

IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE

An Analysis of the Split in the OJPGF Why We Revealed the

Ideological Debates to the Public* Part 2:

“Without Revolutionary Theory There Can Be No Revolutionary Movement”(Lenin)*

In a period of over one year following the insurrection and the overthrow of the Shah's regime, an evolution of class struggle and the culmination of the movement, particularly the working class movement, is one that we all are witnessing more and more in the strikes and offensives by workers against the bourgeoisie, the obvious widening moves by the peasants, who are taking away the landlord's territory, the continuation of the people's democratic movements, especially the Kurdish people's resistance movement and the bloody heroic struggle and resistance by the students to protect and defend the revolutions achievements, are clear and undeniable facts about the masses' deepening and widening struggle. The fundamental causes of such phenomena must be looked for in the intensifying class contradictions, the growth of political-economic crises, the class nature of the ruling circle, its actions and the resulting intensifying suffering of the workers and peasants and their overall impoverishment and lack of meeting the needs, increasing day by day, of our

country. On the other hand, in this period there happened to be a relatively democratic situation that made it easy for the many left groups and cells to announce their existence and present Marxist ideas.

Propagandizing and propagation of Marxist-Leninist ideas and the vast publication of classical works has attracted a considerable number of the different social forces, such as university students, high school students and also a vast force from the workers, towards Marxism and Iran's Communist movement. Such a situation has also caused the quantitative growth of groups and experienced organizations, to the extent that within the present Iranian Communist movement there has been a move away from a limited intellectual current and has gradually gained a powerful political shape.

However, it can be said that in the period after the establishment of the Islamic Republic, until the present, the Iranian Communist movement has considerably gained in quantity along with the masses and the working class move-

ment, but has remained at a low qualitative level.

From any perspective and on all theoretical-political and organizational bases, the movement has important weaknesses and is encountered with minor tasks, factionalism and diversity so that its internal currents could not relate the fundamental order of Communist activities and movement of the masses as a whole, although a political, crucial, and changeable situation dominated our Communist movement in the same way that right wing opportunist tendencies and, also an orientation towards ultra-leftism has rendered large strikes against the anti-imperialist and democratic nature of the working class and the Iranian people's movement. Unfortunately, we have witnessed fluctuations which placed our organization, particularly, under the effects and actions of the opportunist wing, led by the majority of members of the "Central Committee", and this opportunism was the distinguishing characteristic.

The conclusion we are forced to draw from this nonprogrammed and unplanned acceptance of large numbers of forces has been a penetration from various deviated tendencies, bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie ideological elements, ambiguity and darkness, which have left a shadow on the activities of the more leftist currents, regarding many ideological-political issues. These circumstances have not only been matched with the relations among Marxist-Leninist groups and organizations but even further, with the internal conditions of many of the organizations. With this is an undeniable truth, that is to say, in this situation, that the ruling circle, because of its class character and nature, has been unable to meet the demands of the people and remove their economic and political needs and also cannot end the crisis. The seriousness of-

the crisis has worried the political ruling circle more than ever. The growth of dissatisfaction among the masses has brought larger numbers of them towards revolutionary organizations and currents. The lack of trust toward the ruling circle has been intensified and, proportionately, brought heavier responsibilities upon the struggling Communists in the mass movement. On the other hand, the above contradiction and weakness within the Communist movement has prevented them from performing all aspects of the tasks that were given to them.

With a little notice, the face of the Communist movement of Iran will recognize the same truth. Acceptance of the weakness in the Communist movement is an acceptance of a matter which does not yet clear the way, in reality, for overcoming it. Thus, it must be said that this discussion is not an explanation of the current realities but is rather a way of changing them. It is evident that, without moving forward to ideological-political unity there can not be anything said for organizational unity and establishment of a single organization consisting of Communist revolutionaries as well as a working class party, and this cannot begin to be possible without ideological debate and explicitly distinguishing the boundaries of ideological political lines within the Communist currents.

Such struggle can be accomplished using various methods, but we believe the first important step toward positive change, in order to unite the Communist movement in Iran is to strive for the presentation of a practical way for an organized ideological debate among the Communist forces regarding the most urgent questions of class and the historical struggle of Iranian workers. Of course, within the organizations and currents, this has to be done on a level upon which the ideological contradiction is

Retrogression of the Central Committee*

"The war has speeded up this development and transformed opportunism into social-chauvinism, transformed the secret alliance between

alteration of the masses' misconceptions about the government.

In this article we will not try to ex-

continued on page 7

Why We Revealed the Ideological Debates to the Public*

continued from page 8

developed to some degree so that it can be manifested in two ideological systems and two lines on, political and practical questions. Until now, we are applying ourselves to this revolutionary task in a struggle within the organization, but it is very clear that, with any small difference, there can't be an open debate, because the anarchy which exists in ideological debate must not be replaced by organizational ideological debate, opening ideological debate and organizing it democratically not only can make clearer the lines of ideological political boundaries in many of the problems which are still unclear, as well as the ambiguity in many of the issues, but also it is an essential step to strengthening democratic centralism and struggle against opportunism in the organization, and it will, in a principled way, move toward achieving unity in the Communist movement.

In our opinion, the main content of ideological debate, those factors which have become clear at this time, as well as ones which will become clearer in the future, will lead to an alignment of forces within the movement and, with further evaluation of class struggle, the most decisive and the clearest line of demarcation between revolutionary-Marxism-Leninism and opportunism will be drawn, concerning an analysis of the objective relations of classes, determination of the nature of the ruling circle and strategy and tactics of proletarian class struggle at the present time.

We, representing the minority of the organization, when we still were going to hold the first Plenary of the

organization, offered a draft to the "Central Committee" and also to the Plenary, for an open ideological debate and we repeated, in writing, the same of for almost three months ago, in a more obvious way, but the central body, using the excuse that open ideological debate would develop into mental disturbances for the body of the movement, refrained from accepting or even considering the matter. These comrades, in conformity with the policy and spirit of their political circles, called it harmful to the movement and the organization. Lenin, in 1901, at a time when the struggle against economist ideas was the main part of ideological debate in the Social Democratic movement of Russia, responded to the Russian economists' criticism of *Iskra* and pointed out a very important criticism which had especially attracted the Central Committee comrades' attention in the past. Lenin emphasized the important issue at the time, that ideological unity of the Russian Social Democrats still had to be prepared.

Lenin considered that the fear by the economists of open ideological debate, which was in dispute, was a necessary matter and to improve the matter, in the official organ of the Russian Social Democratic Party meant that *Iskra* was insisted upon and he said, "But although we discuss all the questions from our distinguishing point of view, in our newspaper we would leave a place for polemics among the comrades. Free polemics are necessary and ideal and will occur in the top layers of all Social Democrats and Russia's conscious proletariat. It will make clear the depth of the differences which there are, for this causes discussions about problems under con-

sideration and gives all the aspects in order to struggle against extremists who not only represent different ideas but also represent different magazines, or are 'experts' in the revolutionary movement, and who are likewise unavoidably affected by this. Actually, as we said before, we believe that one of the movement's weaknesses is the lack of free polemics among the explicitly different views, with those striving to hide the differences on fundamental questions. We will not go into details on all of the questions and views that we are going to proceed with in our newspaper, because this program will spontaneously draw conclusions from the general concept that a political newspaper must be the newspaper which is now publishing under the present circumstances." (Lenin, "The Editorial Board of *Iskra*).

However, more than anything else in this period, the comrades of the "Central Committee" prefer the "striving for hiding differences on the fundamental issues". The reasons given by the comrades in the central body concerning our suggestion for organizing an open ideological debate, was, besides what has already been mentioned that the enemy would benefit from the differences. In fact, the "Central Committee" in their denial based on the ideology, gave the same reasons that the Russian economists gave. The Russian economists, in a letter regarding the polemics printed in *Iskra*, said, "*Iskra* does not look toward the Social Democratic organization, whose opinion concerning the progress of the Russian workers' tasks do not match their own, in their preoccupation with discussion, it occasionally forgets the truth and with unlimited fault fin-

ding of unrealistic out of context statements, has attributed us some opinions that we don't believe, and they emphasize differing points, most of which do not have material significance, while they obstinately ignore the many points of agreement. In this, we mean the way *Iskra* has responded to Rabocheye Dyelo. *Iskra's* continuous tendency towards controversy is mostly because of the exaggerated significance, that it gives to the role of 'ideology', (programs and theories) for the movement." (Taken from a letter to the Russian Social Democratic Newspaper, quoted from Lenin's article under the title, "A Word to Defenders of Economism.")

However, Lenin wrote a reply to a letter from Russians in exile and to all those who were raising the issue of the state taking advantage of the existing differences among the Social Democratic movement, and who used this as a reason for denying open polemics.

Yes, we opened ideological debate, despite the opposition by the "Central Body", on the basis of Lenin's idea and also on the basis that "Before we are able to be united, so that we may unite, we must first make clear distinguishing and clear boundaries."

In our opinion, we believe that open ideological debate is based on principles regarding the basis for internal unity for one Marxist-Leninist organization. There cannot be any ignorance concerning these bases, even under the excuse of maintaining superficial unity, unless drawn to the kind of opportunism that the "Central Body" has embraced. In any other case except this, Lenin says, "Our unity would merely be imaginary and would cover the confusion, putting off the solid groundwork necessary for unity."

*From KAR No. 62, June, 1980