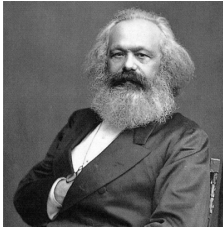


# Towards Marxist-Leninist Unity



## A Journal of Discussion and Debate



Vol. 4, No. 2

July, 2022

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To see the reasoning behind publication of TMLU, please see the article “Why ‘Towards Marxist-Leninist Unity’” in the first issue on the web-site below. Though we believe that a Party must have ideological unity, we include progressive articles from groups with varying views. **Also, note that unsigned articles, as well as comments before articles, are mine (George Gruenthal).**

Note that we reprint many articles without our asking for permission. Clearly the authors are in no way responsible for other views in this publication.

Comments, criticisms and articles are welcome. The next issue of TMLU should appear in September, 2022. Material should be sent in by the end of August.

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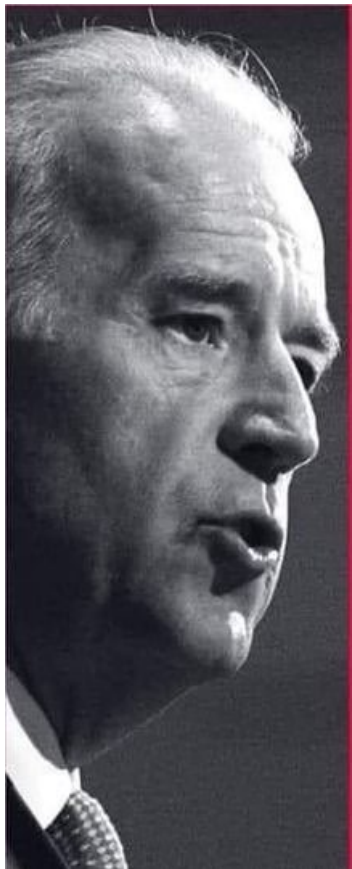
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## Fight to Restore the Right to Abortion!

On June 24, the Supreme Court, by a vote of 6 to 3, overturned Roe v. Wade, a Supreme Court ruling of 1973 that recognized the right of women to an abortion. Many states have already passed laws abolishing or severely restricting this right that go into effect immediately not that Roe v Wade is overturned. This is a major setback, particularly of course for women, but for all working and oppressed people, who will be the most affected by this.

If poor, pregnant women are forced to bear a child that they cannot afford and to give it the care it needs, this not only hurts the child but both of its parents (as long as they are both involved in its upbringing<sup>1</sup>). Also, the same ruling class forces (and the bourgeoisie is divided on this) who oppose the right to abortion generally also oppose the right to contraceptives and to gay marriage; they are cutting back on food stamps, day care, facilities, Medicaid and other aid to families. These hypocrites who claim to uphold the “right to life” of the fetus in the womb do not care about its having a dignified life once it is born.

Meanwhile, the Democrats are claiming to uphold abortion rights, but this is mainly a ploy to win votes in the November elections.



**Joe Biden's record of opposing abortion rights**

- 1974:** Joe Biden: "I don't like the Supreme Court decision on abortion... I don't think that a woman has the sole right to say what should happen to her body."
- 1982:** Joe Biden votes to allow states to overturn Roe v. Wade
- 1988:** Joe Biden repeatedly votes against inclusion of exceptions of rape & incest in the Hyde Amendment
- 1992:** Joe Biden voices opposition for litmus test on abortion for Supreme Court justices
- 1994:** Joe Biden brags he voted against federal funding of abortion "on no less than 50 occasions"
- 2003:** Joe Biden votes for a bill that would "overturn Roe v. Wade by criminalizing the most common procedures used after the first trimester"
- 2006:** Joe Biden: "I do not view abortion as a choice and a right."

In Germany, the Nazis denied the right to abortion. Their slogan was “Kinder, Küche, Kirche,” that is, a woman’s place was with the children, in the kitchen and in church. Our conservatives are following the same path.

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<sup>1</sup> In single parent families, in the great majority of time it is the woman, and/or the maternal grandmother, who is responsible for the child’s upbringing.



On the question of women's rights, the U.S. is heading down the path of reaction. Many countries in supposedly "conservative" Latin America, including Mexico, have recently passed laws decriminalizing or legalizing abortion.

A fightback is already developing around this issue, as many demonstrations were held as soon as it was learned that *Roe v. Wade* was likely to be overturned. Let us bring out as many people as possible, women and men, to support the right to safe, legal and free abortion!



Abortion rights protest, June 24, Washington Square Park, New York City

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## The Right to Abortion in the Soviet Union

Many people on the left know that Soviet Russia legalized the right to abortion in 1920, shortly after the socialist revolution there. But they will also say that this right was restricted (not eliminated) in 1936. One should look at the reason for this, whether or not one agrees with it.

At that time, the Soviet Union was in the middle of its second five-year plan. The living standard of the population was rapidly being raised, and not only had unemployment been eliminated but there was a labor shortage. Most women had joined the labor force, and much housework had been socialized, through provision of meals in factory canteens, setting up creches and kindergartens attached to the workplaces, etc.<sup>1</sup> So if a parent could not, or did not want to, take care of a child, this care could be handled by the socialist society. The slogan: "It takes a village to raise a child" was being made a reality!

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<sup>1</sup> See Kollontai: *On the New Abortion Law*, at the web-site of Revolutionary Democracy at: [www.RevolutionaryDemocracy.org/archive/kollontai2.htm](http://www.RevolutionaryDemocracy.org/archive/kollontai2.htm), as well as her *Communism and the Family*. Also worthwhile is *Russian Women in the Building of Socialism*, by Anna Razumova, the latter two available from Red Star Publishers.

# My Body, No Choice

## Hypocrisies Abound



Cindy Sheehan

June 25

Thank you for reading Cindy Sheehan's Soapbox Newsletter. This post is public so feel free to share it.

For the record, I am 100% in favor of body autonomy; especially when it comes to medical procedures that should be made in the privacy of our medical provider's office.

I hate to be the bearer of tough news, but neither Democrats, nor Republicans care about women or babies. The abortion issue is a convenient political football that can be kicked around. The recent SCOTUS decision on *Roe v. Wade* sent the partisans of both political parties into a frenzy: the decision energized both bases.

Because the political energy from their voters has been strong for decades, if Democrats cared about women in reality, the times they have had solid majorities and the presidency, they could have codified *Roe* into Federal law. But besides protecting a woman's right to choose a medical procedure, they could have fought against rightwing reactionaries for better access to birth control and education. Since the Democrat majority nominated and confirmed a woman to the SCOTUS that pretends she doesn't know what a woman is, because she's not a botanist. Hmm, I am not an arborist, but I know what a tree is; I am not a seamstress, but I know what clothes are. See? The Democrats have been leading proponents in the marginalization of women. May I also remind you, that when the Dems had a super-majority in 2009 and 2010, they FAILED miserably to pass a rational/national healthcare system, again, pledging their fealty to big pHARMA and health insurance companies.

Since this decision was on the way, I have seen little, if any, exposition of the fact that women still don't have protection under the U.S. Constitution, and we are still paid a fraction of men's salaries. Maybe if women and children didn't have a high incidence of poverty/homelessness/insecurity in this country, we could get to the point where abortion would be what we have long said, "legal and easily accessible for ALL women, yet rare, with no stigma attached."

This SCOTUS decision will not stop abortion, it will just force women to either give birth to unwanted and unwelcome babies, OR have unsafe procedures. FYI: women have always terminated pregnancies and it is hypocritical, (to say the very least), to know that the poorer a woman is, the least opportunity she will have, but rich Republicans can have abortions literally on demand (and they do). No one has the right to judge a woman's choice—you don't know what is going on in her life. We are a tough species and the imperative is for reproduction, so even so-called responsible women can find themselves in trouble. Anyway: NONE OF IT IS YOUR BUSINESS. However, the liberal Democrats have screwed the proverbial pooch over the body autonomy issue.

Another thing that is nobody's business is whether I have been jabbed, or not. Over the past two years, I have observed the people who are now justifiably upset about the SCOTUS decision were, and still are, doing everything in their state-power, or personal disdain and coercion to force a medical procedure on everybody in a coup of collective (mis) treatment, regardless of anyone's personal beliefs, or current health status. Again, whether I take a medical procedure, or not is NONE OF ANYBODY'S BUSINESS, unless I choose to make it so.

Mostly Republican politicians have resisted the urgency to mandate Covid jabs, but they are also massive hypocrites who have taken up the mantra: "My body, my choice" over the jab mandates. While

cheering the overturn of Roe, does anyone really believe that Republicans (or their counterparts in Fascist, USA) give any shits about babies? Nope, nope, nope.

If Republican/conservatives really care about dead babies, would they continue to support wars and fund a war machine that not only kills women and babies all over the world, but sucks our very communities dry of the resources we need to support women, families, and babies? (To be fair, the Democrats are also mass-murdering, war-criminals).

Would the GOP not be busy passing legislation that supports women: access to quality pre-and post-natal care? Family/maternity leave? Safe daycare and schools that provide quality education and further support to families in the form of food security, housing, peace, a sustainable environment, etc.? Maybe, just maybe, some women observe a world that is hostile to life no matter how much lip-service is given to being “pro-life.”

I think the major problem of both sides of both of these issues, is that people look to the U.S. government to be the moral or ethical arbiter of anything.

Both sides support a genocidal war machine and liberals support a genocidal medical machine: both of these machines are there to support profits over people — Congress is there to support genocide all over the world as long as their power and bank accounts remain mostly intact.

Logically, who can believe a country that allows the spraying of toxic chemicals on our genetically modified food, cares about our well-being?

Logically, who can believe a country that allows its citizens to drink and bathe in poison water cares about our well-being?

Logically, who can believe a country that imprisons a large percentage of its (mostly minority) citizens in brutal prisons for profit cares about our well-being?

Logically, who can believe a country that provides unsafe, low-quality, high cost education to its youth cares about our well-being?

Logically, who can believe that a country that provides low-quality, high-cost “health” “care” to the 99% cares about our well-being?

I guess I could write about these contradictions from our treacherous political class all day, really, I could, but I don’t think many have the will to do what really needs to be done: stop allowing ourselves to be co-opted by the greed and brutality of the 1%, including their political and media toadies.

I realize that pointing out the hypocrisies doesn’t help people, but we need to wake up and how can we do that without information? What can we the people do to **overturn** politicians—which are really the manifestation of metastatic cancer spreading across every aspect of our lives? Workers can find ways to support each other with real help and not allow the cancerous federal government to spread onto our bodies, or communities.

I know I am going to get some opposition from both sides about this post. However, I am not trying to be a contrarian, or mislead people. I am human and I do want people to “like” me, but I am also just so weary of the absurdity of the hypocrisies that are endemic to American life.

Book Review: *Civil Rights Unionism: Tobacco Workers and the Struggle  
for Democracy in the Mid-Twentieth-Century South*,  
by Robert Rodgers Korstad

Of the many struggles of the militant, mostly CIO-led struggles of the union movement during the New Deal (and in this case also shortly thereafter), one of the least known is the struggle of the tobacco workers and their union, FTA (Food, Tobacco, Agricultural and Allied Workers) Local 22, centered in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. This struggle is of particular importance because it took place in the South, involved an integrated group of mostly black workers, and combined the fight for higher wages and better working conditions with a fight against the effects of segregation. It pitted the union against one of the giants of Southern manufacturing industry, the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, and for several years the union was successful. It further took up the special demands of women workers. Through this process, not only were thousands of rank-and-file workers won to a militant union, but hundreds were recruited to the Communist Party (CP), which played an important role in this fight.

The attempts to organize tobacco workers in Winston-Salem began earlier, in 1919, when the AFL sent organizers for the Tobacco Workers International Union (TWIU) to that city. Although the union won contracts with Reynolds, its success was short-lived, so by 1923 there were no functioning TWIU locals left in the city (p. 101). This was partly due to repression by the company and the state, but also because the TWIU, bowing to Southern segregation, organized separate locals for white and black workers, and treated the black locals with disrespect (p. 90). The CP-led Trade Union Unity League (TUUL) also attempted to organize tobacco workers in the area, but it only really began to achieve success after the TUUL dissolved and its members and others formed the Tobacco Workers Organizing Committee (TWOC).

The TWOC, as well as other CIO unions, took advantage of New Deal legislation, particularly the Wagner Act, which allowed workers to organize into unions and to call on the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to certify elections for a union. (The legislation also set minimum wages and overtime pay; however, agricultural and domestic workers, both areas made up overwhelmingly of black and other oppressed nationality workers and women, were excluded.)

Reynolds Tobacco maintained a strictly segregated work force. Certain areas, such as the largely mechanized cigarette-making department, were all white, and by classifying these workers as skilled, they were able to earn a slightly higher wage (though lower than that of workers with similar skills in the North). The foremen were also all white. On the other hand, stemmery workers were all black and mainly women (pp. 14-15). Not only did they have the worst working conditions (the stemmeries were hot, with no air conditioning, and tobacco dust made it hard to breathe), but foremen could barge into the women's lavatories to get women back to work.

The TWOC, which later became Local 22 of the FTA, started signing up workers in 1942, and won collective bargaining rights at Reynolds the next year. Even before the bargaining unit was recognized, on June 17, 1943, there was a strike sparked by women workers in the stemmery department and by the death of a male worker, James McCardel. The strike had the support of some of the white workers. Finally, Reynolds signed an agreement that there would be no discrimination against strikers and that management

would look into the workers' grievances. The workers went back to work. Union membership increased from hundreds to thousands. And a committee was chosen to meet with management.

One of the political strengths of the CIO, especially of its left-led unions, was that it did not go along with Southern segregationist policies. In particular it tried to organize all workers in a plant, black and white, into a single local. In order to get a speedy election at Reynolds, TWOC Local 22 initially accepted the company's demand for two separate bargaining units, one consisting of mainly black workers, who were overwhelmingly pro-union, and the other consisting of mainly white workers, who were almost evenly split between the CIO and no union (pp. 188-189). But the leaf-house workers, who prepared the tobacco leaves for storage and were almost entirely black and mainly women, also signed union cards.<sup>1</sup> This allowed the TWOC, instead of just demanding a run-off in the mostly white department, to request a new election for one local consisting of both units and the leaf-house workers.

The lawyer for the TWOC stated: "This is a well-integrated, well coordinated business." To have two bargaining units "would be a thinly disguised and effective segregation of a large section of the Negro workers from the rest of the workers, in spite of the fact that there is no difference in their problems, or in their relations towards the company.... So I say that the reason the company wants two units is to destroy unionization among the workers" (p. 192). The NLRB accepted the TWOC's request. On December 17, 1943, results were 6,833 for the CIO, and 3,175 for the Employees Association (an anti-union organization) (p. 200). Thus an integrated union was won in one of the largest manufacturing plants in the South.

There are many important political points that Korstad makes in his book. One is that, in organizing among white workers, the union placed its emphasis on the commonality of the class interests of all workers. Reynolds, on the other hand, tried to foment racial divisions among the workers, playing up the "benefits" that the white workers allegedly received from a segregated and non-union work force (p. 195-196).

Another theme of importance was the role of the black middle class, and particularly preachers, in the formation of a united front, or more specifically what was called the Southern Front. Korstad notes the role that preachers had (and still have) in the African-American community. In fact, there were a number of black preachers who worked in the Reynolds plant. One of them, Frank Oneal, was apparently the highest paid black worker at Reynolds (p. 22). He supported the union, and later on even let the CP hold public meetings in his church. Other ministers played a more vacillating role. Kenneth Williams, for example, was elected in 1947 as the first black alderman (equivalent of a City Council member) in Winston-Salem, due to overwhelming support of members of Local 22, but he "took on the time-honored role of mediator between the black community and the white elite" (p. 405). Later, in 1949, he became an open anti-communist (p. 407). Other black middle-class leaders opposed the union from the start (p. 181).

### **Undermining FTA Local 22 through McCarthyism**

As the U.S. became the chief imperialist power after World War II, it turned away from any progressive, pro-working-class reforms.<sup>2</sup> One of the first of these actions was the passing of the Taft-Hartley Act (over

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<sup>1</sup> The tobacco pickers themselves, almost entirely black, were concentrated in the eastern section of North Carolina, part of the Black Belt. Their situation and struggles are not included in Korstad's book.

<sup>2</sup> This article is not the place to discuss this, but I think the slogan to revive the New Deal coalition was utopian in this period. The New Deal was an attempt to preserve capitalism in the U.S. during the Great Depression, through reforms in favor of the working class, and for a strong alliance with the Soviet Union during World War II. It was correct for progressive



President Truman's veto) in 1947. Among its provisions was one that required union leaders to sign affidavits stating that they were not members of the Communist Party if they wanted to make use of the provisions of the NLRB, including holding union elections and requiring employers to bargain over contracts. (If union members who were in the CP signed these affidavits, they opened themselves up to criminal charges of making false statements under oath.)

The attacks under Taft-Hartley were followed up by red-baiting by the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC). Leaders of Local 22, whether or not they were CP members, generally refused to answer questions about CP membership by invoking their fifth amendment protection against self-incrimination (p. 339). But this did not get them out of the provisions of Taft-Hartley.

Despite this, Local 22 maintained a principled stand. It supported Henry Wallace<sup>3</sup> and the Progressive Party in 1948. One person who consistently supported Local 22 was Paul Robeson, the great fighter for civil and human rights, defender of the Soviet Union, and a great singer, actor and athlete. He came to Winston-Salem in 1948 to help raise money for the union. He answered the charges of red-baiting as follows: "If fighting for the Negro people and their trade-union brothers, if fighting for democracy and the welfare of my people, if that makes me the subversive that they're talking about in Congress, if that makes me a 'red' then so be it" (p. 335).

The attacks on Local 22 and other progressive unions did not only come from the state. For a long time, the AFL's TWIU had upheld anti-communism. "Foreshadowing the tactics that the AFL would employ with a vengeance in the 1940s, Evans [head of the TWIU] went on to claim that Communists had opened an office in Winston-Salem and were distributing literature among the factory employees. He suggested that Reynolds and the TWIU put aside their past differences so that they could fight the 'common enemy'." (p. 122). By 1949, the leadership of the CIO (which had always been a coalition of left and "center" forces) also went on the offensive against the left. "At the CIO's October convention in Cleveland, Phillip Murray [the head of the CIO] and his allies asked the delegates to authorize changes in the federation's constitution allowing the executive board to refuse to seat Communist Party members and to expel any affiliate deemed to have followed policies directed toward achievement of the Party's 'program' or 'purposes'." (p. 398).

Furthermore, some members of the black middle class, such as Alderman Kenneth Williams, who had been elected largely due to the overwhelming support of Local 22, also began to attack the union. He particularly criticized it for supporting the Progressive Party and not the Democratic Party in the 1948 presidential election.

Local 22 still had the strength to wage a month-long strike against Reynolds in 1947, which led to some gains and some concessions (p. 333). But in February, 1948, Reynolds refused to recognize the union (p. 352). A final NLRB election was held in March of 1950. Local 22 lost to "no union" by 66 votes out of a total of over 8,000 votes (pp. 410 & 413). Local 22 was decertified.<sup>4</sup>

In sum, I will quote from a radio broadcast made by Robert Black, an African-American and one of the leading rank-and-file workers of Local 22. He said: "Reynolds has tried to keep us from realizing that our economic problems are the same and that only through our united strength... will we be able to win in our

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forces to take advantage of this. But the ruling class no longer needed these reforms after the war. Of course, it was still necessary to fight for such reforms, but they now had to be pushed through against the ruling class as a whole.

<sup>3</sup> Wallace had been Secretary of Agriculture under Roosevelt from 1933 to 1940, and the Vice-President until 1944, when he was pushed out by Truman at the Democratic Party convention (p. 255). In 1946 he finally had to leave the government completely. He then formed the Progressive Party and was its presidential candidate in 1948.

<sup>4</sup> It is worth comparing what happened to other left unions that were expelled from the CIO in that period, but we cannot take that up in this article. One should note that the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), which was in and out of the CIO, is still one of the most progressive unions in the U.S. today (especially Local 10 in the San Francisco Bay area). And Local 150 of the United Electrical Workers (UE), which now consists of city and state workers across North Carolina, as well mass organizations such as Black Workers for Justice, still draws on the traditions of Local 22.

struggle... I am for the only kind of a union which can defeat R. J. Reynolds – a union of Negro-white unity, with both white and Negro leadership.”

Finally, I will emphasize one of the conclusions that Korstad draws in his book. That is, one of the most important things that Local 22 did, was to combine the fight for workers’ rights with the fight for civil rights. If Local 22 had been able to continue this fight, it would have led to a civil rights movement with a different class character. Korstad notes: “Within the civil rights movement, the absence of radical, union-based leaders and institutions marginalized economic concerns. Activists’ demands for income redistribution and workplace security simply did not have the resonance they once had. The black challenge of the 1950s and 1960s came to be understood as a single-issue attack on Jim Crow and not as a more broad-based critique of racial capitalism (p. 417). However, today there is no such thing as “non-racial capitalism.” As the great revolutionary nationalist leader Malcolm X said: “You can’t have capitalism without racism.”<sup>5</sup> Therefore, the alternative is socialism.



Workers outside factory during 1948 protest

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<sup>5</sup> Remarks at Militant Labor Forum Symposium, May 29, 1964

# Preliminary Thoughts on the Strengths and Weaknesses of the CPUSA in its Revolutionary Period

## Introduction

This is meant to be just what it says: Preliminary Thoughts. A full analysis cannot be the work of just one person – it must be a collective analysis of people who have gone through the long and not yet completed process of rebuilding a genuine Marxist-Leninist vanguard in the USA. While recognizing that there are particular difficulties in this process in what is *still* the major imperialist power in the world, we are also part of an international movement which has its particularities in every country of the world. Therefore it would be helpful if this analysis would be reviewed by members of other Marxist-Leninist parties worldwide.

Many of the strengths of the CPUSA, particularly during the 1930s, have been discussed and written about, not only by Marxists, but also by sympathetic leftists, mostly academics.<sup>1</sup> Much can be gleaned on this question from these books. As will be seen, I have taken much of these views from a critical reading of *Civil Rights Unionism* (page numbers are from that book).

## CPUSA's Strengths

The strengths of the CPUSA are fairly well known. In 1929, it organized a strike of white textile workers in Gastonia, North Carolina, which ended with armed defense of their union hall against an attack by the state. Early in the Depression, it led major marches of hundreds of thousands of unemployed workers and organized many of them into Unemployed Councils. It played a leading role in the organization of many of the large industrial unions, such as auto, steel, rubber, and later tobacco and others. It organized in defense of African-Americans facing repression, particularly in the South. The best-known case was the defense of the Scottsboro Youths,<sup>2</sup> but it also defended Angelo Herndon<sup>3</sup>. The CPUSA based its understanding of the South on its recognition of the right to self-determination of the African-American nation in the Black Belt. Through these struggles it recruited many militant rank-and-file workers, black and white, women and men, who were front-line fighters in these struggles.

The CP also fought courageously against state repression, from the Palmer Raids in the early 1920s to constant attacks during the 1930s. However, by the McCarthy period of the late 1940s and early 1950s, it

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<sup>1</sup> These include books such as Robin Kelley's *Hammer and Hoe*, Mark Naison's *Communists in Harlem during the Depression*, Erik McDuffie's *Sojourning for Freedom: Black Women, American Communism, and the Making of Black Left Feminism* (reviewed in TMLUV2n2), Robert Korstad's *Civil Rights Unionism: Tobacco Workers and the Struggle for Democracy in the Mid-Twentieth Century South* (reviewed in this issue), and others.

<sup>2</sup> The Scottsboro youths were a group of nine black boys and young men (aged between 12 and 19) who were framed and convicted of rape because they were riding in a freight car with two white young women (ages 17 and 21) through Scottsboro, Alabama, in 1931. They were all travelling to find work, as many unemployed people did during the Great Depression. The CPUSA took an active part in their defense, saving them from execution, though they all spent several years in jail before being released. It is worth noting that one of the supposed "victims" later joined in the defense.

<sup>3</sup> Herndon was a young black CP member who was convicted of "criminal syndicalism" for leading a march of black and white workers fighting for unemployment relief in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1932. He spent five years in jail before being released in 1937.

already tried (unsuccessfully) to deflect these attacks by denying much of its Marxist-Leninist program.<sup>1</sup> It is not necessary to go into more detail here since, as I said, these strengths are fairly well known.

### CPUSA's Weaknesses

The book *Civil Rights Unionism* is a sympathetic account of the work of the CIO in organizing mostly black tobacco workers in the Reynolds Tobacco Company in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, in the years during and shortly after World War II. It also organized tobacco leaf workers in the area. The book also does not shy away from recognizing the important role that the Communist Party played in this organizing.

But what also stands out, when one reads this book critically, is what the CP did **not** do, and that is that it barely made any mention of socialism or of Marxist theory. This of course was not the task of the CIO. However, it certainly **was** the task of the CP members, and particularly of CP leaders, both locally and nationally. Many rank-and-file CP members simply understood communism to mean democratic unionism, as well as the need to get rid of racial segregation and women's oppression.

One should note that in the over 400 pages of text in *Civil Rights Unionism*, the index shows only three references to Socialism and another three references to Marxism.

In his book, Korstad gives an example of Donald Henderson, a Communist Party member who became head of UCAPAWA (United Cannery, Agriculture, Packing, and Allied Workers of America). He points out: "Many of UCAPAWA's officers and organizers in the early days shared Henderson's political sympathies. Some had become unionists as a result of their politics; others had been drawn to Communism as a result of their organizing experiences. They saw little difference between being good trade unionists and loyal party members" (pp. 144-145). Of course, there is no contradiction between being a CP member and being a good trade unionist, but they are not the same thing. This is not a particular criticism of Henderson, but it shows the weakness in the CP's outlook. Fighting exploitation became seen as simply fighting for higher wages. This was of course a good thing in itself, but left at that it became just a militant struggle for reforms. Remember what Marx said in *Wages, Price, and Profit*<sup>2</sup>: "Instead of the *conservative* motto, 'A fair day's wage for a fair day's work!' they ought to inscribe on their banner the revolutionary watchword, 'Abolition of the wages system!'" Of course, this does not mean that socialism was on the immediate agenda, but if it was not put forward as its strategic goal the CP downplayed its main function.

One of the leading leaf workers, Robert Lathan, who had attended CP schools, had said: "Local 22 fights against the Taft-Hartley Law, fights for a \$1.00 minimum wage, fights for civil rights, fights to expand social security, fights for a medical and health insurance program, fights against high taxes for workers, fights for aid to education, that's why they call us Communist" (p. 403). This may have been why the reactionaries called militant unionism "Communism," but that is not enough to be a communist.

Many rank-and-file workers and CP members were prepared to go beyond militant trade unionism and civil rights struggles, but seem to have been given little or no guidance in this by the CP leadership. For example, Velma Hopkins pointed out: "Who built these great factories here?... We did – our mothers and

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<sup>1</sup> See Foster's pamphlet: *In Defense of the Indicted Communist Party Leaders*, available for downloading at: [www.Red-StarPublishers.org/fosterdefpamph.doc](http://www.Red-StarPublishers.org/fosterdefpamph.doc)

<sup>2</sup> This work could easily have been used as a training tool, or even serialized in the CP's newspaper, the *Daily Worker*.

fathers did, working here for 10 or 15 cents an hour. That's why we are uneducated and living in slums" (p. 375).

There were, of course, CP club meetings, which had to discuss some elements of Marxism. Julius Scales, the CP chair for the Carolinas, said: "Most of the points on the agenda were matter of working in the union, or how to put the struggles of the union in a more political context.... There would always be some educational portion of the meeting which would try to put local problems in an international context. Fortunately, it seems to me a lot of them [club chairs] had their feet on the ground and when they weren't hooplaing for the Soviet Union, which we didn't always do, it did tend to broaden their horizons a lot, especially on international and certainly national politics" (p. 273). But considering that most CP members basically identified Marxism with militant unionism, the content of these club meetings were not likely to have been very different from this.

One must note that the main struggles at Reynolds took place during and shortly after the Browder period. But according to Korstad, the main change after Browder was expelled was that the CP carried out more activities openly, including making most of their members public (which was probably in itself a serious error). At a public CP meeting in May of 1946, some 65 rank-and-file workers joined the Party, and by the end of that year the number of members in Winston-Salem had grown to about 150 (p. 270). This, of course, was a good thing in itself. However, there is no indication that the content of the Party's activity had changed. Let us remember Lenin's statement: "without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement" ("The Task of the Russian Social-Democrats," Collected Works, Vol. 2, p. 343).

To deal with the CP's weaknesses, one of course has to go beyond quotes from books such as *Civil Rights Unionism*. One way to do this is by examining the *Daily Worker*, which was published between 1924 and 1958, as well as its theoretical organ, *The Communist*, from 1924 to 1944<sup>1</sup>. Afterwards, under Browder, it changed it to the terrible name *Political Affairs*<sup>2</sup>, and unfortunately it did not change it back after Browder was expelled.

One thing notable about the *Daily Worker*, generally throughout the CP's revolutionary period, was that it was a newspaper (it even had a layout like that of the *New York Times*). That is, like bourgeois newspapers, it carried *news* of what was taking place in the U.S. and around the world. Here is the front page of the *Daily Worker* of January 12, 1934 (from <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84020097/1934-01-12/ed-1/seq-1/>). This is just meant as a sample of what the *Daily Worker* looked like.

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<sup>1</sup> While Marxist Internet Archive has fairly complete copies of *The Communist* and *Political Affairs* from 1924 to 1957 (<https://www.marxists.org/history/usa/pubs/communist/index.htm>), for some reason it only has copies of the *Daily Worker* from 1924 to 1928. However, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84020097/issues/1924/> has copies from 1924 to 1935.

<sup>2</sup> It could only have adopted a worse title if, after the CP had fully succumbed to modern revisionism, it had changed the name to *Apolitical Affairs*.





theoretical article in each issue (see, for example, *En Marcha* #1816, June 12-19, 2018, of the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Ecuador. The title reads: Marxism and the Economic Crises of Capitalism).

# EL MARXISMO Y LAS CRISIS ECONÓMICAS DEL CAPITALISMO

En uno de los anteriores artículos que sobre la obra de Carlos Marx publicamos en esta sección, establecimos la enorme e indiscutible influencia que sus ideas y actividad han tenido en el proceso de transformación revolucionaria de la sociedad. Su genialidad le permitió dar respuesta y desarrollar elementos que el pensamiento progresista de la humanidad había planteado y estaban a la espera de solución, dando origen a una filosofía que se encuentra en la base del desarrollo de todo el pensamiento social de nuestra época.

Marx es el fundador de la doctrina económica científica, su estudio cimero lo condensó en *El Capital*, que contiene una profunda investigación y análisis del modo capitalista de producción y de sus leyes de desarrollo, junto con la previsión científica de su inevitable liquidación.

"El análisis que Marx efectuó del capitalismo desde su célula económica, la mercancía, hasta la reproducción del capital social y la crisis, prueba que el capitalismo en tanto que régimen económico-social está prisionero de contradicciones antagónicas y es históricamente limitado." [1] Este estudio argumentó científicamente la necesidad y la inevitabilidad de la lucha del proletariado contra la burguesía y su victoria.

El marxismo no es un conjunto de opiniones críticas respecto del capitalismo de mediados del siglo XIX y, por lo tanto, superado históricamente como señalan sus detractores. Por el contrario, una de sus características fundamentales es que la teoría de Marx se halla en permanente desarrollo a la par del desarrollo de la realidad objetiva. Vladimir Ilich Lenin, dando continuidad al estudio formulado en *El Capital*, elaboró la doctrina

sobre el imperialismo, que permite al proletariado y a los pueblos entender cómo llevar adelante la revolución socialista en las condiciones del capitalismo monopolista. En su obra "El imperialismo fase superior del capitalismo", Lenin demostró científicamente que "en su fase imperialista el capitalismo camina hacia su completa descomposición, que las contradicciones antagónicas que emanan de sus características económicas se agudizan al máximo y que las revoluciones socialistas y los movimientos de liberación nacional son inevitables." [2]

Carlos Marx es el creador de la teoría científica sobre las crisis económicas en el capitalismo. El demostró que el carácter cíclico de la reproducción capitalista está vinculado a la acción de la contradicción fundamental, la cual constituye a la vez la base económica y la principal causa de la crisis. La contradicción fundamental, que expresa el antagonismo siempre creciente entre el carácter social de la producción y la forma privada de la apropiación, halla su expresión en las contradicciones entre el trabajo y el capital, entre la producción y el consumo, así como entre la organización de la producción a nivel de empresa y la anarquía de la producción a nivel social. Al caracterizar las crisis como forma de movimiento de la producción capitalista, Marx puso de relieve que éstas "son siempre soluciones violentas puramente momentáneas de las contradicciones existentes, erupciones violentas que restablecen pasajeramente el equilibrio roto." [3]

Cuando se estudia el desarrollo histórico del capitalismo se observa que las crisis son un fenómeno inevitable de este sistema y que sus consecuencias destructoras crecen junto con la agudización de la contradicción



**El análisis que Marx efectuó del capitalismo desde su célula económica, la mercancía, hasta la reproducción del capital social y la crisis, prueba que el capitalismo en tanto que régimen económico-social está prisionero de contradicciones antagónicas y es históricamente limitado.**

dicción fundamental.

Los defensores del capitalismo intentan demostrar que las crisis son fenómenos circunstanciales que podrían ser evitados con un manejo adecuado de la economía, pero lo cierto es que son momentos intrínsecos del desarrollo capitalista.

Marx puso de relieve que "no existen crisis permanentes", descubrió que se presentan de manera periódica y también advirtió la tendencia a la reducción de los ciclos económicos, que depende del nivel de desarrollo de las fuerzas productivas. Los hechos han demostrado que cuanto más se desarrolla el capitalismo, cuanto más se desartrollan las fuerzas productivas, tanto más frecuentes y de mayores consecuencias destructoras se han presentado las crisis.

"La caída de los ritmos de producción, la no explotación

de las capacidades productivas, el aumento exorbitante de los precios, el desempleo masivo, la profunda y crónica inflación, así como los grandes y permanentes déficits en la balanza del comercio exterior, en la balanza de pagos, etc. son índices de crisis que se dan en todos los países capitalistas y revisionistas." [4]

Las víctimas principales de las crisis son los trabajadores y los pueblos; el capitalismo en sí mismo encierra la explotación y opresión para las clases trabajadoras, pero en circunstancias de crisis las condiciones materiales de vida de éstos se ven aún más afectadas. En su obra "Miseria de la Filosofía" Marx describe este fenómeno: "...cada día es más evidente que las relaciones de producción en que la burguesía se desenvuelve

no tienen un carácter uniforme y simple, sino un doble carácter; que dentro de las mismas relaciones en que se produce la riqueza, se producen también la miseria; que dentro de las mismas relaciones en que se opera el desarrollo de las fuerzas productivas, existe asimismo una fuerza que da origen a la opresión; que estas relaciones no crean la riqueza burguesa... sino formando un proletariado que crece sin cesar." [5]

[1] Fatos Neno, Solución Kuroj. La teoría económica de Carlos Marx y la crisis actual del capitalismo. Tirana-Albania. 1983.

[2] Ibídem.

[3] Carlos Marx, *El Capital*.

[4] Fatos Neno, Solución Kuroj. La teoría económica de Carlos Marx y la crisis actual del capitalismo. Tirana-Albania. 1983.

[5] Carlos Marx, *Miseria de la filosofía*.

Integrante de la Conferencia Internacional de Partidos y Organizaciones Marxista-Leninistas CIPOML

Of course, the CP's journal did contain theoretical material, some of it quite good (see, for example, *The Communist* Vol. XIII, No. 2, February 1934:



# THE COMMUNIST

Vol. XIII.

FEBRUARY, 1934

No. 2



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Alex Bittelman

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But to have all theoretical material in *The Communist* and almost none in the *Daily Worker* still leads to a separation of theory from practice. Moreover, the *Daily Worker* circulated among militant trade unionists<sup>1</sup>, while *The Communist* did not.

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<sup>1</sup> Korstad points out that "the *Daily Worker*... could always be found scattered on a table in the Local 22 library along with black newspapers, the *FTA News*, and the *CIO News*" (p. 267).

There are other areas to be investigated which one generally cannot do just by looking up material on the internet. One is the content of Communist Party study groups, not just in Winston-Salem. As there are few people alive today who participated in such groups before the CP fully succumbed to revisionism, one would mainly have to consult memoirs or interviews with those who had participated.<sup>1</sup>

There is also the fact that the CP always advertised classical works of Marxism-Leninism<sup>2</sup> and other material. We include a copy of a page from *The Communist*, again of February, 1934.

Besides being able to order these works by mail, they were available at CP bookstores, which by the end of the 1930s numbered about 50, located in most major cities of the U.S. (including more than one store in New York, Los Angeles and Chicago).

Until the mid-1950s, the CP not (yet) a revisionist party. But its weaknesses had already undermined its Marxist-Leninist basis. Thus, when modern revisionism took hold on an international scale under Khrushchev, the CP was in no position to resist and quickly succumbed to this “new” trend.

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<sup>1</sup> This writer took part, on and off, in study groups organized by one of the early anti-revisionist groups, the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) between 1965 and 1970 while a student at Columbia University. We would read Lenin's *The State and Revolution*, and then graduate to study editorials in the latest issue of PLP's newspaper *Challenge*. I studied more Marxism-Leninism in a Columbia class taught by a social-democratic professor, including *What Is To Be Done*, *Imperialism*, *The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, and other works (but not *The Foundations of Leninism*).

In the summer of 1970, I spent a few days in Atlanta, Georgia, where PLP had just organized a club. In one of my last activities with them, I helped distribute *Challenge* in front of the entrance to a local Ford plant there (during upcoming contract negotiations). A good number of sympathetic workers took the paper. By the end of the summer, PLP had formed a study group among these workers. About a year later I ran into someone who had worked with the Atlanta club, and I asked her what happened to the study group. She told me: "We had to dissolve it, because the workers were coming up with their own theories." One should note that this was close to the time that PLP was developing "its own" revisionist deviation from Marxism-Leninism (its *Road to Revolution III* was printed in November of 1971).

<sup>2</sup> One of the first works that Red Star Publishers reprinted was Stalin's *The Foundations of Leninism*. I was proud that we had printed 25 copies in English and another 25 copies in Spanish. However, a friend showed me a copy of that pamphlet that the CP had reprinted in the mid-1920s. They had printed **100,000 copies**.



## **The workers and peoples are bearing the brunt of the crisis**

"The pace of growth of the economy is slowing down", "inflation has reached levels not seen in decades", "there is a risk of stagflation", "a possible economic recession is looming", "there is a risk of food crises and famine", "this year millions of people will increase the number of those who live in poverty and extreme poverty", these are some of the worrying conclusions reached by several international agencies in charge of studying the development of the world economy. The optimism that these same agencies had regarding the economic recovery, initially foreseen for this year, is today raised in alarm; the war in Ukraine is one of the elements that affects this, but there are phenomena such as the inflationary process, the increase in food prices or the energy crisis that were already present before the outbreak of this inter-imperialist war.

The initial growth forecasts of the world economy spoke of an expansion of about 4.9% in 2022. The highest rates were established in the most developed capitalist economies (5.2%) and in the so-called emerging and developing economies (6.4%), while for the poorest countries a low growth rate was projected (below 4%). The outlook for India (9.5%), China (8.1%), the United States (6.0%), the United Kingdom (7.0%)<sup>1</sup> stood out. The outbreak of the inter-imperialist war in Ukraine is causing a shake-up in the world economy, economic growth forecasts have been revised downwards by all international agencies; global growth is now projected to slow sharply from 5.7% in 2021 to 2.9% in 2022 and to 3% in 2023 and 2024. This year, the growth of the most developed capitalist economies will slow to 2.6%, that of the so-called emerging and developing economies to 3.4%. The growth of the United States will be 2.5%, that of China 4.3%, India will grow by 7.5%, while a fall to -8.9% is expected in the case of Russia<sup>2</sup>. Regarding Latin America and the Caribbean, ECLAC forecasts that regional growth will slow markedly to 2.5% in 2022, following a post-pandemic rebound of 6.7% in 2021.

The information that we have so far regarding the indices of industrial production (which are fundamental to understand what is happening with the economy) show us a downward trend; the year-to-year Index of Industrial Production in Germany is -2.3%, that of the US 6.4%, Japan -1.1%, China -2.9%, United Kingdom



-4.0%, to name a few examples. Another fundamental index is the volume of world trade, which also presents a perspective of decrease in relation to how it was presented in the year 2021. In the case of South America, exports will grow by -0.3%, while imports will grow by 4.8%, which poses liquidity problems for the countries of the region.

The problems related to energy production, which had been noticed since the previous year, have become a crisis after the outbreak of war in Ukraine: the prices of all energy sources have been revealed. The impact of this fact on the economies of the countries and the living conditions of the workers and the peoples is clear. In 2021, there was already an unprecedented increase in the price of gas in world markets, exceeding 170%, and the phenomenon still exists; in the United States, gas prices have soared 52% in the last year, reaching historic levels; unprecedented prices have also been recorded in Europe and these will continue to rise due to the increase in the price of a barrel of oil. According to Goldman Sachs, between July and September of this year the average barrel of oil will be US \$137, previously it had projected that the price would fluctuate by US \$119.

The simultaneous confluence of problems in the merchandizing of oil and gas, of their high prices, as well as of electricity, is causing a crisis that, it is said, would be worse than the oil crisis of the 1970s and 1980s and probably will last longer.

Inflation today has been unprecedented so far in this century. The consumer price index in the 19 countries that make up the Eurozone increased by 8.1% in May, the strong trend in price increases began in November last year; since then, each month has marked a record in its historical series<sup>3</sup>. In the United States, the consumer price index soared in May by 8.6% compared to 2021, the largest increase since December 1981, according to government data. Latin America reported a general inflation of 7.2% in 2021; not counting countries with chronic inflation, such as Argentina, Haiti, Suriname and Venezuela, the latter is the country where prices rose the most in 2021, the year-on-year CPI in 2021 was 686.4% and the previous year it was 1,197.5%. According to the Economic Commission for Latin America, ECLAC, regional inflation is following the global trend and in 2022 it will be 8.2%. Africa will continue to be the region most affected by inflation, but it should be borne in mind that there are huge differences among its countries; for example, Sudan will have an inflation rate above 200%.

Rising food prices and food shortages in some regions are putting millions of people at risk of famine, particularly in Africa. "About 193 million people in 53 countries or territories are experiencing acute food insecurity or worse. This figure represents an increase of almost 40 million people compared to the maximum figures already recorded in 2020. Of these people, more than half a million (570 000) have reached the most severe phase of acute food insecurity – the catastrophic phase – in Ethiopia, southern Madagascar, South Sudan and Yemen, according to a report presented by the Global Network against Food Crises.<sup>4</sup>

All these data show us the general crisis of the capitalist system and the certain fact that this system does not provide any perspective of well-being for the workers and peoples.

1 <https://www.imf.org/es/Publications/WEO/Issues/2021/10/12/world-economic-outlook-october-2021> (Executive Summary)

2 <https://www.bancomundial.org/es/news/press-release/2022/06/07/stagflation-risk-rises-amid-sharp-slow-down-in-growth-energy-markets>

3 <https://www.dw.com/es/la-inflaci%C3%B3n-sigue-batiendo-r%C3%A9cords-en-la-eurozona-y-supera-el-8-en-mayo/a-61987214>

4 <http://www.fightfoodcrises.net/>

Excerpts and synopsis from the publications of “Gegen die Strömung” – Organ for the building of the Revolutionary Communist Party in Germany:

May 2022

***The subject of the leaflet from January/February was:***

**First statement from the beginning of March 2022:**

### **Russian imperialism's war against Ukraine and the attitude of German imperialism**

For many years, the conflicts between Russian imperialism and the major imperialist powers of the West have been intensifying. There is the expansion of NATO on a large scale to the east by admitting former Soviet republics (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania) as well as East European countries (Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Croatia, the Czech Republic and Slovakia). There are large troop deployments of Western imperialist countries directly to Russia's border, the expansion of Russian imperialism into Crimea and parts of Ukraine over the last eight years with fierce military operations at the local level, especially in eastern Ukraine. All these were omens of this military conflict, which now culminated in the invasion of the territory of influence of the Western imperialist great powers by the troops of Russian imperialism, through the invasion of the independent state of Ukraine.

German imperialism, which is increasingly expanding its role vis-a-vis US imperialism, is seizing the opportunity. A gigantic expansion of the aggressive Bundeswehr (100 billion euro plan) has been decided. Its foreign missions, including the bombing of Serbia and its capital Belgrade from March to June 1999, have so far been largely linked to the troops of other imperialist states.

### **Sharpening of the contradictions between the imperialist great powers**

Without question, the world situation has changed. Through the advance of the Western imperialist great powers in the last decades, also with the help of military operations up to imperialist wars like in Yugoslavia in 1999 or in Afghanistan from 2001, they succeeded in expanding their areas of influence at the expense of imperialist Russia.

The attempt of the Russian imperialists to overthrow the government there with their war against Ukraine and installing a pro-Russian regime, possibly conquering Kiev, occupying and seceding parts of the country, is part of this global struggle of the major imperialist powers for spheres of influence.

An increase in the danger of direct war between major imperialist powers is developing at a rapid pace.

The problem is that in the 21st century, as in the 20th century, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to occupy another country with ground troops for any length of time.

In Afghanistan, neither the Russian troops nor the imperialists nor the USA imperialists with their allies, including German imperialism. Where regimes have been removed, as in Iraq and Libya, a confused situation has arisen of rival mercenary forces of different states fighting over the resources there. This is not a stable solution for imperialism either. However, this will not stop the imperialist great powers from continuing to invade and occupy other countries in order to secure areas of military influence in the global competition.

Even if the Western imperialist great powers are currently demonstratively united against Russian imperialism, the rivalries in the struggle for the largest spheres of influence in Eastern Europe and elsewhere are also coming to a head among the Western imperialists, especially between the USA imperialists and the imperialist great powers in Europe, and here in particular also the German imperialists.

### **Solidarity with the truly democratic-revolutionary forces in Ukraine and Russia**

In both Russia and Ukraine, democratic and revolutionary forces are not only confronted with harsh state repression.

In Russia under Putin's government, a Nazi-fascist movement has existed for more than 30 years, which is largely tolerated, even partly used as a mercenary force in military battles such as in Ukraine, and which also forces democratic and revolutionary forces into violent and armed confrontations. This is especially true in the big cities, but also in rural areas.

In the struggle against these Nazi-fascist gangs of murderers, a by no means small group has emerged,

especially of young people, who see cooperation between the state apparatus of Putin's government and these Nazi-fascist organisations. Here is a potential for a democratic-revolutionary alliance with anti-Nazi forces in Ukraine.

In Ukraine, it is by no means news that Nazi-fascist groups are engaged in armed struggle, especially in eastern Ukraine.

Yes, they have become part of the reactionary Ukrainian state apparatus, like the so-called Azov regiment. Nazi forces have helped to break up democratic protests and are a real danger to all democratic-revolutionary forces. In addition, Stepan Bandera, who is known as a Jew-hating Ukrainian nationalist and leader of Ukrainian nationalist Nazi collaborators in the mass murder actions of Nazi fascism in Ukraine is today honoured throughout Ukraine, with hundreds of - street names and several monuments, even in large cities, without these monuments being torn down.

For German imperialism, Ukraine was already a preferred object of exploitation in the time of the First World War and afterwards. The crimes of German imperialism during the invasion of the socialist Soviet Union, especially in Ukraine, have by no means been forgotten. These crimes show that despite the strong cooperation of parts of the Ukrainian population with the Nazis, especially in the mass murders of the Jewish population in Ukraine, a much larger part of the Ukrainian population, of which more than 200,000 were partisans, fought together with the Red Army against the Nazi-fascist mass murderers. The liberation of Auschwitz on 27 January 1945 was led by a Ukrainian detachment of the Red Army.

It is clear: even today there is not the slightest reason to condemn the Ukrainian population as a whole as reactionary and nationalistic.

On the basis of this historical development, it is necessary to fight against any influence of German imperialism on Ukraine. This is what we have to fight for, this is our task - without illusions in Russian imperialism or the reactionary Ukrainian state and its government.

### **The expansion of the Bundeswehr – German militarism**

In the situation of military confrontation between the Ukrainian army and the Russian army inside Ukraine, the hour of German militarism strikes. The current government of German imperialism, with the support of the so-called opposition from the CDU/CSU, has approved the supply of arms to the Ukrainian state in an open war zone and plans to station more soldiers and fighter-bombers on the border with Russia. Above all, a plan has now been pulled out of the hat with €100 billion and a huge increase in the annual military budget. The aim is to massively strengthen the German arms industry and to build up a Bundeswehr that is as effective as possible and that is especially prepared for foreign missions on a large scale.

This is a new stage in the militarisation of Germany, a great danger for the people of Europe and the whole world.

The current mood in Germany, with gigantic support for the current imperialist government as well as European-chauvinist slogans like "For European Values", must be recognised as a huge danger and fought against. Let us not forget that Russophobia, which has a long tradition in Germany, is being massively activated and strengthened again. Let's also not forget that Ukrainian border guards prevent people who look "non-European" from boarding trains to flee across the border.

It may be that every analogy has its problems. But it is worth remembering the bluster with which German social democracy warned of the danger of Russian tsarism in 1914: In the face of Russian imperialism, German imperialism would allegedly cut a more progressive figure. Therefore, it would be necessary to support the struggle of the German imperialists against dangerous Russian tsarism. It was a man like Karl Liebknecht, it was a woman like Rosa Luxemburg, who opposed this social-democratic-imperialist and German-nationalist enthusiasm for war still as a very small group. They made a great contribution to the fact that the mood, especially among the proletariat in Germany, changed thoroughly in the next few years and mass struggles developed on the streets and in the factories against the imperialist First World War. Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg recalled August Bebel's old phrase: "Not a man or a penny for this system!". Applied to today, this means:

### **Not a single Euro to this system of German imperialism and no support whatsoever for the Bundeswehr!**

This is an indispensable democratic demand in the struggle against the danger of war and systematic German nationalist and militarist incitement of the population in Germany.

## **The bourgeoisie hides the nature of the war behind the false contradiction between "democracy and authoritarianism"**



The conflict unleashed by imperialist Russia with the invasion of Ukraine, after years of provocations by US imperialism and NATO, and now become an indirect confrontation with this bloc that promptly helped its Eastern European vassal on the military level, is undoubtedly an inter-imperialist conflict for the control of markets, sources and supplies of raw materials, as well as for the redefinition of alliances and areas of influence.

This armed conflict is falsely represented by the Western bourgeoisie as a conflict between "democracies" on the one hand, and "authoritarianism" on the other.

But what do the Bidens, the Putins, the Scholz, the Zelenskys, the Draghis represent if not the domination of capital, its dictatorship over the working class and the popular masses?

What kind of democracy are these representatives of big capital talking about? The bourgeoisie has been throwing democracy in the air for a long time!

Marx already defined bourgeois democracy as a democracy for the "rich", while proletarians are allowed, from time to time, to put a ballot in an urn.

A concept reiterated several times by Lenin with the unequivocal words:

"It is sheer mockery of the working and exploited people to speak of pure democracy, of democracy in general, of equality, freedom and universal rights when the workers and all working people are ill-fed, ill-clad, ruined and worn out not only as a result of capitalist wage-slavery, but as a consequence of four

years of predatory war, while the capitalists and profiteers remain in possession of the "property" usurped by them and the "ready-made" apparatus of state power." ("‘Democracy’ and Dictatorship,” *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 369.)

Let us take the Italian case, and tell us "lords" to what the parliament is reduced, where according to their own laws important decisions should be made.

How and where the people who lead the country are chosen at decisive moments: how many have the Bank of Italy, the big monopolies, the big concentrations and financial institutions provided?

And what policies have they pursued, those of the well-being of the vast majority composed of workers?

In which forums have they taken or been forced to take important decisions? Come on!

What about freedom of the press and opinion? With the war in Ukraine (not that it was so much better before) we have seen manuscripts that seem like tissues of Minculpop (the fascist ministry for information).

For days and weeks all news of the dramatic social conditions (wages, inflation, health, school, pensions, etc.).

For months there has been thorough censorship, which allows from time to time some dissonant voice, just to save appearances, as long as it is not a voice of denunciation of the use of fake news, and even less a denunciation of the imperialist character of the conflict. Really a beautiful spectacle of democracy!

Would the EU be democratic, dominated by an appointed and unelected committee, where Parliament even equated communism and Nazism in defiance of historical truth?

Would racist Poland be democratic, where communists are outlawed and where refugees are looked at by the color of their skin and from which border they come?

Are Orban's Hungary and Erdogan's Turkey democratic countries, both members of that NATO exporting "democracy" everywhere except in the states that make it up?

Is Ukraine a democratic country where people who express opinions other than those of Zelensky and his corrupt pro-U.S. friends and Nazi criminals are confined, tortured, imprisoned and physically suppressed?

Are the U.S. imperialists, the worst enemies of the peoples, real warmongering gangsters, democratic?

Would NATO be democratic? Can we forget the "democratic" "humanitarian" interventions in the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, Yugoslavia, Libya, Afghanistan, Syria, etc.?

Is the embargo on Cuba and Venezuela democratic?

What about the support given to the Islamists?

Of course, we do not ignore the difference between formal democracy and fascism. We will defend tooth and nail the right to express our ideas, as well as the right to strike, to assemble, to organize. as we always have. Aware, however, that the ruling class has never granted us anything.



As a workers' and communist movement, we won these rights with the Resistance and the great mobilizations of the post-war period; we defended them against fascism and bourgeois subversion, which is always ready to threaten and strike against every popular demand, leaving behind a trail of blood in which, as is now widely seen, there has always been the Atlantic paw.

Defending these spaces, in the particular moment, means using them to the end, without falling into the trap of siding with "democracies" against "authoritarianism" – and also without getting entangled in the scheme that opposes hegemonism and multilateralism, passed off by the revisionists at the service of imperialist China – but to take a decisive stand on the side of the exploited and oppressed against imperialism and the bourgeoisie, starting with our own.

**Intransigent opposition against all imperialism! Freedom and self-determination of the peoples from fascism and from ALL imperialism!**

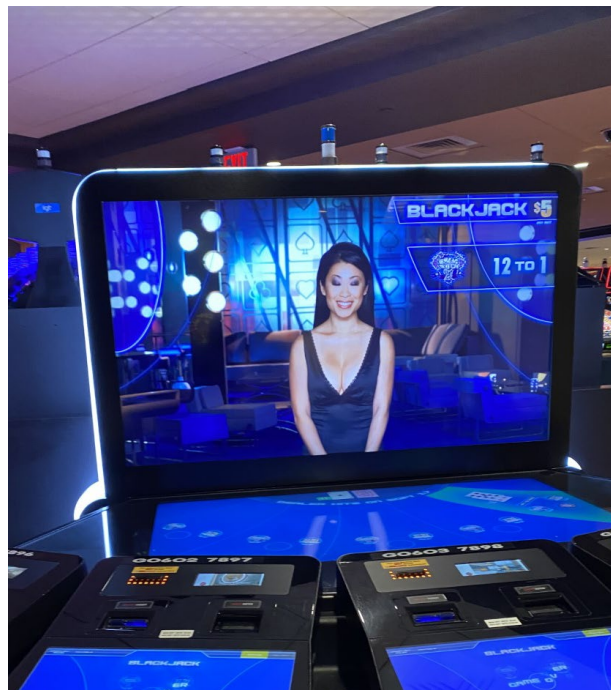
**Not a soldier, not a euro for the war of NATO, of Russia, of the bosses! Not a weapon to kill a class brother!**

**Always against the bourgeoisie, imperialism and fascism! Direct and intransigent opposition to our own imperialism, whether "humanitarian" and not!**

---

In the April, 2022, issue of TMLU, I criticized Hochul's plan to "revive" the economy by allowing new gambling casinos to be built in New York City. I also criticized the leadership of the Hotel Trades Council for going along with this since they claimed it would allow good-paying union jobs.

Last month, I had the opportunity for a brief visit to Atlantic City. Below is the picture of a blackjack "worker." Even the hotel check-ins are almost fully automated. Are these the "workers" that the Hotel Trades Council wants to organize?



<https://www.struggle-la-lucha.org/2022/05/19/labor-council-opposes-40-billion-in-military-aid-to-ukraine/>

## Labor Council opposes \$40 billion in military aid to Ukraine

[May 19, 2022 Struggle - La Lucha](#)

The Troy, N.Y., Labor Council passed the following resolution in opposition to the \$40 billion in military aid to Ukraine. The resolution could be summarized as saying, “Money for housing, education and healthcare, not for war.”

Whereas: According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, it would cost \$20 billion to end homelessness in the United States.

Whereas: The College For All Act endorsed by Senator Bernie Sanders and Representative Pramila Jayapal aims for free college tuition at all community colleges, public 4-year colleges, and tribal colleges.

And Whereas: The estimated total cost of the College For All Act is \$700 billion.

Whereas: A recent study by Yale epidemiologists found that Medicare for All would save around 68,000 lives a year while reducing U.S. health care spending by around 13%, or \$450 billion a year.

Whereas: The US government should prioritize the needs of its own citizens.

Therefore be it resolved: that the Troy Area Labor Council AFL-CIO opposes the recently passed bill that would spend 40 Billion dollars in military aid to Ukraine.



**Starving American Babies Disguise Selves  
As Ukrainian Soldiers In Hopes Of Getting  
\$40 Billion In Federal Aid**

# Pensamientos preliminares sobre las fortalezas y debilidades del PC-EE.UU. en su período revolucionario

## Introducción

Esto está destinado a ser exactamente lo que dice: pensamientos preliminares. Un análisis completo no puede ser el trabajo de una sola persona; debe ser un análisis colectivo de personas que han pasado por el largo y aún no terminado proceso de reconstrucción de una verdadera vanguardia marxista-leninista en los Estados Unidos. Si bien reconocemos que hay dificultades particulares en este proceso en lo que *todavía* es la principal potencia imperialista del mundo, también somos parte de un movimiento internacional que tiene sus particularidades en todos los países del mundo. Por lo tanto, sería útil que este análisis fuera revisado por miembros de otros partidos marxistas-leninistas en el mundo.

Muchas de las fortalezas del PC, particularmente durante la década de 1930, han sido discutidas y escritas, no solo por marxistas, sino también por izquierdistas simpatizantes, en su mayoría académicos.<sup>1</sup> Mucho se puede deducir sobre esta cuestión de estos libros. Como se verá, he tomado gran parte de estos puntos de vista de una lectura crítica del *Civil Rights Unionism – Unionismo de Derechos Civiles* (los números de página son de este libro).

## Fortalezas de PC-EE.UU.

Las fortalezas del PC son bastante bien conocidas. En 1929, organizó una huelga de trabajadores textiles blancos en Gastonia, Carolina del Norte, que terminó con la defensa armada de su sede sindical contra un ataque del estado. A principios de la Depresión, dirigió grandes marchas de cientos de miles de trabajadores desempleados y organizó a muchos de ellos en Consejos de Desempleados. Desempeñó un papel destacado en la organización de muchos de los grandes sindicatos industriales, como el automóvil, el acero, el caucho y más tarde el tabaco y otros. Se organizó en defensa de los afroamericanos que enfrentan la represión, particularmente en el sur. El caso más conocido fue la defensa de los Jóvenes de Scottsboro,<sup>2</sup> pero también defendió a Angelo Herndon<sup>3</sup>. El PC basó su comprensión del Sur en su reconocimiento del derecho a la autodeterminación de la nación afroamericana en el Cinturón Negro. A través de estas luchas, reclutó a muchos trabajadores militantes de base, blancos y negros, mujeres y hombres, que eran combatientes de primera línea en estas luchas.

El PC también luchó valientemente contra la represión estatal, desde las redadas de Palmer a principios de la década de 1920 hasta los constantes ataques durante la década de 1930. Sin embargo, en el período

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<sup>1</sup> Estos incluyen libros como lo de Robin Kelley *Hammer and Hoe (Martillo y azada)*, lo de Mark Naison *Communists in Harlem during the Depression (Comunistas en Harlem durante la Depresión)*, lo de Erik McDuffie *Sojourning for Freedom: Black Women, American Communism and the Making of Black Left Feminism (Estancia por la libertad: mujeres negras, comunismo estadounidense y la creación del feminismo de izquierda negra)*, (revisado en TMLUv2n2), lo de Robert Korstad *Civil Rights Unionism: Tobacco Workers and the Struggle for Democracy in the Mid-Twentieth Century South (Unionismo de Derechos Civiles: Trabajadores en tabaco y la lucha por la democracia en el sur de mediados del siglo XX)* (revisado en esta edición), y otros.

<sup>2</sup> Los jóvenes de Scottsboro eran un grupo de nueve niños y joven hombres (edades entre 12 y 19) negros que fueron inculpatados y condenados por violación porque viajaban en un vagón de carga con dos mujeres jóvenes (de 17 y 21 años) blancas a través de Scottsboro, Alabama, en 1931. Eran todos viajando para encontrar trabajo, como lo hicieron muchas personas desempleadas durante la Gran Depresión. El PC tomó parte activa en su defensa, salvándolos de la ejecución., aunque todos pasaron varios años en la cárcel antes de ser liberados. Vale la pena señalar que una de las supuestas "víctimas" más tarde se unió a la defensa.

<sup>3</sup> Herndon era un joven negro miembro del PC que fue condenado por "sindicalismo criminal" porque lideró una marcha de trabajadores blancos y negros que luchaban por el alivio de desempleo en Atlanta, Georgia, en 1932. Gastó cinco años en la cárcel antes de ser liberado en 1937.

McCarthy de finales de la década de 1940 y principios de la 1950, ya intentó (sin éxito) desviar estos ataques negando gran parte de su programa marxista-leninista.<sup>1</sup>

No es necesario entrar en más detalles aquí ya que, como dije, estas fortalezas son bastante bien conocidas.

### Debilidades de PC-EE.UU.

El libro *Civil Rights Unionism* es un relato comprensivo del trabajo del CIO (Congress of Industrial Organizations – Federación de Organizaciones Industriales) en la organización de trabajadores de tabaco, en su mayoría negros, en la Reynolds Tobacco Company en Winston-Salem, Carolina del Norte, en los años durante y poco después de la Segunda Guerra Mundial. También organizó a los trabajadores de hojas de tabaco en el área. El libro también reconoce el importante papel que jugó el Partido Comunista en esta organización.

Pero lo que también destaca, cuando se lee este libro críticamente, es lo que el PC **no** hizo, y es que apenas mencionar al socialismo o a la teoría marxista. Esto, por supuesto, no era tarea del CIO. Sin embargo, ciertamente **fue** tarea de los miembros del PC, y en particular de los líderes del PC, tanto a nivel local como nacional. Muchos miembros de base del PC simplemente entendían que el comunismo significaba sindicalismo democrático, así como la necesidad de deshacerse de la segregación racial y la opresión de las mujeres.

Cabe señalar que en las más de 400 páginas de texto en *Civil Rights Unionism*, el índice muestra sólo tres referencias al socialismo y otras tres referencias al marxismo.

En su libro, Korstad da un ejemplo de Donald Henderson, un miembro del Partido Comunista que se convirtió en jefe de UCAPAWA (United Cannery, Agriculture, Packing, and Allied Workers of America – Trabajadores Unidos de Conservas, Agricultura, Empaque y Aliados de los EEUU). Señala: "Muchos de los oficiales y organizadores de UCAPAWA en los primeros días compartieron las simpatías políticas de Henderson. Algunos se habían convertido en sindicalistas como resultado de su política; otros se habían sentido atraídos por el comunismo como resultado de sus experiencias de organización. Veían poca diferencia entre ser buenos sindicalistas y miembros leales del partido" (págs. 144-145). Por supuesto, no hay contradicción entre ser miembro del PC y ser un buen sindicalista, pero no son lo mismo. Esta no es una crítica particular a Henderson, pero muestra la debilidad en la perspectiva del PC. La explotación se vio como una simple lucha por salarios más altos. Esto era, por supuesto, algo bueno en sí mismo, pero, al margen de eso, se convirtió en una lucha militante por las reformas. Recuerde lo que Marx dijo en *Salario, precio y ganancia*<sup>2</sup>: "En vez del lema *conservador*, de '¡Un salario justo por una jornada de trabajo justo!', deberá inscribir en su bandera esta consigna *revolucionaria*: '¡Abolición del sistema del trabajo asalariado!'" Por supuesto, esto no significa que el socialismo estuviera en la agenda inmediata, pero si no se presentó como su objetivo estratégico, el PC minimizó su función principal.

Uno de los principales trabajadores de las hojas de tabaco, Robert Lathan, que había asistido a las escuelas de CP, había dicho: "Local 22 lucha contra la Ley Taft-Hartley, lucha por un salario mínimo de \$1.00, lucha por los derechos civiles, lucha por expandir la seguridad social, lucha por un programa de seguro médico y de salud, lucha contra los altos impuestos para los trabajadores, lucha por la ayuda a la educación, por eso nos llaman comunistas" (p. 403). Esta puede haber sido la razón por la que los reaccionarios llamaron al sindicalismo militante "comunismo", pero eso no es suficiente para ser comunista.

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<sup>1</sup> Vea el folleto de Foster: *In Defense of the Indicted Communist Party Leaders* (En defensa de los líderes acusados del Partido Comunista) disponible para descargar en: [www.RedStarPublishers.org/fosterdefpamph.doc](http://www.RedStarPublishers.org/fosterdefpamph.doc)

<sup>2</sup> Esta obra podría haber sido fácilmente utilizado como una herramienta de capacitación, o incluso serializado en el periódico del PC, el *Daily Worker* (Trabajador diario).



Muchos trabajadores de base y miembros del PC estaban preparados para ir más allá del sindicalismo militante y las luchas por los derechos civiles, pero parecen haber recibido poca o ninguna orientación al respecto por parte de la dirección del PC. Por ejemplo, Velma Hopkins señaló: "¿Quién construyó estas grandes fábricas aquí?... Lo hicimos, nuestras madres y padres lo hicieron, trabajando aquí por 10 o 15 centavos por hora. Por eso no tenemos educación y vivimos en barrios marginales" (pág. 375).

Hubo, por supuesto, reuniones de los clubes del PC, que tuvieron que discutir algunos elementos del marxismo. Julius Scales, el presidente del PC para las Carolinas, dijo: "La mayoría de los puntos en la agenda eran cuestión de trabajar en el sindicato, o cómo poner las luchas del sindicato en un contexto más político ... Siempre habría alguna parte educativa de la reunión que trataría de poner los problemas locales en un contexto internacional. Afortunadamente, me parece que muchos de ellos [los presidentes de los clubes] tenían los pies en la tierra y cuando no estaban jugando para la Unión Soviética, lo que no siempre hicimos, tendía a ampliar mucho sus horizontes, especialmente en la política internacional y ciertamente nacional" (pág. 273). Pero teniendo en cuenta que la mayoría de los miembros del PC básicamente identificaban el marxismo con el sindicalismo militante, el contenido de estas reuniones del club probable no era muy diferente de esto.

Hay que tener en cuenta que las principales luchas en Reynolds tuvieron lugar durante y poco después del período de Browder. Pero según Korstad, el principal cambio después de que Browder fue expulsado fue que el PC llevó a cabo más actividades abiertamente, incluyendo hacer público a la mayoría de sus miembros (lo que probablemente fue en sí mismo un grave error). En una reunión pública del PC en mayo de 1946, unos 65 trabajadores de base se unieron al Partido, y a finales de ese año el número de miembros en Winston-Salem había crecido a unos 150 (pág. 270). Esto, por supuesto, era algo bueno en sí mismo. Sin embargo, no hay muestras de que el contenido de la actividad de la Parte haya cambiado. Recordemos la declaración de Lenin: "sin teoría revolucionaria no puede haber movimiento revolucionario" ("La tarea de los socialdemócratas rusos", *Obras completas*, Tomo 2, pág. 482).

Para hacer frente a las debilidades del PC, por supuesto, tenemos que ir más allá de las citas de libros como *Civil Rights Unionism*. Una forma de hacerlo es examinar el *Daily Worker*, que se publicó entre 1924 y 1958, así como su órgano teórico, *The Communist (El Comunista)*, de 1924 a 1944<sup>1</sup>. Después, bajo Browder, se cambió al terrible nombre de *Asuntos Políticos*<sup>2</sup>, y desafortunadamente no lo cambió de nuevo después de que Browder fuera expulsado.

Una cosa notable sobre el *Daily Worker*, generalmente a lo largo del período revolucionario del PC, fue que era un periódico de *noticias* (ni siquiera tenía un diseño como el del *New York Times*). Es decir, como los periódicos burgueses, publicaba *noticias* de lo que estaba sucediendo en los Estados Unidos y en todo el mundo. Aquí está la portada del *Daily Worker* del 12 de enero de 1934 (de <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84020097/1934-01-12/ed-1/seq-1/>). Esto solo se entiende como una muestra de cómo era el *Daily Worker*.

---

<sup>1</sup> Mientras que Marxist Internet Archive tiene copias bastante completas de *El Comunista* y *Asuntos Políticos* de 1924 a 1957 (<https://www.marxists.org/history/usa/pubs/communist/index.htm>), por alguna razón sólo tiene copias de la *Trabajador diario* de 1924 a 1928. Sin embargo <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84020097/issues/1924/> tiene copias de 1924 a 1935.

<sup>2</sup> Sólo podría haber adoptado un nombre peor si, después de que el PC había sucumbido completamente al revisionismo moderno, había cambiado el nombre a *Asuntos apolíticos*.





# EL MARXISMO Y LAS CRISIS ECONÓMICAS DEL CAPITALISMO

En uno de los anteriores artículos que sobre la obra de Carlos Marx publicamos en esta sección, establecimos la enorme e indiscutible influencia que sus ideas y actividad han tenido en el proceso de transformación revolucionaria de la sociedad. Su genialidad le permitió dar respuesta y desarrollar elementos que el pensamiento progresista de la humanidad había planteado y estaban a la espera de solución, dando origen a una filosofía que se encuentra en la base del desarrollo de todo el pensamiento social de nuestra época.

Marx es el fundador de la doctrina económica científica, su estudio cimero lo condensó en *El Capital*, que contiene una profunda investigación y análisis del modo capitalista de producción y de sus leyes de desarrollo, junto con la previsión científica de su inevitable liquidación.

"El análisis que Marx efectuó del capitalismo desde su célula económica, la mercancía, hasta la reproducción del capital social y la crisis, prueba que el capitalismo en tanto que régimen económico-social está prisionero de contradicciones antagónicas y es históricamente limitado." [1] Este estudio argumentó científicamente la necesidad y la inevitabilidad de la lucha del proletariado contra la burguesía y su victoria.

El marxismo no es un conjunto de opiniones críticas respecto del capitalismo de mediados del siglo XIX y, por lo tanto, superado históricamente como señalan sus detractores. Por el contrario, una de sus características fundamentales es que la teoría de Marx se halla en permanente desarrollo a la par del desarrollo de la realidad objetiva. Vladimir Ilich Lenin, dando continuidad al estudio formulado en *El Capital*, elaboró la doctrina

sobre el imperialismo, que permite al proletariado y a los pueblos entender cómo llevar adelante la revolución socialista en las condiciones del capitalismo monopolista. En su obra "El imperialismo fase superior del capitalismo", Lenin demostró científicamente que "en su fase imperialista el capitalismo camina hacia su completa descomposición, que las contradicciones antagónicas que emanan de sus características económicas se agudizan al máximo y que las revoluciones socialistas y los movimientos de liberación nacional son inevitables." [2]

Carlos Marx es el creador de la teoría científica sobre las crisis económicas en el capitalismo. El demostró que el carácter cíclico de la reproducción capitalista está vinculado a la acción de la contradicción fundamental, la cual constituye a la vez la base económica y la principal causa de la crisis. La contradicción fundamental, que expresa el antagonismo siempre creciente entre el carácter social de la producción y la forma privada de la apropiación, halla su expresión en las contradicciones entre el trabajo y el capital, entre la producción y el consumo, así como entre la organización de la producción a nivel de empresa y la anarquía de la producción a nivel social. Al caracterizar las crisis como forma de movimiento de la producción capitalista, Marx puso de relieve que éstas "son siempre soluciones violentas puramente momentáneas de las contradicciones existentes, erupciones violentas que restablecen pasajeramente el equilibrio roto." [3]

Cuando se estudia el desarrollo histórico del capitalismo se observa que las crisis son un fenómeno inevitable de este sistema y que sus consecuencias destructoras crecen junto con la agudización de la contradicción fundamental.



**El análisis que Marx efectuó del capitalismo desde su célula económica, la mercancía, hasta la reproducción del capital social y la crisis, prueba que el capitalismo en tanto que régimen económico-social está prisionero de contradicciones antagónicas y es históricamente limitado.**

dicción fundamental.

Los defensores del capitalismo intentan demostrar que las crisis son fenómenos circunstanciales que podrían ser evitados con un manejo adecuado de la economía, pero lo cierto es que son momentos intrínsecos del desarrollo capitalista.

Marx puso de relieve que "no existen crisis permanentes", descubrió que se presentan de manera periódica y también advirtió la tendencia a la reducción de los ciclos económicos, que depende del nivel de desarrollo de las fuerzas productivas. Los hechos han demostrado que cuanto más se desarrolla el capitalismo, cuanto más se desarrollan las fuerzas productivas, tanto más frecuentes y de mayores consecuencias destructoras se han presentado las crisis.

"La caída de los ritmos de producción, la no explotación de las capacidades

productivas, el aumento exorbitante de los precios, el desempleo masivo, la profunda y crónica inflación, así como los grandes y permanentes déficits en la balanza del comercio exterior, en la balanza de pagos, etc. son índices de crisis que se dan en todos los países capitalistas y revisionistas." [4]

Las víctimas principales de las crisis son los trabajadores y los pueblos; el capitalismo en sí mismo encierra la explotación y opresión para las clases trabajadoras, pero en circunstancias de crisis las condiciones materiales de vida de éstos se ven aún más afectadas. En su obra "Miseria de la Filosofía" Marx describe este fenómeno: "...cada día es más evidente que las relaciones de producción en que la burguesía se desenvuelve

no tienen un carácter uniforme y simple, sino un doble carácter; que dentro de las mismas relaciones en que se produce la riqueza, se producen también la miseria; que dentro de las mismas relaciones en que se opera el desarrollo de las fuerzas productivas, existe asimismo una fuerza que da origen a la opresión; que estas relaciones no crean la riqueza burguesa... sino formando un proletariado que crece sin cesar." [5]

[1] Fatos Nano, Selaucin Kucaji: La teoría económica de Carlos Marx y la crisis actual del capitalismo. Tirana-Albania, 1983.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Carlos Marx. *El Capital*.

[4] Fatos Nano, Selaucin Kucaji: La teoría económica de Carlos Marx y la crisis actual del capitalismo. Tirana-Albania, 1983.

[5] Carlos Marx. *Miseria de la filosofía*.

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Por supuesto, la revista del PC contenía material teórico, alguno de esto bastante bueno (véase, por ejemplo, *The Communist* Vol. XIII, No. 2, febrero de 1934:



# THE COMMUNIST

Vol. XIII.

FEBRUARY, 1934

No. 2



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## SPECIAL PLENUM ISSUE

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Pero tener el material teórico solamente en *The Communist* y casi nada en el *Daily Worker* todavía conduce a una separación de la teoría de la práctica. Además, el *Daily Worker* circulaba entre los sindicalistas militantes<sup>1</sup>, mientras que *The Communist* no lo hacía.

<sup>1</sup> Korstad señala ese "el *Trabajador diario*... siempre podría ser encontrado sobre una mesa en la biblioteca del Local 22 junto con periódicos negros, el *Noticias TLC*, y el *Noticias CIO*" (pág. 267).

Hay otras áreas a investigar que generalmente no se pueden hacer simplemente buscando material en Internet. Uno es el contenido de los grupos de estudio del Partido Comunista, no solamente en Winston-Salem. Como hay pocas personas vivas hoy en día que participaron en tales grupos antes de que el PC sucumbiera completamente al revisionismo, tenemos que consultar principalmente memorias o entrevistas con aquellos que habían participado.<sup>1</sup>

También está el hecho de que el PC siempre publicitó obras clásicas del marxismo-leninismo<sup>2</sup> y otros materiales. Incluimos una copia de una página de *The Communist*, de nuevo de febrero de 1934.

Además de poder ordenar estas obras por correo, estaban disponibles en las librerías del PC, que a finales de la década de 1930 sumaban alrededor de 50, ubicadas en la mayoría de las ciudades principales de los Estados Unidos (incluida más de una librería en Nueva York, Los Ángeles y Chicago).

Hasta mediados de la década de 1950, el PC no era (todavía) un partido revisionista. Pero sus debilidades ya habían socavado su base marxista-leninista. Por lo tanto, cuando el revisionismo moderno se afianzó a escala internacional bajo Jrushchov, el PC no estaba en posición de resistir y rápidamente sucumbió a esta "nueva" tendencia.

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P. O. Box 148, Sta. D (50 East 13th Street) New York City

<sup>1</sup> Este escritor participó, de forma intermitente, en grupos de estudio organizados por uno de los primeros grupos anti-revisionistas, el Partido Laborista Progresista (PLP) entre 1965 y 1970 mientras estudiaba en la Universidad de Columbia. Leeremos la obra de Lenin *El Estado y la Revolución* y luego graduaremos para estudiar editoriales en el último número del periódico de PLP *Desafío*. Estudié más obras del marxismo-leninismo en una clase de Columbia impartida por un profesor socialdemócrata, incluyendo *Qué hacer?*, *El imperialismo, fase superior del capitalismo*, y otras obras (pero no *Los fundamentos del leninismo*).

En el verano de 1970, pasé unos días en Atlanta, Georgia, donde PLP acababa de organizar un club. En una de mis últimas actividades con ellos, ayudé a distribuir *Desafío* frente a la entrada de una fábrica local de Ford (durante negociación de contratos). Un buen número de trabajadores simpáticos tomaron el periódico. Al final del verano, PLP había formado un grupo de estudio entre estos trabajadores. Aproximadamente un año después, me encontré con alguien que había trabajado con el club de Atlanta, y la pregunté qué pasó con el grupo de estudio. Ella me dijo: "Tuvimos que disolverlo, porque los trabajadores estaban ideando sus propias teorías." Cabe señalar que esto fue aproximadamente el tiempo que PLP estaba desarrollando "su propia" desviación revisionista de Marxismo-leninismo (su *Road to Revolution III – Camino a Revolución III* – fue impreso en noviembre de 1971).

<sup>2</sup> Una de las primeras obras que Red Star Publishers reimprimió fue la de Stalin. *Los fundamentos del leninismo*. Estaba orgulloso de haber impreso 25 copias en inglés y otras 25 en español. Sin embargo, un amigo me mostró una copia de ese panfleto que el PC había reimpresso a mediados de la década de 1920. El había hecho **100.000 ejemplares**.



## **La crisis la cargan los trabajadores y los pueblos**

«El ritmo de crecimiento de la economía se desacelera», «la inflación ha llegado a niveles no presentes en décadas», «existe el riesgo de estanflación», «se vislumbra posible recesión económica», «hay riesgo de crisis alimentarias y hambruna», «millones de personas alimentarán este año la cifra de quienes viven en condición de pobreza y extrema pobreza», son algunas de las preocupantes conclusiones a las que han llegado varios organismos internacionales encargados de estudiar el desenvolvimiento de la economía mundial. El optimismo que esos mismos organismos tenían respecto de la recuperación económica, inicialmente prevista para este año, hoy se trastoca en alarma; la guerra en Ucrania es uno de los elementos que incide en ello, pero hay fenómenos como el proceso inflacionario, el incremento de los precios de los alimentos o la crisis energética que ya estaban presentes antes del estallido de esta guerra interimperialista.

Las iniciales previsiones de crecimiento de la economía mundial hablaban de una expansión en torno del 4,9% en el 2022. Los índices más altos se establecieron en las economías capitalistas más desarrolladas (5,2%) y en las denominadas economías emergentes y en desarrollo (6,4%), mientras que para los países más pobres se proyectaba un crecimiento bajo (inferior al 4%). Destacaban las perspectivas respecto de India (9,5%), China (8,1%), Estados Unidos (6,0%), Reino Unido (7,0%)<sup>1</sup>. El estallido de la guerra interimperialista en Ucrania está provocando un remezón en la economía mundial, los pronósticos de crecimiento económico son revisados a la baja por todos los organismos internacionales; ahora se prevé que el crecimiento mundial disminuya bruscamente del 5,7% en 2021 al 2,9% en 2022 y sea de 3% en 2023 y 2024. Este año, el crecimiento de las economías capitalistas más desarrolladas disminuirá al 2,6%, el de las denominadas economías emergentes y en desarrollo al 3,4%. El crecimiento de Estados Unidos será 2,5%, el de China 4,3%, India crecerá un 7,5%, mientras que se prevé una caída al -8,9% en el caso de Rusia<sup>2</sup>. Respecto de América Latina y el Caribe, la Cepal prevé que el crecimiento regional se desacelerará marcadamente hasta llegar al 2,5% en 2022, luego de un repunte posterior a la pandemia del 6,7% en 2021.



Las informaciones que hasta el momento se tienen respecto de los índices de producción industrial (que son fundamentales para entender lo que ocurre con la economía) nos muestran una tendencia a la baja, el IPI interanual en Alemania es de -2,3%, el de EEUU 6,4%, Japón -1,1%, China -2,9%, Reino Unido -4,0%, por citar algunos ejemplos. Otro índice fundamental es el relacionado con el volumen del comercio mundial, que también presenta una perspectiva de disminución en relación a cómo se presentó en el año 2021. En el caso de América del Sur, las exportaciones tendrán un crecimiento de -0,3%, mientras las importaciones crecerán el 4,8%, lo que supone problemas de liquidez para los países de la región.

Los problemas relacionados con la producción energética, que se advertían desde el año anterior, han devenido en crisis luego del estallido de la guerra en Ucrania: los precios de todas las fuentes de energía se han destapado. La afectación que este hecho provoca en la economía de los países y en las condiciones de vida de los trabajadores y los pueblos es evidente. En el 2021, ya se produjo un aumento sin precedentes en el precio del gas en los mercados mundiales, superior al 170%, y el fenómeno sigue presente; en Estados Unidos, los precios de la gasolina se han disparado un 52% en el último año, llegando a niveles históricos; en Europa también se han registrado precios sin precedentes y estos continuarán elevándose por el incremento del precio del barril del petróleo; según Goldman Sachs, entre julio y septiembre de este año, el promedio del barril de WTI se ubicará en USD 137, anteriormente había proyectado que el precio fluctuaría en USD 119.

La confluencia simultánea de problemas en la comercialización del petróleo y del gas, de sus altos precios, al igual que en la electricidad, configuran una crisis que —se dice— sería mayor que la crisis del petróleo de los años setenta y ochenta y, probablemente, durará más.

La inflación actual no tiene precedentes en lo que va del siglo. El índice de precios al consumidor en los 19 países que conforman la Eurozona se incrementó en 8,1% en mayo, la fuerte tendencia al crecimiento de los precios inició en noviembre del año pasado, desde entonces, cada mes marca un récord de su serie histórica<sup>3</sup>; en Estados Unidos, el índice de precios al consumo se disparó en mayo un 8,6% respecto a 2021, el mayor aumento desde diciembre de 1981, según datos del Gobierno; América Latina reportó una inflación general del 7,2% en el 2021, sin contar los países con inflación crónica, como Argentina, Haití, Surinam y Venezuela, este último es el país donde más subieron los precios en el 2021, el IPC interanual en 2021 fue del 686,4% y el año anterior del 1.197,5%. Según la Comisión Económica para América Latina, Cepal, la inflación regional sigue la tendencia mundial y en 2022 será del 8,2%. África continuará siendo la región más afectada por la inflación, pero debe tenerse en cuenta que hay enormes diferencias entre sus países, por ejemplo, Sudán tendrá una tasa inflacionaria superior al 200%.

El encarecimiento de los alimentos y la falta de estos en algunas regiones pone en riesgo de hambruna a millones de personas, particularmente en África. «Alrededor de 193 millones de personas en 53 países o territorios viven inseguridad alimentaria aguda o en situaciones peores. Esta cifra representa un incremento de casi 40 millones de personas en comparación con las cifras máximas ya registradas en 2020. De dichas personas, más de medio millón (570 000) habían alcanzado la fase más grave de inseguridad alimentaria aguda —la fase de catástrofe— en Etiopía, el sur de Madagascar, Sudán del Sur y Yemen, señala un informe presentado por la «Red mundial contra las crisis alimentarias»<sup>4</sup>.

Qué nos muestra todos estos datos, sino la crisis general del sistema capitalista y el hecho cierto de que este sistema no brinda ninguna perspectiva de bienestar para los trabajadores y los pueblos.

1 <https://www.imf.org/es/Publications/WEO/Issues/2021/10/12/world-economic-outlook-october-2021> (Resumen ejecutivo)

2 <https://www.bancomundial.org/es/news/press-release/2022/06/07/stagflation-risk-rises-amid-sharp-slowdown-in-growth-energy-markets>

3 <https://www.dw.com/es/la-inflaci%C3%B3n-sigue-batiendo-r%C3%A9cords-en-la-eurozona-y-supera-el-8-en-mayo/a-61987214>

4 <http://www.fightfoodcrises.net>