Present-Day Revolution and Trotskyism

Features of present-day Trotskyism and circumstances of its rebirth. Necessity of the fight against Trotskyism as saboteur of proletarian revolution

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The development of the revolutionary movement of the working class in our days, as the 6th Congress of the Party pointed out, necessarily requires a consistent struggle both against the right opportunism of the modern revisionists, which is the main struggle, and against «leftist» trends and arguments, especially against the dangerous activity of Trotskyism, which beginning particularly from the sixties, has currently been reactivated. In his report delivered to the 6th Congress comrade Enver Hoxha said: «The various anti-Marxist trends of the Trotskyites and anarchists have been revived as never before. By penetrating into various mass movements, especially those of the youth and intellectuals, they are seeking to fish in trouble waters with a view to diverting the masses from the right road, and to throw them into dangerous adventures which lead to serious defeats and disillusion».

THE REVIVAL OF TROTSKYISM AND ITS CAUSES

After the 20th and especially after the 22nd Congress of the CPSU, where the renegade Khrushchev launched the savage campaign of anti-Stalinism, Trotskyism, which had been dealt heavy blows and had lost all influence on the masses, raised its head, resumed its undermining activity on a broad scale, and extended its poisonous roots to many areas and countries of the world. Like mushrooms after a shower, Trotskyiste groups and organisations started to crop up in large numbers in Europe, America and in other areas. At the present time, from the sixties onward, the Trotskyites have grouped themselves around four main centres: the «International Secretariat», the so-called «Marxist-revolutionary trend of the 4th International», «Latin-American Secretariat», the «International Committee» in London, which unites mainly the British, American and Canadian Trotskyite groups. The Trotskyite groups in Western Europe are especially numerous. Thus, for instance, several such groups have appeared in France and are carrying out their pernicious activity: the «Internationalist Communist Party» (PCI), which is the French branch of the 4th International; the «Internationalist Communist Organisation» (OCI), a rival faction which does not belong to the 4th International; «Youth Alliance for Socialism» (AJIS), «Marxist-Revolutionary Alliance» (AMR); «Communist League» (LC), the «Worker struggle» group (LO), etc. In Spain, too, several Trotskyite organisations are active: the «International Communist Party unification» (POUM), the «Communist Action» organisation, the «Revolutionary Workers Party» (POR). In Britain the Trotskyite organisation known as the «Socialist Labour League» is active. Various Trotskyite groupings have also raised their head in many other countries too, such as West Germany, Sweden, Belgium, etc., in Europe, and including Ceylon and Japan in Asia.

What are the causes of the revival of Trotskyism at the present time? The principal ones are the following:

On the one hand, the betrayal of modern revisionism, in particular that of the Khrushchevite revisionists, which caused great disorientation in the revolutionary movement. It is precisely this that has allowed the Trotskyites to speculate with pseudo-leftist slogans in order to lead astray the revolutionary movement.

On the other hand the revival of Trotskyism is connected with the large scale involvement in the present-day revolutionary movement of other intermediate, petty-bourgeois, strata, including in particular the various petty-bourgeois
SOME ESSENTIAL FEATURES OF PRESENT-DAY TROTSKYISM

What characterizes present-day Trotskyism? The treatment of this problem, even though in summary form is essential in order to understand the essence and role of this anti-Marxist trend in the present-day conditions of the development of the revolutionary movement.

The Trotskyism of our days is generally based on the anti-Marxist viewpoints, objectives and methods worked out by Trotsky in his time. But it has, and cannot fail to have, some new features and peculiarities dependent on the present-day conditions and circumstances of the development of Trotskyite activity. What we have to do with here, is the fusion of some already known features with new nuances. The aim of the present paper is not to draw an historical parallel between yesterday's Trotskyism and today's, or to throw into relief the differences between them which might be the object of a special study. Here we shall point out some of the fundamental principal features that characterize the viewpoints and activity of the Trotskyites in our days, irrespective of whether or not they were also characteristic of the Trotskyism of the past. Nor shall we enter into a comparative analysis of the numerous Trotskyite groups and factions which are in permanent feud and polemics with one another, but are united on some fundamental points in their fight against Marxism-Leninism and the revolutionary movement. We may thus speak of some general features of the whole Trotskyite trend.

From the philosophical-methodological viewpoint, present-day Trotskyism, like that of the past, is characterized by voluntarist subjectivism which finds expression, among other things, in the failure to take into consideration the objective conditions determining the development of the revolutionary movement on a national and international scale, and the character and motive forces of the revolution in its different stage. The Trotskyite concepts are also characterized by eclecticism and pragmatism, the lack of stable principles, reliance on entirely opposite concepts, the transition from one extreme to another, uniting with the most various trends for the sake of ephemeral advantages, etc.

From the ideopolitical viewpoint, present-day Trotskyism is characterized, above all, by hostility towards revolutionary Marxism-Leninism. This is a general feature of old and new Trotskyism. At one time it expressed itself in Trotsky's hostile stand towards Lenin and Leninism. Later on it found its expression in the hostile stands of Trotsky and the Trotskyites towards Stalin, his ideas, work and leadership. In our time the hostility of Trotskyism towards Marxism-Leninism is expressed in the fact that the Trotskyites seek to divert the attention of the revolutionary movement from the fight against modern revisionism and push it into positions of anti-Stalinism. The Trotskyites present Stalin's Marxist-Leninist revolutionary line in an entirely false light, describing it as Right opportunism. And while they gloss over or say a few general words about the struggle against revisionism, they have spearheaded the whole fire of their batteries against Stalin and Stalinism, accusing him of betrayal of Leninism and the cause of the revolution and socialism, of disorientating the world revolutionary movement, of causing a decline of the revolutionary upsurge in the West, of occupying and exploiting the countries of people's democracy after the second world war, etc. (P. Frank «The Fourth International» ed. Maspero, 1969). They also attack Mao Tse-tung and his ideas, the Communist Party of China and the Chinese revolution (Ibidem, as well as D. Avenas, A. Brossat. «On Anti-Trotskyism», ed. Maspero, 1971). On the other hand the Trotskyites are in full agreement with the modern revisionists on fundamental attitudes. Jointly with the revisionists they attack Stalin and the CP of China, and give their support to the variants and different trends of revisionism. In 1948 the leadership of the Fourth International and the Trotskyite organisation belonging to it expressed their support for the Yugoslav revisionists and carried out a large-scale activity in their favour (P. Frank «The Fourth International»). In 1956 they took sides with the Hungarian counterrevolution and expressed their dissatisfaction with Imre Nagy's «irresolute stand» (Ibidem). In 1968 the Trotskyites supported the Dubcek revisionists in Czechoslovakia, proclaiming their course to be a revolutionary movement (Ibidem). Likewise, the Trotskyites join in the demagogy of the Soviet revisionists about «the united front of all the socialist countries against US imperialism» (Ibidem), deny the process of the restoration of capitalism in the revisionist-ruled countries, etc., (Ibidem). What Lenin once said about Trotsky is completely true of present-day Trotskyism. «... He manoeuvres, speculates, poses as a leftist, and helps the rightists as much as he can...» The objective of the Trotskyites is to unite all trends, be they rightist or «leftist», against revolutionary Marxism-Leninism, described by them as «Stalinism».

The division of the revolutionary movement of the working class constitutes one of the most characteristic distinctive
objectives and features of present-day Trotskyism. Objectively, the Trotskyism of our days could be described as a special agency in the service of the bourgeoisie for the division of the labour movement, a division which the Trotskyists are seeking to raise to a principle, openly expressing themselves against unity in its ranks. One of the leaders and ideologists of present-day Trotskyism, Pierre Frank, writes: «In fact, what is truly abnormal in the labour movement is monolithicism, this «unity» that strangles every independent political thought in the ranks of the organisations calling themselves Marxist... Whoever refers to the history of the worker movement sees that this has most frequently been full of struggles of trends and tendencies, in theoretical and political opposition with one another. This was normal, for the progress of revolutionary action and thought cannot be conceived outside an unceasing confrontation of theories, stand and orientations with reality, and the more so in a world which is in a state of uninterrupted upheavals, in which «the new» was and is emerging from day to day» (P. Frank «The Fourth International», page 60). Thus, according to him, there can be no question of unity of the worker movement, its normal situation is continuous division (!). It clearly follows from such a concept that the constant division in the very ranks of the Trotskyite movement, its continuous dismemberment into a large number of groups and factions in unceasing disarray with each other, is not only an expression of its weakness and petty-bourgeois nature but also a tactic to sow discord and disintegration in the ranks of the revolutionary movement. The unprincipled vassellations to the «left» and right, unity at one time with the extreme Right opportunists and at another with the most extremist and adventurist «leftist» elements, is also a characteristic feature of the concepts and attitudes of the Trotskyites. Thus, for instance, on the one hand they pursue the so-called policy of «entrism», i.e. the merger of the Trotskyist groups with other parties, including the Right social-democratic parties, while on the other hand they furiously attack the policy of antifascist popular fronts, describing it as «opportunistic policy of class collaboration». On the one hand the Trotskyites praise to the skies the use of random violence, they support and incite the anarchist «leftist» movements which lack perspective and a clear revolutionary programme, which bring confusion and disillusion into the revolutionary movement, such as the chaotic revolts of small armed groups or the warfare of guerrillas not based on an organized broad political mass movement. Thus, they advocate political adventurism and pushchism, while on the other hand they recommend to the worker movement a «strategy» and «tactics» in the struggle for socialism, which is identical with the reformist line of the rightwing revisionists (P. Franc «The Fourth International» as well as K. Mavrakis «On Trotskyism», ed. Maspero, 1971). These vassellations, the eclectic mixture of the most rightist concepts with the most extreme «leftist» ones are not only an expression of the essentially petty-bourgeois nature of the Trotskyite movement, but also a way to disintegrate and disorientate the revolutionary movement.

Al this shows that the fundamental political characteristic of present day Trotskyism is, just as in the past, revolution in words and the undermining and sabotage of the revolutionary movement in practice.

The above-mentioned distinctive features which, irrespective of the shades between the various factions and groups, characterise at the present time the concepts, stands and activity of the Trotskyite trend, find their concrete expression in the treatment of a series of problems. It is necessary to dwell, even though very briefly, on some of them, in order to see in what directions they distort Marxism-Leninism and in what ways the Trotskyites try to hoodwink and disorientate the working class and the revolutionary movement in our time.

HOW THE TROTSKYITES SABOTAGE THE WORKING CLASS
REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT AT THE PRESENT TIME

The Trotskyites speculate a great deal on the slogans of the revolution, and publicize in particular the so-called theory of «permanent revolution» which they seek to peddle as a creative development of Marxism-Leninism. But what is the essence of their ultrarevolutionary theories and whom do they serve in reality? The theory of «permanent revolution» is the denial of the stages of the revolution under the pretext of its uninterrupted development. This was Trotsky's viewpoint, and is also the viewpoint of the present day Trotskyites. According to it, in every country, whether in the capitalist metropoles or in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, for the revolution to develop, it cannot be other than a pure proletarian revolution, without any intermediate stages. «The whole revolutionary experience of present-day Vietnam, – the Trotskyites write, – confirms the necessity of combining the anti-imperialist struggle with the anti-capitalist, anti-bourgeois struggle, and the necessity for the revolutionaries of the colonial countries, if they want to secure the means to carry through to the end the so-called «national» tasks, to set about the process of a proletarian revolution» (D. Avenas, A. Brossat «On Anti-Trotskyism», p. 75). And further: «... the revolution by stages has definitely failed», «... at the present time there is no intermediate road between the rule of capital and the dictatorship of the proletariat» (ibidem). But raising the question in this way means to ignore the objective factors that condition the character of the revolution in the various stages of its development, it means to narrow the social basis of the revolution in these countries, sowing discord between the social forces which should be united in the revolutionary movement and, in the last analysis, sabotaging it.

To these adventurist arguments of the Trotskyites, the Marxist-Leninists counterpose the necessity for a concrete analysis of the development of the revolution in every country, without falling into rigid and absolute formulas and, where objective conditions and circumstances impose it, the combination of revolution by stages and the uninterrupted revolution, under the leadership of the working class and
its Marxist-Leninist party, as a necessary condition for carrying the anti-imperialist or democratic revolution through to the end and passing on to the socialist revolution.

The Trotskyite theory of «permanent revolution» is also the theory of negation of the national movement in the development of the revolutionary movement, the theory of the overestimation of the external factor and negation of the internal factor as decisive in the revolution and, in the last analysis, a theory of the «export» of revolution. «The idea that revolutionary movements can be built on a «national» scale or in «regional» isolation, — says one of the programmatic documents of the 4th International, entitled «Current dialectics of world revolution», — has never been so bankrupt as in the epoch of intercontinental ballistic missiles and voyages to outer space» (P. Franc «The Fourth International»). While the Trotskyites D. Avenas and A. Brossat write: «The different countries have reached very different levels of development, but they are all closely connected, they are all interdependent — this is what should be borne in mind, for this last stage of development of the productive forces bars turning back, returning to national boundaries» (Ibidem). Such a treatment of the question in fact leads to abandoning the revolution in different countries, to waiting for the creation of conditions for the development of the «chain world revolution» which is impossible because of the uneven economic and political development of capitalism, a factor which the Trotskyites want to ignore, thereby falling into subjectivism.

By their arguments and stands the Trotskyites disorientate and divide the motive forces of the present-day revolutionary process. In the colonial and semicolonial countries, where the working class still constitutes a relatively limited class whereas the peasantry makes up the majority of the population, and thus also the numerically greater force of the revolution, they, by denying the revolution by stages, in fact deny the revolutionary possibilities of the peasantry, they estrange the peasantry and the other intermediate strata from the working class with ultra-leftist slogans. While in the developed capitalist countries, where the working class constitutes the decisive force of every truly revolutionary movement, the present-day Trotskyites are ever more persistently spreading the view that in these countries the striking force of the revolution and the real leaders of the revolutionary movement are, allegedly, the young intellectuals, the students and school pupils. This is also clearly shown by the fact that the Trotskyite trend is spread mainly among the student youth, while its influence on the workers is extremely limited. Thus, on this question the position of the Trotskyites is similar to that of the bourgeois ideologists of the Marcuse type or of the Right extremist revisionist like Fisher and others. But however developed the student movement may be, it can play a positive and effective role in the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism only if it unites with the revolutionary movement of the working class and places itself under the leadership of the proletariat and of the Marxist-Leninist proletarian party.

While making a great hue and cry with general ultra-revolutionary slogans, the present-day Trotskyites, when it comes to treating the concrete problems of the development of the working class revolutionary movement, come out with arguments which in essence fully accord with those of the modern revisionists, about «structural reforms» about the participation of the workers in running the capitalist enterprises, etc. Thus, the Trotskyite Mandel says that the struggle for workers' control in the capitalist countries «creates a situation of dual state power», that the «demand for workers' control... aims at the establishment of workers' power, first in the plant and then throughout the country.» According to Mandel, in May-June 1968 the workers would have achieved victory if they had acted according to the following recommendations: «Had they been educated during the previous years and months with the spirit of workers' control they would know what to do: elect a committee in every enterprise which would begin with the opening of the account books of the employers; calculate themselves the cost of the income and the company tax on the firms' incomes; establish the right to vote in hiring in and dismissing workers, as well as in every modification of the organization of work; replace the foremen appointed by the boss with elected work mates... The workers should pass quickly from worker control to worker administration. But this interval should be used to denounce before the entire nation the arbitrariness, injustice, confusion and plunder by the employers and to organize local, regional and national congresses of strike committees and worker control committees which would ensure the workers who had risen in struggle the means of organizing and self-defence necessary to cope with the bourgeois state and the capitalist class as a whole» (Quoted from K. Mavrakis «On Trotskyism»). And all this, according to the Trotskyite theories can be done in the conditions of the rule of the bourgeoisie while it is still armed to the teeth, without overthrowing it, without destroying the bourgeois state machine, without establishing the proletarian dictatorship (!). This is a most flagrant opportunist denial of the revolution.

PRESENT-DAY TROTSKYITES AND THE PROBLEM OF THE VANGUARD PROLETARIAN PARTY

The hostility of the Trotskyites, both past and present, towards the revolutionary working class movement, is clearly seen in connection with the stand towards the problem of the proletarian party. The Trotskyite viewpoint on this question could be summed up as follows: First, according to the Trotskyites, the existence and leadership of the Marxist-Leninist proletarian party is not absolutely necessary in the struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the triumph of socialism. As the Trotskyite P. Franc says in his book «The Fourth International», Trotsky himself forecast in his writings, although as a rare possibility in extraordinary circumstances, that «the revolution could be victorious even under a leadership which is not revolutionary Marxist», while after the second world war some such cases have allegedly occurred (P. Franc «The Fourth International»). It is quite evident that on this ques-
tion there is no essential difference whatever between the Trotskyite viewpoint and that advocated by the Yugoslav, Italian and other modern revisionists. It is common knowledge that such arguments aim at leaving the working class without a genuine revolutionary leadership and serve only to undermine the revolution and leave the working class in capitalist bondage.

Second, the Trotskyites are against the undivided leadership of the Marxist-Leninist proletarian party after the seizure of power by the working class and, together with the various rightist bourgeois and revisionist ideologists, advocate the multiparty system in socialism. Here is what the Trotskyite P. Franc writes in a connection: «In the society of the period of transition to socialism the working class will still remain differentiated for a long period to the extent that different strata will have different viewpoints concerning the relationship between their everyday needs and their longterm interests. Thus, there will be room for different parties in the transitional society, some of a more reformist character, others of a more revolutionary character» (Ibidem). Thus, it is a question of the existence of several so-called worker parties, which excludes the leadership of a single vanguard party of the working class based on the revolutionary theory of Marxism-Leninism. But in these circumstances the existence of a genuine proletarian dictatorship is impossible, and this enters into the calculations of the Trotskyites. The very fact that they have waged and continue to wage a frantic campaign against the «Stalinist» Soviet system, which embodied the fundamental features of the proletarian dictatorship, is the most evident testimony to their unbridled hostility towards the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Third, by advocating «world revolution» and by underestimating the role of the internal, national, factor in the development of the revolutionary movement, the Trotskyites consequently also underestimate the role of the proletarian party on a national scale and speak of the necessity for a «world party». Since there is no «socialism in a single country», they say - the instrument of the world revolution cannot be other than a world party» (P. Franc «The Fourth International») This in essence means to eliminate the true role of the proletarian party, for the world revolutionary process in the present-day conditions cannot be conceived other than as a development and triumph of the revolution in different countries; therefore on a national scale, under the indispensable and fully responsible leadership of the proletarian party in each country.

Fourth, the Trotskyites, although in words they proclaim themselves as consistent heirs, and indeed the only ones, of Lenin, in fact are stubborn opponents of the Leninist principles concerning the internal life of the proletarian party. Under the pretext of «democracy» and «freedom of thought», they oppose in particular the principle of centralism and unity of thought and action, the iron proletarian discipline in the party, without which the latter remains something amorphous and disorganized, a club for endless discussions, incapable of any kind of effective revolutionary actions, while internal democracy is transformed into a means to disintegrate and liquidate the party. The party of the Leninist type was described by Trotsky in his time as a «barracks regime» and the Leninist norms as bureaucratic and dictatorial. According to him, the party should be an unprincipled union of all the factions or trends which proclaim themselves socialist or communist (Jean-Jacques Marie «Trotskyism»). The present-day Trotskyites also advocate factionalism and support «freedom of discussion and the right to form trends, without which the base is denied true political activity» (P. Franc «La Quatrième Internationale»). Also on this question the position of the Trotskyites is identical with that of the extreme rightwing revisionists of the type of Garaudy and Fisher, or of the «leftist» groups of the type of the «Manifesto» who openly (and not in a camouflaged way like the Trotskyites) oppose the Leninist teachings about the party.

Facts prove that present-day Trotskyism is a sworn enemy of the revolutionary movement of the working class and of the peoples and a dangerous weapon in the hands of the bureaucratic imperialism to sow confusion in this movement, to divide and undermine it. Therefore, in the present-day conditions the struggle for the exposure and destruction of the Trotskyite trend is an urgent need for the successful development of the working class revolutionary movement and a current task of all Marxist-Leninists.

This will be a protracted and complex ideological and political struggle to expose the falsity and the true counter-revolutionary character of the Trotskyite preachings and stands in connection with the various problems of the present-day revolutionary movement. But such a struggle alone would not be sufficient.

The defeat of the Trotskyite trend is inseparable from the struggle of the Marxist-Leninist parties against modern revisionism, and against Soviet revisionism in the first place, to put an end to the confusion it has caused in the present-day revolutionary movement, which created the conditions for the revival of Trotskyism, to make clear to the workers and peoples the wide gap separating the revisionists from Marxism-Leninism and genuine socialism, in order thereby to deprive Trotskyism of the possibility of speculating.

But the decisive condition for a successful struggle against Trotskyism is the further development of the Marxist-Leninist movement itself, the working out by it in every country of a true programme of revolutionary struggle, the extension and penetration of the Marxist parties among the masses, in order to give them a clear orientation, to liberate from the Trotskyite influences the sincere revolutionary elements misled by Trotskyism.