INTERNATIONAL MONOPOLIES - TOOLS OF ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL EXPANSION

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The multi-national companies increase their profits continuously through the relentless intensification of exploitation of the working people, the plunder of the national assets of many different countries, the exploitation of their cheap labour force, the operation of the neo-colonialist mechanism of prices.

The concentration of capital to such a degree — often going beyond the bounds of its own country, the export of capital, as one of the more important economic features of imperialism, created the possibilities and conditions for the monopolies of various countries to enter into agreements among themselves and extend their domination of the world production and market. In his work of genius "Imperialism — The Highest and Last Phase of Capitalism", Lenin writes that capitalism has long ago created a world market. And the more the export of capital and all sorts of foreign connections increased..., the more things led in a natural manner to a world agreement and the strengthening of the international cartels.

These monopolies, as demonstrated by reality, have had and continue to have economic and political division of the world, hitching the different countries of the world to their chariot and ensuring maximum profits by sucking the sweat and toil of the working masses of these countries, as their aim.

The concentration and centralization of production and capital, which characterize the capitalist-revisionist world today, have stepped up the rates of socialization of production, but have not in the least altered the exploitative nature of the monopolies and imperialism. Monopoly capital, which has the extraction of maximum profit as its motto, before making its investments calculates exactly how much profit will accrue from them. Everywhere, in the Middle East, in Africa, Latin America and other parts of the globe a savage competition and struggle has broken out among the international monopolies to increase the amount of their investments and expand their spheres of influence.

The international monopolies today resort to the most various forms in order to spread their spider's web all over the capitalist and revisionist world. Their activity extends to all the branches of the economy, banks and financial transactions, they control production, prices and markets of goods and raw materials, bringing about, as a result, the ruin and bankruptcy of many small- and middle-sized enterprises, the increase of unemployment, the lowering of real wages, the worsening of the living conditions of the working people and their impoverishment. The neo-colonialist exploitation and plunder of the underdeveloped countries by foreign monopoly capital has assumed large proportions, especially in the more recent years, which subsequently deepens the backwardness and poverty of these countries. The multi-national companies and other
big monopolies of the United States, Britain, West Germany and other Western countries have squeezed more than 72 billion dollars profits out of the undeveloped countries during the last seven years. Apart from the profits they make through the export of capital, the international monopolies have also enriched themselves through the unequal trade they carry with the countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America. The foreign debts of these countries reached 450 billion dollars in the beginning of 1981. The imperialist powers, and the United States in the first place, are driving their clutches ever deeper into the huge assets of the undeveloped countries. Foreign monopoly capital controls 58 per cent of the industrial production and 45 per cent of the trade of Latin America. The investments of foreign capital, and especially of American capital, keep increasing from year to year. In Latin America these debts have increased more than ten times over, as the American bourgeoisie review, Newsweek, has it, while they were in excess of 120 billion dollars in the end of 1980.

The monopolies and the multi-national companies are savage enemies of the proletariat and the peoples of the world, as the weapons in the hands of the superpowers in the struggle for the economic and political redivision and domination of the world. Their strategy is the strategy of imperialism and social-imperialism for the perpetuation of the capitalist exploitation of the proletariat and the working masses by the bourgeoisie. This policy is seconded by unrestrained demagogy which seeks to perpetuate the enslavement of the peoples to imperialism and social-imperialism. The scribes of the bourgeoisie and capital write about the possibility for capitalism to develop in a peaceful and organized manner, without crises, on an international scale, as a result of the spread of the international monopolies. However, the reality refutes these worthless statements. Nothing has changed in the nature of imperialism. Crises and unemployment, inflation and anarchy not only have not disappeared, but, on the contrary, have assumed large proportions unseen before.

The reactionary cliques which have come to power in most of the undeveloped countries, have subordinated the interests of their countries to those of the international imperialist bourgeoisie so that they, too, can participate in the exploitation of the working masses of their own countries. Entering into close relations and agreements with the international monopolies and the imperialist powers, these cliques ruling in these countries have opened their doors to them and have put their territories at their disposal not only for economic exploitation, but also for political and military purposes. The imperialist powers, the superpowers in particular, export capital as aid to the undeveloped countries. Thus, in the Middle East the American imperialists have granted the Israeli zionists more than 800 million dollars in economic aid, which the Tel-Aviv heads have utilized to carry out their aggressive policy against the Arab people and to turn these countries into sources of raw materials for American imperialism and the other imperialist powers. The already large investments, which they make through their monopolies, have enabled the American imperialists and the Soviet social-imperialists to establish their domination partially in some countries and completely in some others. For example, only during the rule of the present dictator of Haiti, 150 American companies have extended their tentacles to the economy of that country, controlling its economy and finances and mercilessly exploiting its cheap labour force. According to official data, foreign monopolies' investments in Haiti have increased more than 800 per cent over these last five years.

Apart from the profound backwardness inherited from the colonial rule, the difficult situation of whole continents, of hundreds of millions of people in these areas, is largely due to the savage capitalist exploitation by the multi-national companies, which operate in agricultural and livestock production, too. The multi-national companies dictate their policy on the production, sale and processing of agricultural products, and the prices for farming machines. Twenty-one of the biggest multi-national companies of this type are American. The multi-national company, «Bunk Corp.» centred in New York has its branches in 55 countries of the world. Another American company — Daniel Ludwig, in Brazil, owns over 3.6 million hectares of fertile land in plantations. About 70 per cent of the arable land of Guatemala is owned by 2 per cent of the big capitalist families and the American monopoly companies.

The bourgeois ideologists, the defenders of the capitalist order, try to paint the interference of the multi-national companies in the agriculture of the developing countries in humanitarian colours, presenting it as aid to boost the economy of these countries and «solve» the acute problem of the feeding of the population. But the reality gives the lie to these statements. «The agricultural multi-national companies operating in the developing countries take returns amounting to 30 per cent of the invested capital,» admits the directors of these monopolies. And they achieve this high profit rate, especially through the exploitation of the cheap labour force.

The development of production and the structure of articles in the plantations run by the foreign monopoly companies are at complete variance with the demands of the local population. Only those crops which are greater in demand on the export markets and show high profits for the monopolies are planted in the more fertile lands of the undeveloped countries, instead of the traditional crops which ensure the staple food of the local population. This one-crop structure, imposed by the foreign monopoly companies, has created great difficulties for the food supply of the local population, has impoverished it while enriching the big capitalists, the owners of the monopolies and their filials in these countries.

The development of agriculture of the more backward countries in those directions, which suit the interests of the foreign monopoly companies of the
multi-nationals, is a powerful economic and political weapon in the hands of imperialism to exercise its dictates and pressure on these countries to comply with the line of its exploitative and expansionist policy.

The multi-national companies increase their profits continuously through the relentless intensification of exploitation of the working people, the plunder of the national assets of many different countries, the exploitation of their cheap labour force, the operation of the neo-colonialist mechanism of prices. According to the Western press reports, the American trust «Occidental Petroleum» wound up the year 1980 with a profit of 810 million dollars. The profits of some companies, as for example the «General Motors», are in excess of the gross national product of several industrialized countries, whereas the profits of the American complex of car industry, oil extraction and road building are larger than the budget of any capitalist state, including the United States itself. The multi-national companies based in the United States, Britain and the other industrialized countries have put under their control 80 per cent of the total industrial production of the capitalist world, 80 per cent of the world trade and 40 per cent of the export of raw materials from Asia, Africa and Latin America. Only the American «Rockwell» group, specialized in the construction of spare parts for automobiles and planes, has 140 enterprises in different countries of the world, and employs 110 thousand workers. The «Ford» exploits 100 thousand hired workers in more than 20 plants outside the United States.

The bourgeoisie of the backward and developing countries follows an anti-popular policy subservient to the policy of the American and other imperialists. These cliques have put up for auction the national assets of their own countries and have created favourable conditions for the foreign monopolies and multi-national companies to exploit the cheap labour force and the natural resources of their own countries.

In the beginning of 1981 the capitalist world numbered about 11 thousand international corporations with 82 branches in different countries. Only from the branches outside the country they ensure a production worth more than 400 billion dollars, which represents a sum of about 40 billion dollars more than the gross national product of the countries of Latin America taken together.

The history of the plunder of the Peruvian oil is connected with the imperialist penetration into this country, which began by the end of the past century. Such monopoly enterprises as «Texas Oil», «Philip Petroleum», etc have extended their tentacles to the oil-bearing areas of the Peruvian land. Recently two other American multi-national companies operate in these oil-rich areas, covering an extent of over 50 million hectares, 50 million of which are forests, subjects to intensive, all-round exploitation. The local financial oligarchy has taken measures which favour the plunder of the oil even more.

The monopolies of the superpowers are worried by the mounting struggle of the peoples of the different countries for social justice and against imperialist domination. In these conditions the superpowers try to bring the dictatorial regimes to toe their own line, in an effort to penetrate into these countries by means of «aid», while not neglecting open pressure and blackmail against the peoples of these countries. Such is also the character of the «aid» which the American imperialists have accorded to the different countries including Chile, Guatemala, Salvador, etc through the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development. Only over the years 1970-1978 the multi-national companies have invested 42.2 billion dollars in the undeveloped countries, squeezing a total profit of 100.3 billion dollars from them.

The Soviet social-imperialists are today the fiercest rivals of the American imperialists in the struggle for hegemony and expansion on the various continents. They have always used the so-called economic aid as a means towards imposing on the other states onerous neo-colonialist conditions under «agreements of economic co-operation», which link these countries with the Soviet companies. According to press reports until the end of 1978 the Soviet social-imperialists have signed 26 enslaving agreements with the countries of Africa. From 1960 on, the Russian monopoly capital has penetrated these countries and driven its clutches into their raw materials, which has brought about huge losses for these countries and big profits for the Soviet monopolies. Until 1978, they had robbed the African countries of 7 billion dollars worth of rare metals.

The facts show that the Soviet social-imperialists, in pursuing their neo-colonialist policy, have turned the countries of the Comecon into complete slaves, which are dependent on the Russian metropolis for many raw materials. The dependence of the Comecon countries on the Soviet revisionists and their exploitation by them are quite apparent from the fact that the Kremlin chiefs force them to enter agreements, to invest funds and material means and send labour power to the projects which the Soviet Union is building under common programs. Only in 1978, the Soviet Union signed more than 400 contracts for cooperation and specialization of production in the engineering industry with its vassal states. The Soviet social-imperialists force these countries to cut on the production of some goods, to sacrifice their own national needs and «specialize» themselves in the production of a number of goods for the needs of the Russian metropolis. Under these conditions, the policy of the Comecon, this social-imperialist monopoly, has created huge deficits among the members of this organization in their trade balance with the Soviet Union. More than half of the foreign trade of the Comecon countries is directed towards the Soviet Union. The so-called «agreements of economic cooperation», «community of equal states», advertised by the Moscow revisionists and their spokes-
The ventures, set up jointly by the Soviet Union with the Western monopolies, operate in the so-called third world, besides the companies on mixed capital with some of the developed countries which carry on their activities in the most backward countries of the third world. Soviet capital in the joint companies operating in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, accounts for 50 per cent and, in special cases, even 60 per cent of the total capital of these companies.

In order to step up their exploitation of these countries, and their expansion into them, the Soviet social-imperialists are making large use of the Comecon. According to what the Soviet press itself says, the division of labour within the Comecon «is being done under the projects for a division of labour on a world scale». The imperialist activity of the economic-financial organisms of the Comecon, with the enslaving «agreements» signed by this organization with various countries, has been expanded on this basis. Through Comecon, the Soviet social-imperialists have invested their capital in thousands of economic projects in which, no doubt, they take the lion's share. Under the disguise of «aid» and advertising it as such, the Soviet Union and the other Comecon member countries have invested their capital and are building 4,500 and more projects in the undeveloped countries. «Cooperation» is one of the main ways of limiting the dependence of the emerging countries on the imperialist countries and the multi-national companies, says the Soviet revisionist press. The ever increasing penetration of Comecon capital into the various countries is aimed, first, to ensure surplus profits for the Soviet bourgeoisie and, second, to dissipate Soviet neo-colonialism. According to incomplete data, over the recent 20 years the Soviet Union and Comecon have robbed the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America of goods worth 27 billion dollars purchased at prices 11-31 per cent lower than those of the world market. Trade exchanges with the undeveloped countries have increased more than 30 times over these twenty years. Not unlike the other capitalist countries, the Soviet monopolies invest their capital in those branches which ensure raw materials for the food-processing and other industries. Industrial goods from the undeveloped countries account for about 1 per cent of the total of their exports to the Soviet economy, and, furthermore, these goods come only from those enterprises and branches built on Soviet credits, which are given only for those projects the production of which is needed by the Soviet market.

The Soviet revisionists admit that the destructive influence of the multinational companies on the economy of the undeveloped countries is something which cannot be denied. But, on the other hand, they propose to these same multi-national monopolies to invest and plunder the backward countries jointly.

Another international monopoly is the European Common Market. In the international field, the European Common Market is a great neo-colonialist power, which competes with the superpowers and, at the same time, seeks to regain the old privileges of the former colonial powers. The Common Market has special aims and expansionist interests in the Middle East. However, its aims are not limited to the region of the Middle East alone. The European Common Market has signed dozens of conventions, agreements of economic cooperation and trade with the countries of Africa, the Caribbeans and the Pacific, Canada, Argentina, Uruguay, etc in order to ensure its political and economic penetration into them. By penetrating into these countries, the West-European monopolies have further stepped up their exploitation and enslavement. The same spirit prevails in the agreements of the European Common Market with the Soviet Union. The West-European monopolies, individually and jointly, as one organization, share together with the Russian bourgeoisie the surplus value accruing from the exploitation of the Soviet working masses. The revisionists of the different countries, such as Yugoslavia, China, etc have legalized the investment of foreign capital, moreover, they have created favourable conditions for its penetration. On their part, the Chinese revisionists try to justify the penetration of the international monopolies by talking about their peaceful character. This view is the same as that of the traitors of the 2nd International, like Kaulsky and company, whom Lenin has exposed. In this context, the Chinese revisionists are eager to enter into more agreements with the European Common Market, with the other capitalist and revisionist countries. This leads to the opening of doors to the capital of the international monopolies and multi-national companies and the increasing absorption by the local and international bourgeoisie of the surplus value created by the Chinese working masses. Only during the years 1979-1980 China received about 30 billion dollars in credits and signed a number of agreements on loans from British, Canadian, West-German, Italian, Japanese and other banks. This process of penetration of Western capital into the economy of the Soviet Union, China and the other East-European countries is fraught with heavy consequences for the working masses.

The capitalist companies are stepping up their penetration into the economy of the undeveloped countries through direct capital investments or large credits, which is one of the most advantageous forms of economic expansion, a form that now has assumed unprecedented proportions as a component part of the global strategy of imperial-
ism and social-imperialism for world hegemony and domination.

The bourgeois-revisionist propaganda arsenal concocts all sorts of theories and raises a great fuss about them in order to convince people that «aid» and credits are allegedly given for the development of the backward countries, to enable them to embark on the road of progress. The fact, however, shows the contrary. In 1979 the multi-national companies have ensured high rates of profit from the capital invested in the undeveloped countries. Hence, here can be no question of «aid» or economic progress, but of new chains being imposed on the backward countries and their peoples.

The Soviet revisionists talk about the concentration of capital in the capitalist countries, about the expansion of the international monopolies and multi-national companies, especially in the United States of America, but they «forget» to point out their competition with American imperialism and the other imperialist powers, «forget» to say that they are assiduous «visitors» of America and Africa to buy their raw materials at cheap prices and to sell their goods at high prices.

History has proved that the tendencies of economic cooperation between the various capitalist and revisionist countries in the form of international monopolies, not only are based on common interests opposed to the revolution and socialism, but also create profound contradictions and clashes among them in the different countries of the world. Everywhere, in the Middle East, Africa or Latin America, savage competition is going on among the monopolies of the superpowers and the other capitalist countries bent on increasing the amount and expanding the sphere of their capital investments. So, in the conditions of the deep and all-round crisis which has the capitalist and revisionist countries in its grip, their aim is to create conditions as favourable as possible to increase the profits of the corporations, multi-national companies, state and inter-state monopolies.

The international monopolies seek to make huge profits from the plunder of the working masses of the countries which enter «agreements» of «cooperation» with them. These tendencies demand more efficient use of neo-colonialism to broaden the spheres of influence in the process of the struggle for a redivision of the world. However, the realization of such a policy comes up against the savage competition and the fierce fight of the monopolies of the imperialist and social-imperialist countries to keep for themselves the right of the imperialist exploitation of other countries. The American trusts, which have extended their tentacles to foreign countries, are increasing their profits more and more. Only during 1981, these trusts, which have invested 200 billion dollars in the different countries of the world, expect to reap 41 billion dollars in profits. Huge profits accrue to them from Canada and the countries of the European Common Market. On the other hand, Japanese influence in American corporations and trusts has greatly increased recently. Japanese companies control 225 American companies totally or partly. As a result, the American car industry had to lay off more than 200,000 out of a total of 700,000 workers in 1981.

In fierce competition, the Japanese sold the United States 2.4 million motor vehicles, that is 80 per cent of the American import. Japanese economic expansion and competition is being stepped up in South-east Asia, where Japanese investments have increased more than fourfold from 1973 to 1980. In this competition for penetration of their capital abroad, the monopolies of the social-imperialist Soviet Union and other countries are trying to achieve the final aim of bringing about the economic submission of other countries and peoples. The mergers and unions that are made between the monopolies are the result of this struggle, too. So, there is talk of the merger of the American group «Occidental Petroleum» with the Italian company ENI and of the setting up of a great industrial complex both for the petrochemical and coal industries.

In open opposition to Marxism-Leninism, the bourgeoisie and revisionists consider the concentration of production and capital as a «qualitatively» new phase of imperialism. However, it must always be borne in mind that the international monopolies operating today are levers of imperialism and social-imperialism and one of the main forms of their expansion. The bourgeoisie and its lackeys sing the praises of these pillars of the political and economic expansion on a world scale.

By means of the international monopolies, the superpowers and the other imperialist powers penetrate ever deeper into the economies of the different countries, not to develop them, but to keep them under their domination, to hamper the independent development and the struggle for freedom and independence, to avert the peoples from the true road of salvation — the revolution. However, the peoples have now understood that the international monopolies are their enemies. Speaking to the 8th Congress of the Party, Comrade Enver Hoxha pointed out: «National revolutionary consciousness is mounting everywhere. This is clearly apparent in the extension of the movement of various countries and forces which are struggling for the establishment of national sovereignty over their own national assets, for re-evaluation of their raw materials and sources of energy, for equal exchanges with mutual benefit in international trade, for alteration of the international monetary system established by imperialism, for the restriction and elimination of the monopoly economic power of the multinational companies, etc.»

Today the peoples have launched themselves in the struggle to shake off the colonial and neo-colonial yoke and the chain of the oppression by the local bourgeoisie, the imperialist powers and the international monopolies.

1 E. Hoxha. Report to the 8th Congress of the PLA, p. 179, Alb. nd.