

Communist Party of Portugal (Reconstructed)

The Proletariat must wage class struggle on a major battlefield today: the defence of Marxism-Leninism

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from an editorial in the newspaper *Bandeira Vermelha*, central organ of the Communist Party of Portugal (Reconstructed), June 1979.

Editors' note: The Communist Party of Portugal (PCP(R)) adopted a resolution entitled "The deepening of the struggle against revisionism, a present-day imperative" at their Third Congress. The resolution was in three parts. We are printing the first section in this issue. The two other parts are entitled Cunhalite revisionism: a counter-revolutionary bourgeois theory and practice (Cunhal is the leader of the Portuguese revisionist party) and Mao Zedong Thought, an eclectic system of anti-Marxist ideas.

In this first section, the PCP(R) puts forward its analysis of modern-day, revisionism and the current situation in the international communist movement. The analysis includes a presentation of the tasks that the PCP(R) has set for itself in the struggle against revisionism in Portugal and on an international level. The translation is by the MLOC IN STRUGGLE!

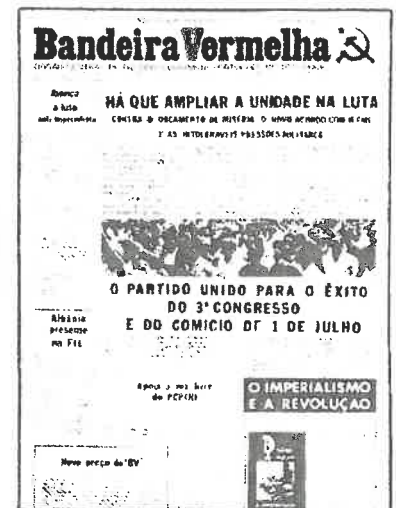
Today more than ever it is vitally necessary that the struggle against all expressions of revisionism be intensified. The always fresh and relevant principles which constitute the doctrine of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin must be defended not only across the country but at the international level also.

The Third Congress has determined that it is necessary to understand the indispensable and permanent character of the struggle against the expression of bourgeois ideology, and particularly of revisionism. Our party must build up its ability to fight on this battlefield and it must pay attention to the particular forms it takes in Portugal itself.

The struggle against revisionism is a fight to demarcate between Marxism-Leninism and the opportunist trends which are trying to corrupt the revolutionary movement. The ideological and practical struggle against all forms of revisionism is critical to the consolidation of the PCP(R) itself. Any

underestimation of this form of struggle will result in an erosion of the Marxist-Leninist movement. It is only by waging a permanent struggle against revisionism that we will be able to drive it out of the working-class movement and to bring an end to its activities which fragment the people's movement. Fighting firmly and steadily against revisionism is the only way to ensure that Marxism-Leninism will be recognized as the revolutionary guide to action for the working class in its struggles.

The ideological offensive of the Portuguese bourgeoisie today against the revolutionary movement is a constant and intense onslaught. The capitalists want to play down and make the people forget about the lessons drawn from going through the revolutionary crisis. Worse still, they are trying to revive reactionary and fascist ideas. The attacks against the gains won by the people, against the revolution and socialism, never stop. Revisionist ideology is an obstacle to the grow-



ing consciousness of the working class and people. It is a barrier which gets in the way of the open struggle against the offensive launched by the big bourgeoisie against the people, who remain vulnerable to reactionary ideas.

The Third Congress of the PCP(R) recognized that the working class must develop its own world view, its understanding of its class goals, its socialist consciousness. This means pointing up the antagonism which exists with revisionist ideas every bit as much as with openly reactionary capitalist concepts. Throughout its history, the Portuguese working class has never managed to develop a real socialist consciousness. Anarcho-syndicalist ideas were dominant for a time. Revisionism has smothered class consciousness for the past

twenty years. The struggle waged by the old PCP between 1921 and 1956 overcame the storm of anarcho-syndicalism. However it was not able to establish scientific socialism. Marxism-Leninism, as a force to be reckoned with in the Portuguese working class. It is the job of our Party to educate the proletariat about socialism. We must battle against bourgeois and revisionist distortions and make up for the fact that scientific Marxist-Leninist traditions were never developed in the Portuguese workers movement.

1. Only Marxism-Leninism equips the proletariat for the revolution

Revolutionary situations are springing up or maturing rapidly in a large part of the globe. This is true for both the developed countries and those which are economically more backward. Victories have been won in the peoples' revolutionary anti-imperialist struggle, which continues to move forward. The working-class movement in the imperialist metropolises is standing up to repression. It is dealing with the purposefully confusing "socialist" rhetoric employed by capitalist governments. It has organized courageous battles against the effects of the crisis. Every day there are more and more parts of the world which develop into points of tension or scenes of war. The capitalist system is mired

in its most serious crisis since World War Two. All economic structures and the entire institutional superstructure have been severely shaken. What is happening in Portugal is part of what is happening on a world scale. We went through a revolutionary crisis in 1974-5. The factors contributing to such a crisis are still very much with us.

The proletariat is the most advanced class in the world today. It is in its best interests to contribute a revolutionary solution to the capitalist crisis by violently overthrowing capitalist State power. The working class must make revolution and become the leading class in society. Thus it will free itself from the violent exploitation and degeneration which is its lot under capitalism. Even more important, it will thereby accomplish its historic mission of leading all working people along the path of building socialism on the ashes of capitalism and finally eliminating all classes and achieving communism.

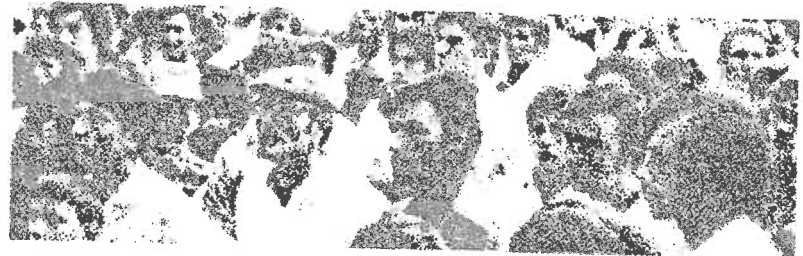
The proletariat needs a theoretical weapon which can show it which road to follow in the practical accomplishment of its revolutionary tasks. Marxism-Leninism synthesizes the historical experience of the international working-class movement. It is the revolutionary scientific doctrine of the proletariat. Leninism is the Marxism of our era, the era of imperialism, of the breaking down and collapse of capitalism and of the revolutionary transition from

capitalism to socialism. Leninism is the theory and tactics of proletarian revolution in general. It is the theory and tactics of the dictatorship of the proletariat in particular. Leninism is still completely relevant and a precious weapon which will enable the proletariat to win.

The working class wages the economic struggle against the effects of capitalist exploitation. It carries out political struggle with the aim of overthrowing the bourgeois State. The other great battleground is that of the theoretical struggle to defend the revolutionary purity of Marxism-Leninism against all opportunist and revisionist deviations.

2. The main trends of modern-day revisionism

The existence of a goodly number of revisionist trends is an international phenomenon these days. Revisionism has already inflicted incalculable damage to socialism and the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat. It has brought about the restoration of capitalism in various forms in socialist countries. It has led to the bourgeois degeneration of communist parties and the contamination of the revolutionary consciousness of the mass of workers. It has set back the process of world revolution several years. Revisionism is the consequence of the penetration of the working-class and communist movement by a



Portugal. May Day 1979. Workers, peasants, women and youths stage massive demonstrations against starvation wages and repression.

regressive and decadent social climate which decomposing capitalism engenders in society as a whole. Capitalism desperately grabs at anything to figure out new ways to save itself from the crisis and revolution. Revisionism is bourgeois ideology in Marxist clothing. New variants of revisionism will continue to spring up as long as there is imperialism. It will be necessary to conduct an uninterrupted battle to defend revolutionary proletarian ideology.

Modern-day revisionism internationally can be subdivided in a number of major trends:

— **Soviet revisionism** is represented in Portugal by Cunhalite revisionism. It originated with the Khrushchovite theses presented to the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union which attacked both the person and the work of Comrade Stalin. These theories became the basis for the restoration of capitalism and the coming to power of a new capitalist class in the Soviet Union and in the majority of the other socialist countries. These theories also enabled small groups of revisionist traitors to take over the leadership of the communist parties and to make them degenerate into counter-revolutionary bourgeois parties. Ultimately these ideas were to convert the Soviet Union into a social-imperialist superpower.

— **Titoite revisionism** promotes the concepts of "worker self-management" and "non-alignment". It is allied with imperialism and is its preferred instrument for the purpose of accelerating the degeneration of the socialist countries into capitalism. It also serves imperialism by sabotaging the liberation struggles of the oppressed nations. It does so by preventing oppressed peoples from forging a fighting alliance with the working class and socialism. That

alliance is the only path to complete national and social liberation.

— **So-called "Eurocommunism"** grew out of the intensification of the bourgeois degeneration of the revisionist parties. Those parties threw off their "Leninist" and "socialist" masks entirely. They came right out and nakedly converted their organizations into social-democratic type parties and subdued appendages of the capitalist State.

— **Chinese revisionism** has its ideological and political roots in so-called "MaoZedong Thought". It is the underpinning for the rapid restoration of capitalism in China. Chinese revisionism promotes a counter-revolutionary strategy of allying with U.S. imperialism and all reactionary forces against the proletariat, peoples and progressive forces in the world. It stands for a chauvinist policy which clashes with Soviet social imperialism in order to obtain zones of influence for itself. This all works to undermine the reorganization of the international communist movement, which has already been weakened and divided by Khrushchovite revisionism.

The main trends of modern-day revisionism take on various specific forms in each country. Soviet, Chinese and Yugoslav revisionism are represented by Cunhalite revisionism, the counter-revolutionary theories of the "Vilarites", (*) and the sections of the SP and UEDS (**) which call for a "self-management" line, respectively. Marxist-Leninists have to go beyond just the peculiarities of the particular representatives of these trends in their countries if they want to fight them on a theoretical plane. They must get down to what is common to all of them and deal with the central theories they are built upon. On the political and practical front, however, great attention must be paid to the national moulds into which this revisionism

is poured. Portuguese communists must deal with the concrete ways in which the Portuguese revolution is being sabotaged.

The Third Congress stated that the two most important expressions of revisionism at the present time are the Russian and Chinese versions. Both merit our full attention and will require a sustained struggle to destroy them ideologically and politically.

Russian revisionism is the most dangerous enemy of the revolutionary proletariat. It is the leading centre of revisionism on a world level. It has the most completely developed revisionist theory. It dominates the working-class movement in the majority of the capitalist countries and has substantial influence. Cunhalite revisionism is the most dangerous in Portugal because it is the most effective in fooling the masses.

Chinese revisionism, which has recently come out in its open form at the international level, has not shown itself to be capable of winning over any important sections of the working class. Its influence among the masses in Portugal is practically nil. All the same, it poses new problems for the communist movement. It comes across as a friend and ally of the peoples fighting liberation struggles against imperialism. It claims to be the undying enemy of social imperialism and even poses as the initiators of struggle against it. Special attention must be paid to Chinese revisionism in order to root out its ideological and political influences.

No matter what theories they dress themselves in, all the revisionists have in common the idea that revolution is impossible in today's world. They all say that it is not possible to move from

(*) Vilar is the former leader of the Communist Party of Portugal (Marxist-Leninist), a pro-Chinese and "third-worldist" party.

(**) Union of the left for socialist democracy.

capitalism to socialism by following the revolutionary path blazed for the working class by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. All of them want to deprive the proletariat of its principal and decisive role in the overthrow of the capitalist system.

The scientific conference in Tirana, Albania, stressed that "the struggle between the Marxist-Leninists, on the one hand, and the bourgeois ideologues and various opportunists, on the other hand, is today focused on a key problem: is revolution necessary to transform society? Do the conditions for revolution and victorious revolution exist? Is it essential to resort to revolutionary violence or can this transformation be achieved by reformist, parliamentary means? These are vital questions for the proletariat and all oppressed and exploited people. One's position on them has been and continues to be a line of demarcation between Marxist-Leninists and all the varieties of opportunists and revisionists."

All revisionists — whether Russian-style, Chinese, Yugoslav or "Eurocommunist" — answer this crucial question in the negative. Each of them in their own fashion rejects the revolutionary path. Our party must be alert to this common thread which runs through all revisionists so that we can bear down on the fundamental issue which pits us against them: the necessity of leading the proletariat onto the path of revolution. It was also stated during the Tirana scientific conference that: "No one who slights and rejects the most fundamental aspect of Leninism can be a true Leninist. This basic element is the theory of revolution, a theory that is still fresh and pertinent, a theory which says that exploitation and oppression can only be eliminated through revolution. Any turning away from the path of

revolution leads to revisionism. The consistent defence and application of Marxist-Leninist theory is therefore one of the most important tasks for Marxist-Leninists today."

There you have, in brief, the common basis of all expressions of revisionism and an indication of how important it is to combat them.

3. The consolidation of the communist movement cannot be separated from the struggle against revisionism

The PCP(R) is a fighting detachment of the international communist movement which was reorganized after the great betrayal of Khrushchovite revisionism. Today, the international movement is making decisive steps forward in the struggle to strengthen its unity on a Marxist-Leninist basis. The various parties are broadening their involvement in the struggles of the working class. We are now moving from the period of propaganda against revisionism internationally to the stage of drawing up concrete revolutionary programmes for action in each country and fighting to implement them. All Marxist-Leninist parties must thus deepen the struggle against revisionism. They must act to restore the revolutionary tradition of Leninism and the ideas of the great socialist October Revolution which the revisionists have betrayed. They must work out genuinely revolutionary strategy and tactics which are adequate to the tasks which the proletariat and peoples have before them today. Communist parties also regard it as imperative to eradicate from the Marxist-Leninist movement all the Maoist influences which exist side by side with Soviet revisionism. The impact of Maoism has been serious distortions in ideology, methods of

work and in the building of new Leninist parties. In fact, it has even managed to bring about the degeneration of several of the new parties.

The Party of Labour of Albania and its great leader Enver Hoxha have played a vanguard role in the reorganizing of the communist movement on a Marxist-Leninist basis. The PCP(R) takes as its model the consistent and unbending attitude of the PLA and Comrade Enver Hoxha in leading the socialist construction in Albania and defending the purity of Marxism-Leninism against the opportunists and revisionists.

The Third Congress feels strongly that in Portugal, the PCP(R) and all of its members and leaders, being as we are a detachment of the international communist movement, are faced with the task of developing the anti-revisionist struggle in two main ways:

First, we must intensify the theoretical, political and practical struggle against Cunhalite revisionism. It has not yet been exposed in the working class and is the most important block to the development of the working-class awareness of the need for revolutionary struggle. It may thus exercise some influence within our own ranks.

Second, we must consolidate the building of the PCP(R) into a proletarian communist party for socialism and revolution. Every member must be made aware of what it is that distinguishes us radically from Maoism on the ideological and political planes and in the area of organizational principles.

To do all this, the PCP(R) will have to participate actively in the international ideological struggle against revisionism and in the fight to determine a revolutionary strategy and tactics for the communist movement.