The "peaceful coexistence" of the modern revisionists with the religious ideology and its consequences. Political degeneration of the revisionists and their ideological and practical collaboration with the enemies of the revolution and socialism

Modern Revisionism And Religion

by HULUSI HAKO

"Look what is happening in the countries where the revisionists are in power! On the general ground of the bourgeois degeneration, for the sake of the internal and external political conjunctures, indeed using church also for social-imperialist aims, the religious propaganda is extending there, the churches and clergy are increasing, the reactionary and obscurantist old rubbish of the Middle Ages"

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A further rapprochement of the modern revisionists with the religious ideology and clerical organizations has been noticed recently. This process has its own political reasons and causes. The reactionary opportunist political line of the modern revisionists towards the religious ideology, which is aimed at perpetuating religion for the needs and interests of the rule of the revisionist cliques, has yielded its regressive results. All the countries ruled by the revisionists appear before imperialism and the Vatican with a rich balance-sheet of churches and clergymen, publications and other religious activities. The review "Nauka i Religia" (Science and religion) published in Moscow wrote some time ago for example that "...in the high areas of Tajikistan alone, during the last 2-3 years there have been opened about 100 mosques and many holy places. The newspaper "Komsomolskaya Pravda" has written about the increase of the number of baptized children. The review "Voprosi Filosofii" ("Questions of Philosophy") says: "...the activity of the religious organizations during the last three or four years has been greatly strengthened. Some believers are more concerned with re-
ligious questions, they have more frequently attended religious ceremonies and, in some regions, the number of members of the religious sects has grown.

In the Soviet Union «holy» books and religious review, books on the history of religion have been and continue to be published; the works of the patriarch and the synod are being published in several volumes. Dozens of dissertations are defended and «scientific» titles are conferred on theologians and priests of religious seminaries and academies. The Polish and other revisionists, too, are not lagging behind in the competition of turning back to the medieval religious obscurantism. A proverb goes: «If the king eats an egg in the village, the Cabinet Ministers exterminate all the chickens». With regard to the fold of the modern revisionists this means: When the Soviet shakes hands with the pope and bows before him fully 90°, the Polish lies down and kisses his foot. When the Khrushchevian revisionists follow the course of enlivening the religious ideology the French Roger Garaudy is not content with that much, he demands much more from the «Soviet comrades», he proved to be on the question of religion the most revisionist among the revisionists, he also gives theoretical orientations and platforms, for example that «the deepest social roots of religion reside not simply in the exploitation of man by man but in making a fetish of commodity which occurs also in socialism; that «religious faith, precisely because it is a reflection of the existing conditions, can play a different role in different epochs; that «religion is not always a bridle; like any other superstructure it plays a different role according to the concrete conditions; that «God is a force of the transformation of the world», etc. (Garaudy has gone more backward than the 18 century French bourgeoisie which gave an exclusively political, not religious, spirit to its revolution, it almost broke from religion; he has insulted and betrayed the revolutionary traditions of the Communards and the French proletariat). Garaudy cannot say that «the Soviet comrades» have not carried out in practice his teachings.

What speculations and demagogies, deceptions and falsifications the modern revisionists use in order to camouflage their ties with the darkest and most reactionary forces and ideologies ever known to mankind?

FREEDOM OF RELIGION UNDER THE MASK OF «FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE»

The Khrushchevian revisionists admit: «We have ensured the two sides of the freedom of conscience, the freedom of the religious ideas as well as the freedom of anti-religious ideas.»

This is an anti-Marxist-Leninist thesis, a flagrant distortion of the meaning of the «freedom of conscience». As is known, this principle in its original meaning and source, constitutes a requirement of the liberal bourgeoisie in the fight against the feudal order, against the arbitrary violation of human conscience and the imposition of religion by the force and political authority of the feudal state. But this, too, remained only a proclaimed freedom, an unrealized hope, an illusion of the first ideologists of the bourgeoisie. K. Marx has explained to us that for the bourgeoisie the «freedom of conscience» is nothing more than tolerance towards all kinds of the freedom of religious conscience. V.I. Lenin has stressed that in the conditions of the bourgeois rule freedom remains a fiction, it is transformed into a «...freedom of advocating what is convenient to the bourgeoisie, and it is convenient to it to advocate the most reactionary ideas, religions, obscurantism...» (V.I. Lenin. Works, Russian edition, vol. 27, p. 186).

Marxism-Leninism teaches us that religion, in its whole content, existence and extension, represents the greatest restriction, burden and insult of thought, of the human conscience, a serious obstacle in the free human development; it represents the trampling under foot of the dignity, personality and of all the other true human values.

The freedom of conscience in socialism has only one aspect, one direction. We see the real and complete triumph of the principle of the freedom of conscien-

1) I.N. Velikovich «Cerkov i socialne problemy sovremenosti». M. 1964, p. 60.
ce only through the serious steps of the liberation of the socialist society from the religious old rubbish, and we are working in an organized and systematic way in this direction. The problem arises only as follows: either freedom of conscience or freedom of religion. The existence of religion, the exercise of the religious cult was called by V.I. Lenin not as freedom of conscience, of thought, but lack of conscience, ignorance, obscurantism. (V.I. Lenin, Works, Russian Edition vol. 10, p. 81).

The opportunist policy of the modern revisionists on the religious question is a quite significant indicator of their ideological disintegration and degeneration.

To affirm that «the freedom of conscience» is enjoyed by the believers to such an extent that it does not violate the rights and feelings of the atheists, and that the atheists enjoy it at a rate which it does not the rights and feelings of the believers» (Nauka i Religia, Nr. 4, 1969), as the revisionists advocate, that means to be guided by an original metaphysical theory of balance; that means, at least, a peaceful ideological coexistence, an eclectic ideological situation. Finally, that means, in fact, to find out a pretext to renounce an offensive, militant, atheistic propaganda. This has been preached by Kautsky through the following idea: «You may be a good christian and a good communist». This has been refuted by V.I. Lenin.

If a truth which was set forth by V. I. Lenin, is «exaggerated» and extended by us beyond the boundaries within which it can really be carried out in practice, it could be changed into an absurdity and, in such conditions, it becomes ridiculous.

By their pretexts and speculations, making of religion almost a «touch me not flower», the modern revisionists realize some reactionary aims: Give a free hand to religion and the clergy, they pose as exceptionally «humanitarian», «democratic» and «liberal» before the eyes of the believers, of backward elements, fattened bureaucrats and disillusioned by life, they create the possibility for 'l'Osservatore Romano' of the Vatican to express satisfaction with the fact that «the religious life in the socialist (read: revisionist) countries is developing in a fully normal way». The Vatican rejoices that in the East the doors of churches and the hearts of the believers are being opened to it in order to implant religious obscurantism in them.

In such positions can fall only a rotten, bureaucratized and uncertain state which needs political support and credit from the clergy, from the ecclesiastical institutions, internal and external.

UNSCRUPULOUS FALSIFICATIONS

Marxism-Leninism and the labour movement do not expect and have no reason to show interest in a «positive» evolution of religion. A movement continuing to need a religious ideology cannot be a labour movement. However, the Khrushchevian revisionists come out today «revealing» that «some atheists in the past were not attaching any importance to the evolution of the religious organizations in socialism», that precisely V. I. Lenin had allegedly shown «special interest in the processes of the renovation of religion», of the «Russian orthodoxy» (Nauka i Religia, Nr. 6, 1969).

This «revelation» crosses the boundaries of a speculation and appears as a pure falsification by professionals. The classics of Marxism-Leninism have not nourished the least of illusion about the religious ideology, they have stressed its reactionary, anti-revolutionary essence and have definitely and unappealably sentenced religion to death. «All the present-day religions and churches, all the sorts of religious communities, — Lenin wrote in his life-time, — are always considered by Marxism as organs of the bourgeois' reaction, which defend exploitation and stunt the working class» (V. I. Lenin, Works, Russian Edit., vol. 15, p. 455). «Now as well in Europe as in Russia, indeed, even the most sophisticated and benevolent defence and justification of the idea of god, is an approval and justification of reaction». (V. I. Lenin, Works, Russian Edit., vol. 48, p. 232).

The classics of Marxism-Leninism likewise have instructed that the question of religion should never be brought to the forefront or make preliminary bargainings with the believers and set forth conditions as to what should be done with religion in socialism, but this question should be treated of only in accordance with the class struggle, with the problems and tasks set forth by the labour movement, by the revolution and the building of socialism. At present the falsification of the ideas of K. Marx by the revisionists has become a common occurrence. In this competition distinction is claimed also by the French revisionist Roger Garaudy. He has attributed to Marx the viewpoint that «religion is not always restriction». It is not the first time that the renegades and traitors to Marxism-Leninism, for their mean interests and to propagate the most reactionary ideas, brazenly distort the heritage of the classics of the proletarian revolution.

Roger Garaudy has been criticized by his French «comrades»; he is condemned
also by the Soviet revisionists (indeed academician F. Konstantinov himself in the newspaper «Pravda» November 16, 1972) for having allied himself with the bourgeois ideology and for seeking to reconcile Marxism with the Christian religion. But as the saying goes, «a crow does not put out the eyes of a crow». And what could we say about those who, varying with renegades of the Garaudy type, encourage and bless the unnatural marriage of Marxism with obscurantist clericalism. On this question we should mention the words of F. Engels:

«...The elimination of a greater charlatan often provides only an occasion to a smaller one but more adroit in these affairs, to reiterate, under a new board, all the games of the former».


The separation of the church and religion from the state and the school, which is realized de jure and de facto only by socialism constitutes a fatal condemnation for the religious ideology for which the authority and tutelage of the exploiting state are the fundamental support and life-giving source. In socialism religion remains in ideological opposition which, in one way or another, is expressed also in political opposition of the clergy and the church. It is inherent in the fanatic clergymen to preserve a permanent nostalgia for the reactionary political order and to do their utmost to turn it back to power.

What about the stand of the modern revisionists? They «reveal», among other things, a so-called «new political orientation» of the church, they greet it, they are immeasurably filled with enthusiasm and formulate the «arguments» of this phenomenon. «The political support, — they write, — is a new phenomenon in the history of the Russian orthodox church; it is the first and principal particularity of the adaptation of religious organisation to socialism» (l) («Nauka i Religia», Nr. 5, 1969).

It seems to the Khrushchevian revisionists as if the Russian church has worked out a «new political orientation», as the trees along a road-side seem to a man rapidly moving in a car. In reality, in the countries ruled by the revisionists, just as in all the exploiting states we notice, as Marx says, «the treatment of religion in a political way and of politics — in a religious way.» This is incontestably proved by the use of religion as a means of the internal and external political conjunctures, by the exchange of clerical delegations and state personalities, by the holding of official talks and the political ties with the Vatican.

The modern revisionists, gravely infected with the bourgeois reactionary idealistic viewpoints, are treating religion as a moral and cultural tradition and source; indeed they are raising it to the pedestal of a national feature. We notice these positions and tendencies in the admissions of the Polish revisionists and their actions in favour of the church, that «People's Poland does not intend to break from the tradition of bright Catholicism... For the first time there has been made in Poland another stride in the direction of the recognition of the spiritual values of Catholicism by the people's regime» (Zicie Warsawi, February 1970); in the open considerations of the modern revisionists about the «spiritual pleasure and the calming and comforting action of the icons, crosses and religious dogmas», etc. The open tolerance of the revisionist officials allowed the Polish clericals to celebrate the millenary of the Polish Roman Catholic church with the construction of 1,000 new churches at a time when in that country hospitals for the people and schools and kindergartens for children are insufficient. It is in the interest of the new revisionist bourgeoisie to have religion as near to it as possible, but it hesitates to call it by its right name — a political tool; they dish it up and baptize it as a national feature. As such they have used and continue to use it also as a weapon of division and conflict between the peoples.

It is a known fact that religion has not been and can never become a national feature. Therefore it cannot serve as a man indicator of nationality. It is known that while the nation has been historically created and has consolidated its own features of language, territory, economic connection and psychic formation, the religious ideologies have changed and expelled one another during the history of the same nationality, of the same nation, but becoming also means of conquest of a country against another.
With these changes and shifts the religions not only have not proved to be a national feature, but they have not justified even their claim to be «divine», «eternal».

The claims of the theologians include also the proclamation of the «religious demands of men» as a «higher expression of culture». In the spirit of these preachings, some representatives of the revisionist intelligensia set forth the problem of the relationship between religion and national culture and they are making one concession after another to the religious viewpoint. Tolerances are followed by encouragements, religious influences and traces in the artistic and cultural creativeness. «The resounding of the bells» — the revisionists admit, — «are so much abundant in poetry that they fully resemble as the most widespread expression…». In the films «War and Peace», «Ana Karenna» the religious scenes are given protracted and with a feeling of satisfaction…» (Nauka i Religia, Nr. 4, 1972, p. 5). In the «Hearth of Russia», a film about the revolution, the ecclesiastic group of priests heading for the revolutionary military committee, takes the form of a grandiose mass marching… a suggestive religious march, as in the good old days… » (Nauka i Religia, Nr. 4, 1972, p. 81). Almost the whole of the Soviet film «Olesja» is permeated by the dogma of God and fatalism, by dreams, fortune-telling and the cult of life in nature, in the spirit of the «hippies», by fortune-teller and sorcerer activities, by dream disturbances. We notice here a violent invasion of the religious ideology nourished and supported by the revisionist official policy. In fact, the linking of religion with the spiritual and cultural-artistic creativeness is neither natural nor indispensable. True, progressive, socialist culture not only does not need religion at all, but it has developed and continues to develop in struggle against the negative and inhibitive influences of the religious ideology.

The revisionists are concerned with the fabrication of some «bases», historic and current arguments about the change of the social positions of the Russian orthodox church and about the roads it must follow to implant religion in social life in the form of «communist christianity».

On earth, — the revisionists say with pleasure, — is being linked with every passing day with the communist transformation of the world… Christianity has been adapted, it is in harmony and cooperation with the process of transformation of social relations according to the socialist and communist principles…» The Russian orthodox church is no more an instrument of social-economic oppression, … it is a tool for the transformation of social relations» (Nauka i Religia, Nr. 4, 1969), etc.

Mankind has heard the sounds of the bells for centuries as symbols of «divine» threats, sufferings and ominous events. The bell and the clergymen lead only to death. But there come the Khrushchevian revisionists who advocate the paradox of the marching towards communism also under the church sounds and tunes (!). Similar wonders have been unknown so far to the laws of development of nature and society.

Atheism is not an invention of the labour movement, of Marxism Leninism, nor a feature and monopoly of theirs. It has been created since the birth of the religious prejudices and dogmas as an opposing expression of the force of science and materialist thinking. There occurs no essential change whatever of the anti-scientific and reactionary character of religion in socialism, in comparison with its situation and essence in the capitalist society, in the social orders with exploiting classes. The clear-cut, decisive stand of the socialist state, of the Marxist-Leninist party towards the religious problem, the increasingly active critical stand of the entire socialist society towards the religious dogmas and rites is a direct continuation of the protracted century-long struggle of the progressive forces and classes, it is the realization of the aspirations of mankind to liberate itself from the poisonous and blinding opium of religion.

To be a Marxist, V.I. Lenin used to instruct, means to be atheist, materialist; it means to be opposed to religion, to fight against it in an active and continuous way.

Revisionism and religion seek one another. They are ideologics of one and the same nature, of one and the same character. The same idealist and reactionary essence and their position of a servant of the imperialist bourgeoisie make them to be not only in a simple coexistence but also in close and active alliance. The adoption of the religious ideology by the modern revisionists ensures to the latter the support of the army of priests and believers. Their opportunistic policy has hired the religious feeling of the fanatics and reactionaries; indeed, their arrogance for the broadest possible extension of religious obscurantism has been further incited. The fanatics, filled somewhat with indignation by the progress of science and of the previous atheistic-scientific work, are now comforting themselves, they are sprinkling their grudge with the new revisionist holy water of «communist christianity». The «communist christianity» formula appears also as a very much convenient bridge of the imperialist-revisionist ideological ties. Therefore, the imperialist bourgeoisie, reaction the Vatican fully agree with this formula. Here, religion, the most ancient old rubbish, puts on the uniform of communism.

This formula constitutes a great fraud, an unscrupulous speculation by the modern revisionists. The latter present the existence and flourishing of religion as an aspect of democracy. However, their claims, as well about democratic conditions as about communism, are false and deceitful. Anyone knowing how to read and write, — V.I. Lenin used to say, — understands that democracy cannot be democracy while they pray God in it». (V. 22, p. 7, Russian Edit.)

The imperialist states and the modern revisionists, the Vatican and the Russian orthodox church, the reactionary ideologists and theologians have united into a new «holy alliance» and act in all the ways against the working class and Marxism-Leninism, against democracy and socialism, for the economic and spiritual enslavement of the working masses.

But the irresistible tendency of the present-day world development is the struggle for breaking the imperialist-revisionist chains and of mystic and religious obscurantism which consecrate and strengthen these chains.