THE STATE OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT IS THE MOST COMPLETE

The reality of socialist Albania, where genuine democracy, proletarian democracy exists and develops uninterruptedly, is a clear and vivid demonstration of the Marxist-Leninist thesis that proletarian democracy represents a new and historically higher type of democracy as is the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat itself.


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To the types of state known in history—the slave-owning, feudal, capitalist and socialist state, correspond the related types of democracy. In the first three types of state and democracy, that is, in slave-ownership, feudalism and capitalism, the essence of the state and democracy consists in only one thing: the oppression and exploitation of the broad popular masses and the exercise of democracy by the oppressing and exploiting minority in power. The essence of the proletarian state, which expresses and defends the interests of all the working people and guarantees democracy for the broad masses of the working people, which is genuine democracy, is quite different.

Despite the unrestrained demagogy made by the bourgeois ideologists, in capitalism, just as in the other exploitative orders, democracy is always limited, it is democracy only for a minority, for the exploiting class, which enjoys the freedom and rights proclaimed, and profits from democracy. In order to cover up its exploitative essence, this kind of “democracy” employs many mechanisms, such as elections, with the alleged participation of the people, the rights and freedoms, proclaimed only in form, etc. However, the poor, the broad working masses there come up against difficulties caused by the complete lack of material conditions to have their say in elections and in any other field of state activity, or to take part in the exercise of democracy. To this are added the successive limitations which the bourgeois law establishes juridically especially through the so-called census regarding property, qualifications, race, religion, education, residence, etc. All these “limitations, qualifications and obstacles against the poor may seem trivial to those who have never known what need is, and have never been close to the oppressed classes and the life of the masses (such are nine out of ten, if not ninety-nine out of a hundred bourgeois publicists and politicians), but in general these limitations bar the poor from politics, from active participation in the exercise of democracy.”

The same situation exists in the revisionist countries where the restored capitalism tries to deck itself out in socialist phrases. The overthrow of the dictatorship of the proletariat in these countries and its replacement with the dictatorship of the new revisionist bourgeoisie has unavoidably given the democracy in these countries an anti-socialist, exploitative character. In the revisionist countries the class essence of democracy, just as the state, is the same as in the bourgeois countries, it belongs to the capitalist type of democracy. Like in the bourgeois countries, in the revisionist countries, too, state power is a means for the suppression of the working masses which are barred from participating in the government of the country, do not enjoy real rights and freedoms, and are divided from the new
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True democracy is realized only in the socialist order. As early as in the Communist Manifesto Marx and Engels link the establishment of democracy with the triumph of the dictatorship of the proletariat. “The first step in the workers’ revolution,” they wrote, “is the transformation of the proletariat into a ruling class, the establishment of democracy.”

The establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat guarantees democracy for the broad working masses which make up the overwhelming majority of the population. This emerges for the first time in history as the most complete democracy, which is a radical turn of historic importance in the social status of the working man who becomes a free man of free socialist society. The reality of socialist Albania, where the construction of socialism is successfully carried out despite the conditions of the savage imperialist-revisionist encirclement of the country, is a living proof of the life-giving and indomitable strength of the ideas of Marxism-Leninism and the correct line of the PLA, of the vitality of the socialist order and the deep and true democratization it puts into life.

Based on the teachings of the great classics Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, the Party of Labour of Albania and Comrade Enver Hoxha have waged a constant struggle against all the bourgeois-revisionist great plays on democracy. In all cases, says Comrade Enver Hoxha, democracy should be assessed not proceeding from the names and slogans used, but from the important fact whether or not it is in the interest of the broad working masses. Seen from this angle, any other democracy, apart from proletarian democracy, is a hypocrisy, lie and deception.

The bourgeois revisionist propaganda tries to cover up this fact through demagogy by bringing forth, as a criterion of democracy, the number of political parties in parliament, anarchic disintegration, the rights formally proclaimed by law, etc. But what do people benefit from all this? Nothing, because when political parties do not follow a Marxist-Leninist line, when the deputies indulge in empty talking in the parliament, when anarchic liberties are presented as freedom, then the broad working masses have no possibility to enjoy the rights proclaimed on paper, as well as all the other advertisements of the so-called bourgeois-revisionist democracy, this is only a game to beguile the people. The people continue to be oppressed and exploited, and the fog spread through this big deception cannot cover up the antidemocratism of society of these countries. It is clear that true democracy can never exist there where exploitation exists.

Bourgeois-revisionist democracy is a democracy only in name, it is not, nor can it be, true democracy, for it means nothing good for the working masses. It is a democracy only for the oppressing and exploiting minority, only for the bourgeoisie and the new revisionist bourgeoisie, at a time when the broad working masses are savagely oppressed and exploited.

True democracy, which becomes a reality only in the proletarian state, is sanctioned in the Constitution of the PSR of Albania, which reflects the great and vivid example of proletarian democracy set by socialist Albania today.

The Constitution of the PSR of Albania openly proclaims the proletarian character of the state and democracy, emphasizing at the very start that “The PSR of Albania is a state of the dictatorship of the proletariat, which expresses and defends the interests of all the working people.” It reflects the great and unprecedented extension of democracy brought about by the dictatorship of the proletariat, to which no exploiting state can be compared.

The dictatorship of the proletariat, the class essence of which is the political rule of the working class, as Lenin has it, represents democracy for the majority, the state power of the workers and peasants. This best shows the radical change of democracy with the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the close and indivisible links of the broad working masses with their state of the proletarian dictatorship.

The enemies of the revolution and socialism, from imperialist reaction to the revisionists of all hues Soviet and Yugoslav, Eurocommunist and Chinese, try to distort the content and greatness of proletarian democracy. They attack proletarian democracy and praise bourgeois-revisionist democracy, endeavouring, individually or on a common front, to present true proletarian democracy as non-democracy, and the non-democracy of the bourgeois-revisionist countries as democracy. The bourgeois-revisionist theories “on pure democracy”, “democracy for the whole people”, “direct democracy”, or “pluralism and liberalism” etc, which all are disguises to hide the deceptive character of the bourgeois-revisionist democracy, serve also this aim.

As the loyal minions of their bourgeois patrons, the modern revisionists praise bourgeois “democracy” and uphold the thesis that today it is possible
to go over to socialism within the context of this so-called democracy, through structural reforms, on the parliamentary road, etc. These efforts of theirs are directed against the great Marxist-Leninist truth that proletarian democracy is born as a result of the proletarian revolution, that it is indisputably linked with this revolution and is its work alone. Speaking about the great harm caused by these revisionist «theories», Comrade Enver Hoxha points out that «transition to socialist society is achieved not by remaining within the context of the capitalist order, but only by overthrowing this order and its institutions from their foundations, by setting up the state power of the proletariat which is led by its vanguard — the Marxist-Leninist communist party.»

The leading role of the Party is decisive both for the establishment of proletarian democracy and the preservation of its purity, its constant growth and strengthening. Without it, socialist revolution cannot be carried out, the dictatorship of the proletariat and socialism cannot exist, true democracy for the working masses cannot exist. This is why the modern revisionists have aimed their poisonous arrows precisely at this question.

Proletarian democracy, as genuine democracy, not only proclaims the participation of the people in the government of the country, the equality, rights and freedoms of citizens, but also guarantees their implementation in practice, by ensuring all the conditions for democracy to be a living reality, and not a vacant word, for the working masses. Democracy in the socialist order begins with a deep overthrow and is realized with the establishment of the proletarian state power, where the formal principle, as Marx said, is the material principle at the same time.

In socialist society genuine democracy is also realized through the all-round work carried out for the continuous political and ideological tempering of the working masses who gain awareness of the vital importance which proletarian democracy has for them, and of the great role they play, under the leadership of the working class with their Marxist-Leninist party at the head, in defending and constantly strengthening it. In Albania, the working masses, armed with the Marxist-Leninist ideology of the PLA, always see democracy «from the class angle, as a form of political organization of society, as a political condition for drawing the masses into the governing of the country, for the defence and strengthening of the dictatorship of the proletariat, in order to bar the way to revisionist degeneration and the restoration of capitalism.»

Genuine democracy, which is ensured by the dictatorship of the proletariat, is uninterruptedly developed and strengthened in the process of the class struggle. The struggle against bureaucracy and liberalism, which, as historical experience shows, are the main dangers leading to the peaceful degeneration of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as happened in the former socialist countries, has great importance. In Albania the struggle against manifestations of bureaucracy and liberalism has never ceased. It has been and continues to be waged with consistency, in all times and in all circumstances, without interruption and on two flanks — both against bureaucracy and liberalism.

In the context of the struggle against manifestations of bureaucracy and liberalism, the PLA has always taken important measures, the essence of which is the establishment and implementation of a correct ratio between democracy and centralism, the elected and administrative organs, the cadres and all the other officials, on the one hand, and the working masses, on the other, the freedoms and rights of citizens and the discipline and their duties towards the state and socialist society.

One aspect of proletarian democracy in the socialist order is its broad character; it is democracy for the working masses, democracy for the overwhelming majority of the population. The other aspect of proletarian democracy is represented by the merciless suppression of the exploiters of the people and all the other enemies of the people and socialism. Broad democracy, which constitutes the first aspect of democracy in socialism, cannot be imagined and implemented without its other aspect — the necessary suppression of the overthrow of classes and all the other anti-socialist elements who try to undermine the dictatorship of the proletariat and the democracy implemented by it, and to bring back the past.

The PLA and our proletarian state have always seen these two aspects of proletarian democracy in indivisible unity.

As a political form of the state, democracy has a class character. In this direction all the bourgeois-revisionist preachings about the «extra class character» of democracy should be exposed as absurdity and deception. The classics of Marxism-Leninism have pointed out that democracy has always a class character, that, as Lenin puts it in his work «The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky», «pure democracy» is out of question, it is a phrase of ignoramuses, a phrase utterly devoid of sense, it is only a mockery of common sense and history.

Democracy, proletarian or socialist, has a class character even in the period of transition from capitalism to communism. It fully preserves this character as long as the proletarian state itself continues to exist. During this historical period, until the state withers away, which is linked with the complete and final triumph of socialist society on a world scale, until then, says Lenin, democracy is nothing other than «democracy for the people, for the majority, along with the necessary suppression of the minority, the exploiters. Only communism is in a position to give us a truly complete democracy; and the fuller the democracy, the quicker it becomes unnecessary, dies out by itself.»

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Proletarian democracy is constantly developed and deepened through the many and effective forms which are found and implemented by the working
masses, with the working class at the head, is the process of construction of socialism according to the teachings and under the leadership of the Marxist-Leninist party. In order to get at the essence and importance of these forms, in which proletarian democracy finds its clear and complete expression, the socialist political and juridical literature attaches special attention to the grouping of these forms, through which the elements comprising the notion of proletarian or socialist democracy are defined. On the basis of the Marxist-Leninist theory of the state, the notion of socialist democracy comprises the following three elements which are indivisible and closely linked with each other.

First, participation of the working masses in the government of the country. This essential element of proletarian democracy has been and remains in the centre of attention of the Party and the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Albania, representing the unchanging line of all their activity for the socialist construction of the country.

Our working masses, with the working class at the head, are the all-powerful masters of the country, therefore they have their decisive say on everything, including the question of the state power. Here the principle of the Constitution that «all state power in the PSR of Albania derives from and belongs to the working people» finds its complete implementation.

The active and effective participation of the masses in the government of the country gives the people's state power its strength and meaning as a state power which derives from the masses, serves them and relies on them. This has great importance for the present and the future of the proletarian state, because it multiplies the possibilities, forces and capabilities of the state apparatus in all its activity for the successful implementation of its tasks in the promotion of the revolution and socialist construction, it is an effective means, a great guarantee to defend the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the cause of socialism from any danger; it is a school for the political education of the working people, a means to prepare them for the future transition to the communist government by the working people, when the socialist state withers away, after completing its historical mission. This is why the PLM makes a high assessment of the participation of the masses in governing the country, «as the fundamental direction of the development of socialist democracy, as a great motive force to promote the socialist construction and as one of the most important factors to protect our state and society against the danger of bourgeois-revisionist degeneration.»

In the participation of the masses in state affairs consists one of the main distinctions over principle of the socialist state apparatus from the bourgeois-revisionist state apparatus. While the socialist state apparatus is one with the masses, cannot and does not stand above the masses, and cannot be alien to the masses, the bourgeois-revisionist state apparatus, on the contrary, stands above the masses, is essentially divided from them by an unsurmountable barrier, is alien to them. While in socialist democracy indivisible links are established and always maintained between the state and the working people, the contrary happens in the so-called bourgeois-revisionist democracy, which estranges the masses from state affairs. The so-called representative organs established there not only are mere means of deception, but they are also divested of all real power in the state, which is controlled by an exploiting minority through the bureaucratic stratum. «The bourgeois-revisionist democracy,» says Comrade Enver Hoxha, «is a form of the exploiting state, which despite the «democratic» attributes it takes on itself, in fact, its activity has not the least trace of genuine democracy and individual and collective freedom.»

In the PSR of Albania the working people, with the working class at the head, wield state power through the representative organs and directly. Both these ways of expression of the people's will are expressly mentioned in the Constitution which, in this case, not only stresses that state power in the country belongs to the working people, but also the class content of the latter, which includes the working class and the cooperativist peasantry as the two friendly classes of our socialist society, as well as the other working people, such as the stratum of the people's intelligentsia.

People exercise state power or express their will, in the first place, through the representative organs (the People's Assembly on a republic scale), and the people's councils on the basis of territorial and administrative division at the lowest level. These organs, freely elected by the people, occupy the main place in the whole system of our state organs. They institute and control all the other organs of state power. In their hands is concentrated the entire state activity of the country which, according to our Constitution, is carried out in various fields of activity of the state power — the executive and legislative activity, the administration of justice and the control of legality.

Our representative organs, entrusted with the carrying out of the activities connected with the functions of the state power, are true working institutions, and not «places of empty talk», as bourgeois parliaments are. They reject the venal and rotten bourgeois parliamentarism as a separate system, as a division of labour between the legislative and executive power, as a means to ensure a privileged position for the deputies, and have concentrated in one hand, as Marx and Lenin teach, both the legislative and the executive activity. The representatives of the people elected to our representative organs are working people who implement the laws they issue, control what is done in practice and are responsible before the electors. Thus, our representative organs have made a reality of the lessons of the Paris Commune, in as much as they are built and work as legislative and executive institutions at the same time.

People exercise state power, or express their will, in the second place,
in a direct manner. This way of wielding state power in our country finds its expression in different forms which are not expressly provided for in the Constitution, such as participation in elections, direct worker and peasant control, popular discussions, etc.

Elections are held chiefly to form all the representative organs of the country. They are really free, and are carried out through general, equal, direct and secret ballot. The participation of the people in elections is further supplemented and deepened through the other form of direct exercise of the state power—the revocation of anyone’s representative to the People’s Assembly or people’s councils by the electors at any time, whenever he or she does not justify the trust placed in him or her. This is another very important right of our electors and one of the main features of the democratic character of our representative organs.

The direct control exercised by our working masses under the leadership of the Party represents another important form of the direct exercise of state power by the people. This is the direct control by the working class, the cooperativist peasantry and the other working people, parallel with the other two forms of control of the working class in power—by the Party and the proletarian state, and the three together pursue the same aim and supplement each other.

A concrete expression of the direct participation of the working masses in the government of the country are also the popular discussions of major political and social problems. Such were the discussion of the Constitution or the discussion of the plans for the development of the economy and culture, the school and the family, or the further perfection of the moral figure of our new man, etc.

The problems of the state power in Albania concern all the working masses. With this the exercise of the state power becomes a field of effective activity of the working class and the other working masses. Even from the juridical and constitutional standpoint, it is compulsory that “in all their work, the representative organs and other state organs rely on the creative initiative of the masses of working people, draw them into running the country and render account before them” (Article 7).

Second, the rights and freedoms of citizens are a component part of our socialist democracy, place the working man at the centre and cover the whole social and political life of the country, the main fields of which, according to the Constitution, are: the social and economic rights (which have to do with the participation of citizens in work activities, the rest they enjoy after work, their education, as well as the material assistance they are entitled to in old age, in cases of illness or disablement); the democratic freedoms (which have to do with the free expression of the opinion of citizens through speech and the press, with their freedom of organization, union and public manifestation, as well as militating in mass organizations); the rights of electing and being elected (which have to do with the rights of citizens to elect and to be elected to the representative organs, as well as their constant supervision of these organs and the people elected to them); individual freedoms (which have to do with the inviolability of the person, of residence, the secrecy of correspondence, the defence at court, as well as the right to appeal to the state organs over any problem of both personal and general social concern).

All these rights and freedoms have a genuine socialist content, which are recognized to and guaranteed for the working masses in socialism. They are indivisible from the working people, figure as their comprehensive rights and freedoms. And this is natural because socialism, as Comrade Enver Hoxha says, is built by the masses and for the masses, which are made conscious by the Party of the working class.

The promulgation and guarantee of the rights and freedoms of citizens represent one indivisible process. In the socialist order, unlike in the bourgeois and revisionist countries, there is no barrier between the promulgation by law of the rights and freedoms of citizens and the possibility of their actual implementation. The rights and freedoms of our citizens do not remain a vacant expression, but have a fully realizable content, because they rely on the sound political and economic base which is built by the dictatorship of the proletariat and is ensured by the socialist mode of production. In the Constitution and the other socialist laws they find their broadest sanctioning, with the related juridical warrants being added to them. This is a clear expression of the profoundly democratic and genuinely socialist content of the rights and freedoms of citizens, is another convincing demonstration of the work for the emancipation of the working people in socialism.

“Rights” and “freedoms” are mentioned for demagogical purposes also in the Constitutions of the capitalist, bourgeois or revisionist states. But what catches the eye in these Constitutions is the complete lack of any guarantee for the putting into practice of the “rights” and “freedoms” proclaimed, their false and fraudulent character, as well as the narrow character and the limitations repeatedly enforced on their enactment by the bourgeois and revisionist law. The words of Marx, who criticized with mordant sarcasm this aspect of the “democracy” of the exploiters, saying that the bourgeois Constitutions contain freedom in the general phrase and its negation in the clause, apply perfectly to the bourgeois and revisionist Constitutions of today.

Third, equality of citizens is another expression of socialist democracy. Socialism ensures genuine equality, because it frees the working people from any oppression and exploitation. It puts an end to unemployment, economic crises, which are the source of misery, and ensures, as expressed in the very requirements of the fundamental economic law of socialism, the fulfillment of the material and cultural needs of society.

Rights and freedoms of citizens in the PSR of Albania derive from the
full equality of citizens who, as proclaimed in the Constitution, are "equal before the law". No privilege or limitation in account of sex, race, nationality, education, social position or material situation is recognized in the exercise of these rights and freedoms. These rights and freedoms are exercised in complete conformity with the socialist order and can never be in contrast with the duties of citizens. The rights and freedoms of citizens are broadened and deepened further, parallel with the degree of development of socialist society.

This idea of equality is alien to the exploitative orders, not only the slave-owning and feudal orders, which openly proclaim inequality, but also the capitalist, bourgeois or revisionist orders which proclaim equality on paper, but deny it in practice as long as they defend oppression and exploitation which lie at their foundations. There is an unsurmountable barrier there dividing the broad popular masses from their oppressors and exploiters, the bourgeois class or the new revisionist bourgeoisie.

The bourgeoisie and revisionist ideologists labour to create an impression of the existence of social "homogeneity" which "softens" or even "eliminates" class antagonisms. They talk about the altered nature of present-day capitalism, which is no longer the same as the capitalism of the past; they talk about "technical progress", in particular, claiming that the "consumer society", "industrial society", "neo-capitalism", "popular capitalism", etc. have been created today. With their "theories" they advocate the rapprochement of the rich with the poor, of the oppressors with the oppressed, the elimination of antagonisms between them. But the present-day reality refutes these bourgeoisie-revisionist preachings. The modern world is torn apart by fierce class contradictions which lead to another rapprochement — the closing of the ranks of the broad working masses, with the working class at the head, in their broad fierce struggle against capitalists, bourgeois or revisionist, oppression and exploitation. Speaking about the extending struggle of the proletariat and the broad working masses in all the bourgeois and revisionist countries today, especially their struggle against political oppression and economic exploitation, for the defence of democratic rights and a better life, Comrade Enver Hoxha points out: "In these fierce clashes with capital and the bourgeoisie, the working class and the broad masses of the working people are more and more strengthening their proletarian consciousness, preparing and tempering themselves ever better for the coming class battles."

The socialist system of the economy has the true equality realized in the socialist order at its foundation. It constitutes the unshakeable basis for the emancipation of the working people, for the elimination of private property and exploitation for the realization of the principle of working according to one's abilities and being remunerated according to one's work, without which there is and can be no true equality. These important expressions of equality have been legally sanctioned in the Constitution of the PSR of Albania. It proclaims the equality of citizens, as one of the important principles of all their rights and duties.

Our Constitution also sanctions the great and constant work which is done in Albania to narrow down any inequality inherited from the past. It has led to great achievements in the emancipation of the woman who suffered under a twofold oppression in the past, and who today enjoys equal rights with man at work, in remuneration, social insurance, education in all socioeconomic-political activity as well as in the family, to the narrowing down of distinctions between the city and the countryside: between work in industry and agriculture; between mental and manual work, etc.

The measures for the consistent implementation of the socialist principle of distribution according to work have great importance for the realization of true equality. Our state has always striven not to allow either petty-bourgeois equititarianism or great differentials in wages and salaries. With us these differentials have always been very small, and in the recent years they have been reduced even further. Thus, the ratio between the higher salaries of the employees and the average wages of the workers fell to 2 to 1 as against 2.5 to 1 until 1976. This is another great achievement of our socialist democracy.

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The reality of socialist Albania, where genuine democracy, proletarian democracy, exists and develops uninterruptedly, is a clear and vivid demonstration of the Marxist-Leninist thesis that proletarian democracy represents a new and historically higher type of democracy, as is the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat itself. The comprehensive and genuine democracy for the masses of working people, which is closely and indivisibly linked with the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat, represents, at the same time, the general road for the strengthening of the state and the whole socialist order. "Ensuring a broad socialist democracy," says Comrade Enver Hoxha, "constitutes a fundamental condition for the protection and strengthening of the dictatorship of the proletariat itself, just as the dictatorship of the proletariat constitutes an indispensable and decisive condition for the existence of genuine democracy for the working people."