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**HISTORY OF THE
INTERNATIONAL
COMMUNIST
MOVEMENT
1848-1917**

*Volume 1 – Origins and Development
of Marxism*

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***Presentation of the
“Collection for study by young people
by the Editing Group”***

Chairman Mao teaches us: “*It is of the utmost necessity for young people who have studied to go to the countryside to be re-educated by the poor and medium-poor-peasants.*” Answering this great call by Chairman Mao, groups of young people, filled with a communist consciousness, have ceaselessly gone with a great enthusiasm into the countryside. This is an undertaking of great significance designed to reduce the three great differences (between manual and intellectual labor, the city and the countryside, and workers and peasants – *French translator’s note*) and to limit bourgeois right.

In this immense world of the countryside, many educated young people are conscientiously studying the Marxist-Leninist classics and the works of Chairman Mao, fighting with zeal on the front line of the three great revolutionary movements (class struggle, struggle for production and scientific experiment – *French translator’s note*), resolutely following the path of integration with the workers and peasants and carrying through their contribution to the building of a new socialist countryside. Proletarian heroes are arising continually; a new revolutionary generation is growing and expanding. This is the great victory of the revolutionary line of Chairman Mao.

Following the teachings of Chairman Mao: “*It is necessary to take care of the development of the young generation*”, we have prepared and published this “*Collection for study by young people*” to respond to the needs of the educated young people who have come to the countryside to study for themselves. Guided by Marxism-Leninism and the thought of Mao Zedong, this collection presents in its content a general knowledge of philosophy, social science, literature, natural sciences as well as the use of agricultural technique.

We hope that the publication of this collection will play a positive role in the studies of the educated young people who moved to the countryside and help them to further increase their consciousness of the class struggle, the struggle between the lines and the carrying through of the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat. We hope that it will help them to raise their theoretical and

political level as well as their cultural and scientific level, so that they can progress with great strides on the path of being red and expert in order to respond even better to the needs of building the new socialist countryside and to carry out all the tasks.

We wish to express our sincere gratitude to the concerned units and to the authors who have been giving a powerful support to the publication of this collection and we invite all our readers to present their observations and criticisms with regards to this collection with the objective of improving it.

People's Publishers of Shanghai
April 1976

QUOTATION OF MARX AND ENGELS

The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.

QUOTATION OF LENIN

The principal condition for preparing the total victory of the proletariat is to wage a prolonged, fierce struggle, without mercy, against opportunism, reformism, social chauvinism and other bourgeois influences and currents. These influences and currents are inevitable, as result of the fact that the proletariat moves in the capitalist environment. Without waging this struggle, without having previously triumphed totally over opportunism in the workers' movement, there can absolutely be no question of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

QUOTATION OF MAO ZEDONG

The socialist system will eventually replace the capitalist system; this is an objective law, independent of man's will. However much the reactionaries try to hold back the wheel of history, sooner or later revolution will take place and will inevitably triumph.

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CHAPTER 1

THE BIRTH OF MARXISM AND THE RISE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST MOVEMENT

The 1840s were the witness to a significant event in the history of humanity: the birth of Marxism.

Marxism is the scientific theory of the proletarian revolution; it is a sharp weapon in the hands of the proletariat and the revolutionary peoples to understand and transform the world. Marxism explained the laws of development of nature and society, it showed the proletariat and the oppressed peoples the correct path to follow for their liberation, it leads them in the struggle to achieve socialism and communism. This is why communism is also called scientific socialism or scientific communism.

The birth of Marxism marks the beginning of the international communist movement. Since then, guided by Marxism, the proletariat and working people of the entire world have written a new chapter in human history through their heroic struggles. The history of the international communist movement for more than a century has clearly shown that Marxism is invincible. Nowadays, countries want independence, nations want liberation and the peoples want revolution; this is the inevitable trend of history. The old world is floundering while storms rage around it. *“The communist ideological and social system alone is full of youth and vitality, sweeping the world with the momentum of an avalanche and the force of a thunderbolt. [It will make its wonderful spring bloom. *] (1).”*

1. The socio-historic conditions for the emergence of Marxism

The birth of Marxism in Europe in the 1840s did not happen by chance; on the contrary, it was due to profound historical and social causes. *“As the social economy of many European countries advanced to the stage of highly developed capitalism, as the forces of production, the class struggle and the sciences developed to a level unprecedented in history, and as the industrial proletariat became the greatest motive force in historical development, there arose the Marxist world outlook of materialist dialectics.” (2).* This statement

* Not in English edition.

of Mao Zedong illustrates well the objective socio-historic conditions in which Marxism was born.

In the first half of the 19th century, the capitalist mode of production was already predominant in several European countries. At that time England had become the country where capitalism was developing most rapidly. In the 1840s the industrial revolution had almost been achieved; in Germany as well this revolution was advancing rapidly. Germany was still considerably behind compared to England. While capitalism was already largely developed there: mechanized industry had appeared and the Rhineland, Germany, had become a prosperous industrial zone. The main social consequence of the industrial revolution was the formation of the proletariat. With the rapid development of mechanized production, with the construction a series of big factories, this huge industrial army became concentrated and grew rapidly.

The development of large industrial capitalist production not only transformed production techniques and changed its whole scope; it also brought about profound social changes. To the degree that large mechanized capitalist production was developing, the oppression and exploitation of the workers by the capitalists was made crueler and the proletariat was becoming poorer and poorer. In 1825, the first economic crisis broke out in England. Starting from that moment, a succession of cyclical economic crises occurred without interruption in all the capitalist countries, each time more acute. The capitalists shifted the weight of these crises on to the workers and the working people, thus increasing the contradictions and struggles between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

From the day it was born, the proletariat took on its struggle against the bourgeoisie. At the beginning, it was still at the stage of spontaneous struggle, breaking machines and taking on certain capitalists in particular. The proletariat was still a class in itself. But with the continual rise in its number, its level of political consciousness and its capacity to organize against the bourgeoisie also gradually increased.

In the 1830s and 40s three broad workers' movements broke out in western Europe: in France, the two armed insurrections of the silk workers of Lyon; in England, the Chartist movement; and in Germany, the revolt of the weavers of Silesia. These struggles shook Europe, showing that the workers' movement had henceforth entered into a new phase.

In November 1831, the workers of Lyon unleashed an armed uprising. Lyon was then the center of the French silk industry. The masses of workers were subjected to cruel oppression by the bosses and their intermediaries. They had to work 15 to 18 hours a day, and received a salary that was barely enough to buy a loaf of bread. The young and strong workers were quickly exhausted by their work, they had no more than the skin on their backs and they caught all kinds of illnesses. The life of their children was even worse. Many died every year at a tender age and the majority of working children died before the age of ten as a result of bad treatment. The workers could barely survive. In October, 6000 silk workers forced their bosses to accept a wage increase. But the bosses did not keep their promise, and that caused an outbreak of anger among the workers. On November 21, they went out on strike and also held demonstrations, which were harshly suppressed by the police. Having been pushed to the limit of their patience, the workers also took up arms and unleashed an insurrection in response to the provocations of the police and capitalists. The insurgent workers had written on their banners: "*Live working or die fighting.*" This slogan encouraged them to fight valiantly against the enemy and after three days of bloody fighting the insurgent workers succeeded in taking over the city hall. At that time, influenced by the ideas of utopian socialism, the workers were still not aware of the extreme importance of seizing power. Consequently, they left the reactionary prefect in place and did not remove the officials of the former administration; they were satisfied in forming a Workers' Committee, responsible for controlling the activities of the local government. The reactionaries thus had enough time to catch their breath, and military reinforcements were rapidly sent in from Paris that mercilessly crushed the insurrection.

In April 1834, the Lyon silk workers rose up again, engaging in a heroic combat against the police, to fight a government decree which prohibited workers' meetings and associations and in order to rescue the imprisoned strike leaders. During this insurrection, the workers demanded the formation of the Social Republic, giving it an openly political character. But for some time, the government and the capitalists had been preparing for this workers' revolt. Faced with an enemy with superior numbers and arms, the workers summoned up a great courage but the balance of forces was too unequal and they were forced to retreat. The few workers who held their

positions to the end selflessly sacrificed their lives. Thus the second Lyon workers' insurrection failed.

These two workers' insurrections were of great political importance. They showed that the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie was from now on in the forefront of the social struggles and marked the beginning of putting the French workers on the path to forming an independent political movement.

After the Lyon workers' insurrections, the Chartist movement in England broke out, which also had great significance. In June 1836, a group of workers and artisans had founded The London Working Men's Association, which in that same year had adopted a six-point document demanding, among other things, the establishment of universal suffrage. In May 1838, this document was officially published under the title *People's Charter*. From that date on, this revolutionary movement had a mass character, with a principal point the struggle for universal suffrage and principal force the working class. It was called the Chartist Movement, and its members were known as Chartists. The great moments of Chartism centered on 1839, 1842 and 1848, when the movement had expanded all over the country; the Glasgow workers organized meetings and demonstrations under the slogan "Bread or revolution", and great workers' demonstrations also took place in Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool and other major cities. The Chartist movement lasted from the beginning of the 1830s up to 1848, in all over ten years, and millions of workers participated in it. But finally, the leaders let themselves be discouraged, and it was dissolved by a government decree.

In spite of the setback of the Chartist movement, thanks to these struggles the English proletariat had written a brilliant page in history. It was no longer just a struggle of the workers in a given factory or a given body against some particular capitalist. It was no longer limited to certain economic demands; it involved the first independent political struggle of the English proletariat and that is why Lenin described the Chartist movement as "*the first broad, truly mass and politically organized proletarian revolutionary movement*" (3).

While the Chartist Movement was developing in England, in June 1844 the weavers of Silesia in Germany launched an armed insurrection against their bosses. At that time Silesia was part of the kingdom of Prussia, and it was the region in Germany where the textile industry was most developed. There they produced primarily linen and cotton fabrics. The Silesian workers were under the dou-

ble yoke of landlords and capitalists: not only did they suffer from the exploitation of the bosses and their intermediaries, but they also had to pay the landlords a special tax on the weaving. In order to compete with the English merchants, the regional industrialists lowered the wages and working conditions of the weavers, who became worse off than beasts of burden. Shortly before the insurrection, of the 36,000 weavers in the area, 6,000 had died from hunger. In an anonymous song entitled, *The Judgement of Blood*, the weavers angrily denounced the crimes of these vampires: “You are the cause of all this misery that weighs down upon the poor”, “you even take away last the poor man’s last shirt”. Marx spoke about this song as a “bold call for struggle”. On June 4, some workers passed by singing this song in front of the house their boss Swanziger and the capitalists and the police force cruelly beat them; some were arrested. The anger which the workers held back for a long time burst open like the flames of a volcano. On that day the workers sacked Swanziger’s house; the following day 30,000 workers gathered and destroyed the factory, burning the accounting books and stocks of the boss and engaging in a bloody struggle against the police who had come to put down the riot. Armed with axes, sticks and stones, the workers drove the police on the run. On June 6, the Prussian government sent in military reinforcements and the workers’ uprising was harshly repressed.

In spite of the spontaneity of this uprising, the proletariat, was strongly united, and directed its main attacks against the capitalist system and, as Marx said, the workers “*the proletariat at once proclaims its antagonism to the society of private property in the most decisive, aggressive, ruthless and forceful manner.*” (4)

The revolutionary spirit of the German proletariat was shown by this insurrection and was a powerful inspiration for workers’ struggles in all corners of the country.

The various struggles and insurrections described above reveal how great the strength of the proletariat was, and marked the beginning of a new historical epoch for the European workers’ movement. Politically, the proletariat was no longer in the tow of the bourgeoisie; it had become an independent political force and, with its head held high, it had made a brutal interruption on the political battlefield. The level of consciousness of the proletariat had also increased. It not only focused on the improvement of living conditions but also began a struggle with the objective of seizing political

power. As to the forms of struggle, the destruction of machinery and the confrontations with individual capitalists that had taken place in the beginning had become a political movement of a mass character and for armed insurrection. At last the proletariat had begun to put order into its ranks and the first independent political organizations of the workers appeared.

The repression exercised by the reactionary ruling classes against these three European workers' movements in the 1840s clearly shows that if the proletariat wants to struggle, if it wants to make the revolution, it must quickly adopt a clear orientation, a correct revolutionary theory. However, the theories of petty-bourgeois socialism and utopian socialism that dominated the workers' movement were not only incapable of showing the proletariat the correct path to follow to achieve their emancipation, but quite the opposite, they led to a dead end. Under these circumstances, the creation of a doctrine of scientific communism and of connecting it to the workers' movement became an urgent and indispensable task; it was the most urgent problem for the proletariat to resolve in its struggle against the bourgeoisie. It was a hard task determined by the historical development.

Mao Zedong pointed it out: "*Marxism could be the product only of capitalist society.*" (5) In the 1840s, capitalism experienced a great development in several European countries; the contradictions and struggles between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie were continually becoming more acute; the ranks of the proletariat increased day by day and the workers' movement was waking up, full of vigor, showing that the proletariat had already become the principal motive force of historical development. At the same time, science and culture had reached a level unknown before. In the domain of the sciences of nature, three great discoveries were of particular importance: the law of the transformation of energy, the discovery of the cell, and Darwin's theory of evolution; furthermore, the social sciences, philosophy, history, economics and other branches were marked by vast and very profound research. For all these reasons, the creation of scientific socialism became an urgent necessity of this period; the development of society for its part provided its material and theoretical bases. These were the historic and social conditions that had determined the moment of the birth of Marxism.

2. The revolutionary activities of Marx and Engels: the fundamental conditions for the creation of Marxism

The theory of scientific socialism was the product of determined historical and social conditions. However, why was it that Marx and Engels, and they alone, could create this theory? This is particularly because they had participated personally in the practice of the class struggle and in scientific experimentation of their time, and through this practice, they consciously transformed their conception of the world and became, from the idealists and revolutionary democrats that they had been, materialists and communists. This alone allowed them to take up the magnificent historical task that would lead to the creation of scientific socialism. *“Leaving aside their genius, the reason why Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin could work out their theories was mainly that they personally took part in the practice of the class struggle and the scientific experimentation of their time; lacking this condition, no genius could have succeeded.”* (6)

Karl Marx (1818-1883) was born in Trier, a prosperous industrial town in Prussia, on May 5, 1818. His father was a lawyer; the Marx family was comfortable, cultured and not in the least bit revolutionary.

After having obtained his bachelor's degree in 1835, Marx first entered the University of Bonn, and a year later he enrolled in the University of Berlin where he studied law, history and philosophy. It was at the University of Berlin where Hegel had taught and his political conceptions had a great influence in Europe. At the University of Berlin, Marx studied the works of Hegel and was part of the group of Young Hegelians (Left Hegelians). This group was based on the positions of bourgeois radicalism; they criticized the feudal absolute monarchy and the Christianity linked to this system. They had drawn from the works of Hegel their atheism and their revolutionary conclusions, and advocated the implementation of bourgeois reforms.

The young Marx stood out because of his lively spirit, his youthful fervor and the determination that he had shown when he was going against the current and dared to criticize the old world. In April 1842, Marx began to contribute to the *Rheinische Zeitung* [*Rhenish Gazette*] (7), of which he became the editor-in-chief in October of that same year. He used the magazine as a weapon to

intensify the struggle against Prussian absolutism. Under his direction, the *Rheinische Zeitung* took on new life and its democratic color became increasingly evident. Thanks to journalism, Marx penetrated deeply into society; he widely addressed the various aspects of social life, and had direct knowledge of the life of the people and their struggles. In Prussia during this period, the development of capitalism allowed the big landowners to use state power to dispossess the people of their land and woods. Some peasants, who had lived for generations in the mountains where they made their living as wood cutters, were suddenly deprived of their right to cut wood. In order to survive, they continued anyway to cut down trees, and the selfish landowners had them arrested as “robbers of wood”. In 1836, over 200,000 cases were pending in Prussia, and more than 150,000 were tried for “illegal removal of trees, illegal hunting and fishing.” In order to protect the interests of the big landowners, the Diet [Parliament] of the Rhineland passed a special “law against the theft of wood”. After many inquiries and much research, Marx understood what this was really about and placed himself firmly on the side of the working people; he defended their interests with all his might and with a great revolutionary spirit. He published an article in the *Rheinische Zeitung* entitled “Regarding the debate on the law on the theft of wood” in which he ruthlessly attacked the reactionary Prussian government, denouncing the fact that: “*all the organs of the state had become ears, eyes, arms, legs, by means of which the interest of the forest owner hears, observes, appraises, protects, reaches out, and runs.*” (8) Marx’s exposures caused panic and anger in the reactionary Prussian government, which issued a series of harsh censorship measures against the *Rheinische Zeitung*, and then issued an order to seize it. The investors in the newspaper demanded that Marx change his attitude and make concessions to the government. In view of this reactionary persecution, Marx, who had never been intimidated by tyranny, flatly refused and, in March 1843, he deliberately resigned his position as editor in chief. Shortly after, the *Rheinische Zeitung* was effectively banned.



The student Karl Marx (Bonn 1838)

The actual development of struggle showed numerous deficiencies in Hegel's idealist philosophy. He considered the State and the law as "rational" elements placed above classes. The class struggle showed that this was actually absolutely incorrect and that the state and the law were simply instruments to serve the reactionary ruling classes and to maintain their rule. This led Marx to criticize Hegel's philosophy.

Just as Marx just began to settle accounts with Hegelian idealism, Feuerbach published "The Essence of Christianity" and other important works in which he criticized Hegel's idealism. These books had a great influence on Marx and helped him to break from the idealist philosophical system of Hegel. As Engels stressed: "*at once we all became Feuerbachians.*" (9)

At the same time, through the practice of struggles, the contact that Marx had with the material problems of the great masses of workers, led him to study the relationship between the economy and society, political economy. Marx repeated more than once to Engels that it was precisely his studying of the law on the stealing of wood and his investigation into the situation of the grape workers of the Mosel valley that pushed him to study not only politics, but also the economic relations and, from there, socialism.

In autumn 1843, Marx arrived in Paris. At that time, the socialist movement and the workers' movements were quite developed; the struggles of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, the confrontations among all kinds of political forces and social currents were particularly relentless there. His arrival marked the beginning for him of an effervescent life of struggles.

He lived in a popular neighborhood of the city (10) and he was learning to understand the life and struggles of the workers; he also kept direct connections with the clandestine workers' organizations of France and Germany, often attending their meetings and making speeches. The workers had become habitual guests in Marx's home, where they often had discussions into the wee hours of the morning. They told him about the exploitation of which they were victims as well as about their struggles and their hopes. The great qualities that he observed among the workers and the unity that they demonstrated in their struggles profoundly inspired him and confirmed his conviction of the prominent role of the proletariat.

In Paris, Marx continued his important research work. He studied the history of the bourgeois revolution in France, took on the

systematic study of the English bourgeois economists Adam Smith and David Ricardo, and studied the French materialist philosophy as well as the doctrines of various socialist currents.

It is because Marx plunged into the ardent class struggle, because he understood the workers, because he knew them deeply and was linked with them that his theoretical studies could correctly reflect the fundamental interests of the proletariat and the real needs of the class struggle. His links with the working class also accelerated the transformation of his conception of the world. At the beginning of 1844, Marx wrote an article in the *Franco-German Annals* entitled "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right," in which again he attacked more profoundly Hegel's idealist philosophy, presenting numerous important principles of Marxism and, for the first time, showed that the proletariat is the social force that must carry out the socialist revolution. He wrote: "*The weapon of criticism cannot, of course, replace criticism of the weapon, material force must be overthrown by material force; but theory also becomes a material force as soon as it has gripped the masses.*" "*As philosophy finds its material weapon in the proletariat, so the proletariat finds its spiritual weapon in philosophy*". (11)

As a consistent materialist, Marx declared the need for a merciless criticism of everything that exists; he laid out particularly the criticism of weapons and appealed to the masses and to the proletariat to struggle to overturn the established order. "*In his articles in this magazine Marx already appears as a revolutionary,*" as Lenin would say later (12).

Friedrich Engels (1820-1895) was born on November 28, 1820 in Barmen in the Rhineland province of the Kingdom of Prussia. His father was a manufacturer, a pious man, a conservative who made arbitrary judgements. From an early age, Engels felt uncomfortable in his family, and in return his father strongly despised him.

In 1838, Engels had to abandon his secondary studies and became a clerk in a house of commerce in Bremen. His commercial occupations could not hold young Engels back from plunging into the class struggles of society of his time, nor could they hold him back from his scientific and political studies.

Barmen was the main industrial region of Germany. In Barmen just as in Bremen, Engels closely observed the living conditions of the laboring masses. He saw how the bosses cruelly oppressed the workers while showing off their wealth; how the workers spilled

their blood and sweat in inhuman conditions, without ever satisfying their hunger. The behavior of the bosses infuriated Engels, while he had a deep compassion for the unfortunate workers. At the age of 19, he sent to a magazine a "Letters from Wuppertal", which contained his personal political ideas. He ruthlessly denounced this society where "*man is a wolf to man*". On the 9th anniversary of the French Revolution of July 1830, Engels expressed in a poem the idea that the revolution was imminent and that the thrones of kings were shaking and ready to crumble. Full of hate and contempt for the King of Prussia, Frederick William III, he described him as the most incapable, hateful monarch for whom death would be most desirable. The young Engels was a radical revolutionary democrat.

In 1841, Engels left to do his military service in Berlin, in the artillery. He took some courses as an auditor at the University of Berlin and frequented the circle of Left Hegelians. At this period, Berlin was the scene of intense philosophical polemics in which Engels took part. His attacks were directed against the political regime of the King of Prussia. Under the influence of Feuerbach, he turned progressively towards materialism.

When Engels was demobilized in 1842, he left for Manchester, England, where he went to work in a spinning mill, which he managed jointly by his father and an associate. England was at that time the country where great capitalist industry was the most developed and Manchester was not only the center of the English textile industry, but also the impregnable fortress of the Chartist Movement. It was in this atmosphere that Engels fought at the side of the workers, becoming their friend and confidant. At the same time, that allowed him to see concretely all the contradictions of capitalist society and to get to know better the dawning of the proletariat. In England he became a communist. During his stay, he often visited the workers in their slums and asked them personally about their lives and struggles. Here is what he wrote in a dedication to the working classes of Great Britain: "*I wanted to see you in your own homes, to observe you in your everyday life, to chat with you on your condition and grievances, to witness your struggles against the social and political power of your oppressors. I have done so: I forsook the company and the dinner-parties, the port-wine and champagne of the middle-classes, and devoted my leisure-hours almost exclusively to the intercourse with plain Working-Men; I am both glad and proud of having done so.*" (13) To get to know the workers' condi-

tions better, Engels also read several books and studied all the official documents he could get. He also took an active part in the workers' movement.

During his stay in England, Engels visited more than 30 cities, and made a detailed and careful social investigation. He attended all kinds of meetings organized by the Chartists and he linked himself with the leaders of their left wing and wrote in the *Northern Star* to support the movement. Involved in real struggles, Engels wrote several articles among which was "Critical Essays in Political Economy", published in 1844. Starting from the conception of historical materialism, he analyzed the economic base of the emergence of the classes and their antagonism, studied the living conditions of the English working class and its role in social life and he denounced private property as the base of all the economic and political contradictions of capitalist society. In all the essential ideas of scientific socialism, he arrived at identical conclusions as those of Marx. It was in England that Engels took the definitive step from idealism to materialism, from revolutionary democracy to communism. It was this that allowed Lenin to state: "*It was not until he came to England that Engels became a socialist*" (14).

In August 1844, Engels left Manchester and, during his return trip, he stopped in Paris where he met Marx. The two men spoke openly for ten days. From that time on, the closest and most admirable revolutionary friendship was formed between the two great teachers of the proletariat; together, they fought to their last moment for the cause of the emancipation of the proletariat.

3. The struggle of Marx and Engels to found the theory of scientific socialism

After their meeting in Paris in August 1844, right up to the beginning of 1848, Marx and Engels plunged into the practice of the workers' movement of the time, criticizing all the currents of thought that went against it and fought for the creation of a proletarian party; they also summed up all the experiences of the workers' movement and took on the enormous and difficult task of conducting scientific and theoretical research.



Engels in the 1840s

Based on the synthesis of the experiences of the workers' movement, with a critical spirit Marx and Engels collected the best conclusions of the advanced ideas of humanity which they transformed and developed in a revolutionary fashion. In this sense, one could say, as did Lenin, that Marxism "*is the legitimate successor to the best that man produced in the nineteenth century, as represented by German philosophy, English political economy and French socialism.*" (15) These are the three sources of Marxism.

Marx and Engels founded Marxism by confronting the above theories one after the other with the proletarian ideology, in the crucible of the class struggle and scientific experimentation, in re-analyzing them in the light of the practice of the workers' movement, and in verifying them, criticizing them and transforming their rational elements in a revolutionary sense. The three constitutive parts of Marxism became Marxist philosophy (dialectical materialism and historical materialism), political economy and scientific communism.

Classical German philosophy began with Kant (1724-1804, and its most eminent representatives were Hegel (1770-1831) and Feuerbach (1804-1872). But one often understands by this term the dialectic of Hegel and the materialism of Feuerbach. Hegel elaborated the concept of development in proclaiming that the universe is a process in which all things are born, grow and are destroyed perpetually. He thought that all things are part of an uninterrupted process and that contradiction is the basis of the development of all things. It was thus he who presented the fundamental ideas of the dialectic. However, his philosophical system remained idealist. He thought that the world had been created by an "absolute Spirit". This mystical entity was simply another name for God. As a result of the limitations of the system of idealist thinking, its dialect was also very inconsistent. Feuerbach criticized Hegelian idealism, and reaffirmed materialist positions. He persevered in the idea that the world is material; according to him, that which is material determines that which is spiritual and not the contrary. However, Feuerbach's materialism remained mechanical, metaphysical and inconsistent; when he interpreted social phenomena, he still showed himself to be idealist. Marx and Engels drew what was the most rational in the dialectic of Hegel and the materialism of Feuerbach but they rejected that which was erroneous. By bringing about these revolu-

tionary transformations, they created dialectical materialism and historical materialism.

The principal representatives of English classical political economy were Adam Smith (1723-1790) and David Ricardo (1722-1823), who formulated the labor theory of value according to which it is concrete labor that creates use value of the commodity. However, they believed that this value was produced in common by the workers and the capitalists, thus covering up the essence of capitalist exploitation. When Marx and Engels made their criticism of this doctrine, they kept the rational part, constituted by the labor theory of value and meticulously analyzed the conditions of production of commodities in the capitalist system, shedding light on the relationships between men which are hidden behind the relationships between commodities. Marx scientifically showed that the salary paid to the worker by the capitalist only in appearance compensates the value created by his labor: in reality, it represents only a part of the value produced by the labor of the worker. The worker does not receive any compensation for the rest of the value that he has also produced: that is, the surplus-value, which constitutes the source of the capitalist's profit. The Marxist theory of surplus value uncovered in depth, the secret of the exploitation of the workers by the capitalists, it is an important part of Marxist political economy.

Utopian socialism had as its principal representatives in France Saint-Simon (1776-1825) and Fourier (1772-1837), and in England Owen (1771-1858). They lived at the beginning of the 19th century, and were witnesses to the most monstrous aspects of the capitalist society. They denounced and attacked the horrors of this society, stressing that capitalist society is a paradise for the rich and a hell for the poor, that it is an "upside-down world". They projected the building of an ideal society in which all men would be equal, and professed positive opinions such as the participation of all in labor and the abolition of differences between cities and the countryside. In a subjective way, they set up projects that would allow workers to free themselves from oppression and to transform society. However, they did not understand the laws of development of capitalist society, they did not recognize the eminent historical role played by the proletariat, they denied the class struggle, were opposed to violent revolution and placed their hopes on the ruling classes, under the illusion of being able to achieve their ideal society thanks to the help of the noblesse of the bourgeoisie. It was, of course, a utopia

that would lead them to an inevitable failure. The emergence of the materialist conception of history and the doctrine of surplus value allowed Marx and Engels to refute and transform the best of the utopian social theories. They scientifically presented the laws of development of capitalist society, showing that the proletariat would be the gravedigger of this society, that the class struggle is the real motive force of social development and that only a violent revolution which would overturn the domination of the bourgeoisie and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat would allow the proletariat to achieve socialism and communism. In this way, Marx and Engels made of socialism, which was a simple utopia in its origin, a true science.

As one can see, in order to create the Marxist revolutionary theory, Marx and Engels were not satisfied to collect and bring together their three theoretical sources; they criticized them and profoundly transformed them. At the same time, they summed up the experience of the international workers' movement. Marxism is a product of the world proletarian revolution. It is only with the creation of Marxist theory "*that an unprecedented revolution occurred in the history of human knowledge*" (16).

"Marxism develops in the struggle against bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideology, and it is only through struggle that it can develop." (17). The process of creating the theory of scientific communism was also a process of struggle against bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideology. In the 1830s and 1840s, a great revolutionary storm threatened all of Europe. The proletariat had just arrived on the scene of history and all kinds of erroneous currents appeared in the workers' movement of the period, such as the utopian socialism of Weitling, the "true" socialism in Germany and Proudhonism in France, which undermined the healthy development of the movement. To allow the workers' movement to better advance along the correct path, Marx and Engels carried out a resolute struggle against these opportunist sects.

Wilhelm Weitling (1808-1871) was an artisan tailor who joined the League of the Just in 1836 and became one of its principal leaders. He bitterly denounced the crimes of capitalist society and advocated a violent revolution to overthrow the old system. But he did not understand the laws of social development at all, thinking that it was necessary to achieve "*a society in which all could enjoy life together*" and, instead of relying on the proletariat to make the revo-

lution, he placed his confidence in beggars, criminals and other elements of the lumpen proletariat, believing in the insurrection by a small number of conspirators. He considered the revolution to be something spontaneous and was opposed to the organized class struggles of the masses as well as the building of a proletarian party. Clearly, Weitling's socialism was utopian and could only bring the workers' movement to a dead-end. In the beginning, Marx and Engels placed great hopes on Weitling and, on several occasions, aided him wholeheartedly, hoping that he would correct his errors and turn towards scientific socialism. But Weitling continually held on to his erroneous ideas and his sectarian positions, until finally, Marx and Engels were obliged to declare publicly that they had broken with him, providing this as an example to the proletariat. Later on, Weitling left for the United States and distanced himself from the workers' movement.

While they were fighting Weitling, Marx and Engels waged a determined struggle against "true" socialism in Germany. This "true" socialism was a variant of petty-bourgeois reactionary socialism. Its principal representatives were Hess, Kreige and Grün. Ignoring the contradictions and the class struggles, they were openly opposed to political struggle and violent revolution; using abstract expressions such as fraternity, humanity and eternal justice they tried to divert the working class away from the class struggle in order to speak of love along with the bourgeoisie and the reactionaries, and to achieve a communism based on love. Marx and Engels mercilessly denounced the reactionary nature of this false socialism, showing that the aim of "true" socialism was to camouflage the existing antagonistic contradictions between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie and to support the Kingdom of Prussia that was sinking into crisis. Together they wrote the "Circular against Kreige" which showed the absurdities of Kreige and company on their notion of love. The circulation of this pamphlet led to Kreige disappearing from the political scene. In August 1846, Engels took on another leader of the so-called true socialists, K Grün. One debate was drawn out over three consecutive evenings. During the debate, Engels explained the fundamental principles of scientific communism of which he gave a clear definition. The debate ended with a new victory for scientific socialism.

During the 1840s, Proudhonism was widespread in the workers' movement, hindering its development and holding back the spread-

ing of scientific communism. Proudhon (1809-1865), born in France in a peasant family who eventually became artisans; he worked as a typesetter before opening a small print shop. At the beginning of the 1840s, in his work "What Is Property?", he brought forward the view that would make him famous, "*property is theft.*" In 1846, he wrote and published "The Philosophy of Poverty", in which he systematically exposed its opportunist conceptions. He was opposed to big private capitalist property, but he dreamed of the eternal survival of small property. He opposed the proletarian revolution, proposing social improvements. He preached the organization of all kinds of cooperatives, the opening of an "exchange bank", etc. as so many means of escaping capitalist exploitation. He was opposed to all States and all authority, advocating anarchism. He launched the absurd slogan: "*Down with the parties, down with the State!*", proclaiming "absolute freedom" for each individual. In 1847, in response to the Proudhon's "Philosophy of Poverty", Marx wrote his work "The Poverty of Philosophy" in which he made a systematic criticism of the political, philosophic and economic conceptions of Proudhon and shed light on the reactionary nature of that crook who waved as the banner of socialism.

In the struggle against these socialist currents and sects of all sorts, Marx and Engels won victory after victory, and Marxism began to spread among the workers of all countries of Europe, thus preparing the ground for the future foundation of a proletarian party. At the same time, while they were elaborating the theory of scientific socialism, Marx and Engels always did their best to directly link themselves with the workers' movement, to unite the struggle for the elaboration of the revolutionary theory of the proletariat to that for the construction of a proletarian party.

In 1846 in Brussels, Marx and Engels founded a Communist Correspondence Committee, responsible for establishing relations with the workers' associations and socialist groups of different countries and assuring the dissemination of scientific communism. Marx and Engels were especially interested in the activities of the League of the Just. Founded in 1836, it was at the beginning only a secret society of German workers living in Paris but, later on, its sphere of activity increased little by little, and it became an international organization of workers of that period. However, the League lacked a correct orientation of revolutionary theory and it was heavily influenced by the utopian socialism of Weitling and by the "true"

socialism of Proudhonism. Confused on the ideological level, badly organized, it was incapable of taking up the heavy historic mission of leading the proletarian revolution. The sustained struggles of Marx and Engels against all opportunist currents and their repeated victories little by little rallied the majority of the members of the League to scientific socialism. In the beginning of 1847, Marx and Engels joined the League, invited by its leaders, in order to rebuild it from the inside and transform it into a revolutionary proletarian organization guided by the ideology of scientific socialism.

In June 1847 the first Congress of the League was held in London. Engels attended it and proposed new statutes. Article I of these statutes, approved by the Congress, clearly stipulated that “*The aim of the League is the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, the rule of the proletariat, the abolition of the old, bourgeois society based on class antagonisms and the foundation of a new society without classes and without private property.*” (18) Other articles in the statutes defined democratic centralism as the basic principle of the League, designed to put an end to the typical style of sectarianism and conspiratorial activities that formerly dominated such organizations. The Congress decided to change its name from the League of the Just to that of the Communist League. The former slogan of the League: “All men are brothers” was replaced by the new war cry: “Workers of the world, unite!” From that moment, the League of Communists became the first international proletarian organization to appear on the scene of political struggles.

In November 1847, the League of Communists held its 2nd Congress in London and both Marx and Engels were present. The principal task of this congress was to be the drafting of a program for the League, around which bitter struggles had long been fought. Finally, the Congress unanimously adopted the principles formulated by Marx and Engels and asked them to draw up a manifesto, which could serve as the program of the League. This was the first program of the international communist movement, the famous “Manifesto of the Communist Party”.

4. The *Manifesto of the Communist Party*: first program of the struggle of the international proletariat

In February 1848 the “Manifesto of the Communist Party” was officially published in London, jointly written by Marx and Engels. The Manifesto presented for the first time in an integral and system-

atic fashion the fundamental principles of Marxism; it constituted the first program of struggle of the international communist movement. “*With the clarity and brilliance of genius, this work outlines the new world conception, consistent materialism, which also embraces the realm of social life, dialectics, as the most comprehensive and profound doctrine of development, the theory of the class struggle and of the world-historic revolutionary role of the proletariat -- the creator of a new, communist society.*” (19).” That is why the Manifesto remains one of the “*handbooks for every class-conscious worker.*” (20).

The Manifesto’s content is extremely rich and, among its most important statements, one could mention the following:

1 – The class struggle is the motive force of the development of class society.

From its very beginning, the Manifesto stresses that “*The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles.*” (21) This means that, since the disintegration of primitive society, the whole history of society is the history of struggles between exploited and exploiting classes, between ruling classes and ruled classes. These struggles were at times hidden, at times open, but they have always existed, and all development of human history along with the revolutionary transformation of society has been under the impulse of the class struggle. For thousands of years, it has always been the struggles and uprisings of slaves and of peasants that have sped up these changes and allowed history to advance. Capitalist society, which rose out of the ruins of feudal society, did not abolish class antagonisms. It merely substituted new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggles to those of earlier on. In capitalist society, the struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat is a struggle to the death, without any possibility of conciliation. The Manifesto formulated the famous principle, “*every class struggle is a political struggle*” (22),



The *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, translated into many languages

thus indicating that the struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie must of necessity develop into a political struggle for the seizure of power and the outcome of this struggle must be the violent overthrow of bourgeois rule by the proletariat and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat to do away with all classes and to achieve communism.

2 – The collapse of capitalism and the victory of socialism are both inevitable; this is an objective law of social development.

The Manifesto of the Communist Party forcefully proclaims to the whole world that capitalism must necessarily be eliminated and that socialism must necessarily triumph. In the Manifesto, Marx and Engels, based on the principle according to which the relations of production must be in accordance with the development of the productive forces, analyzed the process of the birth and development of the bourgeoisie and showed the objective law that constitutes the inevitable collapse of capitalism and the certain victory of socialism.

It is in the movement produced by contradictions between the productive forces and the relations of production in the heart of feudal society that capitalism appeared and developed. Capitalist economy was built on the basis of the development of commodity production, it knew a long evolutionary process to pass from simple cooperation and manufacture to large mechanized industry. As the bourgeoisie developed its economy, its political power also grew. This is how *“the conditions under which feudal society produced and exchanged, the feudal organization of agriculture and manufacturing industry, in one word, the feudal relations of property became no longer compatible with the already developed productive forces; they became so many fetters. They had to be burst asunder; they were burst asunder”* (23). Through a social revolution, the bourgeoisie overthrew the feudal system and established its own political rule.

In the period following the seizure of power by the bourgeoisie, the relations of production still corresponded to the development of the productive forces and they sped up this development. But with the continual growth of the productive forces, the contradictions between the relations of production and the productive forces inherent in capitalist society became more evident every day, finding their expression concentrated in the contradiction between the social

character of production and the individual character of ownership. These contradictions showed themselves, on the economic level, through the repeated periodic crises that effect capitalism and on the level of the relationship of classes, by the continual intensification of the struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. The capitalist relations of production finally ended up by greatly hampering the development of the productive forces. *“The weapons with which the bourgeoisie felled feudalism to the ground are now turned against the bourgeoisie itself.”* (24). The capitalist system by itself is incapable of eliminating economic crises, which can only be made possible by overturning bourgeois rule, the abolition of private property of the means of production and its replacement by socialist and communist common property. This is an objective law of social development that no force can resist. The Manifesto sounded the death knell of capitalism and solemnly proclaimed to the whole world: *“What the bourgeoisie produces, above all, are its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.”* (25).

3. – On the proletariat rests the great historic mission of overthrowing capitalism in order to achieve socialism and communism.

The Manifesto points out: *“not only has the bourgeoisie forged the weapons that bring death to itself; it has also called into existence the men who are to wield those weapons -- the modern working class -- the proletarians”* (26). The proletariat is the gravedigger of capitalism. If the proletariat is able to assume its historic mission, it is partially because it is located in *“the lowest stratum of our present society”* (27). The proletariat does not own any means of production, it is harshly exploited and oppressed: this is what makes it deeply revolutionary. On the other hand, it is because the proletariat is the product of large-scale mechanized industry. It represents the most advanced productive forces, and, for that reason it is of all classes the one that has the greatest future, the one that sees the farthest ahead and is the most progressive. *“Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie to-day, the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class. The other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of modern industry; the proletariat is its special and essential product”* (28), wrote Marx and Engels in the Manifesto. Finally, the proletariat cannot emancipate itself without

emancipating the whole of society. Its social and economic position makes it completely devoid of egoism, as pointed out in the Manifesto: “The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interest of the immense majority” (29). The proletariat identifies itself fully with the fundamental interests of all the laboring classes; this is what makes it able to unite all the revolutionary forces that can be united in the struggle for the overthrowing of capitalism and the achievement of socialism and communism.

4. – The proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat constitute the obligatory route to achieve the historic mission of the proletariat.

How can the proletariat accomplish its historic mission? In summing up the historical experience of all the class struggles of humanity, especially the experience of the struggles of the international workers’ movement, Marx and Engels pointed out in the Manifesto that the proletariat, through violent revolution, should establish and ceaselessly strengthen the dictatorship in order to wage the proletarian revolution to the end.

The ruling classes, whichever they might be, never willingly leave the scene of history. In order to protect its rule, the bourgeoisie will certainly use the powerful tool of the State that it has in its hands to strike back at the proletariat and crush its opposition. Consequently, it is by revolutionary violence that the proletariat must respond to the counter-revolutionary violence of the bourgeoisie; the violent revolution is the universal law of the proletarian revolution. The Manifesto clearly points out: “*The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions.*” (30).”

After seizing power, the proletariat must establish its own political rule, that is, the dictatorship of the proletariat. This represents the fundamental guarantee for the triumph of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie, of the victory of socialism over capitalism. It represents the obligatory path for passing from capitalism to communism. Even though the Manifesto had not yet used the scientific concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat runs throughout the text like a red thread.

“...the first step in the revolution by the working class, is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class” (31), declared the Manifesto, thereby pointing out that the proletariat should use its power to dispossess the bourgeoisie, step by step, and to concentrate all the instruments of production in the hands of the proletarian State in order to rapidly develop the productive forces. The Manifesto gives the proletarian State a very important definition: “the State, i.e., of the proletariat organized as the ruling class” (32). For Lenin, this idea was the most remarkable and most fundamental Marxist concept of the State, because it presents the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

5. - The leadership exercised by the Communist Party constitutes the fundamental guarantee for realizing the historical mission of the proletariat.

The Manifesto is “a detailed theoretical and practical program” (33). It presents in a scientific fashion the character, the particularities, the program, the tasks and the tactical principles of the Communist Party.

The Communist Party is the party that represents the interests of the proletariat. Guided ideologically by the revolutionary Marxist theory, it represents in practice the interests of its entire class, the interests of the whole movement, it constitutes the section that pushes the movement continually forward. This is why the Communist Party is different from the other organizations and parties of the workers; it is the vanguard of the proletariat, which applies the principle of proletarian internationalism and the spirit of the radical revolution.

One could say generally that the program and the tasks of the Party can be summed up as follows: on the political level, to help the proletariat to organize itself as a class in order to overthrow by violence the rule of the bourgeoisie and to establish its own political rule; on the economic level, to allow the proletariat to dispossess the plunderers, to abolish capitalist private property and to establish common socialist property. “The theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of private property” (34). On the cultural and also the ideological level, it is necessary to break radically with individualist conceptions: “The Communist revolution is the most radical rupture with traditional property relations; no wonder that its development involves the most radical

rupture with traditional ideas.” (35). It is only in achieving these two most radical ruptures that it will be possible to exercise the full dictatorship of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie, to continue the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat and to lead the revolution to its completion.

What are the tactical principles of the communists? “*The Communists fight for the attainment of the immediate aims, for the enforcement of the momentary interests of the working class; but in the movement of the present, they also represent and take care of the future of that movement.*” (36). This means that, in the revolutionary struggle against the current social regime, the Communist Party should unite its immediate interests and its long-term objectives, put into action the principles of proletarian internationalism, and fight with the objective in mind of achieving communism for all of humankind.

At the end of the Manifesto, Marx and Engels, with the great spirit of proletarian revolutionaries, proclaimed forcefully to the whole world: “*Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Working Men of All Countries, Unite!*” (37)

The *Manifesto of the Communist Party* is the first document with the character of a program of the international proletariat, which pointed out a correct line for waging the revolutionary struggle. The publication of the Manifesto marked the birth of Marxism. For the international workers’ movement, which from this point on had an orientation given to it by Marxism, a new stage of struggle began. As Stalin said, “*the Manifesto of Marx and Engels was an epoch-making document*” (38). It has now been over a hundred years since the Manifesto was published, but “*to this day its spirit inspires and motivates the organized and fighting proletariat of the entire civilized world*” (39). The fundamental ideas and principles of the Manifesto represent a powerful ideological weapon for the international proletariat and all the revolutionary peoples who want to defeat the reactionaries, opportunists and revisionists of all types. The old revisionists just like the new ones always tried to distort the fundamental principles of the Manifesto, with the aim of opposing the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. But the dialectic of history is

merciless. All the puppets who try to stop the advance of the course of history are condemned by the revolutionary people to be thrown into the dustbin of history.

NOTES

- (1) “On New Democracy,” *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, English edition, Vol. II, p. 361.
- (2) “On Contradiction,” *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, English edition, Vol. II, p. 312.
- (3) “The Third International and Its Place in History,” Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 309, in <http://marx2mao.com/Lenin/TIPH19.html>
- (4) K. Marx, “Critical Notes on the Article: “The King of Prussia and Social Reform. By a Prussian,” <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/08/07.htm>
- (5) “On Practice,” *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, English edition, Vol. II, p. 299.
- (6) “On Practice,” *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, English edition, Vol. II, p. 299.
- (7) *Rheinische Zeitung*, organ of the liberal bourgeoisie of the Rhineland (*translator’s note*).
- (8) K. Marx, “Proceedings of the Sixth Rhine Province Assembly, Third Article,” in http://www.hekmatist.com/Marx%20Engles/Marx%20&%20Engles%20Collected%20Works%20Volume%201_%20Ka%20-%20Karl%20Marx.pdf. p. 245.
- (9) F. Engels, “Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy,” FLP Peking, 1976, at <http://marx2mao.com/M&E/LF86.html>, p. 14.
- (10) 38, rue Vanneau, in the VIIth district (*translator’s note*).
- (11) “A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right,” in https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/Marx_Critique_of_Hegels_Philosophy_of_Right.pdf
- (12) Lenin, “Karl Marx,” FLP Peking, 1970, at <http://marx2mao.com/Lenin/KM14.html>, p. 3.

- (13), "Condition of the Working Class in England," in <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf/condition-working-class-england.pdf>
- (14) Lenin, *On Marx and Engels*, FLP Peking, 1975, p. 52.
- (15) Lenin, "The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism," *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, pp. 23-24.
- (16) "On Contradiction," *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, English edition, Vol. II, p. 315.
- (17) "Speech at the Chinese Communist Party's National Conference on Propaganda Work," *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, English edition, Vol. V, p. 433.
- (18) F. Engels, "On the History of the Communist League," in <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1847/communist-league/1885hist.htm>
- (19) Lenin, "Karl Marx," FLP Peking, 1970, at <http://marx2mao.com/Lenin/KM14.html>, p. 3-4
- (20) "The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism," *op. cit.*, p. 25.
- (21) Marx and Engels, "The Manifesto of the Communist Party," FLP Peking, 1970, p. 30.
- (22) *Ibid.*, p. 42.
- (23) *Ibid.*, p. 37.
- (24) *Ibid.*, p. 38.
- (25) *Ibid.*, p. 46.
- (26) *Ibid.*, p. 39.
- (27) *Ibid.*, p. 45.
- (28) *Ibid.*, p. 44.
- (29) *Ibid.*, p. 45.
- (30) *Ibid.*, p. 76.
- (31) *Ibid.*, p. 57.
- (32) *Ibid.*, p. 57.
- (33) *Ibid.*, p. 1.
- (34) *Ibid.*, p. 48.

(35) *Ibid.*, p. 57.

(36) *Ibid.*, p. 74.

(37) *Ibid.*, p. 76.

(38) Stalin, “Anarchism or Socialism,” from *Works*, Vol. 1, p. 356,

(39) Lenin, *On Marx and Engels*, FLP Peking, 1975, p. 54.

CHAPTER II

THE REVOLUTIONARY STORM OF 1848 IN EUROPE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF MARXISM

Just after the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* was published, the great revolutionary storm of 1848 broke out in Europe. From Budapest to Paris, from Palermo to Berlin, the revolution swept over the whole European continent. This was a bourgeois democratic revolution and it surpassed in breadth all those that modern Europe had known. Its essential objective was to undermine the former bases of the feudal order in all these countries, to sweep away the obstacles that held back the development of capitalism.

Although it was certainly bourgeois, the revolution of 1848 took place at a period when capitalism was already highly developed, when Marxism had already emerged and when the class struggles between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie had gone over to a new step: this gave it characteristics different from all other bourgeois revolutions. But above all, the fact that the proletariat, just recently emerged, appeared as an independent political force on the scene of history, unequivocally marked this revolution with its class features. Marx and Engels, the great teachers of the proletariat, participated personally in this revolution and directed it; they resolutely supported the revolutionary struggles in all countries, and through the practice of the revolutionary struggle of the masses, they tested and developed their own revolutionary theory

1. The February Revolution and the June Days in France

The French revolution of February 1848 was the vanguard of the revolution in the other countries of Europe; it sounded the clarion call announcing the revolutionary storm.

France was governed by King Louis-Philippe, whose reign was known as the July Monarchy (1830-48). This monarchy represented the interests of the big financial bourgeoisie. Its politics, both internal and external, were at the exclusive service of its own group. It had become a shareholder company exploiting the national wealth of the country. Out of the 36,000,000 inhabitants that made up the population of France, only 200,000 had the right to vote. The workers and peasants were not the only ones deprived of this right; such was also the case for the petty bourgeoisie and part of the industrial

bourgeoisie. To the degree that French industry had developed, the industrial bourgeoisie continued to strengthen and express its disagreement with the absolutist politics of the financial aristocracy. Part of the parliamentarians united in a dynastic opposition, demanded an electoral reform, and soon, from the proletariat to the dynastic opposition, all stood up against the July Monarchy. But certainly the interests as well as the political objectives of the various classes were totally different. The economic crisis of 1847 accentuated the class contradictions within the country and allowed the revolutionary situation to develop more rapidly.

In July 1847, the bourgeois opposition, taking advantage of the revolutionary situation created by the economic crisis, rose up in France, organizing an “agitation by banquets.” These were meetings with a political character designed to promote electoral reform. The greatest of these banquets was held on February 22, 1848. It was forbidden by Minister Guizot, and the bourgeois opposition made a cowardly retreat. However, the Parisian revolutionary masses, made up mostly of workers, went out again into the streets shouting “Down with Guizot!” and made an impressive demonstration against which the government immediately sent out the troops. Late in that same night, the workers, who had erected over 1,500 barricades, launched an armed insurrection. On the 24, the proletariat and the revolutionary people occupied all the barracks and arms depots of Paris and attacked the Royal Palace, shouting “Down with Louis-Philippe!”, “Long live the Republic!”. The king did not even have time to pack his bags before fleeing in panic to England. The rebellious people carried his throne to the Place of the Bastille, and burnt it in front of a monument built in honor of the revolutionary martyrs. The July Monarchy had fallen and the victorious February Revolution formed a provisional government.

It was the workers who had provided the bulk of the forces of the February Revolution, but the proletariat at that period still lacked enough maturity and the bourgeoisie robbed them of the fruits of victory. In appearance, the provisional Government represented the union of all the classes that had taken part in the revolution; within it, the petty-bourgeois socialist Louis Blanc and the worker Albert represented the proletariat, but this in reality was merely a symbolic representation, because the bourgeoisie monopolized all the key positions in the provisional Government. That is why Marx considered that the government could only be a com-

promise among the various classes whose fundamental interests were fundamentally opposed. Behind this temporary compromise lurked new irreconcilable class conflicts. At that time, when the workers had arms in their hands, the provisional Government had to accept the voting of a few laws in the interest of the working class, such as the abolition of selective suffrage based on wealth, and the establishment of universal suffrage. It promised the workers the right to work, reduction of the daily working hours, etc. On the other hand, in response to the workers who were demanding the "Organization of labor" and the creation of a Ministry of Labor, the provisional Government pretended to accept a proposal of Louis Blanc and established at the Luxembourg Palace a "Government Commission of Labor" (known as the Luxembourg Commission). It was presided over by the same Louis Blanc, assisted by Albert. But the bourgeoisie only accepted the creation of this organization in order to better fool the proletariat and to paralyze it. This so-called "Government Commission of Labor", which pretended to settle conflicts between capital and labor, had no real power and had no funds to finance its activities. Marx mocked it and described it as a "socialist synagogue" in which the high priests, Louis Blanc and Albert, had as their task to find the Promised Land.

Louis Blanc (1811-1882) was a petty bourgeois socialist. Since the 1830s, he had been attacking the weak points of the capitalist system in the press and propagating a petty bourgeois theory of socialism, which at his time exercised a definite influence over the workers' movement. Always covering up the class differences, he preached conciliation. According to him: "*harmony is the law of all things*", "*through free cooperation among all men in their fraternal union*"; this can lead to "*improving all men on a spiritual and a material level*". He rested his hopes on the social transformation of the bourgeois State. After the February Revolution, he completely trusted the provisional Government to emancipate the proletariat and accepted an unprincipled compromise with the bourgeoisie, thus largely hindering the political struggle of the proletariat. In the Luxembourg Commission, he played the role of mediator in the conflicts between capital and labor, always demanding that the workers be firm and patient as well as to collaborate with the bourgeoisie. Lenin spoke of this in severe terms: "*Louis Blanc, the French socialist, won unenviable notoriety during the revolution of 1848 by changing his stand from that of the class struggle to that of*

petty-bourgeois illusions, illusions adorned with would-be “socialist” phraseology, but in reality tending to strengthen the influence of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat.” (1).

While Louis Blanc addressed the masses of workers with his deceptive sermons, the bourgeoisie hurried to adopt all kinds of measures that would strengthen its ruling position and to hatch a criminal plot against the proletariat.

The first of these measures was the confiscation of the workers' arms. The Provisional Government adopted a resolution to reorganize the National Guard; then it recruited a group of people from the lumpen-proletariat to form the Mobile Guard of 24,000 men, which made up their reactionary support. At the same time the Provisional Government rehabilitated a significant number of prominent figures and high officials of the old regime, assembled the forces of reaction and integrated them into the bureaucratic agencies.

To destroy all prestige that socialism was enjoying and to spread discord between the workers and the peasants, the Provisional Government, under the pretext of satisfying the demand of the right to work formulated by the workers and of putting into practice these “socialist” projects of Louis Blanc, created the National Workshops. In order to do this, it gathered 100,000 unemployed workers, organized them in paramilitary style and forced them to do heavy manual labor that was very badly paid; a day's salary was 23 sous (2). When the low salaries and extremely difficult conditions of life provoked discontent among the workers, the bourgeoisie took advantage of the situation to reply: *“Here is the socialism you want! Here is your right to work!”* Likewise, to pit the peasants and the petty bourgeoisie against the workers, the Provisional Government passed a special decree for an additional tax of 45 cents per franc on the four direct taxes. As the collection of this tax affected especially the peasants and artisans, it arose among them a legitimate discontent. Then the bourgeoisie let it be treacherously understood that the extra tax was designed to maintain the National Workshops and to feed the “idle” workers, which encouraged the peasants and the petty bourgeois to identify their problems and to reject the cause of the proletariat. Thanks to their plotting and dishonest intrigues, the bourgeoisie was able to ruin the reputation of socialism, to seed discord between the workers and peasants and to isolate the proletariat. *“Thus in the approaching melee between bourgeoisie and*

proletariat, all the advantages, all the decisive posts, all the middle strata of society were in the hands of the bourgeoisie..." (3).

Faced with the reactionary politics of the bourgeoisie, the proletariat was forced to move into action. On June 21, 1848, the government announced the closing of the National Workshops, and ordered all single workers be join the army or be sent to faraway provinces to clear the land there. The workers no longer had a choice: they either had to die of hunger or engage in struggle! On the 22nd the Parisian workers put up barricades and began a great uprising against the bourgeoisie. Refusing to obey Louis Blanc, who told them to "*lay down their arms immediately*", the insurgents launched the rallying cry: "*For the democratic and social Republic!*" These were the famous June Days of 1848 of the Parisian workers.

In the fighting on the barricades, more than 40,000 insurgents, tragically lacking in arms and leaders, showed unparalleled courage and spirit. Faced with death, they cried together with a strong voice, "*Better to die standing than to live on our knees!*" But they were up against 200,000 well-equipped soldiers of the regular army. After five days of bloody struggle against an ever more unequal relationship of forces, the uprising failed. The bourgeoisie carried out a bloody massacre of the Parisian workers. During the white terror that followed the defeat of the June Days, more than 11,000 people were killed, more than 25,000 were condemned to prison, deportation or forced labor, and the bourgeoisie substituted the call "Infantry, Calvary, Artillery" for that of "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity", showing openly the despotic nature of its rule over the proletariat.

In spite of the defeat of the insurrection, the historic merit of these June Days remains undeniable. Marx made a great evaluation of this and said that here "*the first great battle was fought between the two classes that split modern society. It was a fight for the preservation or annihilation of the bourgeois order.*" (4).

The June insurrection of also showed that it was impossible for the proletariat to emancipate itself in the framework of a bourgeois republic. The blood of the insurgents proclaimed the failure of the petty-bourgeois socialism of Louis Blanc. It was at that moment that the proletariat launched its audacious rallying cry of the revolutionary struggle: *Overthrow the bourgeoisie! Dictatorship of the working class!*

After the defeat of the June Days, the proletariat was pushed aside for a while from the political scene and the bourgeoisie estab-

lished its own rule. However, the political situation was still not consolidated and the different bourgeois factions began again to fight over power. In order to re-enforce its rule, the republican section of the bourgeoisie made the Constituent National Assembly adopt the Constitution of the French Republic. It extended to the President of the Republic all kinds of special powers and gave him the means to exert his personal dictatorship. In spite of everything, during the presidential elections of December 1848, the strong persistence of the Napoleonic idea among the small peasants and their dissatisfaction with the republic made the republican bourgeoisie fail. It was the nephew of ex-emperor Napoleon the 1st, the political crook Louis Bonaparte, who received the great majority of the peasant votes and was elected President of the French Republic.

After his election, Louis Bonaparte undertook all kinds of maneuvers and plots to allow him to take control of the army, the administration and the National Assembly, in a way to finalize the constitution of an enormous reactionary State machine, made up of 500,000 soldiers and as many public servants. Strengthened by his victory, he declared the coup d'état of December 2, 1851, which dissolved the National Legislative Assembly, and on the same day proclaimed the abolition of the Republic and the restoration of the Empire.

The government of Louis Bonaparte represented the reactionary rule of a bourgeoisie tumbling into counter-revolution.

2. The March Revolution in Germany

The spark of the French February revolution lit up next door, in Germany, the March Revolution.

On the eve of the revolution, Germany was only a very loose confederation made up of 34 States and 4 free cities, each administering its own internal politics, foreign affairs and armed forces. The currencies, weights and measures also differed from one State to another, which considerably held back the development of German capitalism. The bourgeois revolution in Germany therefore had two tasks: to bring an end to the multiple divisions caused by the feudal partition and the unification of the country.

However, the economic and political conditions of Germany had produced extremely complicated class relationships, and created for each class a different attitude towards the revolution. The feudal nobility, which always enjoyed numerous economic and

political privileges, occupied all the key posts in the government and the army. It was opposed to any revolution and wanted to maintain the reactionary rule of feudalism and religion. It represented the outdated relations of production. It was the sworn enemy of the revolution. The bourgeoisie had appeared later than in France and England; it had only begun to participate in the political life in the 1840s, and it was now demanding its part in State affairs in order to gain real political power and to watch over the development of capitalism. But as a result of German economic backwardness, the forces of the industrial bourgeois were still weak and the commercial bourgeoisie remained strictly linked to the feudal aristocracy. But above all, it was the awakening of the workers' movement in Germany that caused the fear of the proletariat in the bourgeoisie – a fear that went far beyond discontent with feudal authority – that explains the extreme weakness and vacillation shown by the German bourgeoisie on the political level. For their part, the peasants constituted the great majority of the German population. Nonetheless, the penetration of capitalism into the countryside had already divided the peasantry into several distinct strata. With the exception of a small group of rich peasants, most were small peasants, farmers and serfs still under the yoke of the feudal aristocracy, whose destruction they called for, also taking an active part in the anti-feudal struggle. Although still few in number, the proletariat, which was originally largely from the countryside and was united with the peasants by blood ties, suffered profoundly from the double oppression of the capitalists and the feudal lords; its revolutionary character was only more marked: it urgently demanded a transformation of the existing order and demanded the establishment a single and indivisible Republic by revolutionary means. But its inadequacies were still numerous on the level of consciousness as well as of organization, and it was still not able to rise to be the leading force of the revolution. Here is how Engels summed up the balance of forces among the various classes on the eve of the revolution of 1848: *“While the higher nobility and the older civil and military officers were the only safe supports of the existing system; while the lower nobility, the trading middle classes, the universities, the schoolmasters of every degree, and even part of the lower ranks of the bureaucracy and military officers were all leagued against the Government; while behind these there stood the dissatisfied masses of the peasantry, and of the proletarians of the large towns...; while*

the bourgeoisie was ready to hurl down the Government” (5). All this led to the inevitable betrayal by the bourgeoisie of the people during the revolution, and the concessions that they offered to the ruling feudal classes.

The March Revolution in Germany broke out first of all in the southwest regions, especially in the Grand Duchy of Baden and in Bavaria in the form of a popular revolutionary movement. On March 1, the reactionary ministry of Baden was overturned and replaced by a new cabinet that included the liberal section of the bourgeoisie. One by one, other States also fell into the hands of the liberal bourgeoisie. Austria and Prussia were the two biggest States in the German confederation. Towards mid-March the revolution broke out in Vienna, the capital of Austria, and in Berlin, the capital of Prussia; these two bastions of reaction in Germany found themselves in the center of the revolution. On March 13, the workers, students and inhabitants of Vienna demonstrated against the government with the rallying cry of “Down with Metternich! Long live the constitutional government!” While Chancellor Metternich gathered the troops to put down the movement, the popular masses quickly erected barricades and declared an uprising. Seeing that the situation was getting worse, Metternich, disguised as a woman, quickly fled to England. The Austrian Emperor, Ferdinand I, was forced to announce the overhaul of his cabinet and had to accept the convocation of a National Assembly, which was charged with drawing up a constitution.

The news of the fall of Metternich galvanized the revolutionary movement in Prussia. The workers, inhabitants, and students of Berlin also got involved in revolutionary activities, which, from the beginning, greatly frightened the Prussian bourgeoisie. Before the outbreak of the revolution, the bourgeoisie pleaded constantly with the workers in a loud and fearful voice: *“Sowing the land requires sunlight and generous rain, the harvest of the revolution requires order and peace; the storms of insurrections are worse than hail storms!”* They hoped to thus channel the revolution into peaceful reforms. The King of Prussia also tried to block the revolution with the help of false promises of reforms. From March 13 to 16, big mass meetings were organized in Berlin. The government formed up troops to contain them, while the bourgeoisie exhorted all the forces of the workers to “keep their calm”. Then, on the afternoon of March 18, the reactionary army fired many times at the crowd

gathered in front of the royal palace, and this began the insurrection. The revolutionary masses, for the most part workers, removed all the obstacles that the bourgeoisie had set up and, after fighting for ten hours against 14,000 soldiers of the reactionary army, they achieved victory. This was the March Revolution. The next morning, the triumphant people rushed to the palace and ordered the King of Prussia to acknowledge the victims of the revolution and then subject him to a severe judgment. At the end of March, by order of the King, the representatives of the big bourgeoisie of the Rhineland, Camphausen and Hanseemann, were instructed to form a new cabinet. It was thanks to the popular uprising that the bourgeoisie obtained its share of the power, but just as soon as they had acceded to it, they linked up with the pro-imperial forces to oppose the revolution, thus preparing the conditions for returning political authority to the monarch.

The revolutionary storm of 1848 unfolded also in several other European countries: in Italy, Hungary and Bohemia liberation wars for national independence were waged that shook the old order in all Europe with fury. In this revolutionary storm of unprecedented breadth, Czarist Russia played the role of the hangman. When the news of the French Revolution of 1848 reached Saint Petersburg, Czar Nicholas I, who was opening a ball, turned white in fear and cried out savagely: "Officers, to your horses! The revolution just broke out in Paris!" He formed up a big army of 150,000 men, placing them on the Prussian boarder and he assembled 120,000 soldiers in Poland. At the very moment when the Hungarian national liberation war was making great gains, Nicholas I invaded the country with 140,000 men and carried out an atrocious oppression that nipped the war of Hungarian independence in the bud. Engels declared a few years later: after the February Revolution, "*it was clear to us that the revolution had only one really formidable enemy, Russia, and that the more the movement took on European dimensions the more this enemy was compelled to enter the struggle*". (6)



*Barricade fighting at the St, Denis Gate in Paris,
June 1848*



*Barricade fighting in Berlin on the night of
March 18 to 19, 1848*

3. The struggles of Marx and Engels during the revolutionary storm of 1848

Since 1847, the teachers of the proletariat, Marx and Engels, had foreseen the imminent unleashing of the revolutionary storm. When it broke out in 1848 over the whole European continent, inspired by warm sentiments, they immediately went to the front ranks of the revolution. Under the leadership of Marx and Engels, the roughly 300 members of the Communist League also took part separately in this revolution in several European countries. There they suffered all the hardships, thus writing a brilliant chapter in the history of the international communist movement.

When the February Revolution broke out in France, Marx and Engels were in Brussels. In struggle against the persecutions of the Belgian government and wanting to be able to lead the revolutionary struggles on the spot, at the beginning of March, Marx returned to Paris where he was joined little by little by the other leaders of the Communist League. There they made up a new central committee for the League and Marx was elected its president. Engels, who was also a member, arrived in Paris in the final days of March to fight next to Marx.

While the March Revolution broke out successively in all the regions of Germany, Marx and Engels shared the opinion that the urgent task of the German proletariat was to draw up an action program for the revolution. At the end of March, they personally took charge of drafting this document known under the title of “Demands of the Communist Party of Germany”.

Marx and Engels had stated in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* that at that time the German revolution had the character of a bourgeois revolution, but that it could be the direct prelude for the proletarian revolution. The “Demands of the Communist Party of Germany” laid out again this principal tactic. Straight away, they defined as the fundamental task of that period for the German proletariat the establishment of a united and indivisible Republic. Why? Because it would have been rash to want to directly achieve a proletarian revolution without first having eliminated the feudal rule over the country. However, the proletariat could not under any circumstance begin its revolution within the framework of a bourgeois democratic revolution; it had to always keep in mind the future proletarian revolution and prepare the indispensable conditions for

this socialist revolution. To assure the victory of the revolution and the possibility of seeing it lead to the proletarian revolution, the Demands had to include a series of democratic reform measures: the establishment of universal suffrage, the only guarantee of workers' participation in the Assembly; the arming of the people, at the same time transforming the army into a great army of labor; the real separation of Church and State and full and universal public education; free legal proceedings; equal pay for all civil servants, the abolition of all feudal fiscal burdens, etc. The Demands linked the unification of the country and the democratic revolution. They also included the nationalization of the mines, transportation, the banks, the post offices and the organization of agricultural production on a large scale; the guarantee by the State of working and living conditions for the workers; the establishment of heavy progressive taxation and the abolition of taxes on articles of consumption, as well as other measures designed to limit the increase of capital. In addition, the Demands included the arming of the whole people as a means of guaranteeing that the revolution would be carried through to the end. The Demands thus clearly defined the program and tactic of struggle of the proletariat in the bourgeois democratic struggle and laid the foundations of the Marxist theory according to which the democratic revolution must be converted into a socialist revolution. To completely establish the program of action, the politics and tactics defined in the "Demands of the Communist Party of Germany", the central committee of the Communist League, then in Paris, sent to return to their country – separately and secretly – 300 to 400 German workers. Most of them were members of the League and had to carry out difficult propaganda and organizational work in Germany. The workers dispersed throughout Germany to become anchor points for the revolution. The Demands, printed in the form of flyers, were distributed to the German workers who were returning to the country, and Marx and Engels gave the members of the League precise instructions for the building of a workers' organization in Germany.

At the beginning of April, Marx and Engels also left Paris and returned home; when they arrived in Cologne, an industrial and cultural city on the Rhine, they directly took part in the German revolutionary struggles and moved the central committee of the League to that city.



Karl Marx

During their stay in Paris, Marx and Engels had designed a project to guide the revolution by setting up an important newspaper and to create broad public opinion in favor of the revolution. That is why, when they returned to Germany, they immediately started work on setting up the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* (*New Rhenish Gazette*). After overcoming all kinds of difficulties, the newspaper came out officially on June 1, 1848. Marx was the Editor-in-Chief, while Engels and several other known members of the League worked as editors. As soon as the newspaper was presented as the organ of the democratic revolution, it made use of all concrete opportunities to affirm its specifically proletarian character. Marx and Engels used the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* to broadly popularize the tactical line they had developed for the proletariat in the democratic revolution and through their newspaper they guided the activities of the League members throughout the country. It was also thanks to this newspaper that Marx and Engels were able to establish broad relations with the democratic parties of various countries and also to direct the revolutionary struggles of the workers and oppressed nations for their independence that were developing there. They called on peoples of all countries to unite against the three reactionary powers of Europe: czarist Russia, capitalist England and the German Empire.

The *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* dedicated itself especially to teaching the German workers how to maintain themselves permanently as a left wing of the movement, and how to keep their independent position; they gave them concrete instructions at each stage and on each important problem of the revolution. Thanks to this, the mass base of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* continued to grow, and the newspaper had a wide influence on the revolution both in Germany and throughout Europe.

The reactionary German government was afraid of the expanding influence of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* and tried to stop by all means at its disposal. By the beginning in May 1849, reaction had become even more virulent; it forced the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* to stop publishing, it expelled Marx from the country and pursued several other editors. The revolutionary forces were forced to make a temporary retreat. On May 19, in the last number printed in red ink, the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* published an article entitled, "To the Workers of Cologne": "*In bidding you farewell the editors of the Neue Rheinische Zeitung thank you for the sympathy you have*

shown them. Their last word everywhere and always will be: emancipation of the working class!” (7)

In spite of being banned, the contribution of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* to the education of the working class and the inspiration that it gave to the revolutionary struggles at the time were indisputable.

After the newspaper’s disappearance, Marx left Cologne for London. As to Engels, he left for southwest Germany where he participated in a popular uprising in Baden and fought bravely against the reactionary army. This uprising was crushed in July 1849 and Engels, together with other insurgents, rejoined Marx in London, passing through Switzerland.

Engels, who had personally taken part in the uprising, drew up a full assessment of insurrectionary principles. In his work “Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany”, he set forth the principles to follow to lead an insurrection and to lead it to victory. This work is an important document on the Marxist approach to the problem of war.

4. The struggle of Marx and Engels against opportunism within the Communist League

The violent class struggles during 1848 in Germany were reflected within the Communist League, which was the stage for a struggle between Marxism and opportunism of the right and left.

Born (1824-1898) was the representative of right opportunism in the League. He was then the president of the “Workers’ Central Committee” and the “Workers’ Brotherhood” of Berlin. He had relationships with all kinds of shady elements in the hope of uniting a group of people around him to indulge in factional activities. On the political level, he carried out a right capitulationist line because he thought that the bourgeois democratic revolution was a matter for the bourgeoisie only and he was opposed to the proletariat participating in the leadership. He refused to take part in the struggle for a united German republic. He preached to the workers the creation of cooperative productive associations and credit structures with State assistance in a way that would minimally improve their condition. According to him, it would be sufficient for the whole working class to take part in associations to become a free class; the bourgeoisie would become “extinct” by itself. He shamelessly proclaimed that his mission was to do his best to not stir up the working class. En-

gels vigorously criticized that in Born's sophisms "*the views represented in the Communist Manifesto were mingled hodge-podge with guild recollections and guild aspirations, fragments of Louis Blanc and Proudhon, protectionism, etc.*"(8).

Marx and Engels also waged a resolute struggle against left opportunism represented at that time by Gottschalk (1815-1849), the chair of the Workers' Association of Cologne. He did not take into account the concrete conditions and he refused to carry out the tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution, claiming that the task of the workers in the revolution was the immediate establishment of socialism. His rallying cry was: "For a republic of the working class". He opposed all alliances of the proletariat with the democrats and even with the peasants. In Cologne, Marx and Engels strongly fought in the Communist League and the Workers' Association against the errors of Gottschalk and patiently tried to educate him, but he persisted in his errors, refused to correct himself and declared that the statutes of the League threatened his personal liberty; he insisted on leaving the organization. The majority of members of the League and the Workers' Association condemned Gottschalk's splitting activities and gave their support to the proletarian line of Marx and Engels, who came out of this struggle victorious against the erroneous left line.

During the summer of 1850, after studying the conditions of the development of capitalism over the course of the last ten years, Marx and Engels came to the conclusion that the economic crisis of 1847 was already over, and that in a situation where the economy was beginning to show signs of general prosperity, it was unlikely that a new revolutionary tide would surge in the near future. Consequently, they proposed a change of tactics for the struggle of the League. The objective, for the moment, was not to start a revolution but to gather forces for the long term.

At this period, the correct ideas of Marx and Engels faced opposition from certain members of the Central Committee of the League, particularly Willich and Schapper. Schapper, succeeded in uniting a group of members of the League, but they were not decisive enough to provoke a split. Actually they retreated from the hard work of bringing together the revolutionary forces; they refused to recognize that the revolution was temporarily at an ebb, they substituted grand revolutionary phases for a materialist analysis of objective reality and sought, in an adventurous way, to rally a democratic

section of the petty bourgeoisie to start a new insurrection in Germany. They said: "*We should take power immediately; or otherwise it would be better to go home and sleep peacefully.*" During a session of the Central Committee, held on September 15, 1850, Marx and Engels severely denounced the Willich-Schapper faction; but, far from repenting, these people continued to try to split the Party and illegally tried to form another central committee. Furthermore, the seat of the Central Committee of the League was transferred from London to Cologne. The Committee at Cologne, thanks to the decisive action of Marx and Engels, passed a resolution expelling Willich and Schapper from the Communist League.

In October 1850, shortly after the reorganization of the Central Committee, the reactionary Prussian government engaged in persecutions, setting up the infamous trial of the Cologne communists. In the autumn of 1851, emissaries from the King of Prussia went to Paris to negotiate with the French police; Germany demanded the help of France to try to catch members of the League who had emigrated there. The Prussian secret services, making use of the confrontations between the Willich-Schapper group and the Central Committee of the League, sent their agents to infiltrate themselves into France, and take over leadership posts. Victims of the persecution of the Prussian government, several members of the Communist League were condemned and thrown into prison. Marx and Engels showed a great concern for the arrested members and did everything in their power to help them. When the trial opened in Cologne, Marx and Engels refuted and denounced the government plot point by point with the help of witnesses and based on concrete documents, and they transformed the court into a political arena where the crimes of the reactionary government were unveiled. This trial showed that the real guilty ones were not to be found among the Cologne communists, but rather within the reactionary government, which was falsifying testimony and persecuting people.

The Cologne trial was the beginning of increasing repression against the League. Under these circumstances, it became necessary to forge a stronger and more seasoned communist organization to lead the workers' movement that was suffering a temporary setback. The historic task of the Communist League was now finished and, on November 17, 1852, in response to Marx's proposal, the League was officially dissolved.



Friedrich Engels in the 1860s

During the five years between its foundation and its dissolution, under the leadership of Marx and Engels the League actively defended the interests of the proletariat and did everything possible to guide it on the correct revolutionary path, and it was subjected to harsh trials in the crucible of the revolutionary movement. The history of the Communist League shows that this organization “*had been an excellent school for revolutionary activity*” (9).

5. The summary of the 1848 Revolution in Europe according to Marx and Engels

The 1848 Revolution exceeded in breadth and scope all previous revolutions known to the modern world. It launched into the whirlpool of struggle all the classes, all the social strata, and all the political parties. This great revolutionary experience allowed Marxism to face its first great test and to show that it was the only correct revolutionary doctrine capable of guiding the revolutionary struggles of the proletariat. Marx and Engels were not content to merely take a direct part in the practice of the revolutionary struggles of 1848; in the same process of the revolution, they summed up the historical experience. Thus it was that they wrote “The Class Struggles in France 1848 – 1850”, the “Address of the Central Committee of the Communists League”, “The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte”, and other works, which contributed to the enrichment and development of the theory of scientific socialism. “*Discover the truth through practice, and again through practice verify and develop the truth*” (10).

Marx and Engels at this period formulated a series of revolutionary principles, of which the following are the most important:

1 – The slogan of the struggle of the proletariat was the following: uninterrupted revolution.

The theory of the uninterrupted revolution constitutes the most important conclusion that can be drawn for revolutionary theory, for the summary of the revolution of 1848 dealt with by Marx and Engels. Before 1848, Marx and Engels had already conceived the idea of the uninterrupted revolution. Thanks to the practice of the revolution of 1848, they were able to base themselves on the objective path of the development of the revolution in France and Germany to define the limits of the goals envisioned in the revolution by the

democratic section of the petty bourgeoisie and the reformists in general. *“It is our interest and our task to make the revolution permanent until all the more or less propertied classes have been driven from their ruling positions, until the proletariat has conquered state power and until the association of the proletarians has progressed sufficiently far – not only in one country but in all the leading countries of the world – that competition between the proletarians of these countries ceases and at least the decisive forces of production are concentrated in the hands of the workers. Our concern cannot simply be to modify private property, but to abolish it, not to hush up class antagonisms but to abolish classes, not to improve the existing society but to found a new one”* (11).

For Marx and Engels, this was not a period of peaceful development but rather a period of uninterrupted revolution which must separate the bourgeois democratic revolution from the socialist revolution; as soon as feudal rule is overthrown, it was a matter of waging the bourgeois revolution to its end, and then without stopping along the way, to wage the struggle to overturn bourgeois rule in order to achieve the dictatorship of the proletariat.

After the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, it is still always necessary to continue the revolution; for Marx and Engels, the development of the socialist society itself constitutes a process of uninterrupted revolution: *“This socialism is the declaration of the permanence of the revolution, the class dictatorship of the proletariat as the necessary transit point to the abolition of class distinctions generally, to the abolition of all the relations of production on which they rest, to the abolition of all the social relations that correspond to these relations of production, to the revolutionizing of all the ideas that result from these social relations”* (12). Here, the four objectives expressed by Marx form just one. It is not enough to achieve one part, not even the main part, nor almost all, it is the totality of these objectives that must be achieved in order to reach the ultimate form of social systems of humanity, communism.

The Marxist theory of uninterrupted revolution constitutes an extremely important guide for the proletarian parties of the whole world. Only if it persists in the uninterrupted revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat and the continuation of the revolution under that dictatorship, can the proletarian parties preserve intact their revolutionary combativeness and struggle up to the end to achieve communism!

2 – In order to triumph, the proletarian revolution must entirely demolish the bourgeois State apparatus and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Marx and Engels had already expressed the idea of the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat; they had already shown that the proletariat must overturn by violence the political power of the bourgeoisie and establish its own rule. However, they had not yet expressed concretely the relationship between the State of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the State of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, nor did they resolve the problems of the substitution of the one for the other. In basing themselves on the practical experience of the 1848 Revolution, Marx and Engels developed the theory of the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. They concluded that “*the next attempt of the French revolution will be no longer, as before, to transfer the bureaucratic-military machine from one hand to another; but to smash it, and this is essential for every real people’s revolution on the Continent*” (13).

After smashing the machine of the bourgeois State the proletariat must build its own, and establish its own dictatorship. In summing up the experience of the 1848 Revolution, Marx for the first time, and in a precise way, used the scientific concept of dictatorship of the proletariat.

Later on, on March 5, 1852, in a famous letter addressed to Weydemeyer, Marx again thoroughly presented the historic necessity of the dictatorship of the proletariat and explained its role in history: “*Now as for myself, I do not claim to have discovered either the existence of classes in modern society or the struggle between them.... My own contribution was 1. to show that the existence of classes is merely bound up with certain historical phases in the development of production; 2. that the class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat; 3. that this dictatorship itself constitutes no more than a transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society*” (14). By this affirmation, scientific socialism clearly distinguished itself from utopian socialism and all other pseudo-socialisms.

3 – A solid alliance between the workers and peasants becomes the principal force for the victory of the revolution.

On the eve of the 1848 Revolution, Engels pointed out in his article “The Movements of 1847” that: “It is true that a time will come when the fleeced and impoverished section of the peasantry will unite with the proletariat, which by then will be further developed, and will declare war on the bourgeoisie” (15). Summing up the experience of the 1848 Revolution, Marx and Engels stressed the importance and necessity of this alliance. In the course of the revolution, the proletariat should come to achieve together with the peasantry, that “the proletarian revolution will obtain that chorus without which its solo song becomes the swan song in all peasant countries” (16). Later on, in a letter addressed to Engels, he explained again this idea: “The whole thing in Germany will depend on whether it is possible to back the Proletarian revolution by some second edition of the Peasants war” (17).

Marx not only shed light on the importance of the worker-peasant alliance, but also presented the theoretical bases for the creation of this alliance. He meticulously analyzed the situation of exploitation and oppression in which the peasants found themselves and also that the process of their ruin was caused by the accelerated development of capitalism. “Hence the peasants find their natural ally and leader in the urban proletariat, whose task is the overthrow of the bourgeois order” (18).

The peasantry is the natural ally of the proletariat; the proletariat is the natural leader of the peasantry. Without the support of the peasantry, the proletariat cannot beat the capitalists, thus he cannot lead a revolution to its conclusion; whereas, regarding the peasantry, without the leadership exercised direction by the proletariat, cannot beat the rural bourgeoisie. The power led by the proletariat and the worker-peasant alliance thus form an indivisible unit.

Finally, the experience of the 1848 Revolution led them to write that “the revolution is the motive force of history”. “In the activities of Marx and Engels themselves, the period of their participation in the mass revolutionary struggle of 1848-49 stands out as the central point” (19), wrote Lenin later on. Their remarkable practical revolution during this period is a glorious example for the international proletariat and the brilliant revolutionary theory that will forever

stand out as a sharp weapon for the proletariat in its revolutionary struggles both present and future.

NOTES

- (1) Lenin, "Blancism," *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, p. 34.
- (2) 1 sou was worth 5 centimes [French cents, then about 12.5¢ U.S.]
- (3) K. Marx, "The Class Struggles in France, 1848 to 1850," in <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1850/class-struggles-france/ch01.htm>
- (4) *Ibid.*
- (5) F. Engels, "Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany," in <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1852/germany/ch02.htm>
- (6) F. Engels, "Marx and the 'Neue Rheinische Zeitung,'" in <https://marxists.catbull.com/archive/marx/works/1884/03/13.htm>
- (7) Marx and Engels, *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, in <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1849/05/19b.htm>
- (8) F. Engels, "On the History of the Communist League," in <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1847/communist-league/1885hist.htm>
- (9) *Ibid.*
- (10) "On Practice," *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, English edition, Vol. II, p. 308.
- (11) K. Marx and F. Engels, "Address to the Central Committee of the Communist League," in <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1847/communist-league/1850-ad1.htm>
- (12) K. Marx, "The Class Struggles in France, 1848 to 1850," in <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1850/class-struggles-france/ch03.htm>
- (13) Letter to Kugelmann, April 12, 1871, in https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1871/letters/71_04_12.htm

- (14) Letter to Weydemeyer, March 5, 1852, in https://marxists.catbull.com/archive/marx/works/1852/letters/52_03_05.htm
- (15) F. Engels, "The Movements of 1847," in Marx Engels Work, Volume 6, p. 525, in <http://www.koorosh-modaresi.com/MarxEngels/V6.pdf>
- (16) K. Marx, "The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," FLP Peking, 1978, p. 134 (fn.) in <http://marx2mao.com/M&E/EBLB52.html>
- (17) K. Marx, Letter to Engels, April 16, 1856, in https://marxists.catbull.com/archive/marx/works/1856/letters/56_04_16.htm
- (18) K. Marx, "The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," pp. 130-131, in <http://marx2mao.com/M&E/EBLB52.html>
- (19) Lenin, "Against Boycott," *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, p. 37, in <http://marx2mao.com/PDFs/Lenin%20CW-Vol.%2013.pdf>

CHAPTER III

THE STRUGGLE OF MARX AND ENGELS AGAINST OPPORTUNISM IN THE PERIOD OF THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL

The revolutionary storm of 1848 was a rough blow to feudal power in Europe. It allowed capitalism to develop without hindrance and even to suddenly know a relative prosperity. During the 1850s and 1860s, England not only accomplished its industrial revolution but also became the “workshop” of the world. The pace of the industrial revolution was sped up also in other countries. Mechanized production gradually replaced craft production, and with the permanent growth of the capitalist markets, international relations of the bourgeoisie were strengthened more and more. In the course of this period, the workers’ movement, after a temporary decline, also entered into a new ascending phase. However, at that time it was influenced by all sorts of opportunist currents. Wanting to lead the movement in one direction and on one correct path, and to re-enforce the cohesion of unity of the proletariat, Marx and Engels fought tirelessly against these currents, thus assuring for Marxism a leading position in the international workers’ movement.

1. The workers’ movement in the 1860s and the revolutionary activities of Marx and Engels

With the rapid development of capitalism, the proletarian ranks were also rapidly swelling. By the middle of the 1850s, Europe had more than 8 million industrial workers. But although capitalism allowed the bourgeoisie to greatly enrich itself, the working masses slipped more and more into poverty; at the same time, the accelerated development of capitalism continually aggravated the fundamental contradictions of capitalist society.

In 1857, the first world economic crisis of capitalism broke out. The bourgeoisie, by all kinds of measures, made it fall onto the shoulders of the workers. Many workers became unemployed, others had their salaries reduced and everywhere the living condition of the working people deteriorated a bit more. The contradictions between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat were exacerbated, and the workers’ movement entered a new period.

The English workers’ movement, which since the defeat of the Chartist movement had been barely active, now began to grow

again. In 1859, in London, the building workers went on strike for a reduction of hours of work: they were strongly supported by the workers of all branches of industry. Starting with this struggle, the London Trades Council, the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers, the Miners union, and other organizations were successively formed, and in 1860, the General Congress of Trades Union was born.

The workers' movement in France also showed new signs of life. In Paris and Marseilles, the Society of Mutual Assistance, the Steel Workers Association and the Carpenters Association were founded in 1863. Through a series of strikes, these organizations forced the government of Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte to revoke the reactionary law that denied workers the right to strike and the right to association.

As for the German workers, who had achieved the right to form workers' associations, in 1863 they founded, in Leipzig, the General Association of German Workers.

In the United States, the workers founded the Communist Club and the National Association of Workers. During the Civil War, the workers were actively involved in the struggle.

In other European countries such as Germany, Switzerland and Denmark, workers' associations were formed and in the 1860s they began their activities one after the other.

To respond to the new wave of the workers' movement, Marx and Engels delved into deep theoretical research and practical revolutionary activities.

In 1848, Marx began the study of political economy. The economic crisis of 1857 encouraged him to deepen his research, which had been interrupted for a while due to the 1848 Revolution. In 1859, he compiled the results of his study in a work entitled "Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy", in which he drafted the broad outlines of the principal ideas of "Capital". Between 1861 and 1863, Marx filled up 23 notebooks on political economy. From 1863 up to the end of 1865, he completed a first draft of "Capital" in three volumes – almost 2500 pages. In 1867, the first volume of "Capital", carefully checked by Marx, officially appeared in Hamburg, Germany. This was an unprecedented event in the history of the international communist movement and the social thought of humanity. In a commentary on "Capital", Engels said: *"As long as there have been capitalists and workers on earth no book has ap-*

peared which is of as much importance for the workers as the one before us.” (1).

In “Capital”, Marx used dialectical materialism to present, through the analysis of the commodity, the economic laws of the capitalist society; he developed the theory of surplus value, unveiled the secrets of the exploitation of the workers by the capitalists and showed the objective law according to which the destruction of capitalism, along with the triumph of socialism and communism, are inevitable, also pointing out the way for the emancipation of the proletariat.

To support Marx’s theoretical research, Engels worked for 20 years – from 1850 until 1869 – in a business establishment in Manchester where his father had interests, allowing him to use his salary to support Marx and his family to overcome their financial difficulties. During this period, Engels developed major and broad research in the fields of military science, linguistics and the natural sciences.

While they were carrying out their theoretical studies, Marx and Engels closely followed the revolutionary movements throughout the world. They wrote numerous articles outlining their political theses to support the popular uprisings in India and Poland as well as the Civil War in the United States; they also denounced the atrocities and robberies committed by the English and French colonialists, as well as the criminal activities of the American slave owners. Marx and Engels were also interested in the revolutionary war of the Chinese people against imperialist aggression (2) and they warmly greeted it. These revolutionary sentiments of Marx and Engels encouraged the revolutionary struggles of the proletariat and oppressed peoples throughout the world.

Animated with a great revolutionary fervor, Marx and Engels strived to unite and educate the leaders of the workers’ movement in different countries, to help them to get rid of the influence of the opportunist currents; and to build the leading framework of the workers’ movement through real struggles.

Thus Marx and Engels made important preparations, on the ideological and organizational level, for the foundation of an international organization of the proletariat.

2. The foundation of the First International

With the extension of capitalist markets throughout the world, capitalist exploitation increasingly took an international character and, therefore, the struggle against it demanded an ever-closer unity of the proletarians of all countries.

At the beginning of the 1860s, the contacts among the workers of the western European countries – where capitalism was more developed – increased in frequency; the relations between the French and English workers in particular became increasingly close. In 1862, during the Universal Exhibition held in London, a group of French workers met with English workers to discuss the question of the unity of the international proletariat. They emphasized that the absence of an international workers' organization and the lack of organized links among the workers of different countries often allowed the capitalists to resort to hiring foreign labor in order to break workers' strikes. To fight back against the exploitation and oppression by international capital, they called for the founding of an organization that would bring together workers of the whole world. In an address of the English workers and the French workers it said: "The fraternity of the peoples is extremely necessary in the interest of the workers." To show the internationalist solidarity of the proletariat, the English and French workers organized joint mass meetings in support of the just struggle of the Polish people against the despotic rule of the Russian czar.

On September 28, 1864, workers from England, France, Germany, Italy, Poland and Ireland met at St. Martin's Hall in London. Marx was invited to participate in that meeting. The French delegation proposed the creation of an international workers' association. After an animated discussion, all the delegates present unanimously approved the French program. They then adopted a resolution proclaiming the foundation of the International Workers' Association (3) and elected a provisional Central Council of 21 members. This council would later become the General Council of the International. The trade union leaders, who exercised a notable influence, were elected president (G. Odger) and general secretary (W. Cremer). Marx was also elected a member of the Counsel. In fact, he would become the leader of the First International. As Engels said: "*Marx was the soul of this as of all subsequent General Councils up to the Hague Congress*" (4).



*F. Engels, K. Marx and his three daughters
Jenny, Eleanor and Laura in the 1860s*

After its foundation, the First International established a special editorial committee, charged with drawing up the program and rules of the Association. Marx took part in the work of this committee, inside of which there arose a good number of erroneous ideas and opportunist projects concerning the nature of the tasks of the International. There were very bitter struggles, and the different parties waged unending debates. Finally, it was decided that the program and rules would be drafted by Marx.

According to him, the program of the International had to have, as fundamental principles, those set forth in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* and it had to take into account the actual conditions of development of the workers' movement, unequal at that time in different countries, as well as the domination over the workers' movement in several of them by the opportunist currents. That is why the wording of these documents had to be "*firm in substance and moderate in form*", the only means to realize the cohesion and unity of the international workers' movement and to place it on a revolutionary path. The Inaugural Address and the General Rules of the I.W.A. (International Workingmen's Association), written by Marx, constituted a brilliant example of the combination of the spirit of principle and flexibility.

In plain language and by stating concrete facts, the Inaugural Address uncovered without mercy the true face of the supposed economic prosperity of capitalism, which only offers working people cold and hunger, misery and sickness, and a continuing growth of poverty; in doing so, the Inaugural Address reaffirmed the idea that the development of the capitalist system could only increase the antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat; it rejected the theory of class conciliation. It also confirmed the two victories won thanks to the workers' struggle after the defeat of the 1848 Revolution: first, the law on the ten-hour working day, obtained by the English proletariat after protracted struggles: second, the cooperative movement, which showed that it was possible to produce on a large scale without the help of the bourgeoisie. However, the Inaugural Address emphasized that these struggles, and they alone, would not allow the proletariat to emancipate itself and that, to be able to liberate the laboring masses it must abolish the system of wage labor and overturn capitalist domination.

In responding to the right-opportunist line which opposed political struggle, the Inaugural Address clearly traced a revolutionary

proletarian line. Marx solemnly proclaimed there: “*To conquer political power has, therefore, become the great duty of the working classes*” (5). To accomplish this historic task, it had to strengthen the building of the proletarian party, to wage revolutionary struggles and to arm itself with a scientific revolutionary theory. In accordance with the actual situation of the workers’ movement in the different countries of western Europe at that period, Marx assigned the task of conscientiously reorganizing the workers’ party on a political level.

The Inaugural Address condemned the colonialist and warmongering policy of the ruling classes of the different countries and called on the working class to struggle for the application of an internationalist foreign policy, making this struggle an integral part of the general struggle for the emancipation of the working class. Finally the Address repeated the rallying cry: “*Proletarians of all countries, unite!*” The General Rules stipulated that the objective of the International was to unite the popular masses of all countries to struggle for the abolition of class oppression and for the emancipation of the working class. They declared, in the preamble, that “*the emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves*” (6). The grand objective of winning their economic emancipation, could only be attained through political struggles and the cooperation among the proletariat of the different countries. The General Rules expressed the principles of organization of democratic centralism and of designating the Congress of the Association, which met once a year, to serve as the organ of supreme power. In the interval between Congresses, the General Council was responsible for exercising the supreme authority and for managing current affairs.

In November 1864, the assembly of the General Council unanimously adopted the Inaugural Address and the General Rules of the I.W.A. Thus the correct line of Marxism triumphed from the beginning of the International, and Marxism began to assume a leading position in the international workers’ movement. But the victory of Marxism did not put an end to the struggles of the lines within the First International. It only represented the continuation of those that existed in the past between the two lines within the international workers’ movement, but under the new circumstances, they had become more bitter and more complex. The struggle of Marx and

Engels against the various opportunist currents in the period of the First International can basically be divided into two periods:

The first goes from the foundation of the International up to the Brussels Congress in 1868. This period was essentially marked by the struggle against Proudhonism as well as the criticism of trade unionism and Lassalleanism.

During this period, the First International successively held the London Conference (September 25-28, 1865), the Geneva Congress (September 3-8, 1866), the Lausanne Congress (September 2-8, 1867) and the Brussels Congress (September 6-13, 1868).

The second period extended from the Basel Congress in 1869 up to the Hague Congress in 1872. This period was marked by the heroic uprising of the Paris Commune, the holding of the London Conference (September 17-23, 1871) and the Hague Congress (September 2-7, 1872). The opposition to the theories of Bakunin and the support of the Paris Commune remain among the two great tendencies of the period.

3. The struggle against Proudhonism

The first attack delivered against the various opportunist currents within the First International targeted Proudhonism.

Proudhonism was an opportunist current of thought common in France in the mid-19th century. It was a pure product of the development of capitalism which, in provoking the ruin or countless small producers, upset them by making them fear, among other things, of falling into the ranks of the proletariat. These people dreamed about building a society in which small property would last forever. Proudhonism only reflected the mentality of the contradictory wishes of this part of the bourgeoisie, in continuous decay; this is where one must seek its class social origin.

Since the 1840s, Marx and Engels had started to criticize Proudhonism. Proudhon died shortly after the foundation of the First International, but his disciples who inherited his doctrine continued to propagate all his absurd views. The Parisian section of the International, led by the Proudhonists, completely refused to apply the correct line of Marxism and used all their efforts to impose their opportunist line in the I.W.A. and to popularize it within the international workers' movement. This is why Proudhonism became the principal danger within the workers' movement in the early period

of the International. The struggle of Marx and Engels against Proudhonism essentially revolved around the following questions:

A) *The question of the leading power in the International.* Proudhon above all was afraid of the increasing prestige of Marxism in the workers' movement and tried by all means to keep the Marxists out of the leadership of the International. During the London Conference and the Geneva Congress, the Proudhonists on many occasions reiterated their proposal to exclude the intellectual workers from the International. Thus they basely hoped to push Marx and Engels aside and take over the leadership. However, the resolute struggle of the Marxists caused them to fail in their attempt to take over the leadership of the International.

B) *The question of the fundamental path for the emancipation of the proletariat.* The Inaugural Address and the General Rules, drafted by Marx, had set out a correct political line for the International. The Proudhonists were vehemently opposed to this revolutionary line. They rejected the political struggle and advocated class conciliation. They were even opposed to workers' strikes, organizing unions, the eight-hour working day, and women coming into production. After a bitter struggle, the Lausanne Congress kept the correct orientation and adopted a resolution "On the Political Struggles of the Working Class". This resolution stated that, without emancipation on the political level, the emancipation of the working class was impossible; that to totally liberate itself, to obtain its emancipation on the economic level, the proletariat must first of all take part in political struggles, and that is the only way for it to conquer its political rights. The Congress put a stop to the ramblings of the Proudhonists, thus preventing the workers' movement from getting involved in the dead end of reformism.

C) *The attitude towards the national liberation movements.* In the 1850s and 1860s, Czarist Russia remained "*the last, so far intact, reserve of the entire European reaction*" (7). The savage colonial rule that it exercised over Poland provoked a strong resistance of the Polish people. In 1863, an insurrection for national independence broke out in Poland. Marx and Engels warmly approved of this movement, calling on the working class of all countries to actively support the Polish demands. They pointed out that the independence of Poland could weaken czarist Russia and speed up the develop-

ment of the international workers' movement and the movements for national independence. Thus, during the London Conference and the Geneva Congress, the Proudhonists opposed the inclusion of the Polish question on the agenda. They described Czarist Russia as a progressive power and claimed that crushing the Polish insurrection was only "a deserved punishment"; they opposed the International discussing this question, attacked the correct position of supporting the liberation struggle of the Polish people taken by the International and violently contested the national liberation movements. Marx and Engels indignantly rejected these reactionary absurdities and rightly pointed out that "*for the greater glory of the tsar he [Proudhon] expresses moronic cynicism*" (8). Resolutions in support of the independence of Poland embodied the spirit of proletarian internationalism and were successively adopted; they seriously weakened the influence of the Proudhonists.

D) The question of Property. Marx and Engels had already clearly pointed out in the Manifesto of the Communist Party: "In this sense, the theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of private property" (9). Assuming the position of the small producers, the Proudhonists were supporters of maintaining private property. At the Lausanne Congress, they declared themselves in favor of individual property, saying for example: "Here is our formula: give the land to the peasants, extend credits to the industrial workers". at the Brussels Congress, they ended up supporting with unbounded arrogance the individual ownership of the soil as being the "essential premise for happiness and progress". To give the Proudhonists a definitive blow, Marx presented a special report on this subject to the General Council of the International, shortly before the Brussels Congress,.

As a result of this report, the Brussels Congress took the correct decisions. It pointed out that the nationalization of the means of production and the lands was necessary for economic development, that the means of industrial production, the lands designated for agriculture and all means of transport should be under public ownership, becoming the property of the entire society. This resolution was a stunning blow to the Proudhonists and provoked the disintegration of their opportunist ideological system, which tried to preserve small property, Thanks to the untiring struggle of Marx and Engels, the insidious attacks of the Proudhonists were repulsed. The

practice of the class struggle showed that only Marxism could correctly guide the proletariat in the revolutionary struggles and profoundly uncovered the absurd and reactionary character of Proudhonism. The influence of Marxism on the workers' movement continued to spread while Proudhonism recruited fewer and fewer supporters and suffered from internal divisions. Elements of the left wing of Proudhonism, such as E. Varlin, came closer to Marxism and took an active part in the revolutionary struggles of the French working class that they led. As to the right section of the Proudhonists, they later distanced themselves from the workers' movement and became the sworn enemies of Marxism and the international communist movement. During the storm of the Paris Commune, Proudhonism was definitively swept away.

4. The struggle against English trade unionism

We designate by the general term of trade unionism the opportunist line followed by the leaders of the Trades Union Council of London (also known as the Junta) in the 1850s and 1860s. The trade unionists considered the improvement of the living and working conditions to be the overriding demand of the struggle of the proletariat. They opposed the political struggle and, with their economism, they blunted the combative spirit of the working masses. Their motto was: "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work." They only joined the International in order to try to transform it into a trade-unionist organization of an international character that would serve their immediate interests. The trade unionists were interested in leading the international workers' movement down a mistaken path, and they seriously threatened its cohesion and unity. In the struggle that they waged against Marx and Engels, they completely unmasked the reactionary nature of the English trade unionists. "*The trade unions are the organization of the minority, of the workers' aristocracy*", declared Marx in 1871.

When the First International was founded, the trade unions represented the principal form of organization of a national character of the English workers, and it exercised a real influence over the working masses whom it mystified. This is why Marx and Engels fought to bring the English trade unions into the International in order to educate and unite the large masses of English workers, to raise their level of consciousness and to remove the limits of trade unionism,.

Thus they helped the English workers' movement to adhere to a correct revolutionary path.

Trade unionism was not born in England by pure chance; it was the product of a policy of the English bourgeoisie of buying the workers' aristocracy. England was then a country with a great prosperous industry, it had numerous colonies and it had extended its monopoly over the whole world. The English bourgeoisie, which feared the vigorous development of the workers' movement, did all it could to sabotage it, it reserved a small portion of the immense profits extracted from the colonies to buy the elements of the upper stratum of the working class and the skilled workers, thus, organizing their own support within the working class: a privileged stratum of workers cut off from the broad masses, the workers' aristocracy. This constituted and still constitutes the social base and class origin of opportunism in the workers' movement.

Marx and Engels fought against trade unionism principally within the General Council and around the following questions:

The question of the attitude to adopt regarding the workers' movement. The trade unionists were opposed to political strikes by the workers for a general increase in wages under the pretext that a general increase in the wage level created the risk of a rise in prices; they also spread the absurd notion that the union movement was "harmful" and considered that working class could do without unions. Faced with these stupid proposals, Marx began an open struggle against the trade unionism during the two meetings of the General Council that were held in 1865. In his lectures "Wages, Price and Profit", he showed the usefulness of unions in the defense of the interests of the working class, and thus of the necessity of fighting for wage increases. He pointed out that the general tendency of capitalist production consisted in intensifying the exploitation of the workers and the continuous lowering of the average level of wages. Consequently, the workers, if they did not want to abandon their fight for the increase in wages, also should not exaggerate their importance, since "*they are applying palliatives, not curing the malady*" (10). He added: "*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!'*" (11).

The question of the participation of the proletariat in the movement for electoral reform. For a long time, changing the unjust electoral system was in the foreground of the problems in English political life, Marx and Engels had actively supported the political movement for electoral reform that appeared in the 1860s, and they had encouraged the English masses to mobilize to launch a political struggle and fight for their elementary democratic rights. On a proposal by Marx, the General Council decided to send its representatives (mainly trade union leaders) to form an alliance with the representatives of the liberal bourgeoisie in favor of electoral reform. In 1867, the mass movement that swept like a tidal wave forced the English government to make concessions and to vote for an amendment to the electoral system. This amendment granted numerous political rights to the bourgeoisie, and the right to vote to the workers of the upper stratum, who had fairly high incomes. But the working masses remained without the right to vote. The trade unions, in spite of all, accepted the amendment, as the bourgeoisie wanted: this was a real blow against the massive movement for electoral reform, then in full swing. Marx denounced this betrayal of the trade union leaders, and showed that they were already following the path of collaboration with the bourgeoisie and abandonment of the defense of the interests of the workers.

The question of the Irish national liberation movement. This was, at that time, another burning question in English political life. Ireland, the first colony of England, had officially been annexed to it in 1801. In order to wrest its independence, the Irish people had since then been waging a heroic struggle against the English. To grab its independence the Irish people began a heroic struggle against the English. In the 1860s, the national liberation movement vigorously developed in Ireland. But the English trade union leaders, putting themselves at the tail of the bourgeoisie, adopted chauvinist positions on the question of Ireland and refused to support the Irish struggle for national liberation. These same leaders even went so far as to flatter the English Prime Minister, describing him as “a sincerely friendly benefactor of the Irish people”. They presented themselves as defenders of colonialism, supporting as much as they could the interests of the English rulers. Marx and Engels, on the contrary, resolutely defended the just struggle of the Irish people against colonialism. They denounced and criticized the traitorous

positions of the trade union leaders and, maintaining the principles of proletarian internationalism, they coined the famous phrase:

“A nation that enslaves another forges its own chains” (12).

Marx and Engels pointed out that the working class should clearly differentiate itself from the bourgeoisie on the Irish question, that it should resolutely support the Irish national independence movement. This was not a question of abstract justice, but one of the fundamental conditions for its own emancipation. With numerous supporting facts, Marx denounced all the atrocities committed by the English colonialists and the ruthless rule that they imposed over the Irish people; he mobilized the working class of all countries to come to the aid of the national liberation struggle in Ireland. On a proposal of Marx, the General Council held meetings and organized demonstrations to protest the imprisonment of Irish revolutionaries.

“The policy of Marx and Engels on the Irish question serves as a splendid example of the attitude the proletariat of the oppressor nations should adopt towards national movements” (13)

Given the repeated sabotage by the trade union leaders, the International echoed Marx’s proposal in eliminating, after the Lausanne Congress in 1867, the post of President of the General Council, occupied until then by Odger. After the defeat of the Paris Commune of 1871, the forces of European reaction frantically attacked the International. The trade union leaders openly slandered the Paris Commune and attacked the work of Marx “The Civil War in France”. Shortly after, they announced their withdrawal from the General Council and they took the shameful path of complete betrayal of the working class.

5. The struggle against the Lassalleans

The Lassalleans represented an opportunist current that arose in Germany towards the middle of the 19th century. At the beginning of the 1860s, the development of capitalism sped up in that country and the class contradictions were increasingly accentuated; the workers movement was soaring and urgently demanded the creation of an independent political organization. In May 1863, the General Association of German Workers was founded, of which Lasalle

usurped the presidency, making his doctrine the guiding principle of this organization.

Ferdinand Lassalle (1825-1864) came from a Prussian family of silk traders. During the revolution of 1848, he came into contact with the *Rheinische Zeitung* and met Marx. After that, he did everything possible to disguise himself as a sincere socialist, often passing himself off as a student of Marx. At the beginning of the 1860s, he infiltrated the workers' movement and published two brochures: "Handbook for Workers" and "Public Response" (14), which were nothing more than plagiarisms from the *Manifesto*, from which he fraudulently copied certain ideas and passages. Lassalle was never a real Marxist, but was rather a disguised counter-revolutionary, an agent of the enemy and a traitor to the working class infiltrated into the revolutionary ranks. He sold under false colors all his jumble of opportunist theories, programs and tactics.

Lassalle totally disregarded the State as an instrument of one class for the oppression of another; on the contrary, he thought that the State was above classes, that it constituted "an instrument for educating human society and making it advance towards freedom". According to him, it would have been sufficient to establish equal and direct universal suffrage to transform the bourgeois aristocratic state into a popular free state. For him, obtaining universal suffrage was the key for the emancipation of the working class; he thus opposed, with all his might, the violent revolution as well as the dictatorship of the proletariat. He slanderously treated all the laboring classes other than the working class as a "reactionary mass" and sabotaged the cause of the revolution by opposing the alliance between the workers and peasants. He also drew from the theory of Malthus "the iron law of wages", according to which the poverty of the working class was determined by natural laws, and therefore had no remedy; accordingly, he opposed the working class fighting for its emancipation, and urged the proletariat to rely on "direct socialist action" of the Prussian State to win its economic emancipation. Marx and Engels fought the Lassalleans resolutely. When, in 1862, Lassalle met Marx in London, Marx told him in all frankness "*direct socialist action by the 'state of Prussia' was nonsense*" (15). Engels for his part pointed out that, "*Lassalle's entire socialism consisted in abusing the capitalists and flattering the Prussian rural squires*" (16) (17).

By his opportunist line, Lassalle resorted openly to the protection of the Prussian monarchy; he shamelessly honored the highest representative of the aristocracy of the Prussian Junkers, Bismarck, the chancellor of “blood and iron”. Beginning in 1863, he carried out an extensive correspondence and secret conversations with Bismarck in which the two could plot their intrigues. In selling his services to Bismarck, Lassalle definitively became an agent of the enemy and a traitor to the working class. In a letter dated June 11, 1863, Engels already expressed his fear that “*Lassalle does not currently work entirely for Bismarck*” (18) and Marx two years later would state “*Lassalle had in fact betrayed the Party*” (19).

For Marx and Engels, the victory over the Lassalleans depended on the ability to win the masses and to educate them. Now, the general Association of German Workers, founded and directed by Lassalle, fell after his death into the hands of his disciples. In spite of all, the General Association remained at that time the principal national independent organization of the German working class; for this reason Marx and Engels insisted that it be part of the First International, in the hopes of influencing the German working class with regards to the International and to allow the German workers’ movement to get rid of Lassalleans and, with them, the obstacles that held up its full development. The supporters of Lassalle, however, took as a pretext a Prussian government decree which prohibited membership in a foreign organization, trying by all means to prevent the entry of the General Association in the First International. Marx and Engels decided then to go over the heads of the leaders of the General Association and to get into direct contact with the advanced elements of the organization to help them to struggle against the Lassalleans. The first to take the side of the ideas of Marx and Engels and to confront the Lassalleans, were Wilhelm Liebknecht and August Bebel. They carried on a great work in the General Association. In August 1867, the Marxists left the General Association. In August 1869, under the leadership of Liebknecht and Bebel, they held in Eisenach a national convention of leading workers’ organizations of Germany (Eisenachers) and drew up their own program based on the principles of the First International, of which they proclaimed themselves the German section. The foundation of the Social Democratic Workers’ Party of Germany was a great victory for the Marxists over the Lassalleans. The influence, however, of the latter over the workers had not totally disappeared,

and, in the 1870s, Marx and Engels continued an untiring struggle against them.

6. The struggle against the conspiratorial faction of Bakunin and his defeat

After the defeat of Proudhonism, Bakunin with his acolytes came on to the scene. In organizing a conspiratorial faction, they carried out divisive activities on a grand scale; in peddling Bakuninism, they gravely sabotaged the unity and cohesion of the international workers' movement and became the worst enemies of Marxism at the time of the First International.

Mikhail Bakunin (1814-1876) came from a family of Russian nobility. He took part in uprisings in Prague and Dresden and was imprisoned after their failure; in 1851 he was turned over to the Czarist government. While in prison, Bakunin wrote his Confessions, in which he said that he was a "repentant sinner". In begging the pardon of the Czar, he became an infamous traitor. In 1861 he escaped from Siberia, where he had been deported and went to Japan, then to the United States and finally, in 1864, to Europe. He then infiltrated the First International.

Bakunin was a fanatical anarchist. According to him, the essential calamity of modern society was not the capitalist system but the State itself. He stated that it was the State that created capital, that the riches of the capitalists were simply benefits granted by the State. He was opposed to all States, against all power and all authority and was opposed particularly to the State of the dictatorship of the proletariat. He advocated "destroying everything", "tearing everything down" through secretly planned riots and to put a sudden end to the State in one single day.

For Bakunin, the social revolution would begin by abolishing the right of inheritance and establishing cooperativism. By this term he meant the distribution of the land to the peasants and the handing over of the factories to the workers in order to establish autonomous and dispersed enterprises which would be combine industry with agriculture. He was against any central leadership exercised from top to bottom, and against any unified plan. His cooperativism was in reality nothing but a new form of the system of capitalist ownership.

Bakunin proposed the foundation of a society "in which liberty and anarchy would reign". Each individual would enjoy the highest

degree of liberty, every man, every village would be autonomous and there would no longer be any constraints. To achieve his ideal, he counted essentially on the lumpen proletariat and the ruined petty producers.

In summary, Bakuninism was characterized by its opposition to the proletarian revolution and its rejection of the dictatorship of the proletariat; it reflected the mentality and sentiments of the ruined petty producers overwhelmed by despair. In spite of some differences of form with Proudhonism, their class essence was identical: Proudhonism and Bakuninism both represented the interests of the petty bourgeoisie. Influenced by the ideology of the lumpen proletariat, Bakuninism however proved to be much more dangerous than Proudhonism.

The birth of Bakuninism was also marked by its social base and its class origin. In the 1840s, Bakunin was deeply influenced by the anarchism of Proudhon. At the beginning of the 1860s he was active in Italy, a country at that time relatively backward on the economic level and in which small property still predominated. The rise of capitalism there had caused the ruin of innumerable peasants and petty bourgeois in the cities; these formed in society a rather large lumpenproletariat. These people, led to ruin by capitalism, were in a situation that provoked sentiments of despair and a destructive tendency. When he arrived in Italy, Bakunin formed a group of young people who had fallen from their petty bourgeois position as well as a large number of vagabonds who were wandering aimlessly in society, and he lived among them. Within this ruined and desperate lumpen proletariat, with its blind wish to destroy everything, Bakunin saw the hope of his so-called "social revolution" and it was on these bases that he elaborated his mess of anarchist ideology.

The danger that Bakunin represented for the workers' movement was not only due to his absurd theories, but even more in the conspiratorial and divisive activities of his group. "*If he is a nonentity as a theoretician he is in his element as an intriguer.*" (20), was what Marx said on this subject. To preserve the unity and cohesion of the workers' movement, Marx and Engels were not content to put an end Bakuninism on the theoretical level; they also condemned the destructive and divisive activities of the Bakuninists.

In the autumn of 1867, Bakunin moved from Italy to Switzerland, where in October 1868 he organized a group of conspirators, the International Alliance of Socialist Democracy, by which he

planned to penetrate into the International and to take over its leadership. In order to do this Bakunin deployed all the tricks of an adventurist and, while carrying out his intrigues in the shadows, he wrote hypocritically to Marx, saying: “At present, the International is my homeland and you are its principal founder. This is why, you see, my dear friend, that I am your student and I am proud to be so”. “Today, I understand much better how right you are.” All this in the hope of winning his confidence and penetrating into the International in order to achieve his counter-revolutionary ambitions.

Marx and Engels, who long ago had seen through the intrigues and plans of Bakunin, took energetic measures to counteract them. In December 1868, Marx drafted a document entitled “The General Council to the International Alliance of Socialist Democracy,” stating that the Council should refuse to admit the Alliance as a branch of the International. In March 1869, Marx drafted a circular: “The General Council to the Central Committee of the International Alliance of Socialist Democracy”, which clearly pointed out that, only if the Alliance renounced its mistaken program and dismantled its organization, its members could be admitted individually into the International. Bakunin was offended but could do nothing other than pretend to accept the conditions imposed by the International; by this means he could infiltrate it. In the meanwhile he secretly maintained the Alliance’s structures intact and focused his activities on usurping power.

At the 4th Congress of the International held in Basel in 1869, the acolytes of Bakunin used vile procedures such as falsifying the mandates of the delegates and, having succeeded in gaining a majority in the Congress, they maneuvered, by a series of intrigues, to seize control of the leadership of the General Council. Faced with this situation, the Congress discussed and voted for a series of “administrative resolutions” granting more extensive powers to the General Council. Two of these resolutions stipulated notably: “*The General Council has the right to admit or reject the affiliation of any new society or group...*” and “*The General Council has equally the right to suspend until the next Congress any section of the International...*” (21). The Bakuninists approved these resolutions. Their objective, however, as Engels pointed out, was to obtain the majority in order to have the General Council in their hands; this is the reason why the extension of powers granted to the General Council seemed to coincide with their interests. Bakunin thought to use

these resolutions to his benefit and to thereby strengthen his power after having usurped power. But the departing General Council was re-elected by the Congress and Bakunin was not part of it; the Bakuninists' plot to seize power fizzled out once again.

Among the main points on the agenda of the Congress, included by Bakunin's gang, was a reactionary theoretical program that contained nonsense such as "the abolition of the right of inheritance as the starting point of the social revolution". On this important question that put in doubt the orientation of the revolution, Marx, armed with the theory of scientific communism, wrote a report for the General Council on the right of inheritance, in which he showed that this right was just a consequence of the law of the system of private property, and not the cause of private property. Quite the opposite, it was private property that gave birth to the right to inheritance, and, when capitalism will be abolished, this right would disappear by itself. Without mincing words, Marx pointed out: "*To proclaim the abolition of the right of inheritance as the starting point of the social revolution... would be a thing false in theory, and reactionary in practice*" (22).

After the Basil Congress, the Bakuninists, who did not admit defeat, began to surround themselves with individuals recruited from the dregs of the trade unionists, Lassalleans and Proudhonists in order to claim autonomy for the sections and to oppose the leadership of the International. They continued to be involved in divisive activities and sabotage. They accused Marx of being a dictator, they proclaimed maliciously that the General Council was just a den of authoritarianism and made up a string of counter-revolutionary platitudes intended to weaken Marx's prestige and that of the General Council. Faced with Bakunin's frantic attacks, Marx drafted a "Private Circular" (23) in which he proved the correctness of the positions and tactics of the General Council, denounced the mistaken character and maneuvers of Bakunin and brought to light his conspiratorial activities, thus refuting the shameful slanders being spread by his associates.

To crush once and for all Bakunin's conspiratorial clique, the General Council chose delegates to go to Switzerland to investigate. Full of hate and defiant, Bakunin panicked and, blinded by rage, he pushed his henchmen to assassinate the representatives of the General Council. But his criminal plot failed, and even though the in-

investigators were seriously injured they accomplished their task in due time.

The conspiratorial and divisive activities of Bakunin's supporters distanced them from the International. The 5th Congress of the First International held in The Hague in 1872 adopted a "Report on the Alliance of Socialist Democracy," drawn up and presented by Engels in the name of the General Council. This report systematically uncovered all the sabotage activities of Bakunin and his followers, as well as their usual two-faced schemes. The Congress decided to exclude Bakunin and his accomplices from the First International and to make their criminal activities public, since they served as a negative example from which the proletariat of the whole world could learn. In summing up this struggle of lines, Marx and Engels declared "*There is only one means of combating all these intrigues, but it will prove astonishingly effective; this means is complete publicity*" (24). This was a precious historical experience, which confirmed the triumph of Marxism against a clique of divisive plotters within the international workers' movement.

Thanks to the denunciations of Marx and Engels and their struggles against the supporters of Bakunin, the latter's reactionary theory and line quickly faded away and they became completely isolated within the workers' movement. In September 1873, Bakunin published in the "Journal of Geneva" a call to withdraw from the theatre of struggles. Thus this ambitious, great plotter was finally thrown into the dustbin of history by the revolutionary current of the workers' movement; He ended up miserable, with nothing left but his eyes to cry with. Later on, sick and at the final point of his vile career, Bakunin died in Geneva in 1876.

The persecutions of the reactionary governments of the various countries of Europe after the defeat of the Paris Commune and the continuous divisive tactics of the Bakuninists did not allow the International to function normally. Consequently, the General Council decided to move to New York in 1872, which effectively put an end to its activities. This was the period when the workers' movement in the European countries entered into a new phase of regrouping of the revolutionary forces and the building of proletarian political parties. The forms of organization which had been those of the International were no longer suitable. As a result, at the proposal of Marx, the General Council held its last Conference in Philadelphia

(U.S.A.) on July 15, 1876 and adopted a resolution officially dissolving the First International.

Under the leadership of Marx and Engels, the First International had largely propagated Marxism in Europe and in North America, thus linking it little by little with the workers' movement. The untiring struggle of Marx and Engels and their victories over the opportunists of all sorts had assured Marxism a leading position in the workers' movement. In educating the workers of all countries in the spirit of proletarian internationalism so that they mutually supported their struggles and supported the national liberation movements, the First International had set an example for the unity of the proletariat. Finally, the First International had established the foundations that would allow the working class of all countries to build their own independent parties. "*The First International (1864-72) laid the foundation of an international organization of the workers for the preparation of their revolutionary attack on capital*" (25); "*the activities of the First International rendered great services to the labor movement of all countries and left lasting traces*" (26), Lenin would write later.

NOTES

- (1) "Review of Volume One of *Capital* for the *Demokratisches Wochenblatt*" (Democratic Weekly), in <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867/reviews-capital/dwochenblatt.htm>
- (2) The Opium War (*translator's note*).
- (3) Better known as the International, then as the First International after the creation of the second International in 1889.
- (4) F. Engels, "On Marx," FLP Peking, 1975, pp. 7-8, at <http://marx2mao.com/M&E/OM77.html#s1>
- (5) "Inaugural Address of the International Working Men's Association," in <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1864/10/27.htm>
- (6) "General Rules" of the International Working Men's Association, in <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1864/10/27b.htm>

- (7) F. Engels, "On Social Relations in Russia," in <https://marxists.catbull.com/archive/marx/works/1874/refugee-literature/ch05.htm>
- (8) K. Marx, "On Proudhon," in https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1865/letters/65_01_24.htm
- (9) Marx and Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," *op. cit.*, p. 48
- (10) and (11) K. Marx, "Wages, Price and Profit," FLP Peking, 1975, p. 78, in <http://marx2mao.com/M&E/WPP65.html>
- (12) K. Marx, "Confidential Communication on Bakunin," in <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1870/03/28.htm>
- (13) Lenin, "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination," in *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 442, at <http://marx2mao.com/Lenin/RNSD14.html>
- (14) This refers to the "Open Letter Answering the Central Committee on the Convening of a General German Workers' Congress in Leipzig" (*translator's note*).
- (15) K. Marx, "Letters to Kugelmann," p. 27, in http://palmm.digital.flvc.org/islandora/object/fau%3A4457/datastream/OBJ/view/Letters_to_Dr_Kugelmann.pdf
- (16) Junker (the French version uses the word "Junkers", while the English uses the term "rural squires" – *English translator's note*), from the German word Jungherr (Young Master), a German of the petty nobility from the countryside who lives off his lands (*translator's note*).
- (17) F. Engels, "Review of Volume of *Capital* for the Beobachter," in <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867/reviews-capital/beobachter.htm>
- (18) K. Marx, "Letters to Kugelmann," *op. cit.* p. 36, note 4. Translated from the French (*English translator's note*).
- (19) K. Marx, "Letters to Kugelmann," *op. cit.*, p. 28.
- (20) "K. Marx to Friedrich Bolte" (November 23, 1871), in https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1871/letters/71_01_23.htm

- (21) “The First International”, in
https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/Marx_The_First_International.pdf
- (22) “The First International”, *ibid.*
- (23) This refers to the “Private Circular from the General Counsel of the I.W.A.”
- (24) K. Marx and F. Engels, “The Alliance of Socialist Democracy and the International Working Men’s Association,” Marx Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 459, in
http://www.hekmatist.com/Marx%20Engles/Marx%20&%20Engels%20Collected%20Works%20Volume%2023_%20M%20-%20Karl%20Marx.pdf
- (25) Lenin, “The Third International and its Place in History,” *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 306, *op. cit.*
- (26) Lenin, “The International Socialist Congress of Stuttgart,” *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, p. 82, in
<http://marx2mao.com/Lenin/ISCS07b.html>

CHAPTER IV

THE PARIS COMMUNE: FIRST ATTEMPT AT THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

On March 18, 1871, the proletariat and popular masses of Paris rose up heroically and, with the smell of gunpowder and the fire of the struggle, they created the Paris Commune. This was the first big attempt at overthrowing the bourgeoisie, demolishing the old machinery of the state and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat. The communards' revolution was the dawn of the great social revolution that will forever liberate humanity from class society. It wrote with its blood a glorious chapter of the world proletarian revolution. While the struggles in Paris were still raging, Marx wrote: "*If the Commune was beaten, the struggle would only be deferred*" (1). *Whatever therefore its fate at Paris, it will make le tour du monde [a trip round the world]*" (2). This great prediction has become over time an ever more striking reality.

1. The two "Addresses" of Marx on the Franco-German War

In July 1870, a war broke out between Prussia and France known in history as the "Franco-German War". It was a dynastic war between the ruling classes of the two countries, which were contesting for the hegemony of Europe.

France was then governed by Napoleon III. Under the Second Empire, French capitalism was considerably developed, with an ever-increasing misery for the proletariat and the popular masses. Class contradictions were exacerbated within the counties. To preserve the interests of the financial aristocracy and the big bourgeoisie, Napoleon III had created a military, police and bureaucratic apparatus of unprecedented size with which he cruelly exploited the popular masses within the country, and he waged permanent wars of conquest outside the country to despoil smaller and weakest nations. These wars involved heavy loss of life and material and enormous war expenses that fell completely on the backs of the workers, who could only barely survive. But where there is oppression, there is resistance. After the 1857 economic crisis, Europe experienced a gradual increase in resistance struggles of the popular masses, and at the head of them was the French working class, rich in glorious

revolutionary traditions. During the big workers' strikes of 1869, the proletariat fiercely attacked the reactionary rule of the Second Empire. To divert the attention of the people and block the route to revolution, the tottering government of Napoleon III, tried to escape the political crisis internally while waging war externally. As the Empress Eugenie said to her son, "Without war, you cannot become Emperor!" Against whom to declare war? Against Prussia. This choice could be explained by the crazy ambitions that the rulers of France had been nursing for a long time; on the one hand to seize the Rhineland, which they coveted; on the other, to prevent the unification of Germany and to preserve France's hegemony in Europe.

For a long time, in fact, Germany was divided by feudalism into a number of independent states, a system which greatly held back the development of capitalism. The big bourgeoisie and the big German landowners hoped to achieve unification "from the top down" thanks to wars and annexations of different states. In 1861, Bismarck was nominated chancellor of Prussia, and he intensified his "policy of blood and iron" consisting in massacring people internally and waging war externally. After the Austro-Prussian war of 1867, the Confederation of Northern Germany was founded, which grouped the northern states of Germany around Prussia. But a few southern states were still divided, notably due to obstacles set up by Napoleon III. Thus, the total unification of Germany was still not achieved. The big bourgeoisie and the big Prussian landowners were planning to make war against France in order to weaken it and seize the rich mining regions of Alsace and Lorraine. These annexations would allow them to clear the way for the unification of Germany by arms and extend their tyranny over the rest of Europe.

Thus, the two dynasties, of France and Prussia, declared war on July 19, 1870.

How should the proletariat of Europe, that of France and Prussia in particular, analyze this war and stand up to it? On July 23, Marx responded to the question in drafting the "First Address of the General Council of the International Working Men's Association on the Franco-Prussian War". This war, he said, is only a dynastic war provoked by the ruling classes of France and Prussia; whatever happens, "*the death knell of the Second Empire has already sounded at Paris*" (3) The working class should resolutely oppose this war of aggression of Louis Bonaparte. On the German side, the war was, for the moment, of a defensive character, but the Prussian monarchy

also nourished its ambition to loot French territory. As a consequence, the German proletariat should strictly limit the war to the realm of national defense, and be wary of the aggressive intrigues of Bismarck. The war developed as the Address had predicted. After the French army had suffered defeat after defeat, the Prussian army penetrated deeply into French territory. Napoleon III was soundly beaten, on September 2, at the battle of Sedan. He capitulated and became a prisoner of Bismarck.

When the news of the capitulation at Sedan reached Paris, the anger of the popular masses surged like a tidal wave. On September 4, the revolution broke out in Paris. The city bristled with barricades erected by workers, the popular masses and the soldiers, who demanded the abolition of the empire and a war of resistance. The revolutionary people besieged the Royal Palace and, after bursting into the Chamber of Deputies and occupying City Hall, they proclaimed the end of the Empire and the establishment of a Republic that it set up with a provisional government. The Second Empire crumbled like a house of cards; the 3rd French Republic was born. But the workers at that time did not understand the nature of the bourgeois republican party, and that, in fact, it was the bourgeoisie that had usurped power. Trochu, a former reactionary general under Napoleon III, presided over the provisional government. All the other members were also representatives of the bourgeoisie. To mislead the people, they baptized the provisional government a “Government of National Defense”. In fact, this was nothing but a government of national betrayal in which the “plan” (4) would lead the country straight to ruin. Looking for help in all directions; Trochu begged the governments of different countries to intervene as mediators. He sent emissaries to secretly get in contact with Prussia to negotiate peace, and he regrouped the forces of reaction to respond with arms against the people who had risen up.

But the war continued and the Prussian army pursued its advance by forced march towards Paris, thus revealing the intention of the Prussian monarchy to annex French territory. In these circumstances, on September 9, Marx published the “Second Address of the General Council on the Franco-German War”. He pointed out that the nature of the two parties engaged in the war had gone through a radical change. On the German side, the war had become transformed into a means of despoliation and subjugation of the French people; the German proletariat should also stick to the prin-

ciples of proletarian internationalism and act against the war of pillage waged by Bismarck, in order for France to obtain an honorable peace and for the recognition of the French Republic. For its part, the French working class found itself placed in extremely difficult circumstances. On the one hand, it should resist the national enemy that was invading its country, but without forgetting the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, and without being at the tail of the bourgeoisie; on the other hand, without being able to immediately overturn the reactionary government of National Defense, it should resolutely struggle against its reactionary politics and use the republican freedom to regroup its forces in order to struggle for the regeneration of France and the emancipating cause of the proletariat.

Marx's two Addresses on the Franco-German War not only gave a penetrating explanation of the causes and the nature of the war, whose unfolding and results he had anticipated scientifically; they also allowed the proletariat to distinguish between just and unjust wars, to demonstrate proletarian internationalism by supporting just wars and opposing wars of aggression, and to reconcile their immediate struggles with the long-term objectives of the revolution. These two Addresses not only served as a guide for the struggles of the French and German workers at that period; they also served as important documents of Marxist theory on the questions of war and peace.

2. The March 18th insurrection and the proclamation of the Paris Commune

Thanks to the politics of betrayal and capitulation of the Government of National Defense, the Prussian troops quickly advanced up to the walls of Paris, and the situation became extremely critical. The war had taught the people that "*the working classes would have to conquer the right to emancipate themselves on the battlefield*" (5). The Parisian proletariat, rejecting slavery, decided to take up arms and, in a short time, it created a National Guard made up of 194 battalions, about 30,000 men, and then created its own organization of military command, the Central Committee of the National Guard. They were defending not only the right to emancipation, but they defended the whole of Paris and in the interests of the entire French nation. The betrayal and the capitulation of the Government of National Defense aroused the anger of the Parisian people. Two

armed rebellions broke out one after the other, the one in October 1870 and the other in January 1871. In spite of the repression, the workers did not put down their arms and, under the direction of the Central Committee of the National Guard, they reconsolidated their armed force. The Government of National Defense was very worried because, on the one hand, if it surrendered to the Prussians it would suffer some losses, but the Prussians would also allow the bourgeois government to maintain its domination and to continue just as before imposing it on the back of the people; on the other hand, if they let the armed workers defeat the Prussian invaders, its reactionary rule would immediately crumble. Consequently, "*in this conflict between national duty and class interest, the Government of National Defense did not hesitate one moment to turn into a Government of National Defection*" (6). On February 28, 1871, it signed an armistice with Prussia. In February, the landowners, the reactionary bourgeoisie and the supporters of the Empire formed a National Assembly and appointed a bourgeois "regular government" presided over by the traitor Thiers. He was a counter-revolutionary plotter, a two-faced element whose bad reputation was clear to all, a treacherous and venial old fox. All his life, this villainous scoundrel of the French nation sewed evil. "*The chronicle of his public life is the record of the misfortunes of France*" (7). Since his coming into power, Thiers, wanting to suffocate the revolution as quickly as possible, did not hesitate to sign a peace treaty, which betrayed the country by ceding Alsace and Lorraine and accepting to pay Prussia an indemnity of 5 billion francs. After that he mustered all his forces to attack the Parisian proletariat.

At dawn on March 18, 1871, Thiers ordered his reactionary troops to sneak into Montmartre and try to steal the cannons of the National Guard and thus disarm the workers. Under these circumstances, the Parisian proletariat had two choices: either, in conformity with the orders of the reactionary government of Thiers, to surrender their arms and thus condemn France to disappear; or, by revolutionary methods, to roll back the reactionary domination thus saving France from danger. In spite of the double threat of Thiers' reactionary army and the Prussians' cannons which they were facing, the Parisian working class did not hesitate for a moment and fearlessly chose the heroic path of armed rebellion. At 10 o'clock in the morning, led by the Central Committee of the National Guard, the armed Parisian workers routed the army of the reactionary govern-

ment and seized Montmartre. In the afternoon, the armed people, stirred by a force capable of toppling mountains, occupied several strategic points in Paris. Overcome with panic, the enemy fled in disarray. Thiers, the leader of the group of criminals responsible for the civil war, knowing he was at the point of defeat, left Paris in haste, assuring his own safety without even taking the time to warn his family, and ran like a crazy man to Versailles. The routed bureaucrats, police and army, abandoned Paris on the heels of their masters. By the end of the day, the National Guard occupied the City Hall, where the proletariat and the popular masses of the capital raised the red flag and, thanks to their rifles, had overcome the reactionary rule of the bourgeoisie. *“The glorious working men’s Revolution of the 18th March took undisputed sway of Paris”* (8).

The Parisian proletariat overturned the reactionary rule by force and immediately created its own power of a new type: the Paris Commune. It was a great historical innovation. On March 26, the people of Paris organized elections for the Commune. Dressed in their holiday suits and brandishing red flags, the workers gathered at the voting places to cast their ballots. The 86 members of the Commune were elected that day. Among them were 21 representatives of the bourgeoisie who, incidentally, resigned after a few days. There-



Barricades at the Menilmontant Boulevard (photo from the period)

fore, not long after, the Commune was filled only with representatives of the workers or persons supported by the workers. Of these members of the Commune, 30 belonged to the First International. The two most important sections represented were the Blanquists or the “majority” and the Proudhonists or the “minority”. Blanqui, who was at that time in the jail of the bourgeoisie, was nevertheless elected.

On March 28, when a rally was held at the City Hall square, and the Commune was solemnly proclaimed. All Paris was ecstatic. The National Guard, fully armed, red flags in front, made their entry into the square with their heads held high, marching in step to the sound of the magnificent revolutionary songs. When the list of members of the Commune and its foundation were proclaimed, the cannons fired a salvo of honor and a thunderous applause broke out. The joyful ovation “Long live the Commune” reverberated through the sky. The new power of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the first of its kind in the history of humanity, was just born. It proclaimed the glorious victory of the Parisian proletariat and showed brilliantly that the popular masses are the creators of history. “*Its true secret was this. It was essentially a working-class government*” (9), Marx pointed out sometime later.

The first decree proclaimed by the Commune concerned the suppression of the standing army and its replacement by the people in arms. Then, the Commune eliminated the old system of the police and justice, creating the organs of the revolutionary dictatorship.

The Commune destroyed the bourgeois bureaucratic structures that enslaved the people. The legislative and the executive organs were united in the Commune Council, responsible for administering the state. The Commune abolished the hypocritical bourgeois parliamentary system and created ten working Commissions. The Commune Council adopted the system of democratic centralism: all important matters had to be dealt with by a democratic discussion and, once a decision was approved, it had to be fully implemented. The members of the Commune took part, in their turn in the work of the different commissions and those of their own electoral district, where they were responsible to their electors. In this way, the Commune Council represented, on a smaller scale, the organization of a new type of state, the state of the proletariat.

To prevent workers of the state organs from seeking glory and profits, and to avoid them being transformed from servants of socie-

ty into mandarins, the Commune adopted two important measures. First, the members of the Commune and its principal workers had to be elected; they were responsible to their electors and subject to recall at any moment if they were deemed inadequate for their functions. Second, high salaries were eliminated, and the annual minimum wage for all those occupying public offices was fixed at 6,000 francs, which corresponded to the salary of a skilled worker; furthermore, the low salaries were appropriately increased.

The Commune decreed the separation of Church and State; it eliminated the part of the budget allocated to religion and confiscated the assets of the Church, thus strongly undermining this spiritual pillar of reactionary rule.

On the economic level, the Commune took a series of measures to protect the interests of the working class and the laboring people. It handed over to the workers' cooperative associations the factories and workshops whose owners had fled or had stopped production; it abolished night work for bakers, and prohibited the bosses from fining their workers or holding back parts of their wages. It made the owners give back to the poor the objects they had deposited in the pawn shops and declared a moratorium on the payment of rents and debts.

Applying proletarian internationalism, the Commune united around it the working class and revolutionaries of all countries, choosing their leaders from among their best representatives. They voted a special decree to demolish the Vendôme Column, a symbol of bourgeois chauvinism in the center of Paris.

In the extremely difficult and complicated conditions of that period, the Parisian people, using the machine of the proletarian state, transformed the old society from top to bottom and radically changed the appearance of Paris; a new atmosphere of jubilation and confidence flourished. The Parisians lived their revolution enthusiastically. The corrupt Paris of the Second Empire rapidly disappeared. On the other hand, in Versailles, under the reactionary rule of Thiers, the officials, politicians, land owners and capitalists were all together. There were all sorts of people: the gendarmes, police agents, snitches and secret agents, who patrolled the streets, and the crooks, thugs, prostitutes and thieves. The difference between the dictatorship of the two classes was well summed up in this expression, "*Paris all truth, Versailles all lie!*" (10)

3. The heroic defense of the Paris Commune

But the exploiting classes did not accept their defeat. The reactionary party of Thiers, who had taken refuge in Versailles, did not stop his criminal activities for an instant, seeking a counter-revolutionary restoration. While he did not feel quite ready, that old fox Thiers used all his political ruses to numb the revolutionary vigilance of the people and to camouflage the counter-offensive he was preparing. He falsely claimed: *“Come what may, I will not send the army against Paris.”* But, as soon as he received the assurance from Bismarck and Czar Alexander II that they would help him, Thiers’ tone changed. He threatened the Commune, saying that it would be possible to *“conclude peace”* only on the condition that it would lay down its arms. When Thiers had accepted all the terms of surrender, Bismarck in return liberated 100,000 prisoners of Napoleon’s army to fill up Thiers’ reactionary army. And when he was guaranteed direct aid from the Prussian army, Thiers proclaimed in a deadly tone: *“I will enter Paris with the LAW in hand!”* With the *“law”* in hand, he was preparing to massacre the proletariat and the people of Paris.



Demonstration in support of the Paris Commune in London

On May 21, the Versailles bandits, with the help of their spies infiltrated into the city, entered Paris. This was the beginning of the fierce fighting of “Bloody Week”, which shook the whole world. Faced with its ferocious enemies, the heroic people of Paris did not show a moment fear or hesitation. When Dombrowski, a Polish revolutionary and general of the Commune, learned of the news, he immediately led his troops into combat, and commanded them in the front line at the barricades and gave his life for the Commune. When he sensed that his end had arrived, he exhorted his comrades of arms: “*Don't worry about me! Save the Republic!*” Men, women, children, old people, all the Parisian people, unconcerned about death, fought to defend their revolutionary power. Street after street, house after house, floor after floor were transformed into fortresses to shelter the combatants of the Commune and to exterminate the enemy. In this bloody combat, everyone showed the great bravery of proletariat and their generous spirit in the face of death. One example was when the enemy surrounded a gunboat of the Commune on the Seine, the Communards on board, unmoved by danger, refused to give up and with the cries of “Long live the Commune” they sank with their boat. One combatant of the National Guard, Auguste Roland, who had already led three of his sons into combat, wrote to a War commissioner asking him to accept into the army his youngest son aged 16. The Dunand brothers, Ernest aged 14, and Felix aged 17, resisted the enemy cannon fire for over an hour barely 100 meters away; and then with their unit, they charged with bladed weapons and managed to hold the barricade. The youngest brother heroically gave his life planting the flag of their battalion on top of the barricade; his older brother then went to pick up the flag and also died a hero. Their father did not cry but firmly took up his rifle and fired at the enemy to avenge his children, to avenge the Commune! Varlin, a leading member of the Commune, was taken in a street combat, but he preferred to die instead of surrendering and fell as a martyr.

On May 27, a group of Communards, entrenched in the Father Lachaise cemetery, fought desperately, outnumbered by the enemy ten to one. When they ran out of ammunition they fought on with bayonets; not a single one surrendered and, in the end they all died heroically at the foot of the cemetery wall. To commemorate these immortal heroes of the Revolution, the Parisian proletariat gave this wall the name “Wall of the Communards”. It stands forever in the

east of Paris, as a brilliant symbol of the unalterable virtues of the proletariat.

On May 28, the Commune crumbled under the armed repression of the class enemy, and Paris fell again under the criminal domination of bourgeois reaction. With the restoration of its counterrevolution rule, the bourgeoisie unleashed a frantic class vengeance. The reactionaries murdered thousands of people with machine guns, and the white terror extended over the whole of Paris. More than 100,000 people were shot, buried alive or deported. This was the picture of the bourgeois restoration! However, the violence and atrocities of the reactionaries could not make the heroes of the Paris Commune bow down. Incorruptible and strong, they preferred to die rather than surrender. Thus Ferré, a member of the Commune, solemnly declared in front of his judges: "I am a member of the Commune, I am in the hands of its conquerors. They want my head, let them take it! I will never save my life by cowardice. Free I have lived; free I intend to die." The voice of another celebrated fighter of the Commune, Louise Michel, was heard: "I belong entirely to the Social Revolution and I declare that I accept the responsibility for all my deeds... Since it seems that any heart beating for freedom only deserves a bit of lead, I claim my part! If you let me live, I will not stop calling for revenge..."

On May 30, 1871, Marx declared: "*Working men's Paris, with its Commune, will be forever celebrated as the glorious harbinger of a new society. Its martyrs are enshrined in the great heart of the working class. Its exterminators history has already nailed to that eternal pillory from which all the prayers of their priests will not avail to redeem them*" (11).

On the tenth day of the Bloody Week, the Communist poet Eugène Pottier, his heart pounding with rage, wrote at the risk of his life in a Paris suburb the great poem that would spread over the whole world as the "Internationale", raising up an indestructible monument in memory of the heroes of the Paris Commune.

4. The orientation and support of Marx and Engels to the Paris Commune

The great educators of the proletariat, Marx and Engels, who were very interested in the French workers' movement, followed very closely the development of the revolution of the Paris Commune. Even though Marx was in exile in London at that time, he was animated with total sympathy for this great revolutionary battle. The spirit of the revolutionary initiative that made him grant a great importance to the popular mass struggles furnishes us with a great example of the correct way to consider the movements of the revolutionary masses. In the autumn of 1870, on several occasions Marx advised the Paris workers not to launch an uprising since the conditions were not yet ready for this. But when in March 1871, the Parisian proletariat took up arms to seize power with unquenchable revolutionary energy, Marx gave active support to the insurgents and warmly aided the Paris Commune. Enthusiastically he declared: "*What elasticity, what historical initiative – what a capacity for sacrifice in these Parisians!*" "*History has no like example of a like greatness*" (12).

The birth of the Paris Commune greatly worried the international bourgeoisie. United in a counter-revolutionary "holy alliance", it set in motion all its propaganda apparatus to make all sorts of false rumors intended to frighten people and it violently attacked the Commune. The bourgeois press in Germany, the United States and England accused the Paris Commune of being a "reign of terror." Czar Alexander, while pretending to be in favor of peace, was shuttling between Thiers and Bismarck to serve as an intermediary, urging them to conclude a vile political deal which would allow them to crush the communard revolution. In the face of this frantic counter-attack by the internal and external class enemy, Marx and Engels, eager to support the revolutionary struggle of the Paris Commune and to defend the new revolutionary power, put all their means at their disposal to unite the sympathizers of the Commune and bring it a powerful support from a distance. Through the General Council of the International, they wrote several hundred letters to all sections of the Association, in which they explained the proletarian nature of this revolution and its historic significance, calling on the workers of all countries to come to the aid of the Commune. They wrote press articles to show the true face of the proletarian

revolution in Paris, to refute the calumnies launched against it by the bourgeoisie and unmasked all the lies.

As long as the Paris Commune continued, Marx followed closely the development and transformations of the revolutionary situation, and gave it concrete direction and assistance. He sent people to Paris to make contact with the Commune, to transmit orally his instructions and to obtain first-hand information. Marx provided the Commune with valuable guidelines in tactics of struggle, military technology, and social and economic measures. He encouraged the Commune to continue on its victorious course to annihilate Thiers and all the bandits of Versailles in one blow; he advised them to quickly continue the task outside Paris, and even in other countries, to break the isolation of the Parisian struggles. He again urged the Commune to extend the influence of the revolution to the countryside, so as to unite with the peasants to fight side by side with them; he particularly insisted on the need to seize the Bank of France to cut off the economic resources of reaction. Marx also transmitted to the leaders of the Commune all the information he had on the close collusion between Prussia and Versailles, urging the Commune to reinforce the defenses north of the Montmartre and not to be deceived by the lies of the Prussian government that claimed to remain “neutral” between Paris and Versailles. Unfortunately, the leaders of the Commune could not apply these just directives.

The Commune was led mainly by Blanquists and Proudhonists, none of whom were Marxists. The Proudhonists were opposed to any dictatorship and advocated the conversion of the enemy by “kindness”. As for the Blanquists, they hoped to achieve socialism by taking power thanks to the secret terrorist activities of a handful of people. The Blanquists disavowed the Proudhonists, and the latter published a manifesto in which they disclosed the divisions within the Commune. Marx provides some just criticisms of the weaknesses and mistakes of the leaders of the Commune. However, in spite of these errors, he continued to help them wholeheartedly in the hopes that they would escape the opportunist influence and advance towards a correct line.

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

Liberté. — Égalité. — Fraternité.

Association Internationale DES TRAVAILLEURS

CONSEIL FÉDÉRAL DES SECTIONS PARISIENNES

Chambre Fédérale des Sociétés ouvrières

TRAVAILLEURS,

Une longue suite de revers, une catastrophe qui semble devoir entraîner la ruine complète de notre pays, tel est le bilan de la situation créée à la France par les gouvernements qui l'ont dominée.

Avons-nous perdu les qualités nécessaires pour nous relever de cet abaissement ? Sommes-nous dégénérés au point de subvertir le principe de la République ? Avons-nous résigné le despotisme hypocrite de ceux qui nous ont livrés à l'étranger, et de ne retrouver d'énergie que pour nous ruiner irrémédiablement par la guerre civile ?

Les derniers événements ont démontré la force du peuple de Paris, nous sommes convaincus qu'une entente fraternelle démontrera bientôt sa sagesse.

Le principe d'autorité est désormais impuissant pour rétablir l'ordre dans la rue, pour faire renaitre le travail dans l'atelier, et cette impuissance est sa négation.

L'insolidarité des intérêts a créé la ruine générale, engendré la guerre sociale : c'est à la liberté, à l'égalité, à la solidarité qu'il faut demander d'assurer l'ordre sur de nouvelles bases, de réorganiser le travail qui est sa condition première.

TRAVAILLEURS,

La révolution communale affirme ces principes, elle écarte toute cause de conflit dans l'avenir. Hériteriez-vous à lui donner votre sanction définitive ?

L'indépendance de la commune est le gage d'un contrat dont les clauses librement débattues feront cesser l'antagonisme des classes et assureront l'égalité sociale.

Nous avons revendiqué l'émancipation des travailleurs et la délégation communale en est la garantie, car elle doit fournir à chaque citoyen les moyens de défendre ses droits, de contrôler d'une manière efficace les actes de ses mandataires chargés de la gestion de ses intérêts, et de déterminer l'application progressive des réformes sociales.

L'autonomie de chaque commune enlève tout caractère oppressif à ses revendications et affirme la République dans sa plus haute expression.

TRAVAILLEURS,

Nous avons combattu, nous avons appris à souffrir pour notre principe égalitaire, nous ne saurions reculer alors que nous pouvons aider à mettre la première pierre de l'édifice social.

Qu'avons-nous demandé ?

L'organisation du Crédit, de l'Échange, de l'Association afin d'assurer au Travailleur la valeur intégrale de son travail ;

L'instruction gratuite, laïque et intégrale ;

Le Droit de Réunion et d'Association, la liberté absolue de la Presse, celle du citoyen ;

L'organisation au point de vue municipal des services de police, de force armée, d'hygiène, de statistique, etc.

Nous avons été dupes de nos gouvernements, nous nous sommes laissés prendre à leur jeu, alors qu'ils caressaient et reprimaient tour à tour les factions dont l'antagonisme assurait leur existence.

Aujourd'hui le peuple de Paris est clairvoyant, il se refuse à ce rôle d'enfant dirigé par le précepteur, et dans les élections municipales, proclame d'un mouvement dont il est lui-même l'auteur, il se rappelle que le principe qui préside à l'organisation d'un groupe, d'une association est le même qui doit gouverner la société entière, et comme il rejeterait tout administrateur, président imposé par un pouvoir en dehors de lui-même, il réorganisera tout maître, tout préfet imposé par un gouvernement étranger à ses aspirations.

Il affirmera son droit supérieur au vote d'une Assemblée de rester maître dans sa ville et de constituer comme il lui convient sa représentation municipale sans prétendre l'imposer aux autres.

Dimanche 26 mars, nous en sommes convaincus, le peuple de Paris tiendra à honneur de voter pour la Commune.

Les Délégués présents à la Séance de nuit du 23 mars 1871

Conseil fédéral des sections parisiennes de l'Association internationale :

AUBRY
BOUDET
CHAUDESAIGUES
COIFFÉ
V. DEMAY
A. DUCHÊNE

LEO FRANKEL
H. GOULLE
LAUREAU
LIMOUSIN
MARTIN LEON
ROSTAG

Chambre fédérale des Sociétés ouvrières :

CAMELINAT
DESCAMPS
ÉVETTE
GALAND
HAAN
HAMEY

LAZARE LEVY
PINDY
EDM. POTTIER
ROUYEROLLES
SPOETLER

After the defeat of the Commune, its enemies sprang up everywhere to slander it, and the various reactionary governments cruelly persecuted its members. At that moment, Marx and the First International made every effort to ward off the danger, to reply from start to finish to the slanders and to defend the glorious merits of the Paris Commune. Three days after the defeat of the Commune, Marx presented before his General Council of the International his remarkable work "*The Civil War in France*," in which he warmly glorified the great exploits of the Parisian proletariat and summarized all the lessons left by the Commune Revolution, while denouncing the atrocities of reaction, in order to teach the international proletariat that it should persevere in the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Marx and the General Council also tried by all means to help the members of the Commune to escape the pursuit of the police, and gave various forms of relief to the combatants of the Commune exiled in various European countries.

5. The principles of the Paris Commune are eternal

Although the Paris Commune lasted only 72 days, it left as its legacy an infinitely precious experience to the proletariat. Marx and Engels attached great importance to the great revolutionary practice of the Parisian proletariat. To sum up the lessons of the Commune, to refute the calumnies launched against it by the bourgeoisie of all countries as well as by certain so-called socialists, and to allow the proletarian revolutionary movement to advance along a correct line, on April 18, 1871, Marx proposed, at a session of the General Council of the International, to publish a manifesto on the "general tendency of the movement" in France, to be sent to all the members of the Association. Mandated by the General Council, Marx quickly wrote the first and second drafts of "*The Civil War in France*." Afterwards he undertook to complete the definitive text. On 30 May, three days after the defeat of the Commune, he presented to the General Council his important work, "*The Civil War in France*".

"The working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made State machinery, and wield it for its own purposes" (13), Marx declared in his book. The proletariat must instead destroy and annihilate by violent revolution the bourgeois State and establish its own dictatorship. This is the most fundamental lesson that Marx and Engels drew from the great revolutionary practice of the Paris

Commune, and it is their most important conclusion. This is what has been described since then as the “principle of the Paris Commune”.

The experience of the Commune proved that, in order to liberate itself, the proletariat had to wage a violent revolution with arms. The reality of modern class struggles has taught us that the first act of the bourgeoisie when it regains power is to disarm the workers. On many occasions, the French workers had taken up arms, to put them down afterwards, or to be dispossessed of them after each victory. As a result, each time the fruits of the victory had been confiscated by the bourgeoisie. The Parisian workers gradually learned that if they wanted to see the revolution triumph, they had to hold on firmly to their own revolutionary weapons. Despite the absurdities of the Proudhonists who declared “to hope for kindness and mercy” and to oppose the use of violence and intimidation, the Parisian workers ignored him and, under the slogan “To arms!”, they built the first proletarian army in history. Resisting both the seductions and threats of the bourgeoisie, they refused to lay down their arms and violently repelled Thiers’ counter-revolutionary armed offensive. If the Commune was able to see the light of day, if it was able to last 72 days, it was thanks to the revolutionary arms that it had in its hands. Taking stock of this experience, Marx said: “*The new feature is that the people, after the first rise, have not disarmed themselves and surrendered their power into the hands of the Republican mountebanks of the ruling classes*” (14).”

After seizing power, the proletariat must still defend the fruits of its victory with arms, and wage the revolution to the end. But “*the Central Committee made themselves, this time, guilty of a decisive mistake in not at once marching upon Versailles, then completely helpless, and thus putting an end to the conspiracies of Thiers and his Rurals*” (15), contrary to the desire of the working masses of Paris and the National Guard. As a result of these hesitations, the enemy had time to catch his breath, regroup the forces of the counter-revolution to go on to the offensive and, finally, to drown the Commune in a bloodbath. This was one of the principal causes of the failure of the Commune.

The experience of the Commune proved that the proletariat must completely destroy the State apparatus of the bourgeoisie and establish its own dictatorship. During its revolutionary practice, the Commune exercised a power of the dictatorship of the proletariat: it

eliminated a series of counter revolutionary criminals and promulgated political measures intended to reform the economy, such as the control of the post and telegraph agency or the seizure of factories from which the owners had fled. But because of the errors of its leaders, the action of the power of the dictatorship of the Commune remained incomplete and ineffective. One of the biggest errors was not to have repressed the counter-revolutionary forces with sufficient severity and energy. The Proudhonist Commune members were opposed to dictatorial methods: they saw the word dictatorship as disagreeable and hoped to reform the enemy through understanding. The result was that the counter revolutionaries hidden in Paris helped Versailles to prepare for its attack, which resulted in an atrocious massacre of the Parisian workers. Marx had already made this profound remark: *“If they are defeated only their ‘good nature’ will be to blame”* (16). Another grave error was to have not have taken possession of the Bank of France. Not only were the Proudhonists opposed to doing this, but even more, they furnished Versailles with the money it had asked for, and these big sums allowed them to finance their attack against Paris. This was another cause of the Commune’s defeat.

The experience of the Paris Commune also proved that after establishing its dictatorship, the proletariat should prevent the workers of the State organs from enjoying political or economic privileges in order to limit bourgeois right and strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat. The two essential measures taken by the Commune in this respect not only embodied the characteristics of the proletarian State of a new type, they also prevented official functions from being the subject of speculation or favoritism, from being used for personal interests; from allowing State workers to change from being servants of the community into bureaucrats; finally, to ensure that they maintain close relations with the masses. This is where its deep meaning resides. All the great educators of the revolution have held these two measures undertaken by the Commune in high esteem. Engels pointed out that with these two unfailing means “an effective barrier to place-hunting and careerism was set up” (17) Lenin noted as well that these measures represented the turn “from bourgeois democracy to proletarian democracy” and served at the same time as “a bridge leading from capitalism to Socialism” (18).

The experience of the Paris Commune proved once again that to achieve the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the prole-

ariat, it is necessary to ally with all the workers in the cities and the countryside, and particularly with the peasants. If the Parisian proletariat was able to take power and hold it for over two months, it was first of all thanks to the arms that they possessed, but this cannot be separated from the correct measures adopted by the Commune at the right time of uniting with and winning over the petty bourgeoisie in the capital. On the other hand, one of the main causes for the defeat of the Paris Commune was that it was not able to get the support of the peasants of the whole country. The Commune had laid out very well the correct political principles that were in the interest of the proletariat, the petty bourgeoisie of the cities and the peasants and, as Marx noted, if the peasants had understood the political situation they would “soon acclaim the townish proletariat as their own leaders and seniors” (19). But the enemy tightly blockaded Paris and spread false rumors and slanders about the Commune, preventing the peasants from knowing the advantages that its victory would have had for them. Furthermore, the Commune’s leaders did not fully understand the importance of uniting with the peasants and, later on, as victims of the encirclement and the armed offensive of the enemy, they could neither make their program known nor apply it among the peasants of the provinces whom they had not mobilized in time. The proletariat found itself in an isolated situation that finally ended in the defeat of the revolution.

Finally, the experience of the Paris Commune proved that in order to seize power, to establish its dictatorship and to consolidate it, the proletariat must have a proletarian party built on the Marxist theory and style, armed with a revolutionary Marxist line. When they summed up this experience, Marx and Engels unequivocally stated: “*against this collective power of the propertied classes the working class cannot act, as a class, except by constituting itself into a political party, distinct from, and opposed to, all old parties formed by the propertied classes*” (20).

The main cause for the defeat of the Paris Commune was the absence of leadership by a single revolutionary proletarian party, guided by Marxism and presenting a correct line. At that period, the leading positions of the Commune were occupied by Blanquists and Proudhonists; among the members of the Commune, there were not really any authentic Marxists. The Blanquists and Proudhonists adhered to mistaken theories that did not allow them to achieve unity on a political and organizational level, to establish a firm lead-

ership and to draw up a correct line. This led them to make errors on several decisive questions that in the end resulted in the failure of the revolution. The numerous correct measures taken by the Commune were the work of the revolutionary masses, who surged like a tidal wave and imposed them despite the false theories of the followers of Proudhon and Blanqui. "And in both cases the irony of history willed – as is usual when doctrinaires come to the helm – that both did the opposite of what the doctrines of their school prescribed." (21). In the revolutionary struggles of the proletariat, there is always a struggle between two lines. At certain moments, opportunism may have seemed to play a role, but it has always constituted nothing but a stumbling block to the revolution. Among the Blanquists and Proudhonists, some individuals displayed this attitude. "*They are an unavoidable evil: wrote Marx; with time they are shaken off; but time was not allowed to the Commune*" (22).

It is only in its struggle to triumph over opportunism of all forms that the Marxist party can define a correct line to guide the revolutionary masses towards the victory of the proletarian revolution and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The heroic sons and daughters of the Paris Commune, in the short space of time of 72 days, provided to the communist international movement precious lessons that would forever constitute an immeasurable treasure for the world proletariat. Marx pointed out that on several occasions: "*The principles of the Commune were eternal and could not be crushed; they would assert themselves again and again until the working classes were emancipated.*" (23).

Yes, the principles of the Commune are eternal. For over a century, the hymn of the Internationale, composed by the Commune poet Eugene Pottier resounds throughout the whole world.

"The earth shall rise on new foundations,
We have been naught we shall be all!"

"Let each stand in his place,
The Internationale shall be the human race!"

NOTES

- (1) "Record of Marx's Speech on the Paris Commune," Marx Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 595, in <http://www.hekmatist.com/Marx%20Engles/Marx%20&%20En>

gels%20Collected%20Works%20Volume%2022_%20M%20-%20Karl%20Marx.pdf

- (2) K. Marx, "The Civil War in France," in <http://marx2mao.com/M&E/CWFdrf71.html>, p. 173.
- (3) <http://marx2mao.com/M&E/CWF71.html>, p. 22.
- (4) This refers to the capitulation of Paris, supported by Trochu (*translator's note*)
- (5) "Record of Marx's Speech on the Seventh Anniversary of the International," Marx and Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 634.
- (6) K. Marx, "The Civil War in France," <http://marx2mao.com/M&E/CWF71.html>, p. 42.
- (7) *Ibid.*, p. 46.
- (8) *Ibid.*, p. 58.
- (9) *Ibid.*, p. 74
- (10) *Ibid.*, p. 85.
- (11) *Ibid.*, p. 102.
- (12) K. Marx, "Letters to Kugelmann," April 12, 1871, *op. cit.*, p. 123.
- (13) K. Marx, "The Civil War in France," <http://marx2mao.com/M&E/CWF71.html>, p. 66.
- (14) <http://marx2mao.com/M&E/CWFdrf71.html>, p. 189.
- (15) <http://marx2mao.com/M&E/CWF71.html>, p. 62.
- (16) K. Marx, "Letters to Kugelmann," April 12, 1871, *op. cit.*, p. 123.
- (17) K. Marx, "The Civil War in France," <http://marx2mao.com/M&E/CWF71.html>, p. 16.
- (18) Lenin, "The State and Revolution," FLP Peking, 1970, p. 61 & p. 52, in <http://marx2mao.com/Lenin/SR17.html>
- (19) K. Marx, "The Civil War in France," <http://marx2mao.com/M&E/CWFdrf71.html>, p. 182.
- (20) "The First International," *op. cit.*

- (21) K. Marx, "The Civil War in France,"
<http://marx2mao.com/M&E/CWF71.html>, p. 13.
- (22) *Ibid.*, p. 84.
- (23) "Record of Marx's Speech on the Paris Commune," *op. cit.*, p. 595.

CHAPTER V

THE STRUGGLE OF MARX AND ENGELS AGAINST THE OPPORTUNIST LINE ON THE QUESTION OF THE CREATION OF PARTIES IN EUROPE

In the 1870s and 1880s, the capitalist economy of the European countries continued to develop quite quickly and began to move from the stage of liberal capitalism to that of imperialism. The bourgeoisie turned entirely towards reaction, and the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat became the principal contradiction in these countries. The international communist movement also entered in a new phase. *“The West entered a phase of “peaceful” preparations for the changes to come. Socialist parties, basically proletarian, were formed everywhere, and learned to use bourgeois parliamentarism and to found their own daily press, their educational institutions, their trade unions and their co-operative societies. Marx’s doctrine gained a complete victory and began to spread. The selection and mustering of the forces of the proletariat and its preparation for the coming battles made slow but steady progress”* (1).

During this phase, the principal task of the proletariat consists precisely in creating its own independent revolutionary party, in regrouping the revolutionary forces in order to prepare itself on the ideological and organizational level for the future rise of the revolution.

Aided by Marx and Engels, the proletariat of various European countries created revolutionary parties and groups one after the other. After the foundation in 1869 of the Social-Democratic Workers’ Party of Germany (Eisenachers), socialist workers’ parties were founded successively in Holland (1870), Denmark (1871), the United States (1877), Czechoslovakia (1878), France (1879), Italy (1882), Belgium (1885), Norway (1887), Austria (1888), and Switzerland and Sweden (1889). The first Marxist groups appeared, in Russia, with the group “Emancipation of Labor” (1883), and in England with the Social Democratic Federation (1884).

These socialist parties and groups that had just been formed played a progressive role in propagating socialism and in fostering the development of the workers’ movement. But they still lacked the maturity on the ideological, political and organizational fields, and suffered to varying degrees from the influence of all kinds of

opportunist currents. Marx and Engels paid a lot of attention to the foundation and development of workers' parties, and they enthusiastically helped them to develop, while severely criticizing the opportunist tendencies that appeared in their midst, in order to allow them to advance on a correct line and to become genuine proletarian revolutionary mass parties.

1. The struggle between the two lines during the process of the foundation of the Workers' Socialist Party of Germany

After the Franco-German War, Germany's unification was achieved from above. Thanks to the indemnity of five billion francs that it extorted from France, thanks also to the rich mining regions of Alsace and Lorraine that it annexed, and finally thanks to the application of the newest sciences and techniques to industry, German capitalism developed rapidly. As a result, the ranks of the German proletariat also grew very quickly and, with the incessant reinforcement of the proletarian struggles against the bourgeoisie, the workers' movement unfolded every day on a larger scale.

The German workers' movement occupied a preponderant position in the international communist movement of that period. In France, the defeat of the Paris Commune came as a great setback; in England, the workers' movement was held back due to the emergence of the workers' aristocracy and the problems caused by trade unionism; the German workers' movement, on the contrary, was in the process of a vigorous rise. Engels said about that epoch: "*for the present moment the German workers form the vanguard of the proletarian struggle*" (2). But during the 1870s, two factions in the German workers' movement confronted each other: the Eisenachers, the revolutionaries, and the Lassalleans, the opportunists.

The Lassallean party was none other than the General Association of German Workers founded in 1863, whose first president was Lassalle. On his death in 1864, his disciples continued to control this organization and to apply the reactionary line of their master.

The Eisenacher party, or the Social Democrat Workers' Party of Germany, had been founded in the city of Eisenach, Germany, in 1869. It was a revolutionary party of the left, which had grown thanks to support from Marx and Engels, through a bitter struggle against Lassalleanism. This was the first workers' party founded in the history of the international communist movement. This party

had some famous leaders belonging to the working class itself: August Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht. August Bebel (1840-1913), who had worked as an apprentice, joined the First International in 1865 and adhered to Marx's doctrine. He was a remarkable activist, worker organizer and speaker, who enthusiastically defended the interests of the proletariat and relentlessly struggled against the reactionary ruling classes. This resulted in him being expelled and imprisoned several times by the reactionary government. He always declared himself a student of Marx and Engels and endlessly opposed the opportunist tendencies within the Party. His knowledge of the fundamental principles of Marxist theory, however, was insufficient, and this led him to make serious mistakes on several points. Marx and Engels criticized him on several occasions and helped him to advance on a correct path. Wilhelm Liebknecht (1826-1900) had taken part in the 1848 Revolution in Germany and took refuge in London after its defeat. There he met Marx and Engels and became a socialist under their direct influence. He was the most enthusiastic propagandist of the revolutionary ideology of the First International as well as the organizer of the German section of the Association. In the struggles against the adversaries, Liebknecht was merciless, which often caused him to be persecuted by the reactionary government. But, while he made an important contribution to the German working class, Liebknecht committed a certain number of grave errors. On several fundamental questions of Marxism, particularly in the struggle between the two lines within the Party, he frequently was hesitant and conciliatory, even going so far as to abandon the principles, for which he was severely criticized several times by Marx and Engels. In most of these cases Liebknecht was able to correct his viewpoints and adopt revolutionary positions.

Divergences of principle on numerous crucial questions separated the Eisenacher and the Lassallean parties, which applied two diametrically opposed lines. From the beginning, the Eisenacher party adhered to the First International, it applied its directives and maintained the principle of proletarian internationalism; it opposed the invasion of France by the Prussian monarchy, and supported the Paris Commune and the heroic struggles of the French working class. The Lassallean party, on the other hand, refused to enter the First International and, maintaining some chauvinist positions, it supported wholeheartedly Bismarck's aggressive war against France; it went so far as to align itself with the executioners who savagely

repressed the Paris Commune, thus sabotaging the struggle of the French workers.

Two opposing lines produce different results: while the prestige of the Eisenacher party grew rapidly among the workers, its membership increased and the organization took on importance, the Lassallean party was progressively abandoned by growing masses of workers and its organization was at the point of falling apart. In 1869, the unions controlled by the Lassalleans still had 35,000 members; in 1871 there remained only a little more than 4,200. To respond to the needs of the struggle and to unify the development of the workers' movement, the Eisenacher party, on many occasions, proposed to the Lassallean party to unite in order to confront their common enemy, but each time this was met with an unreasonable refusal. It was only after 1873, when the prestige of the Lassallean party was at its lowest and it found itself in a difficult situation that it could not get out of, it finally changed its usual attitude. Taking the initiative and proposing unification, it began to sing more loudly than anyone the great song of "unity". At first sight, Marx and Engels uncovered their scheme and prudently pointed out: if today they come knocking at our door and seek reconciliation, it is because they find themselves in a very difficult situation; but they must not be allowed to use the prestige of our party among the workers to consolidate their tottering positions. Engels said: "*One must not allow oneself to be misled by the cry for 'unity'.*" (3).

On the question of unification, Marx and Engels' attitude was very clear. First of all, they were not opposed in principle to unity, since to cement the German working class it was necessary to found a unified party. But they considered that this unity had to have certain conditions: "*the first prerequisite for union was that they cease to be sectarians, Lassalleans*" (4). Marx and Engels warned the leaders of the German Party many times that they should not compromise on the principles; that if the circumstances were not ripe for unification, they should begin by coming to an agreement with the Lassalleans on a platform of action against the common enemy, but this should in no case precipitate the unification. However, as the leaders of Eisenacher party, especially Liebknecht, were so attached to the idea of unification of the two parties, they allowed themselves to be tempted by immediate success and, not only did they not pay attention to the friendly advice of Marx and Engels, they revised again behind their backs, together with the Lassalleans, a draft pro-

gram infused with Lassallean opportunism – the “The Draft Program of the German Socialist Workers’ Party” – which was published on March 7, 1875, in the press organs of the two parties. As soon as Marx and Engels saw this draft, they were outraged. To them, the program of a party was “*a banner publicly raised, and the outside world judges the party by it*” (5); “*one sets up before the whole world landmarks by which it measures the level of the Party movement*” (6); it was “*a thoroughly objectionable program that demoralizes the Party*” (7), a draft which went totally against the fundamental ideas expounded for a long time in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* and the principles set out by the French proletariat in the course of its revolutionary practice in 1871. This led Engels to say that he and Marx were “*particularly perturbed by the decidedly retrograde step manifested by this draft program*” (8). In order to answer in time the counter-current of the Lassalleans within the Party, in order to defend the revolutionary principles of Marxism, to teach the comrades who had been lost and to help them to clearly distinguish the dividing lines between Marxism and opportunism, Engels stated in a letter to A. Bebel regarding the program: “*It is of such a character that if adopted Marx and I can never give our adherence to the new party established on this basis*” (9). In April-May, 1875, Marx, overcome by illness, wrote his “*Marginal Notes to the Program of the German Workers’ Party*” (or “*Critique of the Gotha Programme*”). He dissected point by point the draft program, denouncing and criticizing the extreme right-wing nature of Lassalleism that was opposed to the revolution, advocated going back and defending the reactionary Prussian monarchy. Marx through his critique further developed the theory of scientific socialism.

The “*Critique of the Gotha Programme*” represents the brilliant record of the unconditional struggle of Marx against the opportunist line of Lassalle; it constituted a sharp weapon to criticize revisionism. Marx and Engels sent it to the leaders of the Party, hoping that they would recognize their errors and correct them in accordance with revolutionary principles. But Liebknecht and the others did not accept the correct criticism of Marx and Engels. In May 1875, the congress for the unification of the two parties took place in the city of Gotha. The Lassalleans were in the majority among the delegates at the Congress and they only made a few modifications to the language of the draft program. This was adopted and became the Gotha Programme of the German Socialist Workers’ Party, created by the

fusion of the two parties. Of the five members elected to the Central Committee by the Congress, three were Lassalleans, so that the power of the leadership of the Party ended up effectively in their hands. After the Gotha Congress, the different social classes did not notice the program's numerous inconsistencies. The working masses understood it from a Marxist point of view and gave it a communist interpretation. As for the bourgeois pack of donkeys, they also saw it as a communist program and they treated with the utmost seriousness. The welcome the program received was better than it should have been and, as Engels wrote in a letter to W. Bracke that this was the only reason that "*has enabled us [Marx and Engels] to keep silent about this program*" (10). It was only in 1891, with the need of the struggle against opportunism that, thanks to the stubborn struggle of Engels, the "Critique of the Gotha Programme" of Marx was finally published.

2. Critique of the Gotha Programme

In his book, Marx criticizes the draft program principally on the following points:

1. Criticism of the reformist line of the Lassalleans, who "demanded more legal means" to achieve a socialist society. Defense of the theory of the proletarian revolution.

To provide the opportunist line with some theoretical substance, the program declared at the beginning that "labor is the source of all wealth and all culture". Marx refuted this by stating: "*Labor is not the source of all wealth*" (11). In order for labor to produce wealth and culture, it must be linked with the natural material conditions such as the possession of raw materials and instruments of labor; and furthermore, the labor cannot be performed except within certain determined social relations. This is what the hypocritical and hollow sermons of Lassalleanism show on labor. To talk about this while leaving aside the fundamental question of the ownership of the means of production cannot aim at anything more than masking class exploitation and eliminating the class struggle, protecting private property and opposing the proletariat in making the revolution.

The draft program strongly insisted on the so-called "iron law of wages" invented by Lassalle. For him, the average wages of the

workers could only hover around the lowest level necessary to allow a worker and his family to live. If one raised wages above that average, the life of the workers would improve, the reproduction rate of the population would increase, bringing an increase in the number of workers, which would create the risk of lowering wages; if, on the other hand, one kept wages below this level, the rate of population growth would be weak and the number of workers would go down, which would allow wages to increase. As Marx pointed out, the theoretical basis of this so-called “iron law of wages” is none other than the Malthusian population theory. According to this absurdity, it is not necessary to find the cause of worker poverty in the capitalist system of wages but in this erroneous law. Quite obviously this theory supports the capitalist system and opposes the proletarian revolution with reactionary lies. During the 1870s, the scientific theory of wages and the doctrine of surplus value were already largely popularized. It was upsetting to honest people that a working-class party such as the German Socialist Workers’ Party accepted these reactionary conceptions of Lassalle.

Marx also refuted the opportunist idea proposed in the draft of “the establishment of organs of production with the aid of the State” in order to achieve socialism. The experience of the revolutionary proletariat had already shown that only violent revolution, the destruction of the bourgeois State apparatus and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat could allow the expropriation of the expropriators and the achievement of socialism. To spread the fallacy of State aid is in fact to try to make the workers renounce the class struggle and to safeguard the reactionary rule of the bourgeoisie.

2. Critique of the absurd position of Lassalle on the establishment of a “free State” and the development of the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat

Based on the idealist conception of history, Lassalle did not take into account the class character of the State, which he presented as something that was above classes and whose essential function was to “make humanity advance towards the conquest of liberty”. The draft program spread Lassalle’s opportunist conception of the State according to and made the objective of the Party struggle the establishment of this imaginary “free State”, thus turning completely on its head the fundamental question of the dictatorship of

the proletariat. Marx, deeply indignant, criticized the absurdities of the free State. Marxism considers that the State itself is violent, it is an instrument of one class to oppress another. The Prussian-German Empire at that time was nothing but “*a police-guarded military despotism, embellished with parliamentary forms, alloyed with a feudal admixture, already influenced by the bourgeoisie*” (12). It was the tool of the class of Junker landowners and the big bourgeoisie. Such a State, as all bourgeois States, could not, as the draft program claimed, be transformed peacefully into a free State. And if the proletariat, by violently overturning the former state apparatus, in creating a new one, this would also not be a free State above classes. Marx pointed out: “*It is by no means the aim of the workers, who have got rid of the narrow mentality of humble subjects, to set the state free*” (13). He added that, for him, “*so long as the proletariat still uses the state, it does not use it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries*” (14). As one can see, the absurd idea of the free State was used to oppose to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Without mentioning the dictatorship of the proletariat, nor defining how it can be transformed into the future state, the draft program continually stressed the slogan of the free State. In criticizing the Lassallean conception of the State, Marx clearly expounded the theory according to which the dictatorship of the proletariat should be maintained during the whole stage of the transition which leads from capitalist society to communist society. He wrote: “*Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. There corresponds to this also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat*” (15). This brilliant clarification by Marx considerably developed the doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

3. Critique of the reactionary theory of Lassalle concerning distribution; clarification of the principles of distribution in socialist society and Marx's first explication of his famous judgement of the two stages of communism.

The draft program presented Lassalle's commonplace positions on the important question of distribution and proclaimed his absurdities on the “integral product of labor”, the “*fair distribution*” ac-

ording to an “*equal right*” of all “*to the proceeds of the labor*”. Regarding the question of distribution, Marx stated: “*The prevailing distribution of the means of consumption is only a consequence of the distribution of the conditions of production themselves*” (16). The draft program avoided addressing the question of ownership of the means of production and dealt only with the abstract question of distribution. It considered and interpreted distribution as a matter without connection to the mode of production. The draft limited socialism to a mere shell for the question of distribution. Furthermore, it fooled the proletariat and the working people with its absurdities regarding the “*fair distribution*” and “*equal right*”, so that they would renounce the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

While criticizing Lassalle’s reactionary conception of distribution, Marx scientifically analyzed the two stages of communism and their respective principles of distribution. He clearly pointed out that under socialism, and even in the first phase of communism, it concerned a society, “*just as it emerges from capitalist society; which is thus in every respect, economically, morally and intellectually, still stamped with the birth marks of the old society from whose womb it emerges*” (17). Thus distribution, during this period, rested firmly on the principle: “*From each according to his ability, and to each according to his work*”. “*Hence, equal right here is still – in principle – bourgeois right*” (18). Even though exploitation has been abolished, one could implicitly recognize that work abilities, which vary from one worker to another, are natural privileges, which amounts to admitting that equal rights are in fact unequal rights. One cannot escape from this bourgeois right in the period of socialism. Marx pointed out again: “*In a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labor, and with it also the antithesis between mental and physical labor, has vanished; after labor has become not only a means of life but itself life’s prime want; after the productive forces have also increased with the all-round development of the individual, and all the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly – only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be crossed in its entirety and society inscribe on its banners: From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!*” (19).

Marx clearly showed what the system of distribution would be in the lower and higher stage of communist society. He scientific-

ly outlined for the first time the characteristics of the two stages of development of the communist society, and so greatly enriched the theory of scientific communism.

Finally, he criticized once again the opportunist conceptions expressed in the draft program that considered the peasants and the rest of the petty bourgeoisie as a “reactionary mass”, and he criticized their narrow nationalism.

The “Critique of the Gotha Programme” has an extremely rich content. It is a document that has the character of a program that enriched the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. It represents the synthesis of the historic experience of the class struggle and constitutes a sharp weapon to criticize revisionism.

3. Marx and Engels’ criticism of Dühring

The foundation of the unified Party of the German working class gave to the epoch its thrust to the development of the revolutionary movement. However, because unprincipled concessions had been made to the Lassalleans on the question of unity, some representatives of the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie succeeded in infiltrating the Party, creating in its ranks a serious confusion on the ideological and theoretical level and reducing its theoretical level. In the Party leadership at that time “a *corrupt spirit is asserting itself... The compromise with the Lassalleans has led to further compromise with other waverers*” (20). Consequently, there was an influx of anti-Marxist currents within the ranks of the Party. Dühring’s theories, in particular, which were diametrically opposed to Marxism, began to spread within the Party, seriously harming its healthy development.

Eugen Dühring (1833-1921) was born into a Prussian aristocratic family. He began working as a lawyer, but then went into teaching. In 1863, he began to teach philosophy and economics at the University of Berlin. In the 1860s, he had already insolently attacked Marx’s “Capital”. In the beginning of the 1870s, Dühring again opposed Marxism even more energetically and, attacking from here and there, he published a succession of articles: “A Critical History of Political Economy and Socialism” (1871), “Course of Political and Social Economy” (1873) and “Course of Philosophy” (1875). Dühring arrogantly boasted about wanting to entirely reform Marxism. He wrapped himself in the title of “the most powerful

genius of all times” and bragged about having discovered the “definitive truths in the final analysis”.

Due to all the noise he made, and the theoretical confusion created in the Party after the unification of the two factions, Dühring succeeded in fooling a good number of people with his jumble of reactionary theories. Even a leader such as Bebel could not immediately distinguish the anti-Marxist essence of Dühring’s theories.

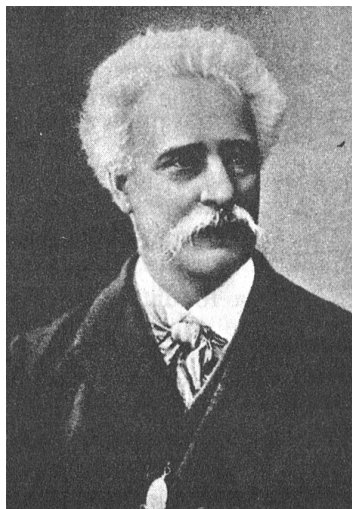
It should be noted that, for the German Socialist Workers’ Party, Dühring represented a danger not only on the theoretical level, but also on the organizational. Using the influence he had in the Party, he grouped around him a little sect made up of people such as Bernstein to lead schismatic activities and to plot with the idea of forming a new party.

To fight back against this invasion of erroneous theories, the most urgent task for the Party was to unmask the reactionary nature of Dühring and expose his frenzied attacks, his opportunism and to raise the theoretical level of the Party in order to unite it ideologically on the basis of Marxism.

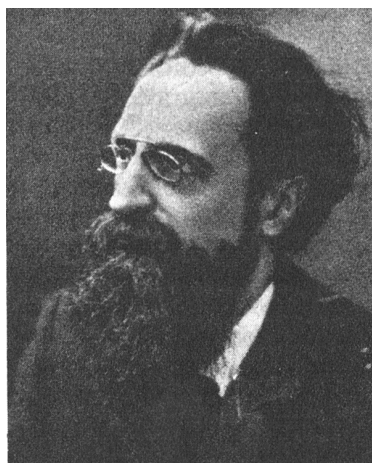
In May 1876, in a letter to Engels, Liebknecht expressed the wish of the revolutionary workers to criticize Dühring. Engels passed this letter on to Marx, and asked him on his part by letter if the moment was not right for a fundamental criticism of Dühring. In his answer, Marx expressed his agreement for this criticism. However, he needed to concentrate his energy on editing volumes 2 and 3 of “Capital”. Engels did not hesitate to put aside the “Dialectics of Nature” that he was in the course of writing and undertook the immediate work to criticize Dühring’s reactionary theories. In close cooperation with Marx, in July 1878, Engels finished his criticism of Dühring that he had begun in May 1876. The work was published over several issues in the organ of the Party, *Vorwärts*, between January 1877 and July 1878 and, in 1878, “Anti-Dühring” was published in one volume.



Wilhelm Liebknecht



Paul Lafargue



Jules Guesde



A page of Vorwärts with the beginning of 'Anti-Dühring'

The publication of “Anti-Dühring” by Engels completely crushed Dühring’s reactionary current. It was a systematic critique of his eclectic philosophy, vulgar bourgeois political economy and petty-bourgeois socialism as well as a defense of the theoretical foundations of scientific socialism. This was beneficial to the development of the workers’ movement. For the first time, Engels systematically expounded the three parts that make up Marxism.

In the section on “Philosophy”, Engels stressed the criticism of Dühring’s idealist apriorism. Dühring peddled Kant’s metaphysical fraud and Hegel’s idealism, making a very motley philosophical stew. He affirmed the existence of apriori principles, pre-existent in nature and human society; and stated that all the problems of nature and society should be solved according to these principles. “[T]he principles are not the starting point of the investigation, but its final result; they are not applied to nature and human history, but abstracted from them; it is not nature and the realm of humanity which conform to these principles, but the principles are only valid in so far as they are in conformity with nature and history. That is the only materialist conception of the question, and Herr Dühring’s contrary conception is idealistic, makes things stand completely on their heads” (21). Engels meticulously explained the fundamental principles of the materialist theory of reflection, emphasizing that the universe is matter, that matter is movement, that space and time are the essential modes of the existence of matter, and that thought is the reflection of matter, from which it has a relative independence. Engels also criticized Dühring’s metaphysical conception that denies contradiction; he presented the laws of dialectical materialism on the unity of opposites, the reciprocal transformation of quantity into quality, the negation of the negation, etc.; he pointed out that “*dialectics is nothing more than the science of the general laws of motion and development of nature, human society and thought*” (22).

In the section on “Political Economy”, Engels criticized in depth Dühring’s idealist economic conceptions; they represented a reaction to Marxist political economic conceptions. In “Capital”, Marx had revealed the secrets of capitalist exploitation and explained in detail the doctrine of surplus value; he had shed light on the law by which the ruin of capitalism and the triumph of socialism are both inevitable. Dühring, on the contrary, made great efforts to hide capitalist exploitation in propagating his theory of violence. According to him, the capitalist right of ownership over the means

of production is due to violence, of which profit was the product; consequently, to achieve his so-called ideal socialism, it is not necessary to abolish the capitalist mode of production, but it would be enough to eliminate violence and to suppress the capitalist mode of distribution in order to re-establish the egalitarian principles of distribution. These absurdities denied the priority of the economic base and subordination of distribution to production, thus contesting the doctrine of surplus value; their reactionary nature resided in their opposition to the overthrow of the capitalist system by the proletariat, with the objective of preserving this system for the future. Engels remarked: "*force may be able to change the possession of, but cannot create private property as such*" (23). Only Marx's doctrine of surplus value completely reveals the secrets of the exploitation of the worker by the bourgeoisie. The proletariat can only emancipate itself by the revolution, by overthrowing the capitalist system, and certainly not by Mr. Dühring's dream in being content to make the system of capitalist distribution disappear. Engels pointed out that force, in the words of Marx, "*is the midwife of every old society pregnant with a new one. that it is the instrument by means of which social movement forces its way through and shatters the dead, fossilized political forms*" (24). The proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat are precisely a revolutionary violence of this type.

In the section on "Socialism", Engels criticizes Dühring's pseudo-socialism, expounding the essential sources and principles of scientific socialism. According to Dühring, the Prussian state would continue to exist and competition continued to develop. As Engels noted, Dühring's socialism was nothing more than embellished capitalism.

At the same time as he rambled on about his theory of socialism, Dühring completely rejected the historical doctrines of utopian socialism, thus giving proof of his arrogance and ignorance. Utopian socialism had been a product of history: "*Their immature theories corresponded to the immature state of capitalist production and the immature class situation*" (25). Engels appreciated the just value of the theories of the three great utopian socialists from the beginning of the 19th century. He recognized their historic merit even while he criticized their basic errors.

Engels also analyzed the contradictions of the capitalist society according to the conceptions of historical materialism, and he point-

ed out that the principal contradiction of this society rests entirely on the social character of large-scale production and the individual ownership of the means of production. Its manifestation on the economic plane is the contradiction and antagonism existing between the organized character of the production in each factory and the anarchy apparent in production in the whole of society, which provokes the economic crises of capitalism. Its manifestation in the plane of classes is the contradiction and struggle existing between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Engels pointed out that there is only one way to resolve these contradictions: “*The proletariat seizes state power and to begin with transforms the means of production into state property*” (26). Starting from that point, Engels showed how Dühring’s attempts to change the capitalist mode of distribution, having as its premise the preservation of the capitalist means of production, and the whole of his project for achieving socialism are only wild dreams, a false socialism and a *de facto* capitalism.

The publication of “Anti-Dühring” by Engels brought to light the reactionary nature of Dühring’s so-called “new socialism”. In tearing off his mask of a reformer in which he was decked out, the book broke his anti-party plot. Furthermore, this criticism allowed for the education of the leaders and rank-and-file members of the Party and raised their theoretical level; it increased the ability of the Party to struggle and sped up the development of the workers’ movement. Dühring, who had only enjoyed a flashy fame for a time, was condemned to silence and disappeared from the scene.

“Anti-Dühring” is a masterwork of Marxism; it is a powerful ideological weapon to fight against both right and left opportunism. Just like the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, they are “*hand-books for every class-conscious worker*” (27).

4. The denunciation and criticism of the “Zurich Three”

After the victory of the German Socialist Workers Party, with the aid and leadership of Marx and Engels, over the reactionary current of Dühring, its development progressed greatly on the ideological and organizational level. In 1876, the Party was publishing 23 newspapers and magazines; in 1877, this number increased to 41; during the 1876 elections to the Reichstag, the Party received 500,000 votes or 36% more than in 1874.

All this caused panic among the German reactionary ruling classes, which tried by every means to put an end to the workers’

movement in their country and to destroy the Party. Using the pretext of two attacks, for which Bismarck placed the blame on the German Socialist Workers Party, in October 1878 he proclaimed the “law to suppress attempts at subversion of public order by the Social Democratic Party” (or the Anti-Socialist Law). This law decreed the immediate banning of all gatherings, all publications and all printed matter and meetings such as “those of the Social Democratic Party, of socialists and communists”. The government could, at will, without any legal procedure, arrest or expel any person considered dangerous to public order. During the two first months that followed the passing of this law, 521 members of the Party were imprisoned, the workers who had socialist ideas were dismissed by their employers and their names were placed on blacklists. During the twelve years that the Anti-Socialist Law was in effect, over 1,300 Party publications were seized, more than 330 worker organizations were dissolved, more than 900 people were deported and 1,500 others detained in jails. The whole country was plunged into the white terror. These circumstances severely tested the Party and each of its members. Having sacrificed everything to the legal struggle in times of peace, the leaders of the German Party were not prepared, neither ideologically nor organizationally, for Bismarck’s surprise attack; when it happened, they panicked and lost their balance, they were unable to discern the orientation corresponding to the circumstances or work out new tactics of struggle. At the instigation of certain Lassallean elements, the Central Committee even launched an appeal for the Party to dissolve itself. The mass membership and the rank-and-file organizations of the Party were thus deprived of leadership, the ties that united them were cut and disorder ensued. The less determined elements of the Party began to fold and to betray one after the other. Individuals such as Höchberg, Schramm and Bernstein, who had taken refuge in Switzerland, from where they edited the Party newspaper, the *Sozialdemokrat*, panicked before the ultra-repressive politics of the enemy. They met to form the infamous “Zurich Committee of Three” and published a manifesto in which they expressed their submission to the reactionary government and begged its pardon. They claimed that between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie there should not be class struggle but, on the contrary, they should reconcile and fraternize; they proclaimed that the Social Democratic Party should not be unilaterally a workers’ party, but a “party of the whole people”, “composed of

all men infused with a sentiment of humanity". They also wanted the Party to again show that "it was not inclined to enter into the bloody and violent revolutionary path, but that it decided... to take the path of legality, that is, of reforms", claiming that the working class could not liberate itself except by submitting to the leadership of the "educated" bourgeois, etc. In a word, they wanted to make the Party a bourgeois reformist party. Parallel to this, among the left opportunists represented by Most and Hasselmann, the cruel repression of the ruling classes had aroused excessive sentiments, and they attempted to replace the organized class struggle with terrorist methods; this led them to adventurist actions. At a time when hesitation and confusion reigned in the Party, Marx and Engels tried to resolutely maintain the spirit of revolutionary initiative and heroic struggle of the members and the working masses. As well, they helped the Party leadership in a friendly manner to analyze the situation and to encourage their combative spirit, to strengthen their confidence and to define a correct tactic of struggle. *"Not to twist and turn under the blows of the opponent, not to whine and moan and stammer excuses that you did not mean any harm – as so many still do. One must hit back, and return two or three blows for every one the enemy strikes"* (28). To promote a possible victory, Marx and Engels taught the leaders of the Party that they should combine clandestine struggle with legal struggle. Under their leadership, the Party created a clandestine organization and also clandestine publications, at the same time that the membership and the revolutionary masses started to use certain legal institutions, such as clubs and associations, to wage the struggle.

Marx and Engels concentrated their attacks against right opportunism, because at that time this constituted the principal danger within the ranks of the Party. In September 1879, they addressed jointly a "Circular Letter to A. Bebel, W. Liebknecht, W. Bracke and others" in which they profoundly denounced and criticized the right capitulationist line of the "Zurich Trio".

In indignantly blaming this line which preached conciliation, they stated: *"For almost 40 years we have emphasized that the class struggle is the immediate motive force of history and, in particular, that the class struggle between bourgeoisie and proletariat is the great lever of modern social revolution; hence we cannot possibly co-operate with men who seek to eliminate that class struggle from the movement"*. *"Hence we cannot co-operate with men who say*

openly that the workers are too uneducated to emancipate themselves, and must first be emancipated from above by philanthropic members of the upper and lower middle classes" (29). These men were found in the Party, they were "falsifiers" and pseudo-revolutionaries that should be excluded. This firm position of Marx and Engels showed the high spirit of principle and high combativeness of the two great revolutionary educators.

At the same time that they were fighting right opportunism, Marx and Engels severely criticized the left opportunist line. They noted that those who held that line had not taken into account the intervening changes in the state of the struggle and advocated suicidal individual terrorist methods; in opposing all legal struggle, this could only lead the whole movement of the German workers directly to an dead end. In spite of that, Most and the others persisted in their errors and waged divisive activities. In September 1879, they published in the newspaper a call to found a new Party and openly engaged in the path to betrayal of the Party.

In August 1880, the German Socialist Workers' Party held a secret congress in Switzerland. The Congress replaced the phrase "use all legal means," which expressed in the Gotha Programme an opportunist point of view, to "use all means" to achieve the objectives of the Party. It also decided to remove Most and all the leaders of the left opportunists who had openly betrayed the Party. Nevertheless, the Congress relaxed the struggle against right opportunism. It notably did not condemn Bernstein and the others, and did not take measures towards them which were required; they limited themselves to removing the "Zurich Trio" from their role of editors of the newspaper that they had held. Putting into play their two-faced counter-revolutionary methods, Bernstein and his followers, after a short and superficial examination, remained underground.

Thanks to the help of Marx and Engels, the German Socialist Workers' Party triumphed over opportunism and overcame the hesitation and confusion of the earlier period of the Anti-Socialist Law; they put into practice a revolutionary line that allowed them to extend their influence and develop the forces of the revolution. In recalling the remarkable activities waged by the German Party at the time of the Anti-Socialist Law, Engels said: "*This too was a revolutionary interval*" (30). The successes obtained by the German Party in that period reinforced again its leading position in the international communist movement.

5. The struggle of Marx and Engels against opportunism in the French, English and other Parties

After the defeat of the Paris Commune, the French movement experienced a brutal decline, and Thiers, bursting with joy, trumpeted that socialism “would not be recovering anytime soon”. Nevertheless, in the short period of five years, the French socialists recovered their strength and resumed their activities. In the latter half of the 1870s, activists of the workers’ movement such as Paul Lafargue and Jules Guesde spread Marxism and struggled resolutely against bourgeois reformism and anarchy. It was in 1879 at Marseille that the first party of the working class in France was founded: the French Workers Party. Marx and Engels supported and guided the creation of this Party with all their strength. In 1880, they took direct part in the work of drawing up the program of the French Workers Party, and Marx orally provided the theoretical section of the general program. Beginning with the experience of the Paris Commune, he insisted on the necessity of transferring the means of production to communal property and on the necessity, to attain this goal, to carry out a social revolution under the leadership of a proletarian party.

After the foundation of the French Workers Party, there was a bitter struggle between two lines present within the Party. The opportunist sect represented by Malon and Brousse, who had infiltrated into the leading organs of the Party, declared in words their adherence to the program while actually they refused the goal fixed by the program: the implementation of communism. These opportunists especially opposed Marx’s ideas of the dictatorship of the proletariat. They advocated maintaining the activities of the working class within the limited possibilities left by the capitalist system, and they advanced some demands that could be satisfied within the conditions of the epoch. This earned them the name of the “Possibilists”. With regards to the principle of the organization of the Party, they insisted that each organ had the right to modify the Party program in order to adapt it to local conditions, which amounted to doing away with the general organization. Marx and Engels supported the Party leaders Lafargue and Guesde (at that time the latter still maintained revolutionary positions), and they helped them to firmly combat the Possibilist faction.

The struggle between the two lines within the Party continually worsened, an open split finally broke out between the Guedists and the Possibilists during the Congress of Saint Etienne in 1882. During this congress, the Possibilists, using the methods of intrigues, falsified the voting cards of delegates to preserve their majority. In the long run, they demanded the modification of the general part of the program and the replacement of this Marxist program with another, opportunist, hoping to drag the Party into the dead end of opportunism. The Guedist faction resolutely opposed this and left the hall to later hold their own congress in Roanne, where they decided to keep the initials of the French Workers Party and its revolutionary program. As for Malon and Brousse, they adopted the name of the French Federation of Socialist Workers, and they totally abandoned the class character and revolutionary principles of the proletariat.

How should one consider this split and the struggles within the French Workers Party? Were they a good or a bad thing? Certainly, while recognizing the inevitable character of this split, they reproached the French Workers Party for uniting with Malon and Brousse at that time.

In response to this situation, Engels had to write: "*In the beginning, when the parti ouvrier was founded, all elements had to be admitted who accepted the program, if they did so with secret reservations that was bound to show later on*" (31). That was what finally happened. After the split in the French Workers Party, Engels, in a letter addressed to Bebel on October 28, 1882, clearly pointed out that this split between the two factions of the Party was inevitable and that the point at issue was a question of principle: Should one conduct the battle as a class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie or was it enough to limit oneself to winning more voters and supporters by putting aside the class character of the movement, which made the split inevitable. Summing up the internal struggle in the German and French Parties, Engels formulated this conclusion: "*The development of the proletariat proceeds everywhere amidst internal struggles and France, which is now forming a workers' party for the first time, is no exception. We in Germany have got beyond the first phase of the internal struggle [with the Lassalleans] other phases still lie before us. Unity is quite a good thing so long as it is possible, but there are things which stand higher than unity. And when, like Marx and myself, one has fought harder all one's life*

long against the alleged Socialists than against anyone else (for we only regarded the bourgeoisie as a class and hardly ever involved ourselves in conflicts with individual bourgeois), one cannot greatly grieve that the inevitable struggle has broken out” (32). With the help of Marx and Engels, the Guesdist faction at that time essentially adopted the Marxist line; it actively directed the struggles of the working class, and its forces grew continually while the Possibilist party was soon reduced to a small sect.

Engels also carried out a resolute struggle against the reformism of the Fabian Society in England. It was a group of supposed socialists created in London in 1884 by bourgeois intellectuals. They took their name from Fabius the Conciliator, a Roman general of the 3rd century BC, who fought by roundabout means and avoiding direct confrontations. In fact, this society also proposed to avoid direct confrontations between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat and wanted to transform capitalist society through reforms without effect. It presented itself with flourishes as a “local community socialism”; the democratic election of local governments which controlled public services such as running water, electricity, streetcars, etc., which could, according to it, allow the progressive achievement of socialism. The Fabian Society appeared in England at a moment when social contradictions were continually increasing and when scientific socialism was penetrating more and more each day. The Fabians were opposed to the Marxist doctrine of the class struggle, the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. As Engels said: “*Fear of the revolution is their fundamental principle*” (33). Engels wrote a series of articles and letters in which he denounced their reactionary efforts to push the proletariat to abandon the revolution and Marxism. Thanks to this criticism and these struggles, the influence of the Fabian Society diminished little by little.

At the same time, Engels criticized the sectarianism and dogmatism of the English Social Democratic Federation and of American socialists.

Thanks to the theoretical weapons of scientific socialism with which Marx and Engels continually provided the proletariat and the laboring masses in the different countries, thanks to the attention that they brought to the development of various workers parties and to the untiring struggles that they waged against the opportunists, the international communist movement was able to advance along a

proletarian revolutionary line and Marxism spread broadly over the workers' movement of all countries.

6. The death of Marx

Under the leadership of Marx and Engels, the international communist movement developed vigorously on the whole European continent. But alas! At a moment when the proletariat had the greatest need from his important leadership, the great revolutionary educator and founder of scientific socialism, Karl Marx, worn out by a lifetime of struggle and difficult and prolonged work, died following a serious illness. He passed away on March 14, 1883, while he was seated at his work table. He was 65 years old.

Marx's intimate comrade in arms, Engels, experienced a great grief. He addressed the socialists of the whole world with announcement telegrams. The funeral ceremony of Marx was held on March 17 at Highgate Cemetery, in the outskirts of London. It was simple and solemn. Present at it were those living with Marx, his comrades in arms, his students and his family. At the funeral, Engels gave a profound speech in front of his tomb, summing up Marx's remarkable life and the immense contribution he had brought to the international proletariat.

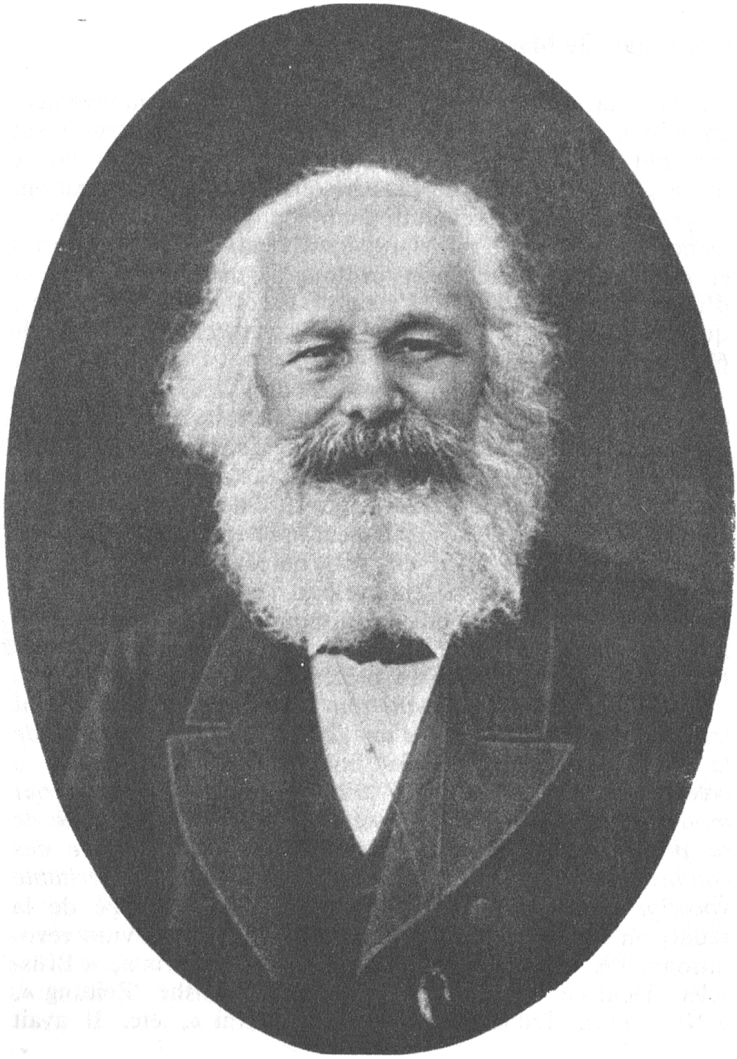
"For Marx was before all else a revolutionist. His real mission in life was to contribute, in one way or another to the overthrow of capitalist society and of the state institutions which it had brought into being, to contribute to the liberation of the modern proletariat, which he was the first to make conscious of its own position and its needs, conscious of the conditions of its emancipation" (34). Since 1848, Marx was occupied with the editing and publication of revolutionary newspapers and magazines: "Rheinische Zeitung", "Vorwärts", "Brüsseler Deutsche Zeitung", "Neue Rheinische Zeitung", "New York Tribune", "Sozialdemokrat", etc. He took part in the revolutions of 1848 in Europe, which he guided; he created the International Working Men's Association and met the aspirations of working-class unity throughout the world; he was committed himself with the greatest sympathy to the Paris Commune in 1871 and guided it; he wrote numerous combative works which summed up the experience of the revolution. Persecuted by reactionary governments, Marx was often hunted along with his family, and he lived in poverty without ever knowing peace. During the years when the revolution was being prepared, one could not separate the founding

and the development of the socialist parties in Europe and the United States from their guidance by Marx. Concerning the national movements in the various countries of Asia, such as China, Persia and India, Marx also paid fraternal attention to them. The struggle was his element. He worked wholeheartedly for the revolution, often even forgetting to sleep and eat. The persecutions of the class enemy, the attacks of the opportunists, the difficulties in his life and the torments of illness never held him back, not even an inch. With boundless energy, he devoted 40 years of his life to writing Volumes I, II and III of "Capital" which proclaimed before the whole world: "*The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated*" (35). When Marx passed away, he was in the midst of correcting the manuscript of Volume III of Capital. At the end of the years, Marx still had intact his revolutionary will and his combative spirit.

Marx was a born fighter. To prevent the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat from going astray by being undermined by bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideology, he waged prolonged and untiring struggles against the Young Hegelians, the "true" socialists, the Proudhonists, the Lassalleans, the trade unionists, the Bakuninists, the supporters of Dühring and all the sects and opportunist currents in all their forms. He displayed a fearless spirit, going against the current, and he defended the fundamental interests of the proletariat and the purity of the proletarian revolution.

The life of Marx was that of a great revolutionary.

"Just as Darwin discovered the law of development of organic nature, so Marx discovered the law of development of human history". "But that is not all. Marx also discovered the special law of motion governing the present-day capitalist mode of production and the bourgeois society that this mode of production has created" (36). The first discovery in question was the materialist conception of history; the second was the doctrine of surplus value. It is precisely thanks to these two great discoveries that socialism ceased to be utopian and became scientific, and only the creation of scientific socialism and its connection with the workers' movement could give birth to the international communist movement and, from there, to give a correct theoretical orientation to the workers'



Marx in 1882

movement. This theory was in turn enriched and developed through the practical experience of the revolution. Marx's position in history, as the creator of the theory of scientific socialism and the founder of the international communist movement, has been established forever.

At Marx's burial, the French socialist Charles Longuet also read funeral eulogies and telegrams of condolence sent by the workers' and socialist parties of Russia, France, Spain and other countries. Finally, Wilhelm Liebknecht, coming from far away, took the floor. In the name of the German Socialist Workers Party, he expressed the Party recognition of its educator and founder. Liebknecht said: "Marx took social democracy from the state of a sect, a clique, to that of a political party; he made it a Party which actually wages victorious struggles, and which will win more victories in the future". "We must strive to the maximum to achieve as soon as possible his teachings and goals. This will be our best homage to his memory."

Marx and his magnificent doctrine will always remain engraved in the heart of millions of proletarians and workers; they will guide them to advance victoriously to the achievement of communism throughout the world!

NOTES

- (1) Lenin, "The Historical Destiny of the Doctrine of Karl Marx," *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, p. 583, in <http://marx2mao.com/Lenin/HDKM13.html>
- (2) F. Engels, "The Peasant War in Germany," in <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1850/peasant-war-germany/ch0b.htm>
- (3) F. Engels, Letter to A. Bebel of June 20, 1873, in https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1873/letters/73_06_20.htm
- (4) F. Engels, Letter to A. Bebel of March 28, 1875, in https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1875/letters/75_03_18.htm
- (5) K. Marx, "Critique of the Gotha Programme," in FLP Peking, 1972, p. 44, in <http://marx2mao.com/M&E/Index.html>
- (6) *Ibid.*, p. 6.

- (7) *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- (8) *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- (9) *Ibid.*, p. 43.
- (10) *Ibid.*, p. 48.
- (11) *Ibid.*, p. 8.
- (12) *Ibid.*, p. 29.
- (13) *Ibid.*, p. 26.
- (14) *Ibid.*, p. 43.
- (15) *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28.
- (16) *Ibid.*, p. 18.
- (17) *Ibid.*, p. 15.
- (18) *Ibid.*, p. 16.
- (19) *Ibid.*, p. 17.
- (20) K. Marx, Letter to F.A. Sorge of October 19, 1877, in Marx & Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 45, p. 283.
- (21) F. Engels, "Anti-Dühring," FLP Peking, 1976, p. 43, in <http://marx2mao.com/M&E/AD78.html>
- (22) *Ibid.*, p. 130.
- (23) *Ibid.*, p. 207.
- (24) *Ibid.*, p. 235-236.
- (25) *Ibid.*, p. 330.
- (26) *Ibid.*, p. 362.
- (27) Lenin, "The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism," *op. cit.*, p. 24.
- (28) F. Engels, Letter to Bernstein of January 18, 1883, in https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1883/letters/83_01_18.htm
- (29) Circular Letter to A. Bebel, W. Liebknecht, W. Bracke and others, in <https://marxists.architexturez.net/archive/marx/works/1879/09/18.htm>

- (30) F. Engels, "Farewell Letter to the Readers of the *Sozialdemokrat*", Marx & Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 77.
- (31) F. Engels, Letter to Bernstein of October 20, 1882, in https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1882/letters/82_10_20.htm
- (32) F. Engels, Letter to Bebel of October 28, 1882, in https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1882/letters/82_10_28.htm
- (33) F. Engels, Letter to F.A. Sorge of January 18, 1893, in https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1893/letters/93_01_18.htm
- (34) F. Engels, "Speech at the Graveside of Karl Marx," in *On Marx*, FLP Peking, 1971, pp. 17-18, at <http://marx2mao.com/M&E/OM77.html#s2>
- (35) K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Part VIII, Chapter XXXII, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1954, p. 715 at <http://marx2mao.com/PDFs/Capital,%201.pdf>
- (36) F. Engels, "Speech at the Graveside of Marx," *op. cit.*, pp. 16, 17.

CHAPTER VI

ENGELS' STRUGGLE TO MAINTAIN AND DEFEND MARX'S REVOLUTIONARY LINE

After the death of Marx, the great responsibility of leading the international communist movement fell completely on the shoulders of Engels.

The new upsurge that the workers' movement knew in the various countries of Europe, with the generalized foundation of workers' parties as well as a broad spreading of Marxism, created the necessary conditions to put in place a new international union of the working class. This was the Second International, founded in 1889, under the personal care of Engels. After the foundation of the new International, Engels, filled with revolutionary energy and a combative spirit for every challenge, fought back tit for tat against the provocations of all the opportunists and waged an untiring struggle to maintain and defend the Marxist proletarian revolutionary line.

1. Engels' struggle to achieve a new international union of the proletariat

After the dissolution of the First International, the idea of the international unity of the proletariat remained engraved in the heart of the workers of all countries. At the beginning of the 1880s, some people had already proposed to the educators of the proletarian revolution, Marx and Engels, to resume the activities of the International or to put in place a new Association. But Marx and Engels thought that the time and conditions were not ripe for that. They always evaluated the question of the foundation of a new International as a response to the level of consciousness of the proletariat and the needs created by the state of development of the class struggle. Engels wrote: "*the next International... will be directly Communist and will openly proclaim our principles*" (1). Engels actively committed himself to prepare the foundation of a new Association, both on the theoretical and on the organizational level.

After the death of Marx, he continued all the work that Marx had not been able to carry out while he was alive. He revised volumes II and III of "Capital", which appeared in 1885 and 1894 respectively. In revising Marx's manuscripts, Engels found in them a summary of the work of the American scholar L. H. Morgan, "Ancient Society", to which he had added his own remarks as well as

some complimentary material. After studying this summary, Engels thought that Morgan's book brought out some new proofs in support of historical materialism and judged it necessary to use this practical material of Morgan as well as Marx's notes to write a book on the subject. This was "The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State", written by Engels in 1884. In this remarkable work, supported by an abundant wealth of historical material and a profound theoretical analysis, Engels showed clearly that the State is the product and the manifestation of the irreconcilable character of class contradictions; he gave an explanation that became classic on the origins and nature of the State, expounding profoundly the Marxist theory of class struggle and showing the historical necessity of the dictatorship of the proletariat, which was also a powerful attack against opportunists of all kinds.

To raise the Marxist theoretical level of the young workers' parties, to clearly mark the boundaries between Marxist philosophy and classical German philosophy, as well as between the Marxist and the opportunist line, Engels wrote in 1886: "Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of German Classical Philosophy." In it he expounded in detail the fundamental principles of dialectical and historical materialism as well as the radical differences between Marxist philosophy and German classic philosophy, and criticized idealism and agnosticism in depth. This remarkable scientific and theoretical work of Engels strongly consolidated the leading position of Marxism in the workers' movement.

Thanks to Engels' untiring energy, the influence of Marxism in the workers' movement increased daily. A new workers' movement of a mass character had an upsurge, and the desire of the workers in all countries to see the strengthening of international unity grew constantly. By the end of the 1880s, the German Socialist Workers Party and the French Workers Party proposed to have an international socialist congress as soon as possible.

While the revolutionaries were starting the work of preparing for the foundation of a new International, the French Possibilists, in collusion with the English trade unionists and the anarchists, were also hastening to prepare the foundation of a new organization to seize the leadership of the workers' movement. In 1888, they met in London, where they decided that the Possibilist Party would be charged with holding an international workers' congress in Paris that same year in order to prepare the founding of a workers organi-

zation that they themselves would control and that would allow them to promote their opportunist line and to divide the international communist movement.

In view of this serious situation, what should one do? Should one to mobilize the masses to expose the reactionary aims of the opportunists, smash their plot aimed at paralyzing the leadership of the workers' movement, and create a new international organization of the proletariat to guide this movement to develop along a revolutionary Marxist line? Or should one renounce the struggle and let the opportunists drag the international workers' movement into the dead end of reformism? This was a question involving decisive choices in the struggle between two classes and two lines.

At this key moment, certain leaders of the German Party, who did not see clearly enough the intrigues of the Possibilists, adopted a conciliatory attitude. They openly broke off the preparatory work that they themselves had earlier decided to take on and started talks with the Possibilists, going so far as proposing to participate in their congress. Likewise, some leaders of the French Workers Party, not as aware of the situation, only later decided to act.

What was at stake was the line and the overall situation. At this serious and decisive time when the destiny of the international communist movement would be determined, Engels, then 68-years old, abandoned without hesitation all his other work and "*flung himself into the fight with the ardor of youth*" (2). First of all he put himself at the head of the socialists of all countries to mercilessly denounce the plot of the Possibilists and their opportunist nature, while seriously criticizing the conciliatory spirit of the German leaders. But the Possibilists were constantly agitating while the others were still not awake; Engels wrote "*you have no idea how naïve the Germans are*" (3). Engels did his best to convince Liebknecht, Bebel and Lafargue, exhorting them to make efforts to found a new International; he showed them how not to abandon the principles by allying with the Possibilist party and to carry out a work of persuasion among the delegates who wanted to attend the opposing congress.

Thanks to the help and education that Engels gave them, Liebknecht, Bebel, Lafargue and others changed their attitude shortly thereafter and vigorously began the work. The young German revolutionary, Clara Zetkin (1857-1933), also took an active part in the preparatory work for the Congress. At the suggestion of Engels, the

workers' parties of the different countries held a preliminary conference at The Hague in February 1889, where it was decided that the International Socialist Congress would be held in Paris in July, the same day as that of the Possibilist party. For Engels, with the holding the two congresses at the same time and the same place, "*the world may see where the genuine movement is concentrated and where the bogus*" (4). Engels was convinced that the revolutionary Marxist line would win total victory.

On July 14, 1889, the hundredth anniversary of the great French Revolution, the revolutionaries and the reformists launched their two antagonistic congresses at the same time. There was an evident contrast between them.

In spite of their frantic efforts and unprincipled manner of recruitment, the Possibilists could only gather a small assembly of splitters, which presented a depressing aspect of abandonment. Besides the representatives of the French Possibilist Party, there were only 70 delegates from 9 countries, for the most part trade unionists, and it was evidently impossible, in this conference lacking any representativity, to found any sort of new international organization. The opportunists' plot to seize power and control of the international workers' movement and to divide it had been a shameful failure.

The Socialist International Congress held by the revolutionaries, in contrast, was animated and solemn. There were 393 worker delegates present from 22 countries in Europe and America; among whom were numerous famous activists and eminent leaders of the workers' movement; this conferred on it a largely international representative character. In the congress hall were numerous red flags and a portrait of Karl Marx had been hung, and banners carrying the rallying cry: "*Workers of the world, unite!*", "*Economic and political expropriation of the capitalist class, collective ownership of the means of production!*" Liebknecht, Bebel, Vaillant, Lafargue, and other known leaders from various workers parties were elected to the presidium of the congress, and W. Liebknecht was chosen as the executive president. It was during this same congress that the foundation of the Second International was proclaimed.

However, during this revolutionary congress, sharp struggles between two lines took place. From the opening of the sessions, some delegates, in the name of unity of the international workers' movement, insisted at all cost on uniting the congress with that of the Possibilists. This proposal encountered strong opposition from a

good number of the delegates. In his address, W. Liebknecht quite rightly pointed out: “*Unification at all cost would be a mistake; only a resolution adopted by the delegates of the other congress and approved by all members of ours would leave hope and possibility for the fusion of the two congresses.*” Liebknecht’s resolution was approved. But the congress of the Possibilists rejected this condition and answered with a series of unreasonable demands, which, were naturally rejected by the leaders of the Second International; thus the plot of the opportunists failed.

Tied up with the revision of Volume III of “Capital”, Engels was unable to attend the congress, but he closely followed its proceedings. Learning that some were advocating an unconditional unification of the two congresses, he launched this warning: “*Fusion on rational terms is perfectly all right; the eyewash, however, consists in the clamor for fusion à tout prix (at any cost) which some of our own people are raising.*” (5). After the unification plan of the Possibilists failed, Engels, who was delighted, wrote in a letter to F. A. Sorge: “*our sentimental brethren, the advocates of reconciliation, received a savage kick on the backside in return for all their assurances of friendship*” (6).

The Paris Congress of the Second International adopted a resolution of great historical significance: to commemorate the heroic struggle waged by the Chicago workers on May 1st 1866 for the eight-hour work day, they decreed May 1st a general holiday for the proletariat of the whole world, International Workers Day. The congress called on the proletariat of all countries to organize big demonstrations every year on this date in favor of the eight-hour work day and to apply the resolutions of the Paris congress. Since then, the 1st of May has become the celebration of the struggle and unity of the proletariat and the working people of the entire world.

The leading role played by the Paris Congress in the workers’ movement was rapidly noted, and the proletariat of all countries responded enthusiastically to the call for “the celebration of the 1st of May”. On the 1st of May 1890, in numerous cities in France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Holland, the United States, Sweden and Norway, impressive demonstrations were held. Engels, who was already 70-years old, participated in a protest march of the London workers that day. In describing this demonstration, Engels, filled with emotion, wrote: “*the European and American proletariat is reviewing its fighting forces, mobilized for the first time, mobilized*

as one army, under one flag... And today's spectacle will open the eyes of the capitalists and landlords of all countries to the fact that today the working men of all countries are united indeed." (7)."

2. Engels' struggle against right and left opportunism in the first period of the Second International

The Second international was made up of very diverse elements. Among them were revolutionary Marxists as well as anarchists and reformists of all kinds; this explains the bitter struggles within it.

During the first period, from its foundation up to 1896, the second International held three new congresses: the second was held in Brussels in August 1891; the third in Zurich in August 1893; and the fourth in London in July 1896.

In the first period, the Second International fought actively against anarchism. After the defeat of the Paris Commune, when world capitalism as in the process of passing to the stage of imperialism, many ruined petty bourgeois swelled the ranks of the workers, bringing with them their non-proletarian ideology, which facilitated the penetration of anarchism into the workers movement. The anarchists were made up especially at that time of French unionists, the "Young" in Germany and numerous supporters of anarchism found in Holland, Austria, Italy, Spain and Switzerland.

The anarchists demanded for the individual an imaginary absolute freedom and an absolute equality. They were adversaries of the dictatorship of the proletariat, denying the necessity of organizing proletarian parties and advocating making revolution using violent methods, whatever the moment, without taking into consideration the objective conditions. They opposed the careful work of penetration among the masses and all legal struggles.

These anarchist ideas greatly damaged the revolutionary movement, which at that time was in the preparatory process of accumulating forces. As long as the conditions were not ready for the insurrection, the proletarian party had to use its legal status to carry out its work; if it abandoned its legal struggle and interrupted its powerful effort of propaganda and organization among the worker masses, it would risk losing the close links that united it with these masses. As Lenin pointed out, the anarchist current leads to "*Subordination of the working class to bourgeois politics in the guise of negation of politics*" (8).

The struggle against anarchism in the first period of the Second International concentrated principally on three questions: on that of daily economic struggles, the anarchists advocated the abandonment of this kind of struggle in all its forms, seeing it as a waste of time; on that of participation in the parliamentary struggles, the anarchists declared without further analysis that this kind of participation was a betrayal to the revolution; finally, on that of condemnation of militarism and the attitude towards war, the anarchists were a priori opposed to all war.

During the two congresses of the International held in Brussels and Zurich, the main points on the agenda were the struggle against anarchism. Liebknecht and Bebel rejected the mistaken proposals of the anarchists and presented theirs, which were essentially correct. The London Congress in 1896 represented a total victory in the struggle against anarchism.

However, one tendency hid behind another. Although the revolutionary faction of the Second International fought against anarchism and won, it let down its guard with regard to right opportunism. Some leaders of the German Party, intoxicated with their success in legal struggles, no longer thought about anything more than winning votes and obtaining a majority in the Reichstag [Parliament]. Their right-wing positions were constantly cropping up and they soon caused a real tidal wave of right opportunism.

When the Second International was founded, Engels was already 69 years old; in spite of everything, with the will and combative spirit and tenacity characteristic of revolutionaries, he fought tirelessly to maintain the principles of the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. In this struggle, Engels paid special attention to the German Party and principally unleashed his arrows against both right and left opportunism within that Party. Since the German Social Democratic Party was the oldest and most influential party at that time, enjoying a great prestige, the line it followed greatly influenced the whole international communist movement. Therefore, in criticizing opportunism within that party, at the same time it criticized opportunism in the whole Second International; conversely, in developing and following a correct line, it also promoted the development of the international workers' movement as a whole.

Thanks to the leadership of Marx and Engels, the German Social Democratic Party, after having survived the difficult tests of the

period of the Anti-Socialist Law, guided the German workers movement; this allowed them to achieve great success. In March 1890, Bismarck was forced to resign, and in October, the Anti-Socialist Law was annulled; this was the political failure of the reactionary politics of Bismarck, who always tried to repress the workers' movement by force. To continue to preserve their domination, the ruling classes changed their methods and put into effect so-called liberal social reforms: making Sunday a day of rest; forbidding work by school-age children; fixing the limit of the work day at 11 hours; maternity leave for women. They hoped that with this seductive policy, they would corrupt and divide the ranks of the working class.

The victories of the proletariat and the tactical changes of the ruling classes provoked a flurry of opportunist ideas in the Party; on the one hand there was a surge of left opportunists, the "Young", and, on the other hand, of right opportunists, of which Vollmar was the representative. While he criticized the "Young", Engels resolutely combated right opportunism, which day by day was becoming the main tendency within the German Party.



Engels and Bebel (4th from right) during the Congress of the Second International at Zurich in 1893

Most of the "Young" were university students and young writers, who were self-proclaimed theoreticians and leaders of the Party. Behind a left phraseology, they frantically advocated anarchist tacti-

cal conceptions. They rejected the necessary legal struggles of the Party and opposed using its legal status to wage a work of agitation, propaganda and organization, accusing it of making errors in its political line. Having grossly deformed the tactical principles of Marxism, they carried out adventurist activities cut off from the masses. They also spread false rumors, saying that their principles of action were in accordance with those of Engels. Engels entirely disassociated himself from these shameless practices, and showed that their theory was an atrociously disfigured Marxism and their practice, entirely cut off from the masses, *“would be sufficient to bury the strongest party of millions under the well-earned laughter of the whole hostile world”* (9). Engels also denounced the insane ambition of the “Young” to become leaders and declared that they had only received an “academic education”, that they did not have the qualities of loyal devotion to the service of the working class and that they did not want to join the ranks of ordinary fighters. He severely criticized the inconsiderate acts of these young intellectuals in remarking: *“they, the ‘academically educated’ all in all have much more to learn from the workers than the workers from them.”* (10). Thanks to the criticism and the help that Engels gave them, a good number of the members of the “Young” faction mended their ways, but their leaders persisted in their erroneous positions, devoted to diversionist activities, and ended up being excluded from the Party. From that point on, the influence of the “Young” was progressively eliminated.

Right opportunism, led by Vollmar, had already become an even more dangerous tendency within the Party at that time. G. H. Vollmar was born into a family of Munich civil servants. In 1875, after leaving the German army during the Franco-Prussian war, he joined the social democratic movement in which, from 1879 to 1880, he was put in charge of editing the “Sozialdemokrat” that the Party published in Zurich. After the Anti-Socialist Law was repealed in 1890, Vollmar applauded the liberal politics of the ruling classes. He heaped praise on them, and presented their tactical change as a manifestation of “true friendship towards the workers”, as “an action conforming to the interests of the whole people” and consequently considered that the Party of the proletariat should applaud the “good will” of the ruling classes. With all his might he advocated parliamentarism, opposed violent revolution and maintained that the proletariat could “attain all its objectives by parliamentary means”.

This was a right opportunist, anti-Marxist line of traitors of the proletariat. However, thanks to the support of part of the leaders of the Party that he had won over, such as Bernstein, Kautsky and company, he was neither counteracted nor criticized in time, but, quite the opposite, succeeded more and more in extending his influence. Liebknecht himself was taken in by him and wrongly recognized the possibility of a peaceful transition, rejecting violent revolution. All that showed that right opportunism had already become the main danger within the Party.

Engels grasped very well the extremely dangerous character of right opportunism. Furthermore, while combating anarchism, he concentrated the essence of his force against right opportunism. In the space of six months, from January to June 1891, with surprising energy, and holding firmly the banner of the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, he took three rigorous measures that brought a severe blow to the right-opportunist current and defended the revolutionary principles of Marxism.

The first measure taken by Engels was to strive to make known publicly the brilliant document of Marx, "Critique of the Gotha Programme".

In October, 1890, at the Halle Congress of the German Party, it was decided, after discussion of the points raised during the Erfurt Congress of the same year, to elaborate a new Party program to replace the old "Gotha Programme". To make the Party membership and the masses understand the essence of the scope of criticism levelled by Marx against Lassalleanism in the 1870s, to eliminate completely the influence of this current and to determine a correct program on the theoretical and political level, Engels decided to publish Marx's "Critique of the Gotha Programme" for the general public. But Kautsky tried in every way possible to block this project. Thanks to the perseverance and tenacity of Engels, Kautsky was eventually forced to publish, in January 1891, in the theoretical journal of the German Social-Democratic Party the "Neue Zeit", the famous "Critique of the Gotha Programme" by Marx, which had been sitting in a drawer for fifteen years.

This publication struck up a wind of panic in the camp of all the opportunists and provoked strong reactions within the German Party. Kautsky went as far as to claim in the Party magazine: "Marx's point of view on Lassalle is not the one of the German Social Democratic Party." The Party delegates declared also at the tribune of the

Reichstag: “The Social Democratic Party does not share Marx’s views on the dictatorship of the proletariat.” Even Liebknecht affirmed: ‘The members of the German Social Democratic Party are neither Marxists nor Lassalleans, they are social democrats.’ These positions encouraged Engels to persevere in the criticism of the opportunist current within the Party.

The second measure was taken by Engels, in March 1891, on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Paris Commune; he re-published “The Civil War in France” to which he added an introduction.

In that introduction, he insisted on the extreme importance for the proletariat to take up arms, to go directly against right opportunism within the Party, which opposed the taking of power by armed force. In the great class combat between the revolution and the counter-revolution, the ruling classes always used their arms to repress the revolution and protect their reactionary rule. “*The disarming of the workers was the first commandment for the bourgeois, who were at the helm of the state*” (11). Consequently, it is only through taking up revolutionary arms to oppose those of the counter-revolution that the proletariat can triumph. For Lenin, the assessment by Engels “*is as concise as it is expressive. The essence of the matter – also, by the way, on the question of the state (has the oppressed class arms?) is here remarkably well grasped*” (12). In order to emancipate itself, the proletariat must demolish the old power of the State and replace it with a new, really democratic one. This new State power is precisely the dictatorship of the proletariat. Engels severely criticized the fear that the dictatorship of the proletariat inspired in right opportunists. “*The Social-Democratic philistine... Well and good, gentlemen, do you want to know what this dictatorship looks like? Look at the Paris Commune. That was the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*” (13).

After having published the “Critique of the Gotha Programme” and re editing “The Civil War in France”, Engels, without considering his physical fatigue or the illness that was undermining him, threw himself into a new battle. At the end of June 1891, he took the last of three measures in writing the famous “Critique of the Draft Social Democratic Program of 1891”. After the Halle Congress, Liebknecht had written a new draft program with the idea of submitting it for discussion at the Party Congress, which was to take place in Erfurt in October 1891. In mid-June, Engels, who had re-

ceived the draft, thought that it still had a significant number of opportunist concepts, even if he found it a bit more progressive than the “Gotha Programme”. To deliver a blow to right opportunism in the German Party and to allow this party to build its own program on a Marxist basis, Engels wrote “A Critique of the Draft Social-Democratic Program of 1891” or “A Critique of the Draft of the Erfurt Program”, in which he maintained the Marxist doctrine of the violent revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. After receiving the criticism and suggestions of Engels, Liebknecht accepted only some of them and after making some brief revisions to his draft, he published it in July 1891 in the organ of the German Party, “Vorwärts”, for discussion by the whole Party. Some on the editorial committee of the journal “Neue Zeit” judged that the draft that had just been published had many shortcomings and, for their part, offered a new draft program which, after being examined and revised during the Erfurt Congress, was approved unanimously. The Erfurt Program represented an advance in comparison to the Gotha Programme; it expounded the principle of the inevitable character of the elimination of capitalism and the triumph of socialism and pointed out that, in order to transform society, the proletariat had to take power. However, the Erfurt Program had some serious weaknesses; for example it did not pose the essential question of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is why “A Critique of the Draft of the Erfurt Program” was also addressed to the Erfurt Program. As all the parties who adhered to the Second International had taken the Erfurt Program as a model, Engels’ critique of the opportunist conceptions of this program was also a critique of the opportunist tendencies of the Second International as a whole.

These three measures taken by Engels burst like so many bombs on right opportunism and accelerated the development of the international communist movement. If, at the beginning of its activities, the Second International was able to apply an essentially Marxist line and if opportunism was not able to take advantage, the merit goes foremost to Engels’ relentless battle against opportunism.

3. Engels and the peasant question

In order to maintain the principles of the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, Engels waged a hard struggle against the opportunist line on the peasant question in the French and German parties. Starting from the interests of the proletarian

revolution, Marx and Engels had always attached great importance to the peasant problem. But the different parties in the Second International had insufficient knowledge on this problem, and they neglected it. At the beginning of the 1870s, the rapid development of capitalism had provoked the ruin of numerous peasants, and the polarization of the peasantry was particularly notable in countries with a large rural population, such as France and Germany. The peasants' hatred towards their governments grew without stopping, and the peasant movement had a new upsurge. It was only at this period that the parties of the Second International began to get interested in the question and to discuss an agrarian program for the Party.

The French and German leaders had not studied the peasant question from proletarian positions, but only from the angle of the increase of their voice during the parliamentary elections; they therefore adopted an opportunist policy towards the peasants. During the Marseille Congress, in 1892, and the one in Nantes, in 1894, the French Workers Party had approved the agrarian program of the Guesdist faction, which openly advocated backward opinions such as the defense of rural property, of small individual production and even of the exploitation exercised by the rich peasants. The German Social Democrat Party had the same type of erroneous views on the peasant question. During the Frankfurt Congress of 1894, Vollmar proposed an agrarian program that tended to protect the economy of the rich peasants and promised the agrarian exploiters measures designed to save them and permit them to escape ruin. This program sparked a lively debate at the congress. Pleading in favor of his opportunist conceptions, Vollmar cited an example of the Nantes Program of the French Party and lied in stating that this program had received direct approval from Engels. Given this situation, Engels considered it his duty to openly criticize the Nantes program and Vollmar's right-opportunist line. In a letter addressed to the editorial board of *Vorwärts*, he declared that the information provided by Vollmar on this matter was completely false. He also explained that he had in no way approved the Nantes program, but on the contrary he had disavowed it. Engels judged the agrarian politics of Vollmar as "*actually further to the right than that of the petty bourgeoisie*" (14).

In 1894, in order to unmask and criticize the opportunist line and policy of the French and German parties on the peasant ques-

tion, to clarify the Marxist theory and policy on this question and to educate the workers parties of the various European countries and help them correctly resolve the peasant question, Engels published his book "The Peasant Question in France and Germany", in which he declared a merciless war against the reactionary line of the right opportunists on the peasant question.

To transform the peasantry into an allied army of the revolution or to gain their support to win votes: this was the key question at that time in the struggle between two lines on the peasant problem. Engels severely criticized the mistaken line that placed the peasant question in the parliamentary sphere. He stated that "*the peasant is a very essential factor of the population, production and political power*" (15), that this was even more true for countries in which a small-peasant economy dominated. If the revolutionary parties did not mobilize and organize the peasants, reaction would probably mislead them in order to use them. The experience of the 1848 revolution in France, and later of the Paris Commune, had clearly shown that, without the support of the peasant masses, it would be impossible for the revolutionary proletarian movement to triumph. If Napoleon III had snatched the power, it was because he was able to extort the support of the peasants. The right opportunists, such as Vollmar, continued to make promises to the peasants but only to coax them to win their votes and use them to serve their opportunist line. Engels remarked judiciously: "*it is not in our interests to win the peasant overnight, only to lose him again on the morrow if we cannot keep our promise*" (16). We have to keep to proletarian principles, educate the peasants to make the proletarian revolution under the leadership of the working class; at the same time, the only way for the working class to guarantee the victory of the revolution is to unite the peasants around them and to build a solid alliance between the workers and peasants. To do this, Engels launched an appeal to the parties of the different countries: "*in order to conquer political power this party must first go from the towns to the country, must become a power in the countryside.*" (17). Thus the peasants, "*the 'picked regiments' of the Prussian army will become Social-Democratic, which will result in a shift of power that is pregnant with an entire upheaval*" (18).

Was it necessary to maintain the class line of the proletariat and form a solid worker-peasant alliance, or was it necessary to unite all the peasants without any class distinction? That was another

er important question of the struggle between the two lines on the peasant question at that period.

Without analyzing the class differences existing in the countryside, the opportunists in the French and German parties had mistakenly advocated “joining all the elements of agricultural production”. Using the Marxist method of class analysis, Engels methodically studied the economic status and political attitude of the different classes in the French and German countryside at that period and laid out a class line and fundamental political principles that the proletarian parties should follow in leading the peasantry.

Engels noted that the rural population in Germany was divided into several strata: agricultural workers, small peasants, middle peasants, big peasants, etc. The agricultural workers were the proletariat of the countryside; the Party should unite them and support them.

The small peasants (owners of small parcels of land or farmers) represented the great majority of the rural population in France and Germany. They lived in bad conditions, which continued to worsen, year after year. Also the small peasants would be the future proletariat, and for the proletarian revolution to triumph, the socialist parties would have to win them in order to establish a solid alliance between the workers and peasants.

Engels also analyzed the situation of the middle peasants in southern Germany. Their position in the capitalist system was very unstable, and at any moment they could fall into the ranks of the small peasants, which would also make it possible to unite with them. As to the big peasants, or rich peasants, one could at a certain moment establish an alliance with them against the big landowners. But the latter, Engels pointed out, were the target of the revolution, and when the Social Democrat Party had power in its hands, it would take over the land they owned in the same way as they would confiscate the factories from their owners.

Regarding the peasant question, the banner carried by the opportunists to unite all the productive elements of the countryside amounted in fact to defending the system of salaried exploitation of the countryside.

Another important question had come forward in the struggle between the two lines on the peasant question of that period; was it necessary to guide the peasants along the path of socialism, to persevere in its progress and to prevent it from going backwards, or

should one leave the peasants alone and let them follow the capitalist path?

In their respective agrarian programs, the German and French parties had some completely mistaken concepts: they considered as the fundamental interest of the peasants their pitiful desire to preserve at all cost their small plot of land in order to avoid ruin under the conditions of capitalism. They shared this deeply held instinct of ownership with the small peasants. They believed that, even after the working class took power, it would be necessary to preserve their private ownership, to protect small production and even the exploitation by the big peasants. All that was not only absurd; it was backward, and it was against the program of the Party, socialist principles and the laws of social development. For Engels, there was an irreconcilable antagonism, on the one hand, between socialist principles and, on the other hand, private property, small production and exploitation of wage labor. This *“attempt to protect the small peasant in his property does not protect his liberty but only the particular form of his servitude; it prolongs a situation in which he can neither live nor die”* (19). Under the conditions of capitalism, it is beyond doubt that big production necessarily crushes the small, in the same way that a locomotive crushed the wheelbarrow. This is why trying to save the peasants by protecting their small property is not only reactionary in theory, but even unachievable in practice; this is the worst service that one could render the peasants.

So, where was the way out? Engels considered that the working class could not, under capitalism, prevent the peasants from being ruined and disappearing, and that the peasants could not escape a worse and more miserable situation as small producers except by committing themselves to make revolution, by uniting with the working class to overturn capitalism and, with the help of the political power of the working class, to channel the peasantry onto a path of socialist cooperation. On this point Engels had already noted in one of his letters to Bebel in 1886 that cooperative production was the key link in the transition towards a communist economy.

How to bring the peasants along the path of cooperative socialist production? Engels thought that to attract them to the cooperatives, it was necessary to maintain the principle of voluntary adhesion and to proceed with the aid of example. For him, it by no means involved the expropriation of the small peasants by force, but of replacing their production and their individual property by the

production and property of agricultural cooperatives; it did not mean using coercive means, but of furnishing models and State aid. This is how one would bring the peasants along the long path of the revolution, while the opportunists could only hold the peasants back and bring them along the miserable impasse of capitalism.

This work of Engels struck a hard blow to the opportunist line on the peasant question in the Second International; it developed the Marxist theory on the alliance between workers and peasants and represented a precious guide to allow the proletarian parties to lead the peasant movement.

4. The death of Friedrich Engels

Since 1894, Engel's health had been continually deteriorating. By the springtime of 1895, his suffering worsened and his doctor diagnosed him with an advanced cancer of the esophagus. In spite of frequent torment with the pain of the illness, Engels continued right up to his last breath to work and fight heart and soul for the revolutionary cause of the international proletariat, as he had always done. There was no end to the visits he received from comrades and companions in arms, to correspond with them to help them and encourage them in waging their revolutionary struggles.

His suffering became increasingly great, and medicine could do nothing more for him; the great educator of the proletariat died on August 5, 1895. The sad news of the death of Engels was felt with profound mourning among the proletariat of the entire world.

Respecting his last wishes, his comrades gave him simple and solemn honors. Representatives of the proletariat and old friends from all over the world attended, among them Liebknecht and Bebel from the German Party, Lafarge from the French party; Eleanor Marx and E. Aveling, who led the workers' movement in England, also many Belgian, Russian and Italian representatives. As Engels had wished, his body was cremated and his ashes thrown into the sea near the beaches of Eastbourne where he had loved to rest when he was alive.

Engels' life had been one of revolutionary struggles. With Marx, holding high the great banner of the proletarian revolution, with a strong revolutionary spirit he had proclaimed before the entire world the inevitable ruin of the bourgeoisie and the unescapable victory of the proletariat. Marxist philosophy and political economy that Marx and he had created, as well as the theory of scientific

socialism, had shown the proletariat the revolutionary path to get rid of the exploitation and domination of capital. Engels and Marx had always been in the front ranks of the struggle; they had been proletarian revolutionary combatants and at the same time great educators of the proletariat. With Marx, Engels founded the League of Communists; he had personally taken part in the revolution of 1848 in Europe and had fought in the ranks of the insurgents. With Marx, he had built the First International, he had been involved with the foundation and construction of the workers' parties and, faithful to principles, he had struggled without compromise against opportunism of all forms. After the death of Marx, Engels had continued his task of adviser and educator of socialist Europeans, he had waged remarkable struggles against right and left opportunism, defended and developed Marxism and led the proletarian parties of different European countries and of America in founding the Second International, which allowed him to develop and expand the revolutionary forces of the international proletariat.

In the heart of workers of the whole world, the name of Engels is linked with that of Marx; they represent the symbol of revolution, the symbol of socialism and communism. In the last years, Engels revised and edited the posthumous work of Marx: volumes II and III of Capital. He himself left to the proletariat remarkable works such as "The Condition of the Working Class in England", "Anti-Dühring", "The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State", "Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classic German Philosophy", and many others. These works constitute a precious theoretical heritage and they played a predominant role in the spreading and the defense of Marxism. Engels' book "Dialectics of Nature" opened new domains in the history of philosophy. Engels also wrote numerous texts on military questions, which made a singular contribution to the Marxist doctrine in this domain.

Just as Marx, Engels had expressed his strong solidarity for the struggles of the oppressed nations and they have supported them in denouncing the colonialists without compromise. During their lives, they followed with warm attention the revolutionary struggles of the Chinese people to whom they extended an important support and great encouragement. When, in 1856, the Second Opium War broke out, Engels denounced the acts of piracy and lying propaganda of English imperialism, and pointed out the just character of the war of the Chinese people; he had condemned without mercy the aggres-

sion of the former Czars against the people. All this had constituted a great support for the revolutionary anti-imperialist struggle of the Chinese people.

Engels had a vast knowledge. Marx often said that he was a living encyclopedia. His contribution to the international workers' movement was inestimable, but he never took pride from his knowledge or his great prestige, quite the contrary remaining always simple and modest. The socialist parties of different countries, who all recognized him as their leader, honored and took care of him, but he always repeated that all the merit came from Marx. He called himself the "second fiddle" of Marxism and added: "*I must harvest the glory and the honor the seed for which was sown by Karl Marx, a greater man than me. So I can only pledge myself to devote the remainder of my life to the active service of the proletariat*" (20).

Engels was the intimate comrade in arms of Marx and he dedicated all his life to the cause of the emancipation of the international proletariat. Lenin wrote of him: "*After his friend Karl Marx (who died in 1883), Engels was the finest scholar and teacher of the modern proletariat all over the civilized world*" (21).

The great doctrine of Marx and Engels, as well as their combative spirit, remains forever engraved in the heart of the proletariat and the working people of the entire world; they always inspire us to wage without rest the tasks of the revolution until the victory.

NOTES

- (1) F. Engels, "Letter to F.A. Sorge," September 12, 1874, in https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1874/letters/74_09_12.htm
- (2) Preface to the Russian translation of the book: "Letters by Johannes Becker, Joseph Dietzgen, Frederick Engels, Karl Marx, and others to Friedrich Sorge and others," Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, p. 369.
- (3) F. Engels, "Letter to F.A. Sorge," June 8, 1889, *Marx & Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 48, p. 335, in http://www.hekmatist.com/Marx%20Engles/Marx%20%20Engels%20Collected%20Works%20Volume%2048_%20Ka%20-%20Karl%20Marx.pdf
- (4) F. Engels, "Letter to F.A. Sorge," July 17, 1889, *ibid.*, p. 354.

- (5) *Ibid.*, p. 353
- (6) F. Engels, "Letter to F.A. Sorge," July 20, 1889, *ibid.*, p. 356.
- (7) K. Marx and F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, FLP Peking, 1970, p. 22.
- (8) "Anarchism and Socialism," Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 328
- (9) "Reply to the Editors of the Sächsische Arbeiter-Zeitung", September 13, 1890, *Marx & Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 69, in http://www.hekmatist.com/Marx%20Engles/Marx%20%20Engels%20Collected%20Works%20Volume%2027_%20Ka%20-%20Karl%20Marx.pdf
- (10) *Ibid.*, p. 71.
- (11) K. Marx, "The Civil War in France," *op. cit.*, p. 3
- (12) Lenin, "The State and Revolution," *op. cit.*, p. 89.
- (13) K. Marx, "The Civil War in France," *op. cit.*, pp. 17-18.
- (14) F. Engels, Letter to W. Liebknecht, November 24, 1894, in *Marx & Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 50, p. 374, in http://www.hekmatist.com/Marx%20Engles/Marx%20%20Engels%20Collected%20Works%20Volume%2050_%20Ka%20-%20Karl%20Marx.pdf
- (15) F. Engels, "The Peasant Question in France and in Germany," in *Marx & Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 47, p. 483, in <http://www.koorosh-modaresi.com/MarxEngels/V27.pdf>
- (16) *Ibid.*, p. 495
- (17) *Ibid.*, p. 484.
- (18) *Ibid.*, p. 502.
- (19) *Ibid.*, p. 490.
- (20) F. Engels, "To the Editors of the Berliner Volksblatt," *Marx & Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 86, *op. cit.*
- (21) "Frederick Engels," Lenin *On Marx and Engels*, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

NAME INDEX

- ALBERT (real name Alexandre Martin, 1815-1895), French worker, socialist; member of the provisional government in 1848.
- ALEXANDER II (1818-1881), Emperor of Russia from 1855 to 1881.
- AVELING Edward (1851-1898), English physician, writer, participated in the translation of Volume I of Capital into English. Married since 1884 with Marx's daughter, Eleanor.
- BAKUNIN Mikhail Alexandrovich (1814-1876), Russian democrat and publicist; took part in the revolution of 1848-1849 in Germany; anarchist theoretician; a member of the First International, he declared himself there a bitter enemy of Marxism; at the Hague Congress in 1872, he was expelled from the International for his splitting activities
- BEBEL Auguste (1840-1913), well-known militant in the German workers' movement; from 1867 he headed the League of the German Workers' Associations, member of the First International; from 1867, deputy of the Reichstag; one of the founders and leaders of the German social democracy, friend and comrade in arms of Marx and Engels; militant of the Second International.
- BERNSTEIN Eduard (1850-1932), German social democrat, publicist; from 1881 to 1890, editor of the newspaper *Sozial demokrat*; delegate to the international workers' congresses of 1880 and 1893; after the death of Engels he openly preached the revision of Marxism from reformist positions.
- BISMARCK Otto, Prince von (1815-1898), German statesman and diplomat, representative of Prussian squires; Minister-President of Prussia (1862-1871), Chancellor of the German Empire (1871-1890).
- BLANC Louis (1811-1882), petty-bourgeois socialist, French historian; in 1848, member of the provisional government and chair of the Luxembourg commission; from August 1848 one of the leaders of the petty-bourgeois émigrés in London.
- BLANQUI Louis-Auguste (1805-1881), French revolutionary, utopian communist;

during the revolution of 1848 he rallied to the extreme left of the proletarian and democratic movement of France; spent many years in prison.

BORN Stephan (real name Simon Buttermilch) (1824-1898), German worker, member of the League of Communists; during the revolution of 1848-1849, representative of reformism within the German workers' movement.

BRACKE Wilhelm (1842-1880), German Social Democrat, one of the founders (1869) and leaders of the Social Democratic Workers' Party (Eisenachers); he was close to Marx and Engels, fought the Lassalleans.

BROUSSE Paul (1884-1912), French petty-bourgeois socialist, leader of the opportunist wing of the Possibilist Party.

CAMPHAUSEN Ludolph (1803-1890), German banker, one of the leaders of the liberal Rhine bourgeoisie; from March to June 1848, Minister-President of Prussia.

CREMER William-Randall (1838-1908), representative of the trade unions, reformist. At the founding of the First International, elected

Secretary General and remained so until 1886. Later, member of the Liberal Party, member of Parliament (1885-1895) (1900-1908).

DARWIN Charles-Robert (1809-1882), great English naturalist, father of evolutionism.

DOMBROWSKI Jaroslaw (1836-1871), Polish revolutionary democrat, took part in the national liberation movement in Poland in the 1860s; General of the Paris Commune; from the beginning of May 1871, commander-in-chief of all its armed forces; killed on the barricades.

DÜHRING Eugen Karl (1883-1921), German eclectic philosopher, follower of vulgar economics, representative of reactionary petty-bourgeois socialism; his philosophy was inspired by idealism, vulgar materialism and metaphysical positivism; from 1863 to 1877 was private-docent at the University of Berlin.

DUNAND Ernest (? -1871), fighter in the Paris Commune.

DUNAND Félix (? -1871), fighter in the Paris Commune.

ENGELS Friedrich (1820-1895).

EUGENIE (Eugenia Maria de Montijo de Guzman, Countess of Teba) (1826-1920), empress, wife of Napoléon III.

FERDINAND I (1793-1854), Emperor of Austria from 1835 to 1848.

FERRE Théophile Charles (1845-1871), French revolutionary, Blanquist, member of the Paris Commune, member then leader of the General Security Committee and substitute for the procurator of the Commune: shot by Versailles.

FEUERBACH Ludwig (1804-1872), great German philosopher, materialist and atheist. Despite its limited and contemplative character, Feuerbach's materialism is one of the theoretical sources of Marxist philosophy on the theoretical level.

FOURRIER Charles (1772-1837), a great French utopian socialist.

FREDERIC-GUILLAUME III (1770-1840), King of Prussia from 1797 to 1840.

GOTTSCHALK Andréas (1815-1849), German doctor, member of the Cologne commune of the League of Communists. President of the Cologne Workers' Asso-

ciation in 1848, he disagreed with Marx on the tactics to be adopted during the revolution.

GRÜN Karl (1817-1887), German petty-bourgeois publicist, in the mid-1840s one of the representatives of "true" socialism; follower of Proudhon.

GUESDE Jules (1845-1922), one of the founders and leaders of the Socialist Party of France and of the Second International. Before World War I was at the head of the left, revolutionary wing of the party. At the start of the war, he entered the French bourgeois government.

GUIZOT François-Pierre-Guillaume (1787-1874), French bourgeois statesman and historian; from 1840 to 1848 in fact directed the exterior and interior policy of France.

HANSEMANN David (1790-1864), big German industrialist and banker, one of the leaders of the liberal bourgeoisie of the Rhineland; Minister of Finance of Prussia (March-September 1848).

HASSELMANN Wilhelm (born in 1844), a leader of the General Association of German Workers founded by

Lassalle; from 1871 to 1875 editor of the *Neuer Sozialdemokrat*; from 1875 member of the German Social Democratic Party; in 1880 he was expelled from the party for his anarchist activity.

HEGEL Georg Wilhelm Friedrich (1770-1831), great German philosopher, objective idealist and dialectician; the most illustrious representative of classical German philosophy. What makes Hegel's historical significance is his detailed study of idealist dialectics, one of the theoretical sources of Marxist dialectics.

HESS Moses (1812-1875), German journalist, young Hegelian, founder and editor of the *Rheinische Zeitung*. Quarreled with Marx and Engels when he rallied to "true" socialism. Member of the League of Communists. Joined the Willich-Schapper faction when the League split in 1850. Supporter of Lassalle during the 1850s.

HÖCHBERG Karl (1853-1885), journalist, German right-wing social democrat. When the Anti-Socialist Law came into force (1878-1906), he blamed his party's revolutionary tactics and called on

the workers to unite with the bourgeoisie. With Bernstein and Schramm, was part of the "Zurich Trio". These opportunist views were severely criticized by Marx and Engels.

KANT Emmanuel (1724-1804), great German philosopher, father of German idealism. "The essential character of Kant's philosophy is that it reconciles materialism and idealism, establishes a compromise between one and the other, associated in a single system two different and opposed currents of philosophy" (Lenin). The tendency to take up Kantian conceptions or to reconcile Marx and Kant was always characteristic of the revisionists.

KAUTSKY Karl (1854-1938), one of the leaders of German social democracy and the Second International; adhered to Marxism, of which he was later a renegade, became the ideologue of centrism (Kautskyism), the most pernicious variety of opportunism. During the First World War, social-chauvinist, author of the reactionary theory of ultra-imperialism. Spoke out against the socialist revolu-

tion in Russia and the Soviet state.

KRIEGE Herman (1820-1850), German journalist, representative of “true” socialism; after 1840 he led the group of “true” German socialists in New York.

LAFARGUE Paul (1842-1911), militant in the international workers’ movement, eminent propagator of Marxism, member of the General Council of the International, corresponding secretary for Spain (1866-1869), took part in the creation of the sections of the International in France (1869-1870), in Spain and in Portugal (1871-1872), delegate to the Congress of The Hague (1872), one of the founders of the French Workers’ Party, disciple and comrade in ideas of Marx and Engels, son-in-law of Marx.

LASSALLE Ferdinand (1825-1864), German petty-bourgeois publicist, lawyer, in 1848-1849, participated in the democratic movement of the Rhineland; soon after 1860 joined the workers’ movement, one of the founders of the General Association of German Workers (1863); was a supporter of the unification of Germany

“from above” under the hegemony of Prussia; was at the origin of an opportunist tendency in the German workers; movement.

LENIN Vladimir Ilych (1870-1924).

LIEBKNECHT Wilhelm (1826-1900), personality of the German and international workers’ movement, one of the founders and leaders of the German Social Democratic Party and the Second International.

LONGUET Charles (1839-1903), militant of the French workers’ movement, journalist, Proudhonist, member of the General Council of the First International (1866-1867, 1871-1872); member of the Paris Commune; subsequently joined the opportunist current (Possibilists) in the French Workers’ Party; son-in-law of Marx.

LOUIS-PHILIPPE (1773-1850), Duke of Orleans, King of France from 1830 to 1848.

MALON Benois (1841-1893), French socialist, member of the International and the Paris Commune; after 1871 emigrated and joined the anarchists; was one of the leaders of the Possibilists.

- MALTHUS Thomas-Robert (1766-1834), English priest, economist; propagated a misanthropic population theory.
- MAO TSE-TUNG (1893-1976).
- MARX Karl (1818-1883).
- MARX Eleanor (Tussy) (1855-1898), youngest daughter of Karl Marx. Representative of the English and international workers' movement. Married Edward Aveling in 1884.
- METTERNICH Clément, Prince of (1773-1859), reactionary Austrian statesman; Minister of Foreign Affairs (1809-1821) and Chancellor (1821-1848), one of the organizers of the Holy Alliance.
- MICHEL Louise (1830-1905), Parisian teacher, heroine of the Paris Commune. Arrested by Versailles then deported. After her return again arrested for her revolutionary activities.
- MORGAN Lewis Henry (1818-1881), eminent American scholar, historian of primitive society, follower of spontaneous materialism.
- MOST Johann Joseph (1846-1906), German social democrat, later anarchist. Advocating the anarchist idea of "propaganda by action", regarded individual terror as the most effective means of the revolutionary struggle.
- NAPOLEON I Bonaparte (1769-1821), Emperor of the French (1804-1814 and 1815).
- NAPOLEON III (Louis Napoleon Bonaparte) (1808-1873), nephew of Napoleon I, president of the Second Republic (1848-1851), Emperor of the French (1852-1870).
- NICOLAS I (1796-1877), Emperor of Russia (1825-1855).
- ODGER George (1820-1877), English shoemaker, one of the leaders of the trade unions, reformist; successively member (1864-1870) then president (1864-1867) of the General Council of the International; in 1871 he came out against the Paris Commune, left the General Council which condemned his treason.
- OWEN Robert (1771-1858), great English utopian socialist.
- POTTIER Eugene (1816-1887), French proletarian poet, author of the *Internationale* which has become the battle song of the international proletariat. Supported the First International. After the failure of the Paris Commune, emigrated to America. After

- his return in 1880, member of the Workers' Party.
- PROUDHON** Pierre-Joseph (1809-1865), French publicist, economist and sociologist, spokesperson for the petty bourgeoisie, one of the fathers of anarchism; in 1844, member of the Constituent Assembly.
- RICARDO** David (1772-1823), eminent English economist, follower of classical bourgeois economics.
- ROLAND** Auguste (?-1871), fighter in the Paris Commune.
- SAINT-SIMON** Henri (1760-1825), great French utopian socialist.
- SHAPPER** Karl (1812-1870), militant of the international and German workers' movement, one of the leaders of the League of the Just; member of the Central Committee of the League of Communists, took part in the revolution of 1848-1849 in Germany; in 1850 one of the leaders of the sectarian adventurist faction within the League of Communists; in 1856 rallied again to the Marxists; member of the General Council of the First International.
- SCHRAMM** Karl August, German Social Democrat, reformist, one of the editors of the "Yearbook of Social Science and Social Policy". With Höchberg and Bernstein, was part of the group of "Zurich Trio". After 1880 left the party.
- SMITH** Adam (1723-1790), English economist, one of the most prominent representatives of classical bourgeois economics.
- STALIN** Joseph Vissarionovich (1870-1953).
- THIERS** Adolphe (1797-1877), bourgeois historian and French politician, Orleanist, Minister of the Interior (1832-1834), Prime Minister (1836-1840), President of the Executive Power (President of the Council of Ministers) (1871), President of the Republic (1871-1873), executioner of the Paris Commune.
- TROCHU** Louis-Jules (1815-1896), French general, Bonapartist, president of the government of National Defense (September 1870-February 1871) and governor general of Paris in 1871; one of the executioners of the Paris Commune. In 1872 he resigned and ceased all political activity.

- VAILLANT Marie-Edouard (1840-1915), French socialist, Blanquist, member of the Paris Commune, member of the General Council of the First International (1871-1872), one of the founders of the French Socialist Party, later reformist.
- VARLIN Louis-Eugene (1831-1871), outstanding figure in the French workers' movement, bookbinder by profession, left-wing Proudhonist, one of the leaders of the sections of the First International in France; member of the Central Committee of the National Guard and the Paris Commune, shot by the Versailles on May 28, 1871.
- VOLLMAR Georg von (1850-1922), a leader of the opportunist wing of the German Social Democratic Party, an ideologue of reformism; repeatedly elected to the Reichstag and the Bavarian Landtag; during the First World War, social-chauvinist.
- WEITLING Wilhelm (1808-1871), prominent representative of the early German workers' movement, one of the theorists of utopian egalitarian communism.
- WEYDEMEYER Joseph (1818-1866), activist of the German and American workers' movement, member of the League of Communists; participated in the revolution of 1848-1849 in Germany and the Civil War in America on the side of the North. First propagator of Marxism in the U.S.A.; friend and comrade in arms of Marx and Engels.
- WILLICH August (1810-1878), Prussian officer, member of the League of Communists, took part in the uprising in Baden-Palatinate (1849); one of the leaders of the sectarian adventurist faction which separated from the League of Communists in 1850; emigrated to the U.S.A. where he took part in the Civil War in the ranks of the North.
- ZETKIN Clara (1857-1933), eminent figure of the German and international workers' movement, one of the founders of the Communist Party of Germany, talented writer. For years was the organizer and leader of the international communist women's movement.