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La Voce n. 43 of the (new)Italian Communist Party

March 2013

The Strategy of Socialist Revolution in the Imperialist Countries

Socialist revolution in Italy has the form of the Protracted Revolutionary People's War against the Papal Republic

In Italy the core of the Protracted Revolutionary People's War consists

in constituting underground the Communist Party as center of the New People's Power of the working class

in the growing mobilization and aggregation of all the revolutionary forces of the society around the communist party

in raising the level of the revolutionary forces

in their utilization according to a plan

for developing a sequence of initiatives putting the class fight at the centre of country's political life in order to recruit new forces,

for weakening imperialist bourgeoisie's power, breaking up or paralyzing its institutions and strengthening the New Power,

for succeeding in constituting the armed forces of the revolution,

for leading them in the war against the bourgeoisie until overturning the relations of forces,

for eliminating imperialist bourgeoisie's State and establish the State of proletariat's dictatorship.

Socialist revolution is not a popular insurrection (a revolt, an uprising, turning tables or something like this) that sooner or later will break out, that the Party hastens with its propaganda and fostering the popular struggles, preparing itself to head it. Socialist revolution is a war that the Party promotes and during which it builds the New Power.

Socialist revolution is not and cannot be a popular uprising as they were other kinds of revolution that preceded it and as they are the revolutions going along with it.

These ones are tumults that shake the entire society suddenly. A whole of circumstances in a given moment concur so that there converge and combine the will of a new class of rising exploiters and the uneasiness, the intolerance, the indignation and the rage of the masses of the exploited that are the bulk of the fighters of the uprising that breaks down the subsiding old classes of exploiters.

On the contrary, by its nature, (because of its content) socialist revolution eliminates any class of exploiters: Therefore its form is new.

Its form is new because it is a protracted war during which the popular masses organize themselves till they constitute a

network of organizations thicker and thicker and growing in strength. During this war the popular masses gather around their vanguards exponents (who are mostly members of the Communist Party and in the collective of the Party form and get the spiritual and material means that make them able to play their role), they launch thousand attacks on ruling classes' forces and institutions, with growing intensity and involving them in incessant and repeated clashes until they paralyze them or break them out, they organize autonomously their social life and production, taking possession of more and more parts of the productive apparatus of the country and building new parts of it.

So doing they create in the country the New Power that counters old ruling classes' power, limits it, erodes and breaks it out until this New Power upsets the relations of strength and eliminate the old one.

In the *Introduction* of Marx's pamphlet *Class Struggles in France from 1848 to 1850* edited in 1895, Engels openly admits that he and Marx (who died in 1883) had been wrong about this matter. They believed that socialist revolution would come about so as bourgeois revolutions did. The Communist Party would have hasten and work up to the insurrection propagandizing the coming system of social relations (the socialism, the objective), denouncing oppression, exploitation and misery (the bad present time), promoting the creation of any kind of organizations (union organizations, political organizations for the participation in going political struggles of the bourgeois democratic society, generally organizations for claims, cooperative or cultural organizations), organizing protests and pressures of the popular masses and particularly of the proletariat addressed against authorities and capitalists. So doing the Communist Party would have prepared itself to head and lead the uprising popular masses when the uprising will break out, and to constitute the future revolutionary government that would sanction the victory of the popular insurrection and begin to carry out the measures the popular masses fought for. As a matter of fact, as Lenin well showed in his writing *War and Revolution of 27th May 1917* bourgeois revolutions in European countries before the Russian revolution in 1905 brought new governments into being but did not create a durable network of popular organizations minutely widespread as soviet (councils) were in Russia.

On the basis of Paris Commune experience (1871) and of the following developments of the communist movement, in 1895 Engels admitted that history denied the conceptions he and Marx had. Socialist revolution would not have the same form of any previous revolution in human history. It would have the form of a war that workers and the rest of the popular masses following them would fight within the bourgeois society, that is to say they would accumulate the spiritual (moral and intellectual) and material resources needed, until they will become able to take the place of the bourgeoisie and the clergy eliminating their power. As a matter of fact it was no more a revolution in which the old exploiting class was replaced by a new exploiting class that was going to establish on his turn its power on the mass of the population (that stayed relegated to its work and excluded by the specifically human activities for managing society, culture, knowledge and art). It was a revolution in which for the first time in history the mass of the population (of the workers) was going to organize itself and to constitute itself as State, a new State that was taking the place of ruling class' one principally in order to repress the latter.

The social democrats of the imperialist countries (the countries where the objective conditions of socialist revolution were ripe) not only do not elaborate themselves (and much less they put into practice) such reflections, but they even firstly misrepresented (*Vorwärts*, the daily newspaper of German Social Democracy, on 1st April 1895 published an edition sweetened in a legalistic way of Engels' *Introduction*), then concealed or anyway neglected what Engels published in 1895.

Basically Lenin openly criticized Social Democrats during the First World War for their lack of strategy for making revolution. As an example confirming what I say, see what Lenin wrote in *Principles Involved in the War Issue* on December 1916 about the conduct of the Swiss Social Democratic Party which Lenin belonged to in 1916-1917, until he went back in Russia in April (in www.marxist.org/archive/lenin/works/1916/dec/00b.htm).

The communist parties of the imperialist countries created within the Communist International (founded in 1919 and formally dissolved in 1943, effectively dissolved in 1956) never elaborated a line corresponding with the conceptions that Engels expressed. This thesis is explained in detail in the article (in Italian language) *Il ruolo dell'Internazionale Comunista – conquiste e limiti* in *La Voce* n. 2, July 1999 (www.nuovopci.it/voce/voce2/rstoric.htm) and *L'attività della prima Internazionale Comunista in Europa e il maoismo* in *La Voce* n. 10, March 2002 (www.nuovopci.it/voce/voce10/aticeu.htm).

Lenin and Stalin applied in Russia Engels' conceptions but in the forms suitable for Russian social (economical, cultural and political) condition, that were very different from those of European and American imperialist countries. Applications corresponding to Engels' observations were done in the specific conditions for the respective countries but always in the ambit of the first Communist International by Ho Chi Minh and particularly by Mao Tse-tung. This one drew lessons from the experience of revolution in China but also from the experience of the Popular Front in France and particularly from that of the Popular Front in Spain and of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), and became able to elaborate an organic theory of the Protracted Revolutionary People's War, referred anyway to revolution in China, and not exposing it as an universal strategy. On the contrary the communist parties of the European imperialist countries kept an ambiguous conduct about the matter: on one side they adopted measures and lines waiting for and preparing an insurrection that was not breaking out (fence-sitting); on the other side driven by the first Communist International they adopted lines and measures corresponding to Engels' considerations: the line of the Popular Front and the Resistance against Nazi Fascism are part of this second part of their conduct. When the Communist International ceased to drive them those parties completely abandoned any line and measure corresponding to Engels' observations about the forms of socialist revolution.

Nevertheless just the vicissitudes of the class struggle in the imperialist countries during the first wave of proletarian revolution (that spans over the first part of the 20th century) confirmed Engels' conclusions. No socialist revolution broke out in Europe nor in USA, despite the derangements and destructions caused by the general crisis of capitalism, by the reactionary mobilization of Fascism and Nazism, by the two World Wars. But the only one who drew lessons from those vicissitudes and who thought over the form of socialist revolution in the imperialist countries was Antonio Gramsci. He elaborated (see *Prison Notebooks* 7, paragraph 16, 10, paragraph 9, 13, paragraph 7, and others) the theory of "war of position" which, freeing ourselves from the language of the censorship imposed by the fascist prison, we now call protracted revolutionary people's war. The "war of position" of Gramsci is essentially a paraphrase of the most explicit expression protracted revolutionary people's war that we use, taking it from Mao.

Why the elaboration by the communist parties of the imperialist countries about the form of the socialist revolution in their own countries has been so backward? In the imperialist countries of Europe and in the U.S. the communist movement set in motion by Marx and Engels has been grafted on claims, trade union, reformist framework of bourgeois democracy, cooperative and even anarchist (Proudhonian) of the proletarian masses already existing and was adapted to it, instead of transforming and making use of it. Even after what the betrayal of the leaders of the socialist parties in the First World War had revealed, after the October Revolution and the founding of the first Communist International, the leaders of the communist parties were mostly the leaders of the old socialist parties that conformed to Communist International guidelines and line to not be separated from the proletarian and popular mass enthusiastic about the October Revolution and anxious to "do as in Russia." In confirmation of this see the writings of Lenin *Letter to the German and French workers* (25th September 1920) and *On the Struggle of the Italian Socialist Party* (4th November and 11th December 11, 1920) (www.marxist.org/archive/lenin/works/1920/nov/04.htm) , the *Response by a Unitarian Communist to Comrade Lenin* (December 16, 1920, open letter by GM Serrati) and Lenin's Report to the Fourth Congress of the Communist International (13th November, 1922)

The lesson we have to draw is not to “do without leaders, because leaders are inherently bad” (that is the lesson drawn by comrades with anarchist leanings, individualist, simplistic): without communist leaders there is no revolution as it is with leaders who mimic the bourgeoisie. The right lesson is that the selection and training of leaders of the Communist Parties is the most difficult part of the communist movement: it is a question of training and selecting people having the most advanced intellectual tools developed by bourgeois society, exercising to the masses and also in the Party tasks of orientation and direction in many ways similar to those the bourgeois exercises in society and who at the same time serve with devotion the cause of revolutionary socialism. The best examples are people like Lenin, Stalin, Gramsci, Mao Tse-tung. The two lines struggle in the Party (one of the main contributions of Maoism to the communist conception of the world) is the method found to cope with this task (the method of the Control Commissions, no matter how they may be independent from the Party Central Committee, adopted still today for example by the Marxist-Leninist Party of Germany (MLPD) to cope with this task, it would be ridiculous if it were not a matter of great importance and where the errors and deviations have tragic consequences).

The backward positions of parties, currents, groups and people who claim to be communists, about the form of the socialist revolution in the imperialist countries today.

1. The followers of sterile deviations from the communist movement that occurred during the first wave of proletarian revolution (“left communism”, Bordiga, Trotskyism, the like & derivatives) are standing still into pre Leninist positions of the Second International: sooner or later the socialist revolution will break out, and in meanwhile, we have to get ready for take direction of it when this will happen

and hasten this outbreak with propaganda and possibly with the struggles of claims and acting in the ambit of the political struggles of the bourgeois democratic society. Typical representative in Italy of this position is the Communist Party of Workers (Ferrando’s PCL).

2. The followers of the modern revisionists, in so far they are not completely confused with the bourgeois left, persist in peaceful and democratic parliamentary way to socialism. Typical representatives of this position are the Party of Italian Communists (Diliberto’s PDCI) and the Party of Communist Refoundation (Ferrero’s PRC – former Secretary Bertinotti was already a left bourgeois, in addition

viscerally anti communist: according to him, the communist movement has been a path of “errors and horrors”).

3. Marxist-Leninists (those who have rebelled against the abandonment of principles of Leninism made by modern revisionists in 1956) adopt in an incomplete way the position held by the communist parties of the first IC in the imperialist countries: to wait until the socialist revolution breaks out, hasten the outbreak of the revolution with propaganda and prepare themselves spearheading the masses, promoting struggles for claims and intervening in the ambit of bourgeois political struggle. Outstanding representative of this position is the MLPD (see the theory of the three stages of the proletarian class struggle in W. Dickhut *Strategy and Tactics in the class struggle* (English edition, 2000, pp. 68 ff.) and confirmed by Stefan Engel *Dawn of the international socialist revolution* (2011, pp. 317 ff.). This is also the position of the Greek Communist Party and the Portuguese Communist Party.

4. Among the Communists who declare themselves Maoists there are exponents of two backward positions:

In order to bring class struggle on a higher level, communists firstly must elevate the level of their scientific elaboration of the experience of the struggle
The low level of the scientific elaboration of the experience of the class struggle is the main hindrance to the development of the revolutionary people's war.
The scientific elaboration of the experience of the class struggle is the main instrument we have to put on in order to hasten our course.
During the first wave of proletarian revolution the communist movement did not have leaders devoted with no reservation to elaborate the way that the communists, the working class and the popular masses must go through for establishing socialism. That is the main reason why in no imperialist country we are not been able to establish socialism

1. those who proclaim rhetorically (in the sense that their ones are statements from which no consequential political or organizational line ensues) that the revolutionary people's war is the universal form of the socialist revolution. In Italy representative of this position is Proletari Comunisti - Maoist Party of Italy;

2. those who say that the RPW, intending it reductively as armed struggle, is good only for the semi-feudal countries, while in the imperialist countries we must wait for the development of a revolutionary situation and the formation of the revolutionary masses, promoting the process. Exponents of this position are among others the Communist Party of the Philippines and the Revolutionary Communist Party of the USA (RCP, USA by Bob Avakian). The position of the RCP, USA is clearly expressed in his *Manifesto - Communism: The beginning of a New Stage*, September 2008, Chapter *The basic approach to revolution*.

The question of the form of socialist revolution is one of the main problems that parties, groups and people in the imperialist countries who want to be communists must solve. The general crisis of capitalism makes the establishment of socialism in the imperialist countries a matter of life or death for humanity. The general conditions are favorable as they ever were: the communists must make the step on indicated in the elaboration of the communist conception of the world.

The (new) Italian Communist Party to contribute to the resolution of this problem combines two paths.

The principal is to carry out the Revolutionary People's War in Italy. The first imperialist country that will break the chains of the International Community of the Europeans, Americans and Zionists imperialist groups will show and will open the way for the masses of the other imperialist countries, too. The success of our work in Italy will be a stimulus to the Communists around the world.

The second is to actively lead the ideological struggle in the international communist movement. In order to do it, the party has drawn up in late 2010 and published in several languages the pamphlet [*The four main issues to be debated in the International Communist Movement*](#) and deals with the problem in international meetings and in bilateral contacts with groups, parties and personalities. The Party asks readers of the magazine to promote the study and discussion of the booklet among the comrades of other countries with which they are in contact.

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