

REPORT OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF COLOMBIA (RED FRACTION): ON THE GREAT UPRISING OF THE COLOMBIAN PEOPLE

Three weeks have already passed since the beginning of the national strike in Colombia on April 28. Three weeks of uninterrupted protests which initially targeted an anti-popular tax reform proposal presented to the congress but which have turned into a real popular uprising against the government of the reactionary Iván Duque and his party the Democratic Centreⁱ, led by the landowner, paramilitary chief and genocidal leader Álvaro Uribe Vélez, an enemy of the people deeply hated by the Colombian masses especially for having commanded the thousands of extrajudicial executions (known as „falsos positivos“) that were carried out in the country by the reactionary armed forces during his mandate (2002-2010) in the midst of the war of the old state against the revisionist guerrillas of the FARCⁱⁱ and the ELNⁱⁱⁱ.

The balance of these mobilisations after their first 20 days allows us to measure the massive participation and the great combativeness of the people in the current days of protests, as well as the bloodthirsty role of the old Colombian state in the service of the big bourgeoisie and landowners. The confrontations have left the old state and the reactionaries with a balance of 1 policeman dead and around 941 wounded, more than 1,000 public transport vehicles and 156 transport stations affected, at least 30 toll booths and 87 service stations destroyed, approximately 80 CAIs (police installations) reported with material damage, more than 421 bank offices and 400 ATMs attacked with fury by the people, around 300 actions of sabotage and popular recuperations against commercial establishments (mainly of big capital) and more than 7,000 activities of popular mobilisation (marches, sit-ins, blockades, takeovers, etc.) distributed in 784 municipalities throughout the country that have the government on the ropes, which has desperately threatened to escalate the repression in order to lift the road blockades by force. The blood toll paid by the people during these days of struggle has also been high: at least 50 children of the people killed by the police or by armed civilians, around 800 injured, there are reports of more than 500 people missing and 1,400 arrested, 37 people with eye injuries, 21 registered cases of sexual violence against women of the people and the militarisation of some cities of the country. All these figures can be summed up in a great truth synthesised by Maoism: after centuries of subjugation, misery and exploitation, it is right to rebel!

This reaffirms the correct Maoist thesis of the unequally developing revolutionary situation in which the whole world finds itself today and from which Colombia, as a nation oppressed mainly by US imperialism, does not escape. As Lenin brilliantly described more than 100 years ago: those at the top can no longer rule as before and those at the bottom no longer want to live the way they have been living. And this is precisely what is happening in Colombia, and to understand this it is enough to take a look at the two hills, the hill of the people and the hill of reaction.

In front of the hill of reaction, a great disorder under the skies is what has reigned during the government of the ultra-right-wing Iván Duque during the three years that he has been in the administration of the old state. A great economic crisis has begun during his mandate, which had been brewing for some time but which exploded most crudely in 2020 with the arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic in the country, reaching the criminal figures of more than 21 million Colombians (42.5%) in poverty by 2020, an unemployment rate for March of this year of 14.2%, a labour informality rate for the first quarter of 2021 of 49% and more than 20 million people forced to go hungry because they cannot access the 3 meals a day. Within the ruling classes there has been intense collusion and struggle, which has been expressed in the divisions within the ultra-right that is in power today and its inability to form a solid and stable coalition with other sectors of the ruling classes such as the right and "centre" parties, but when it comes to condemning the rebellion of the people and seeking to quell it by all possible means, they are united without hesitation. And as if this were not enough, every year of his mandate the people have put the Duque government up against the wall with grandiose days of mobilisation that have delegitimised it, lowering its popularity to very low levels (91% disapproval among the youth according to a recent study) and that have forced it to give in or change its plans in the face of some anti-popular measures oriented by imperialist multilateral organisations with which it has tried to intensify the exploitation of the people, re-improve bureaucratic capitalism and prevent the revolution in the country.

And opportunism and revisionism? Doing what they do best: throwing a lifeline to the old and decrepit Colombian state by containing and diverting the struggles of the people, channelling the immense popular indignation expressed in the streets towards the reactionary way out of the crisis that best suits their petty interests, in this case the renewal of bureaucratic posts within the state aiming at a change of government through the electoral farce. Taking advantage of the strong anti-Uribista^{iv} sentiment, they have openly propagated the idea that these days of struggle should become a "responsible vote" for the next call for the electoral circus scheduled for 2022, bringing in a new "alternative government" to administer the bureaucratic big landlord state for the next 4 years. With the presidential elections approaching, opportunism has been very active during the national strike, propagating among the masses its reactionary theses of pacifism and fraternisation with the police, the abstract preaching of peace and the rejection of "infiltrators and hooligans" (i.e., anyone who goes beyond the established order). Also the opportunists and revisionists of all stripes have played a key role in trying to demobilise the people by calling for "virtual sit-ins" at the beginning of the protests or recently calling for weekly peaceful calls to counter what they call the "everyday, daily and hazardous mobilisation". Having failed to contain the fury of the people, they have shamelessly promoted the idea of not "wasting forces" in the current strike, which according to them has already achieved its objectives, and better to "accumulate forces" thinking about next year's elections. This nefarious influence of opportunist and revisionist organizations like Colombia Humana, Partido Verde, Dignidad, Polo Democrático, revisionist PCC, UP, Comunes (former FARC), among many others, has managed to have a certain effect on some sectors of the masses by sowing confusion and instilling fear among the population, aiming to demobilize and deny the antagonistic character of the current struggle between oppressed and oppressors, promoting their outdated theses of national reconciliation.

As for the hill of the people, they have invariably applied the logic synthesised by Chairman Mao Tsetung: fight, fail, fight again, fail again and fight again until victory is achieved. In the last 4 years there have been memorable days of struggle by the Colombian people that express the growing popular protest such as the national university strike in 2018, the indigenous "minga" [kind of collective work] of 2019, the historic days of national mobilisation that began on 21 November 2019, the heroic battles against police repression

from 9 to 11 September 2020 and the current grandiose national strike that began on 28 April this year. All these struggles are evidence of the profound discontent of the broad masses of the people with the rotten and decadent economic and political system that rules this old society, as well as their yearning for a taste of the sweetness of power, their strong desire for change, their still unconscious but latent clamour for a genuine New Democratic Revolution in the country that will turn all their fantasies into reality: to drive out the imperialist invaders, to sweep away the reactionary landlords and to smash the miserable big bourgeoisie of the country by building step by step the new power led by the Communist Party and based on the worker-peasant alliance. This is what the masses are clamouring for on the streets, shaking the old order by rising up in new waves of rebellion as they have done during these days of mass, legitimate, militant protests with a broad participation of the youth in which they have taken to the streets in rebellion, attacking the symbols of the big bourgeoisie and landlords such as the institutions of finance capital, the state offices and the big supermarket chains and shopping malls. But in each of these struggles, without exception, the reactionary solution to the crisis has predominated, and the illusions of the masses in these struggles have ended in the demobilisation of the people, fruitless negotiating tables and systematic non-fulfilment of the commitments made by the state with the criminal complicity of the opportunist and revisionist traitors.

Against this background, the role of the Maoists in the country is key. In the cities where the Maoists have been acting with increasing firmness and fearlessness, the face of the class struggle is rapidly changing, the masses as well as opportunism and reaction are noticing that a new force, radically different from the others, has arrived and its presence is not indifferent to anyone. In the midst of the active participation in the class struggle and the intense two-line struggle within it, a new red line has been tempering itself and making important qualitative leaps in its process, advancing the strategic and overdue task of the communists in the country of reconstituting the Communist Party of Colombia to initiate and develop the People's War until the conquest of power for the proletariat and the popular masses. The successful action of the still small but firm Maoist contingent in Colombia is reflected in its increasingly broad call and mobilisation of the masses which during the present situation has aimed at sabotaging the anti-crisis plans of reaction; the valuable education it has been giving to the masses in revolutionary violence, the struggle against opportunism and the need for a protracted struggle with the enemy which will not be resolved definitively in the midst of the present mobilisations; the fierce struggle against right opportunist tendencies (electioneering, bureaucratism and pacifism) and "left" tendencies (adventurism and military caudilloism) within the mass movement; the forging of an ardent and disciplined militancy; the building of an ever broader mass base under its influence and of a solid revolutionary front; the advances in organising and leading larger and larger sections of the masses by linking the struggle for demands by demanding the most basic needs of the people with the struggle for power by educating in the revolutionary perspective as Chairman Gonzalo teaches, etc.

The great task before the true communists is to take an active part in this new wave of popular rebellion by fighting on the streets together with the people, agitating and propagating the great revolutionary perspective more strongly among the masses, helping the masses to synthesize the lessons gained in the struggle, distinguishing their friends and foes as well as the road they must take to conquer their rights, and organizing them under the guidance of Maoism "avupg" [acronym used by the Colombian comrades for the universally valid contributions made by Chairman Gonzalo] towards the true revolutionary solution to the economic, political and social crisis that the country is going through, thus forging the force that with years of intense work among the masses will be able to confront the old power wielded by the big bourgeoisie and landowners of the country. Ultimately, the responsibility of the Maoists is that this new juncture of the class struggle in the

country should serve to raise the level of consciousness of the people and strengthen their organisation, taking concrete steps in the process of building the three instruments (Party, Army and Front) which through People's War will destroy the old state and its reactionary armed forces, building on their ashes the construction of the new power based on the worker-peasant alliance. For this the revolutionary organisation of the peasant masses under the leadership of the proletariat is fundamental and the communists in the country must work tirelessly for the development of this organisation.

Finally, it should be noted that in Colombia the national strike continues. In spite of some calls from opportunism aimed at demobilising and dismantling the strike, the last day of national mobilisation called for 12 May again had a massive participation and the banners of struggle have been extended beyond the tax reform. So far, as a result of the popular mobilisation, some important demands have been won: the withdrawal of the criminal tax reform bill that triggered the protests, the resignation of the unpopular banker finance minister Alberto Carrasquilla who designed and defended the reform bill, the health reform proposal filed in congress is about to fall, the government has come out to promise that it will not charge tuition fees for university students from the lowest strata and that it will create thousands of jobs for young people in an attempt to appease the youth, the arrest of some police officers accused of the murders of children of the people during the protests and the resignation of some other public officials and high-level police commanders, but none of this has managed to extinguish the flames of popular rebellion. The Colombian people on the streets are demanding that the bloody wave of repression against them be stopped and that justice be done and the executioners responsible for the more than 50 murders perpetrated directly by the state through its legal repressive apparatus (police, ESMAD, army) and its illegal armed wing (hired assassins and paramilitaries) be punished; they are demanding the release of the more than 1,400 political prisoners captured in the midst of the protests. 400 political prisoners captured in the midst of the combative demonstrations; it is demanding the definitive withdrawal of the new health reform that aims to further privatise health, denying the most basic masses the possibility of access to this right; it is demanding concrete solutions and real economic support to alleviate the hunger, unemployment and informal work that abound in the poorest families; It is demanding that the current economic crisis be paid for by the rich, the big bourgeoisie and landowners of the country out of their fabulous fortunes that amount to billions, while the harsh reality of more than 70% of the Colombian masses is that they live on a minimum wage (8 dollars a day) or much less.

After the rebellions in Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru, USA, France, Spain and other countries, it is now the turn of Colombia with its third big uprising during the last 3 years. With the new open period of revolutions in the world, the explosiveness of the masses has reached impressive dimensions, while the weakness of imperialism and all reactionaries has become more evident, showing that strategically they are paper tigers and that they are in their deepest crisis since the beginning of the last century. The objective conditions for the advance of the world proletarian revolution (WPR), especially in the Third World countries, have long been ripe for revolution and today more than ever are magnificent. But the main factor that radically changes the situation and differentiates it from other epochs is the unstoppable advance of Maoism and this new great wave of the WPR in which more and more Communist Parties and Organisations are decisively taking up the task of reconstituting Communist Parties where they do not exist and initiating the People's War or developing those already underway. For this reason we echo the call made in the May Day joint statement by numerous Maoist Parties and organisations around the world: "The masses all over the world are clamouring for revolution. It is up to the communists to organise and lead them to express their full transformative capacity so that there will be no force in the world capable of holding them back.

Long live the great uprising of the Colombian people!

Honour and glory to the heroic Colombian masses!

Long live Maoism! Down with revisionism!

Forward comrades! For the reconstitution of the Communist Parties, the beginning of new People's Wars in the world, the advance of the People's Wars already under way and the World Proletarian Revolution as the only way out of the crisis!

Communist Party of Colombia (Red Faction)
20 May 2021

- i The ultra-right party currently in power and one of the main representatives of the interests of the landowners and big bourgeoisie in the country.
- ii After the peace accords, divided into a rotten electoral party and some dissidents still engaged in armed struggle along the same erroneous lines as before.
- iii Still in arms, but which has been trying for years to establish dialogues with the government to initiate a peace agreement similar to the one made in 2016 with the FARC.
- iv Deep hatred, especially among the youth, for Uribe Vélez and his far-right party, which has been in power for almost 20 years and has strong control over various state institutions.