

# **The Tsar's New Clothes I – From Soviet Social- imperialism to Russian imperialism today**

*Proletarians of all countries, unite!*

## **The Tsar's New Clothes I**

### **– From Soviet Social-imperialism to Russian imperialism today –**

The current international situation expresses the developments of last three decades concentrated, from the bankruptcy of Soviet social-imperialism, that left Yankee imperialism as the sole hegemonic superpower and Russian imperialism in the condition of nuclear superpower – weakened and looking to recover. In this condition, anxiously trying to break the encirclement of Yankee imperialism, Russian imperialism has launched its war of aggression against Ukraine, in their desire to break through the encirclement and dreaming of the imperial Russia of the Tsars. The development began with the restoration of capitalism in the USSR, with which the relations of the type of tsarist empire were being reestablished. The policy of Lenin and Stalin on the treatment of nationalities was abandoned in order to develop national oppression based on the “Great Russian” sentiment. This is followed by its heir, imperialist Russia, with its pretension to maintain the “limited sovereignty” to which they were subjected during the process of Soviet social-imperialism over the countries that were part of the former Soviet Union, which is most evident in the declared and undeclared objectives of its current war of aggression against Ukraine. At the same

time, internal contradictions are sharpening in Russia.

In this situation, as described earlier, we need to maintain a clear view on the nature of Russian imperialism, and firmly oppose it, without losing sight of the main enemy of the peoples of the world, U.S. imperialism. We must counter-pose our proletarian vision and position against all the confusion that the bourgeoisie tries to feed us from different sides. Therefore we take a look into Russian imperialism and the heritage of the bankruptcy of the Soviet social-imperialism. The Russian bourgeois state is the continuation of the tsarist state and, therefore, its line of historical continuity has as a link to the state of bourgeois dictatorship under the mask of the revisionist ex-USSR, which had nothing to do with the Soviet Union of the great Lenin and Stalin.

## **The Russian Federation as the Heir of Soviet Social-imperialism**

The revisionist clique of Khrushchev started their attack against Stalin, against marxism-leninism and the dictatorship of the proletariat in the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress of the CPSU. They promoted an "economical reform" that was supposedly for "socialism" and "communism", in reality this was capitalist restoration. For this sinister campaign, they cooked up the revisionist thesis of "three peacefuls and two wholes": "the peaceful coexistence, peaceful evolution and peaceful transition" and "the state of the whole people and the party of the whole people".

The Communist Party of China, led by Chairman Mao, following Lenin's warning, pointed out on this process of restoration:

**"For a very long historical period after the proletariat takes power, class struggle continues as an objective law independent of man's will, differing only in form from what it was before the taking of power. After the October Revolution,**

**Lenin pointed out a number of times that:**

- a. The overthrown exploiters always try in a thousand and one ways to recover the "paradise" they have been deprived of.**
- b. New elements of capitalism are constantly and spontaneously generated in the petty bourgeois atmosphere.**
- c. Political degenerates and new bourgeois elements may emerge in the ranks of the working class and among government functionaries as a result of bourgeois influence and the pervasive, corrupting atmosphere of the petty bourgeoisie.**
- d. The external conditions for the continuance of class struggle within a socialist country are encirclement by international capitalism, the imperialists' threat of armed intervention and their subversive activities to accomplish peaceful disintegration.**

**Life has confirmed these conclusions of Lenin's." (A PROPOSAL CONCERNING THE GENERAL LINE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST MOVEMENT", 1963)**

The revisionists soon started dismantling the planned socialist economy and turning it into state monopoly capitalism. The living conditions of the masses deteriorated severely, as profit was again made the only measure of "contribution", and the production was driven to anarchy. The revisionist clique was as divorced from the masses as the Tsars. They put the revisionist principle of "material insensitiveness" and "free competition" above the socialist principle of "from each according to his ability, to each according to his work", attacking the dictatorship of the proletariat and the planned economy that had brought great development and welfare for the broad masses of the Soviet Union. The privileged stratum, such as enterprise leaders and bourgeois degenerate elements in the party, a small minority started again ruling over the workers, the majority, and hoarding the fruits of their labour to themselves. The

revisionist clique put up a ruthless bourgeois dictatorship to suppress the resistance of the masses and the true communists – they carried out a purge in the party and the army, moved true communists from their positions and locked them up in prisons and mental hospitals, built a massive police and military force, even crushing workers' protests bloodily. This restoration and repression started under Khrushchev, but was developed even more under Brezhnev. Similarly, under Brezhnev the collusion and struggle with Yankee imperialism was intensified:

**"Since Brezhnev came to power, with its baton becoming less and less effective and its difficulties at home and abroad growing more and more serious, the Soviet revisionist renegade clique has been practicing social-imperialism and social-fascism more frantically than ever. Internally, it has intensified its suppression of the Soviet people and speeded up the all-round restoration of capitalism. Externally, it has stepped up its collusion with U.S. imperialism and its suppression of the revolutionary struggles of the people of various countries, intensified its control over and its exploitation of various East European countries and the People's Republic of Mongolia, intensified its contention with U.S. imperialism over the Middle East and other regions and intensified its threat of aggression against China. Its dispatch of hundreds of thousands of troops to occupy Czechoslovakia and its armed provocations against China on our territory Chenpao Island are two foul performances staged recently by Soviet revisionism." (Report to the 9th Congress of The Communist Party of China, 1969)**

The revisionist clique twisted the memory of the Great Patriotic War, and started marketing their aggressive imperialist foreign policy as "defence of the Fatherland", aggressively corporativising and militarising the society, subjecting the individual to serve the state. The Soviet revisionism quickly subjugated different nations as semi-

colonies, especially in Eastern Europe, practicing their "Great Russian" policy of the times of the Tsars, abolished by the Great October Socialist Revolution that established the equality of all peoples and nations, making up the revisionist thesis of "limited sovereignty" in their "big socialist community", forcing Eastern European countries to "integrate" their economy, production and science with them. In many soviet republics of the union, the relations of the tsarist imperium were restored. The revisionists completely abandoned what Lenin wrote about Russia and national liberation, and oppressed brutally other nationalities than Russians, with policies of discrimination and for example forced migration<sup>i</sup>. This history is still seen in the world today, especially in Eastern Europe.

In 1991 the total bankruptcy of Soviet revisionism occurred and the social-imperialist Soviet Union collapsed. Fascism, that serves the bourgeoisie to only some extent for the restoration to repress the working class, and especially serves the bureaucratic monopoly faction, had stopped serving its purpose. In this moment, the non-state monopoly "demo-liberal" faction, restricted under fascism, won in the internal contention of the bourgeoisie. Many so-called "reforms", now under the leadership of the other faction were carried out, and in this, bourgeois-democratic institutions and rights were formally set up. As part of the restoration and in correspondence with the epoch, when the bourgeoisie has stopped being a progressive class, this "democratisation" could not be anything else but the establishment of a regime of reactionary bourgeois democracy. Power was centralised to the president from the start over the parliament, that was born weak.<sup>ii</sup> The centralisation of power to the executive therefore remained, but in the form of presidential absolutism. Formally the bourgeois ideal of "separation of power" exists in Russia, as there exists formally in every bourgeois democracy. The president is however a central

institute in the political system: almost like a monarch, he is a guarantor of the constitution, laws and rights of the citizens as well as the sovereignty of Russian Federation. He also determines the basic objectives for Russian politics and represents the country, as well is the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. Already in 2001 in one bourgeois study it was noted that the Russian president had a great power over the Duma with the right to issue decrees, to make proposals for new laws and threaten or even dissolve the parliament and order new elections if it refuses to pass his legislation – however with the risk of another unfavourable parliament. Thus we might as well call it a republican monarchy.

Putin has increased this centralisation of the power the presidential institution, to the executive, during his regime. Some of these measures include tying the regional leaders more tightly to the control of the president. The elections have become more fraudulent, and there is evidence of widespread tampering of the votes. In the Duma, Putin's party, consisting of, according to RT, politicians with different views united by loyalty to Putin and his ideals. In recent years, the Kremlin has advanced – in a very common way of the bourgeoisie – "anti-terrorism" laws banning "extremist organisations" or "foreign agents", organisations that the Putin regime considers as a threat to themselves, and allow these be outlawed and banned from the elections. People associated with these organisations can face prison sentences or violent intimidation<sup>iii</sup>.

Despite all repression and the increasing centralisation of power, Putin does not have a open discourse of attacking democracy or parliamentarism, in contrary, he praises elections, the participation of the people in them, he attends the celebration of national "day of parliamentarism" etc. He does not have an anti-parliamentary or anti-party public discourse. This of course, is great theater and demagogy. The

faction of the bourgeoisie lead by Putin meddles with the elections and increases repression against "political enemies", but they also need the illusion of the bourgeois democracy, for the people to clap along to their circus.

After backlash and major protests against the attacks on democratic rights, the government actually encouraged competition and "free" elections, and made it easier for the opposition forces to attend in order to gain legitimacy. The results of these elections were also twisted using usual means of bourgeois elections, such as "gerrymandering", the changing of the "rules" of the elections and ways of calculating the votes etc, which exists in all bourgeois elections. Also the controversial constitution change was approved by a "citizens vote". The "legitimacy" for the constitution change was achieved through elections, formalism, which is typical to bourgeois democracy. The government needs legitimacy, because it cannot rule solely with its fists. The parliament still serves its purpose as a tool to sow illusions and to manipulate the masses in service of the bourgeois state, and it still has some function, even though the power has been strongly centralised to the president. Despite the limitations, "opposition" forces still exist, even though these parties have a much lower representation in the parliament, and in addition, some of its leaders have been removed from the political scene by being subjected to judicial proceedings and given long prison sentences. The tendency towards fascism, the centralisation of power to the executive, is being developed by Putin and his faction of the bourgeoisie, but in the form of presidential absolutism, that in this moment, serves the Russian finance capital better than fascism.

## **Corporativism continues its march alongside the parliament**

With the restoration of capitalism in Soviet Union, the

revisionists set up a fascist government or regime to oppress the proletariat and the peoples of the Soviet Union with an iron fist, and with this, a corporativist system that is today the basis of the modern system of labor relations in Russia. In 1992, a "tripartisan system" was established in the Russian Federation. This means collective agreements on different regional levels between the state, employers and yellow unions. At federal level the corporativist characteristics are most visible: each of the three parties are represented by 30 members of a commission of corporativist character, consisting of representatives of national employers' associations, the leaders of biggest trade unions and the representatives of the state, which is also a significant employer. This system is bureaucratic and the state dominates it on regional and federal levels.<sup>[iv](#)</sup>

Through the system, the bourgeoisie tries contain the class struggle of the proletariat, to tame strikes and rebellion and promote bourgeois legality and class collaboration. Through imperialist bribery, this system is used to make economic policies against unemployment and ensure economical "security" to the workers. The state can in some cases even prevent enterprises not to carry out dismissals with the order of the president. The system resembles similar "tripartisan systems" in other imperialist countries, but is clearly more corporativist, especially in the way it sidesteps the parliament and controls production.

In 2002 a new labour code was established. This established workers rights to a minimum wage, regular pay, a 40-hour work week, paid vacation, maternity benefits, and protections against discrimination, but also imposed restrictions on the rights of the workers to organise themselves, and reinforced the corporativist system. A legal strike cannot be initiated by the unions, but by workers' meeting or conference with not less than 50 percent of all the employees attending the meeting or two-thirds of workers' delegates attending the



conference, and it has to be announced multiple days beforehand – therefore, it is almost impossible to organise it. A strike is recognised legally as a "way of settling collective labor disputes", which limits striking to changing the collective agreements made in the tripartisan system. Strikes are prohibited on the sectors of business where there is "dangerous production processes and equipment present". This danger is unclearly defined and therefore strikes are prohibited on multiple sectors. As a result, the number of strikes (in the sense that is recognised by the court, as a collective way of settling labour disputes) has decreased. However, other kinds of protests and work-stoppings have increased as a way to go around the law.

Workers participating in strikes and other protest face intimidation from the police, the court and their employers. There is reports that authorities on various levels try to pressure workers to refraining from striking and participating in protest. Trade union activists can also legally be dismissed or moved to another workplace<sup>v</sup>.

The tripartisan system is used by the bourgeoisie especially in the times of crisis. In the tripartisan system, the state has a dominating role, and it promotes the idea that the workers should be mainly be concerned about "the common good". The restrictions on striking make it harder for workers to organise and promotes the idea of the strike as a mere mean to communicate the workers' opinion to make a collective agreement of a corporativist type, under the tripartisan system, and is a serious restriction of demo-liberal rights. Corporativism is continuing its march through the tripartisan system. It also however has to be noted that this system is within a still reactionary bourgeois-democratic regime, in this respect it differs from the reigning one in social-imperialist Soviet Union, and even if dominated by the state, the system exists alongside to the parliament, and does not completely negate it.

To be continued

[i](#)Leninism or Social-imperialism? Foreign Language Press Peking 1970

[ii](#)Rtbh.com 12.06.2015: 25 years of Post-Soviet Russia: How Far Has the Country Come?

[iii](#)Institute of Modern Russia 2020: Russia under Putin – 20 years of Battling Civil Society. Report by the Institute of Modern Russia

[iv](#)Vinogradova, Elena; Kozina, Irina; J. Cook, Linda 2015: Labor Relations in Russia – Moving to a “Market Social Contract”? *Problems of Post-Communism*, vol. 62: 193–203

[v](#)Gerasimova, Elena 2017: Collective Labor Disputes and Strikes in Russia: The Impact of Judicial Precedents and Enforcement. *Russian Law Journal* Vol. V, Issue 2