly achieved rights with its present consciousness.

Characterization of the general situation in Serbia and Montenegro:

- nationalist ideology, whereby the present nationalism has lost its former aggressive potential for waging wars in the region; it now serves as a means of protection for the ruling class and as a means for an easier transition to the support of NATO in its “global war on terrorism”;
- in addition impoverishment;
- further increase in the number of unemployed by 30 per cent in comparison to 2000, the year of the change;
- general decrease in the number of employed persons while the number of those employed in the

multinational companies is increasing;

- the integration of the economy into the currents of the multinational capital.

The strategic aspect of the situation in the region:

The region becomes a place of intensified confrontation of interests of the American, European and Russian imperialism. According to our evaluation conflicts are erupting here permanently. Russia will be keen to regain its old position, Europe will try to reduce the influence and the presence of the USA on the own continent, and the USA will not allow to be driven out there, because of the access to the Middle East and because its military presence hinders Russia and Europe.

At the overthrow of the Milosevic regime in 2000 the workers and a small part of the peasants figured as a revolutionary element, which was most clearly seen in the fact that the strike of the miners in Kolubara marked the beginning of the people's uprising. At the moment only local economic struggles are taking place, which are the clear consequences of the lack of a revolutionary party. Small groups with a revolutionary potential could up to now not fulfill their historical task.

The tasks of the Marxist-Leninists are:

- struggle for the displacing the nationalist, petty-bourgeois consciousness and criminal tendencies of the proletariat;
- propagating the party; the proletariat is still not conscious about the significance of an own party; it lacks the consciousness that its own liberation is a political struggle;
- preparing the understanding that the struggle has to be waged against imperialism and that it is impossible to wage this struggle without the union with the other peoples of the Balkan;
- dissemination of the understanding that imperialism is waging war against other countries of the Third World on the pretext of the "fight against terrorism".

The Party of Work could – despite of greatest efforts – not yet fulfill its fundamental task – the building of a strong revolutionary party on the territory of former Yugoslavia. Our party is still very small in numbers and without significant influence on the political events and without firmly established links to the masses. The party will strive to find the right way for the realization of the interests of the people by means practical work and stresses the particular significance of the links to the revolutionary parties of Albania, Turkey, Greek and other countries of the Balkan. In the same way it will support all parties that prove their revolutionary character in practice.

Conclusions:

O the situation in Serbia and Montenegro:

1. Accelerated polarization of the society and increased impoverishment of great parts of the population.
2. Fast concentration of capital and the emergence of a new capitalist elite as an important political factor.
3. Gradual penetration of the multinational capital in the economy and increasing dependency of the economy on this capital.
4. Complete political and military control of SDG (Serbia and Montenegro) by imperialism.
5. A working class without orientation and without a strong revolutionary party.

The Party of Work thinks that objectively conditions have developed for firm links of the revolutionary movements and its unification on the Balkan. For the following reasons we have to start realizing them:

1. The solution of the national contradictions on the Balkan cannot be realized by the regimes of the compradors, of capital or world imperialism; neither can these contradictions disappear by simply uniting the states. Only the proletarian revolutionary movement can solve this political task.
2. All governments in the Balkan states are totally dependent from imperialism and they are ready to let themselves abuse by imperialism for the oppression of other peoples.

3. The military presence of NATO on the Balkan is of strategic significance, mainly for US-imperialism.
4. The contradictions and the competition between the European, Russian and American imperialism on the Balkan have already developed and will increase in the near future.
5. The situation in all countries being in the process of so-called restructuring is similar and is characterized by the loss of fundamental rights, that had been achieved by long lasting struggles.
6. The lack of a strong revolutionary party (with the exception of Turkey) on the Balkan-countries.
7. The national struggle of the proletariat on the Balkan is doomed to failure under the present conditions, if it cannot to a great extent rely on the support of the proletariat of the neighboring countries.

The Party of Work on the revolutionary movement in the world:

In our view the Marxist-Leninist movement faces huge tasks after the historical defeat of revisionism (states). The struggle between labor and capital meanwhile takes place on a global level and takes on huge dimensions. How can we find the right answer to the complicated questions, which the present historical situation poses us, especially as from this answer depends the future of the Marxist-Leninist movement.

In our view we are in the period of the III. World War, which American imperialism has already started, and therefore the Marxist-Leninist movement must all theoretical contradictions give second priority, mainly the "historical debates" from a past era. The mutual definition as Maoists, Hodzists and Stalinists should be replaced by the creation of a movement with the goal of a strong unity of actin against the attacks of imperialism.

Imperialism has declared war on the Marxist-Leninist movement, and this war has to be taken up, otherwise such parties and movements will be destroyed as it happened with the revisionist parties after the "cold war".

Which methods of struggle will be developed by the individual Marxist-Leninist parties and implemented in practice should be the fundamental criteria for the building of a unified Marxist-Leninist movement.