

People's Struggle Committees in Venezuela

The situation in Latin America. The international communist (Marxist-Leninist) movement

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Editor's note: This article is taken from a special issue of the newspaper Que Hacer?. This issue, entitled On the general revolutionary line, is available in Spanish. It presents the positions of Venezuelan Marxist-Leninists on the international situation, their analysis of Venezuelan society and the nature of the revolution. It puts forward a programme of people's democracy and a strategic and tactical line for the revolutionary struggle in Venezuela. The two excerpts included here are taken from the chapter on the international situation.

The position of the Venezuelan Marxist-Leninists on the unity of the international communist movement reflects a point of view that is being expressed more and more openly by a number of parties and organizations concerning the development of the debate within the international communist movement at the present time. This debate has centred in particular on the role played by Mao and on what method should be used to achieve the principled unity of Marxist-Leninists on a world scale. The excerpts have been translated by IN STRUGGLE!

The situation in Latin America

The situation in Latin America deserves a separate chapter in the analysis of the international situation. It has been the principal zone of North American imperialist domination in the West since it basically took over from British imperialism 100 years ago.

Even though our continent is burdened and subjected to oppressive regimes, it presents a fertile ground for revolution. This is true despite imperialism's attempt to mask its domination through a demagogic campaign of the so-called defence of human rights.

The Latin American people have opposed foreign domination in a continuous process of armed struggle which began against the colonial domination of Spain and Portugal. The desire for victory which has guided these struggles has been frus-

trated by the actions of social-democratic movements like Ad in Venezuela and APRA in Peru, which made themselves the political spokesmen of the pro-imperialist bourgeoisies among the peoples. This current still plays a singularly important role as spokesmen of the dominant classes. They safeguard the interests of the dominant classes which are associated with imperialist capital, and thus defend imperialism's interests even though they speak an anti-imperialist language.

The absence of real communist parties is the main reason that our people's struggles have not developed correctly. The old Latin American revisionist parties educated in Browderist ideas never truly represented an alternative of revolutionary power. The triumph of the Cuban revolution raised the hopes of the Latin American masses that this would be the start of an inexorable march toward their total libe-



ration. However, the fact that the Cuban leaders transformed this process into a further link of dependence on Soviet social imperialism has made our people more cautious when considering other popular victories, such as that of the Sandinista Front in Nicaragua. This weakness will only change when true Marxist-Leninist parties are built, capable of combatting the different projects of the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie (including the revisionists who only seek to replace one imperialism with another) by putting forward really revolutionary project, taking into account the specific characteristics of each country, with the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat as an objective.

Despite the greater or lesser degree of development in our countries, we generally have the same problems: all are dominated by imperialism; internally, our people oppose the bourgeoisie and landlords; their living conditions are deteriorating at an increasing rate; they are victims of imperialist plots to maintain divisions that cause conflict between brother-peoples, etc. This forces Marxist-Leninist parties to play their vanguard role, strengthening their unity and struggling for the union of our people based on proletarian internationalism.

The fundamental key to the unity of our peoples relies on the numerous Marxist-Leninist parties which, basing themselves on principles, must strengthen their unity with their respective people. There are parties in North, Central and South America and in several Caribbean islands that have taken up their people's tradition of revolutionary struggle. They set them-

selves the most important task of raising the revolutionary violence of their people in struggle into forces capable of destroying imperialist domination and building a free America. This objective implies that our parties multiply mutual consultations exchange experiences, reach political and practical agreements which will fortify the revolutionary struggle in our respective countries and seek collective solutions to satisfy the needs for political, moral and material support for each respective country.

In their expansionist zeal, imperialism and the indigent Latin American dominant classes have created an accumulation of border problems between our people. Marxist-Leninist revolutionaries must base themselves on the principle of proletarian internationalism and denounce the reactionary character of these disputes in front of the masses. We must not be blinded by bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalism. We must organize the

proletariat and the rest of our people and not only denounce the voracity of the bourgeoisie of other countries but also the voracity of the bourgeoisie of our own country. We must lead our people to the dictatorship of the proletariat, the stage in which it is possible to solve the problems of our borders in a just way.

The present struggles against imperialism and the military dictatorships endured by the Central American people are of singular importance. Each time it gets harder for imperialism to continue its game of changing military dictatorships for pseudo-democratic civil governments and then changing these for openly fascist military governments.

The growing opposition of the peoples to the U.S. foreign policy of military intervention has forced the States to increasingly rely on pseudo-democratic governments which are just as repressive as the military dictatorships.



There is growing militant solidarity with the Chilean resistance among popular and democratic forces around the world. In the photo, a solidarity demonstration on the university campus in Caracas, Venezuela.

The fact that the leaders of Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia and Costa Rica have fallen all over each other "to calm" the revolutionary crisis in Nicaragua has not stopped the peoples of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras from also overthrowing military governments. Nor has it stopped the growth of the anti-imperialist consciousness of the peoples of Latin America.

Central America is an important zone in the confrontation between imperialism and social imperialism. This confrontation has given rise to two main trends. On the one hand, there are those who call themselves social democrats, like Carlos Andrés Pérez, Tubay Ayala, Rodrigo Carazo or the reactionary Accion Democratica party. On the other hand, there are those who support the Cuban revisionists and the false "progressive" who claim that they want to "help" the peoples struggling for their liberation. We should expect nothing from these opportunists. Marxist-Leninist organizations must, on the contrary, consolidate their ties with all liberation movements which oppose imperialism, fascism and reaction through armed struggle.

As the whole, Latin America is mainly under the thumb of U.S. imperialism. Nevertheless, the presence of social-imperialism in this part of the world should not be underestimated. We have only to think of Cuba's influence as a political, military and ideological base for social-imperialism or of the different revisionist parties with which the U.S.S.R. maintains cultural and commercial relations. Bilateral exchanges between the Soviet metropolis and Latin American countries have reached more than \$5 million per year.

Although we must continue to denounce the interference of social imperialism on our continent, the main

enemy of the Latin American countries remains U.S. imperialism. In alliance with the national bourgeoisie and the land owners, it constitutes the main obstacle to revolution.

The different solutions proposed by imperialism to get itself out of the general crisis of capitalism have led some people to make an erroneous analysis of the contradictions between imperialism and the local bourgeoisies. They claim that imperialism has been so weakened by the crisis that it has no choice but to give in to the pressures of the local bourgeoisies. The new commercial exchanges and the new modes for accumulating capital imposed by imperialism in no way affect the power of imperialism. On the contrary, they increase the dependency of the Latin American countries, which are assigned a lesser role in these negotiations.

Given this situation, the dominant classes of our countries use an "anti-imperialist" and third worldist vocabulary. They appeal to patriotism to justify the increased exploitation of workers' labour power which is indispensable to their existence. The same rhetoric which the Chinese revisionists vigorously turn to is used to justify foreign interference in our countries and the increased exploitation of the working class which we are experiencing today.

There are certainly contradictions between the international monopolies concerning production sectors or the question of markets. There are also contradictions between the international monopoly bourgeoisie and certain sectors of the national bourgeoisie over the sharing of gains. But none of these contradictions are antagonistic.

The national bourgeoisies of our countries have the same fundamental interests as those of imperia-

lism. To claim that the bourgeoisie can be an ally of the revolutionary forces is to falsify the character of the revolution in the independent countries. It creates the illusion that it is possible to put an end to the dependency of our countries by a path other than armed struggle, which is the only path for really putting an end to imperialism, the bourgeoisie and the great landowners.

The international communist (Marxist-Leninist) movement

The international Marxist-Leninist movement was formed over the past ten years in the struggle against modern revisionism. First it had to deal with the Soviet revisionist clique and then with the Chinese revisionists, who did everything they could to sabotage the principled unity of various parties.

As Marxist-Leninists, we believe that the revolution in Venezuela is an integral part of the world-wide socialist revolution. We are firmly committed to practising proletarian internationalism, to the struggle for the unity of Marxist-Leninist parties, and to building an international organization that will allow the development of struggles led by Marxist-Leninists around the world. In order to reach these objectives, Marxist-Leninist parties must have more exchanges, share points of view and experiences, analyze in common the reality of the class struggle in the world, and thus make the necessary preparations for drawing up the general line of the international Marxist-Leninist movement.

Unity must be built on the basis of principles:

- by recognizing the independence of each party to define its own political line on the principles of Marxist-Leninist theory;

- by following the principle that all parties are equal, however big or small they may be, whether they were formed recently or long ago, whether they are in power or still struggling to seize power;
- questions of common concern should be decided by unanimous agreement through consultations;
- differences should be resolved by developing the ideological struggle through internal debates which should not be made public as long as the differences are between fraternal parties; and meetings or congresses of one party should not be used to publicly attack another.

The progressive degeneration of the world-wide capitalist-revisionist system is evident. The class struggle in the world requires that Marxist-Leninist parties increase their exchanges. Adopting common general agreements as a first step would

lead to adopting certain common practical measures concerning the revolutionary struggle in the world. That, of course, does not mean exporting revolution. Revolution will continue to be a problem that each people, led by its vanguard, must face.

Concerning the ideological struggle that currently exists within the international Marxist-Leninist movement on the personality and contributions of Mao Zedong, we believe that this struggle should not be reduced to a simple positive or negative verdict on the personality and contributions of Mao Zedong. We feel that this ideological struggle should be an important step forward in clarifying the problem of the proletarian revolution as a whole. Marxist theory is required for this, not preconceived ideas. It is only in this way that we can contribute to consolidating and enriching Marxism-Leninism as the scientific theory of the proletariat and of proletarian revolution.

In this struggle, Marxist-Leninist parties must combat superficial analyses that lead to subjectivism and unilateralism. Moreover, it is essential that Marxist-Leninist parties help each other in making these analyses. The kind of haste which results in taking statements as fundamental without taking into account the developing political practice must end.

In order to study these and other problems facing the international communist movement, our organization's point of view is based on a community of Marxist-Leninist parties guided by general principles which take a concrete form in each specific real situation. This means we must take into account the unequal and multiple development of our community of parties. To start from the assumption that unanimity would be possible on specific problems which are not directly linked to principles would deny the ideological struggle that exists within each party.



Venezuela. For a general wage increase of 50%! For a national day of protest against the cost of living! For a national rally of workers! Long live the unity of the working class!