

## Anti-revisionism in Italy

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Giovanni Scuderi

# Mao Zedong and the Italian revolution

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## Introduction

Comrades, friends,

On September 9, five years ago, Mao Zedong left this world to join Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. There was probably great rejoicing as the heaven of the martyrs and heroes of the proletariat opened its arms to welcome him. But back on this earth, a great veil of sadness immediately descended over the world, and an unbridgeable vacuum was felt. Progressive humanity realized at once that it had lost one of its greatest sons, one of the most shining figures of all times: a maker of history and a giant of thought and revolutionary activity. Indeed, one of the great leaders of the international proletariat, of oppressed peoples and nations, the most illustrious Marxist-Leninist of our day left this Earth.

Even so, the passing of time carries the risk that Mao will be relegated to the past; that his monumental, extraordinary work will become merely a cultural fact with no practical implications whatsoever. This is why it is so important to keep Mao's memory alive at a mass-level, to pass on entirely his teachings to the next generation, and above all, to use his thought as the groundwork for the life and action of Marxist-Leninist Parties.

If we fail to periodically reaffirm our public loyalty to Mao's thought and if we fail to hold ourselves accountable to the proletariat to show how Mao's thought is put into practice, we run the risk of having Mao transformed into an innocuous

figurehead, his thought emasculated by the revisionists and the Party transformed into a revisionist, bourgeois and counterrevolutionary one.

This is why the Central Committee of the PMLI, in whose name I am honoured to speak today, holds an annual public commemoration of Mao on the anniversary of his death. We are ready and willing to rectify our political line should even the slightest inconsistency with Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong thought crop up. On past anniversaries, we discussed the teachings of Mao on the theory of the continuing revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat; the theory of the three worlds; the struggle against modern revisionism; and the building of the Party. This year, we'd like to turn our attention to Mao's teachings on the tactics and strategy of the revolution, paying particular attention to how political power is seized by the proletariat.

It is certainly not our aim to mechanically copy the experience of the Chinese Revolution. After all, it is unrepeatable. And since every revolution has its own unique characteristics which can't be adopted to fit any other country, it's always mistaken to copy another revolution.

In a conversation with the visiting representatives of several Latin American Communist Parties on Sept. 25, 1956, the Prime Mover of the Chinese Revolution emphasized, **"the experience of the Chinese Revolution - creating bases of support in the countryside and surrounding the cities by fanning out from the rural areas to finally conquer the city itself - is probably inapplicable to many of your countries. It can only be valuable to you as a point of reference. Allow me to advise all those present to beware of mechanically transplanting the Chinese experience: foreign experiences can only serve as points of reference, and must never be construed as dogma. It is absolutely essential that two factors be integrated: the universal truth embodied in Marxism-Leninism, and the specific situations in your countries"**<sup>(1)</sup>.

And we turn to Mao, the great revolutionary leader, for precisely this purpose: so that we may correctly integrate Marxism-Leninism into the Italian experience. Therefore, for us, commemorating Mao is not just a formality, a ritual, a habit. It's an important moment that we use to separate Marxism from revisionism, to present the Party line, to respond to the attacks of the bourgeoisie and revisionists, and to learn once more from that inexhaustible source - he who led one-fourth of humanity out of darkness, who brought immortal contributions to Marxism-Leninism, who lent impetus to world revolution and attracted millions of the exploited and oppressed from five continents into the fold. He who dealt the death blow to Chinese and international revisionism.

Invoking the memory of Mao here today means not only defending the basic interest of the proletariat world-over, and of oppressed nations and peoples everywhere. It also means defending the entire body of Marxism and Leninism, erecting an impenetrable steel barrier against modern revisionism safeguarding the legacy built up over twenty-five years of international-scale struggle against revisionism, protecting the very existence of new Marxist-Leninist Parties, and advancing the revolution and the socialism throughout the world.

The fact that we still hearken back to Mao, the revolution and socialism even today while others have ignominiously lowered these invincible banners, doesn't mean that we are pining away for a man and an ideal that have vanished together. On the contrary, it simply distinguished us as the advance-guards in Italy for all those who believed, and still believe, in the immortal ideas of socialism, communism and the path of the October Revolution. We are not unaware of new ideological and political developments on the revolutionary front. But for now, we adhere only to the principles of proletarian revolution that Mao contributed to the scientific theory of revolution set down by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

### **Mao's thought represents the further development of Marxism-Leninism**

The PMLI considers Mao's thought to be the very essence of the most correct, most revolutionary, most advanced ideas, experiences and indications that the international proletariat and oppressed nations and peoples have amassed and selected over a period of more than fifty years.

Mao's thought has enriched and added to the theoretical, philosophic, economic, military and political facets of Marxism-Leninism, endowing it with the right answers to the main problems of contemporary class struggle. It is the basic ideological weapon of the revolution - both in the Third World and in capitalist and imperialistic countries.

In particular, Mao's thought is essential and irreplaceable for the socialist revolution and the establishment of socialism. Together with the theory of the uninterrupted revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat and the practical experience of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, they arm the working class with new, fundamental tools for defending and developing socialism in the face of revisionist and counterrevolutionary attempts to restore capitalism.

Not an eclectic compendium of many peoples' ideas, Mao's thought reflects his own meditations on Marxism-Leninism and the Chinese and international revolutionary experiences. It was formed in the crucible of the Great Chinese Revolution, but this fact doesn't limit its universality. On the contrary, it gives it the official stamp of truth and correctness: in fact, nothing that is not backed up by reality and social practice can be considered valid or effective. Didn't Lenin's thought derive its authority from the success of the Great October Revolution? Naturally, Mao's thought must be divided up into that which is strictly linked to the China experience and that which is universal in nature: principles, methods, analyses, general indications and guidelines. We must take the essence, the spirit, the revolutionary heart of the matter and apply it dialectically and correctly to our own national reality.

In short, when we examine Mao's thought, we must adopt the same stance that we assume in relation to other leaders of the proletariat - the dialectic and unwavering stance that Mao synthesized as follows: **"The theory of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin is universally applicable. We should regard it not as a dogma, but as a guide to action. Studying it is not merely a matter of learning terms and**

**phrases but of learning Marxism-Leninism as the science of revolution. It is not just a matter of understanding the general laws derived by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin from their extensive study of real life and revolutionary experience, but of studying their standpoint and method in examining and solving problems"<sup>(2)</sup>.**

Of course, we can't reduce Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong thought to pat formulas or set phrases to be recited by rote. But, when we find ourselves face-to-face with a definition or a revolutionary scientific point of view which corresponds perfectly to today's world or to a specific situation, we have no choice but to keep them in mind, to elaborate on them, to discover the truth they contain and to apply them unflinchingly to change the present in a revolutionary sense.

Each class has its own books, and each class draws on these "sacred texts" to defend its own interests and to put its own point of view across. The proletariat turns to Marxism to understand and transform the world, while the bourgeoisie turns to idealism to defend and preserve the world as it is. Therefore, we mustn't be afraid to turn to our leaders as role models of how a revolution is waged and won.

We only have one thing to worry about: how to put their lesson to best use.

Be careful, however. When we say "lesson", we don't mean to imply, as many Italian revisionists do, that Marxism is a simple explanation of facts, events and conflicts, all of which belong to a far-off past or to a well-defined geographic area, and are inapplicable to the West. When we say "lesson", we mean a complete ideology that is organically and systematically opposed to the ideology of the bourgeoisie. The Marxism-Leninist-Mao Zedong thought is, in fact, the sole ideology that gives a scientific interpretation of the history and economic structure of capitalism while, at the same time, offering the arms needed to change our present reality and allow the advancement of history.

Mao was such a keen student of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin that, in the course of the extraordinary, long and complex revolutionary experience he lived, and with complete naturalness and lack of pretension, he gradually ascended to their heights. Marxism-Leninism took a great leap forward as Mao made it totally responsive to the needs of our contemporary revolutionary struggle. Today, there is no true Marxism-Leninism without the thought of Mao and without recognizing that this thought constitutes the continuation and a further development of the theory of proletarian revolution.

The hyphen we put between Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong thought is both a typographic and political manifestation of the continuity and on-going development involved in Marxism-Leninism and the thought of Mao.

Marxism-Leninism and the thought of Mao are not two distinct or separate entities, but two components which together form one dialectic unit. It would be just as erroneous to separate Mao's thought from Marxism-Leninism and consider it in a vacuum - a singular revolutionary experience to bear in mind or not, as one chooses - as it would to reduce Marxism-Leninism to the combined thought of just Marx and Lenin. To do this would mean depriving ourselves of the most recent and authoritative interpretation of Marxism-Leninism on the one hand, (i.e. Mao

Zedong thought), and on the other, letting Marxism-Leninism gradually shrivel up and die.

In fact, without the thought of Mao, Marxism-Leninism wouldn't be able to address itself to today's new situations; it would be unable to give its all to the needs of the revolution. In particular, Marxism-Leninism would be unprepared to handle the questions of the building of socialism and the Party, the socialist economy, dialectic and historic materialism, the analyses of the current international situation, the strategy and tactics of the struggle against the two superpowers, imperialism, colonialism, and the struggle against modern revisionism.

All this without even taking into account that to margin Mao is to do Breznev and his revisionist gang a big favor. Their free-wheeling and mystifying interpretation of Marxism-Leninism is the basis of their fortune. They use it to hoodwink the Russian and international proletariat, and to cover up their expansionism and hegemony as they interfere in the internal affairs of Poland and the other countries or parties or liberation movements that fall within their orbit. An equally big and unexpected favor would be done to Deng Xiaoping's revisionist gang, which views Mao's thought as a thorn in its side and yearns to see it sink into oblivion so that it will be free to restore capitalism to China.

Generally speaking, all revisionist groups - including the "Eurocommunism" and Italian one - are united in wanting to draw the curtain on Mao's thought. They well know that if it manages to penetrate to the masses on a large scale, Marxism-Leninism will come back to the fore in all its original glory and power of persuasion. Their bogus theorizations will pale in comparison, and will be revealed for what they really are: ideological and political shams put together for the sole purpose of keeping the working class from fighting capitalism and seizing political power.

Therefore, considering Mao's thought as a basic and inseparable element of Marxism-Leninism - and an offshoot of the same - becomes a question of fundamental importance for the triumph of the world-wide proletarian revolution. As well as the triumph of Marxism over revisionism, the correct building of new Marxist-Leninist Parties, and the reorganization, unity, and development of the international communist movement. In light of the facts, we can clearly say that those who resist making such a choice will find it hard to stand up to revisionism and, sooner or later, will fall victim to reaction.

Naturally, Mao's thought is not the last word in Marxism. The proletarian struggle keeps it in a continual state of development, and it is incessantly enriched and elaborated by the many truly Marxist-Leninist Parties. At some point in history, closer to the Communist Era, it is likely that the most advanced and emancipated peoples of that age will give birth to another great leader of the proletariat, who will further advance the Marxism. But until the revolutionary theory of the proletariat reaches a superior, more highly advanced synthesis, Mao's thought will remain the highest pinnacle that Marxism-Leninism has reached.

We are still living in the age of imperialism and proletarian revolution, and until we move on to the next rung of the ladder, Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong

thought will be vital and valid the world-over. It's true that many new events - even important events - take place each day in the world. Every day, the two superpowers struggle to control the globe. But for now, not one of these events has managed to overturn or make in-roads in the fundamental analyses and indications left by the Great Leaders of the proletariat, and Mao's thought is as fresh and up-to-date as ever.

Marxism-Leninism did not die along with the Great Leader of our times. It's at the height of its powers and will undoubtedly play a very important role in this final part of the century. Benedetto Croce, the foremost Italian bourgeois philosopher, began to predict the beginning of his end back in 1890, but reality has crushed that prediction. Even those two obituary writers, Piccoli and Craxi, and all other reactionary people were unable to bury Marxism-Leninism - their efforts have only prolonged its life.

### **The influence of Mao's thought in Italy and around the world**

Mao's thought was organized into a corpus and reached its full authority in China in 1943. But even at the time, and precedently, its beneficial effect was noticeably felt by the international communist and workers movement. It was an influence that became decisive after Stalin's death in 1956, when the titanic struggle against modern revisionism began, headed by Khrushchev, who, with the notorious XX Congress, succeeded in restoring capitalism to the glorious Soviet Union.

But it was with the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution that, with the power of an avalanche and the force of a lightning, Mao's thought across the borders of China, out from the communist and international workers movement, to flood the world and the proletarian masses.

It was a majestic moment that is rare in the annals of history; an event that has many parallels with the October Revolution. The East wind prevailed over the West wind, and class struggle was raging everywhere. The armed struggle of the Third World countries assumed a new vigor and impetus, and the West erupted like a flaming volcano. In France, the capitalist regime was on the brink of collapse, and in our country, the great season of struggle (1968-69) exploded, shaking the foundations of the capitalist Establishment and leaving its indelible mark on a whole generation. Young people, wide-open to the new and progressive, were riveted by Mao's thought and it quickly became their war cry.

For a fleeting moment, a few years, it seemed that what had happened in China under the influence of the October Revolution could also happen in Italy. Mao told of this incident in the following words: **"In his book, Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder', written in 1920, Lenin described the Russians' search for a revolutionary theory. Only after decades of adversity and suffering did the Russians find Marxism (...).**

**"The Russians launched the October Revolution and created the world's first socialist state. Under the guidance of Lenin and Stalin, the revolutionary energy of the great proletariat and laboring people of Russia - until then, latent and unobserved by foreigners - suddenly erupted like a volcano. The**

**Chinese people, like the rest of the world, saw the Russians in a new light. Then and only then, a new era dawned in the thought and life of the Chinese. They discovered Marxism-Leninism, the universal truth that is universally valid, and China began to change complexion.**

**"Thanks to the Russians, China discovered Marxism. Before the October Revolution, the Chinese were unaware of Lenin and Stalin; they didn't even know Marx or Engels. But the cannonades of the October Revolution brought Marxism-Leninism to our country. The October Revolution helped the Chinese progressives and those of all countries, to adopt the proletarian concept of the world as a tool for studying their countries' destiny and to examine all their problems anew. Follow the path of the Russians: this was their conclusion"<sup>(3)</sup>.**

We cannot truthfully say that Marxism-Leninism was still unknown in Italy: our proletariat was one of the first in the world to know Marx and Lenin. It was just that the revisionists, old and new, had long ago put it up on the top shelf, and only their feeble cries filtered down to the masses. So when the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution exploded and Mao's thought burst into the international arena, they vividly brought Marxism-Leninism back into the limelight. They provoked a great thirst, especially in the young and intellectuals, to know it and a true desire to use it in their struggle. With one swift blow, Lenin's great watchword required all its original immediacy: **"Without revolutionary theory, there can be no revolutionary movement"<sup>(4)</sup>.**

Street battles were accompanied by great cultural fervor. Theoretical research multiplied and spread to all the universities. The idea was to find the shortest route to liberation from capitalism as quickly as possible. Unfortunately, these studies were dominated by a hegemony of petite bourgeoisie intellectuals, Trotskyites, anarchists and laborites, who were in turn manipulated by the bourgeoisie and revisionist party to kick out those student masses and farm and workers' factions who were attracted by Mao's revolutionary doctrines.

All was not lost, but only because the PMLI was born of this experience. In spite of all, the PMLI managed to systemize the correct ideas unleashed by that majestic mass movement of '68-'69, and to elaborate a political and programmatic line suitable for the needs of our country. We were able to accomplish this thanks to the thought of Mao, who let us to authentic Marxism, to the true path of emancipation for the working class, and who taught us the necessity of separating ourselves from the modern revisionists if we really wanted to found a true Communist Party.

Mao was to Marxism-Leninism as Lenin was to Marxism and Stalin was to Leninism. In other words, Mao put the communist and proletarian ideas back into order. He distinguished true Marxism-Leninism from false one. He underlined the universal nature of the October Revolution path. And he unmasked the bourgeoisie and the counterrevolutionary aims of the modern revisionists.

The role that Mao played in this situation was not so much in reaffirming the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism - an act that was important in its own right - but in revitalizing and up-dating them, and making them work in the biggest country on

earth and in this day and age.

### **The lies of the revisionists will never be able to cancel out the thought and accomplishments of Mao**

Mao's theoretical and political programs and practical deeds represent the most fitting response and stinging denial to the thesis of the "Little Man of Peking" and his Italian twin. According to them, Marxism-Leninism is not capable of providing answers to all of today's problems and so "new principles" and "new conclusions" are needed.

This "Little Man" even had the cheek to mount to the podium and denounce as "erroneous", "adventurist" and "extremist" Mao's most accomplished acts during the period when socialism was built in China. Waving a heap of waste paper which they grandiosely called a "Resolution Pertaining to Several Questions About the History of Our Party After the Foundation of the People's Republic", the Deng Xiaoping gang deluded themselves into believing that they could erase Mao's thought and deeds from the summer of 1955 to September 9, 1976.

What they wanted to cancel out, in point of fact, was: the agricultural communes, the transformation of handicraft work and individual commercial concerns, the Great Leap Ahead, the people's communes, the general lines along which socialism was built in China, the struggle against the revisionist cliques of Peng De Huai, Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, and the fight against international revisionism headed first by Khrushchev and then by Brezhnev.

The main target of this illegal, arbitrary and unilateral anti-Marxist, anti-socialist "Resolution" was, of course, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. The very principles that Mao himself devised were even defined "inconsistent with Marxism-Leninism and the Chinese reality". It's always like this: when the Communists begin to tread hearty on the corns of the bourgeoisie, their lackeys whine to high heaven in an attempt to protect their masters.

In order to camouflage past wrong-doing, present intrigues and today's underhanded aims, the arch-revisionist Deng proclaimed that Mao committed "huge errors" in the last years of his life. But instead, the errors he mentions represent the great theoretical, political and historic accomplishments of Mao. In saying this, we don't mean to imply that the founder of the New China never made a mistake. Only that when he erred, Mao criticized and corrected himself. His aim was not to abandon the socialist path but to correct its course and move forward more confidently.

To lapse into error is a common failing. Even Marx made an error or two: for instance, he was initially sceptical of the Paris Commune, only to support and exalt it later on. From this experience, he theorized on the necessity of a proletarian dictatorship, revolutionary mass violence, and of the Communist Party. Lenin, too, committed some errors. For example after the February Revolution of 1917, he thought that the proletariat could come to power through peaceful means. But it didn't take him long to recant his views and personally launch and guide the Socialist revolution.



The leaders of the proletariat have never had any difficulty in recognizing and correcting their errors; when they were not able to do so, their successors took care of straightening things out. In Mao's case, based on our current information, we can't discern anything either in his thought or works that needs rectifying. All the same, should there be something in need of review, that task will certainly not fall to the apostates, but to the whole international communist movement-

The revisionists have no real stake in correcting the true errors of the great Marxist leaders. Their sole aim, as Deng so aptly illustrates, is to reverse the course of the proletarian revolution, destroy its theory and give free reign to capitalism, man's exploitation of man, and hegemony. How can we lend even an iota of credit to Deng, a man who Mao painted with one masterful brushstroke?: **"He is a man who doesn't uphold the class struggle, who has never spoken of this pivotal concept. He's still on the 'black and white cat' level, without even asking himself if this means imperialism or Marxism". "He knows nothing of Marxism-Leninism; he represents the bourgeoisie. He swore against his will not to 'contest just verdicts'. We can't give him any credit"**<sup>(5)</sup>.

Whatever the "Little Man" says, Mao was lucid and in step with Marxism-Leninism and his own thought until the day of his death. His far-sightedness - not a gift from God, but the product of a deep understanding and mastery of dialectics and reality - was proverbial. He had figured out exactly who Deng was a long time ago, and he was equally sure that one cultural revolution would not be enough to eradicate capitalism from China and sweep away the bourgeois lackeys who lurked at high levels in the Party and the State.

In a famous letter, dated July 6, 1966, Mao wrote: **"There are more than one hundred Communist Parties in the world, and most of them have abandoned Marxism-Leninism. They've taken Marx and Lenin to pieces. What's to prevent that from happening to us?"**. Barely fifteen years have passed since that day, and ring-leader of the Chinese bourgeoisie has taken Mao's thought and accomplishments to pieces. Capitalism has been restored to China and the once-glorious Chinese Communist Party has been transformed into a revisionist, anti-communist, fascist party.

Does this mean it's all over? We don't believe so - neither for China nor for the world at large. The revolution is relentless: it may mark time, it may suffer setbacks, but no one will be able to stop it for good. Isn't this borne out by the revolutions in the Philippines, Malaya, North Kalimantan, Thailand, and Burma, just to name a few? Weren't all of them guided by Communist Parties, proudly flying the flag of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong thought?

The revisionists can slander and repudiate the great proletarian leaders as much as they want, but they will never be able to wipe out their thought or accomplishments. As long as one oppressed or exploited person remains on this earth, their thought will stay bright as a beacon, illuminating the path to freedom, social justice, emancipation and peace.

The true heirs of the great proletarian leaders - the authentic Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations of the world - are duty-bound to safeguard the works and

thought of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao, and to defend them as they would their own lives against the frenetic broadsides of the revisionists of Moscow, Peking, Tirana, Rome and other countries.

We must well understand that the usurpation of power inside the Party and the State by the old followers of Liu Shaoqi signaled the beginning of a new international-scale phase in the fight against revisionism. It's a life or death struggle of the same historical importance as Lenin's struggle with Bernstein and Kautsky, or Mao's struggle with Khrushchev, Brezhnev or Liu Shaoqi.

The crux of the struggle today involves an open defense of Mao's work and thought, and a ringing denunciation of Deng's clique. This must be accomplished by their expulsion from the international communist movement. Cleansing Marxist-Leninist parties of the "capitulationists" and dyed-in-the-wool revisionists; reorganizing the international communist movement on the foundations of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong thought; and incorporating the principles of the proletarian internationalism and consequent struggle against imperialism, social-imperialism, colonialism, racism and apartheid are equally essential elements in today's fight.

No matter what country it's active in or whatever its internal and international circumstances, no truly Marxist-Leninist force can put off the struggle against, the Number 1 enemy worming away at the core of the international communist workers' movement: modern revisionism. As the facts bear out, if we don't fight the dangerous bourgeois current that has infiltrated the proletarian and communist rank and file, waging our revolution, defending the dictatorship of the proletariat and performing our rightful duty to proletarian internationalism will become impossible.

### **Revolution is the universal path to socialism**

Mao was the first person to get his feet and shout "stop" to modern revisionism. It was 1956 and confusion and uncertainty reigned rampant in the international communist and workers' movement. Because of the revisionists' preaching, we didn't know exactly what path the proletariat had to follow to come to political power. Was the October Revolution path still valid? Or, as Khrushchev said, did we have to put it aside and try the path of parliamentary progress?

At that moment, to put things back into order and restore to the proletariat that very certainty that the revisionists had placed in doubt, Mao intervened with all his revolutionary and Marxist authority: **"In my view, there are two swords: one is Lenin, the other is Stalin. The Russians have just thrown down the sword that is Stalin. Gomulka and several other Hungarians have picked it up to strike the Soviet Union, to combat so-called Stalinism. The Communist Parties of many European countries have also joined the attack on the Soviet Union. Togliatti is their leader. Even imperialism has picked up this sword to lead an attack: Dulles took it in hand and used it for his own manoeuvring. This sword wasn't just loaned away - it was thrown away (...) Can we say that, to a certain degree, some Soviet leaders have also thrown away that sword which**

**is Lenin? In my view, they've done so to a marked degree. Is the October Revolution still valid? Can it or can it not serve as a model for all countries? In Khrushchev's report to the XX Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, he says that power can be conquered by following the parliamentary route; in other words, that the world can put aside the example of the October Revolution. But once this breach has been opened, we can say that, in effect, Leninism has been thrown away"<sup>(6)</sup>.**

With this clear and strong affirmation, Mao undoubtedly posed a question of fundamental importance for the future of world proletarian revolution. It's a question that Lenin himself already posed, provoking the bitter disputes between Marxists and revisionists that led to the irrevocable separation of communists from social democrats. It's a question that, nearly forty years later, has reacquired all its old importance and immediacy. With the victorious conclusion of World War II and the collapse of Nazism and Fascism in almost all the countries of the West, it seems as if the revisionists' distortion and manipulation of Marxism and their strategic government "participationism" had cleared the way for a new situation - one that would allow the proletariat to seize power through peaceful and parliamentary means. And lastly, it's a question that must come before all others because the tactics and strategy of the proletariat's rise to power hinge on it.

The seizure of political power through armed struggle is, in fact, a question of principle and method. Principle because it determines whether one has or lacks the actual will to bring socialism about. Method, because armed struggle is the sole means that the working class and popular masses have at their disposal to overthrow the dominant, exploiting class. History past and present, East to West, North to South confirms this repeatedly and unflinchingly. No matter what kind of revolution it is - bourgeois, socialist, anti-imperialist, or anti-colonialist- guns have always been the means to bring the rising class to power or to free a country from foreign domination.

So, we can see that using armed struggle to seize political power is valid everywhere, not just in Asia, Africa or Latin America. This type of struggle, which is a means that the proletariat will turn to only after having exhausted its legal and non-violent alternatives within the bourgeois democratic system, and after all the conditions favorable to the seizure of power have been established, is also valid in capitalist countries - Italy included.

Mao expressed his thoughts on the matter by evaluating the dictatorship of the proletariat both in China and in the world. He said, "**The contradictions inherent in capitalist societies are manifested through acute conflicts and antagonisms, and through bitter class war. They cannot be resolved by a capitalist regime, only by socialist revolution"**<sup>(7)</sup>.

These are sacrosanct and profoundly truthful words. Every responsible worker can personally verify them just by looking at Italy's present-day reality. And yet, the revisionists think differently. They hold that socialist revolution is no good any more, especially in the West. Today, they say, times have changed and the world situation has changed too. That's why we have to make a clean break with the past

and Marxism-Leninism and seek out a new path.

The leader of the Italian revisionists, Enrico Berlinguer, feels exactly the same way: "Faced with today's situation, it would be a grave error not to recognize the different paths, the need for research, the impossibility of adapting ourselves to schemes and patterns or presumed 'immortal principles', - whose very exhaustion is part of history and has become evident (...) What we call "Eurocommunism" counts among its decisive features the ability to move based not only on an awareness of the multiplicity of conditions that we find ourselves faced with today, but also based on an awareness of our radically new situation; and therefore, the ability to use committed thought and action to rid ourselves - as has become indispensable today - of the material contradictions, and political and cultural dead-ends which were, to some degree, inevitable outgrowths of past political stages. However, their presence today in the world and in the contemporary communist workers' movement is obsolete and no longer acceptable"<sup>(8)</sup>.

Berlinguer's speech presents a program of complete renewal, liberation and purification with regard to the past. But it forgets to explain just which "radically new situations" have arisen with such force as to upset the classic communist line. In any case, aside from the true radically new situations that were singled out and put into perspective by Mao, communist theory prescribes an essential first step no matter what the given circumstances: identify which class is in power, and who controls the means of production. Since political and economic power in Italy and in the West in general, is in the hands of the bourgeoisie, it's not possible to ignore this reality and neglect to draw up a policy suitable for turning the tables.

You can have all the political breaks that you want and use all the most unlikely stratagems but in the end, if you really want socialism, you have to squarely face up to this stumbling block and resolutely head down the path of socialist revolution.

Unless, of course, you want to take things so much in stride that you never get to the point, i.e., to the trial of strength with the bourgeoisie. If that's the case, then you can't say that the "immortal principles" have been "exhausted". Instead, you have to admit forthrightly that you want nothing more to do with communist principles and that you're not willing to fight for socialism. We can figure out only one thing about Berlinguer: that he feels boxed in by Marxism-Leninism, and so it's only right that he wiggle his way out of his dilemma. That's his business. But he shouldn't expect the proletariat to feel the same way.

For his own credibility, Berlinguer must tell the proletariat whether the new path he's mooning over and proposing them will also lead to the destruction of the old production relationships, of the social order, of the old State, and of the root of man's exploitation of man. If not, "Eurocommunism" is nothing but nonsense, the umpteenth in a long line of deceptions that we can band together with the "war of position", the "Italian path to socialism", and the "historic compromise". It's one more attempt to trick the sincere communists, revolutionaries and workers, and to throw a life line out to capitalism.

It's evident that "Eurocommunism" is in flagrant contradiction to the path of the

October Revolution. It doesn't have anything new or original to add to the "new paths to socialism" that Bonomi and Bissolati put forward beginning in 1907, and which were later taken up by Turati, Nenni and Craxi. If this is the way things are today - and they are this way - we should ask ourselves, what difference did the 1921 split make?

Twice, in 1892 and in 1921, the proletariat tried to organize a party of its own that would stage a socialist revolution. Both times the revisionists managed to distract it, swindle it, and divert it from its original aims. This fact and no other is the real reason why socialist revolution hasn't yet broken out in Italy, even though this century has presented us with more than one occasion to launch it.

But the future will be different. The PMLI was born to launch the socialist revolution. It will never betray the proletariat. It will hold fast to its principles and follow its original creed: "The basic platform of the Italian Marxist-Leninist Party is to guide the proletariat to the seizure of political power, to defeat the bourgeois dictatorship, to set up the dictatorship of the proletariat, and to insure the complete triumph of socialism over capitalism".

### **In Italy, everything is pushing in favour of the revolution, even the threat of a world war**

In our country, there are no factors that advise against a socialist revolution, or make it impossible or impracticable. Those who insist on the opposite either are not completely familiar with the situation, or have no faith in the masses. Or else, they are working overtly or covertly to prevent the revolution from breaking out and triumphing.

Everything is pushing in favor of revolution. We have a powerful and expert working class, an agricultural proletariat that is accustomed to hard work and severe trials, a women's movement that has taken up the fight for emancipation, a strong, courageous and generous youth, and entire areas of Southern Italy that are tinder-boxes. We have a long history of insurrection behind us, forged by the Risorgimento, the Resistance movement, and the street demonstrations against the De Gasperi, Scelba and Tambroni governments, not to mention the great mass movements of '68-69 and '77.

Today, there is a great restlessness among the mass. They yearn for change, social justice, new relationships among mankind, and peace. We are thinking of, for example, the glorious 35 days of conflict at the Fiat plant, the open - and in some ways, even violent - protests against the revisionists and union collaborationists; of the hard setback the revisionist party suffered at the hands of voter abstentions during the political, administrative and student elections; and of the clamorous victories of the divorce and abortion referendums.

We are also thinking of the touching show of solidarity and the outpouring of help and assistance, by young and old alike, for the earthquake victims of Campania and Basilicata; of the forceful mass and workers' demonstrations against terrorism, as well as those against imperialism; of the huge nationwide farmers' protests and the recent demonstrations by the winegrowers in Barletta and Sicily. We are thinking

of the hard struggles of the unemployed and homeless, of the revolts in Sicily over water distribution, and of the ecology and no-nuke movements.

Last but not least, we are thinking of the still amorphous, rootless multitudes of young people who are looking for a way to satisfy their material, spiritual and social needs, and even more importantly, who are seeking a new ideal, a new path, a new association that is really able to change their lives.

On the other side of the coin, we have a state and various institutions that are muddied by corruption and scandal, literally falling to pieces and increasingly unpopular with the masses; squalid and discredited governments that are careening down into the abyss like so many dead weights; a weakened bourgeoisie, violently shaken by feuding and furious in-fighting over how to set up a new distribution of power among the weightiest financial, economic and industrial clans, and how to establish a new institutional and governmental order; the decline of the DC (Christian Democratic Party) and the rise of the PSI (Italian Socialist Party) - an aftereffect of the earthquake that's been shaking the inner realms of the great bourgeoisie and the State; and lastly, there's the economy, springing leaks left and right, moving ahead in fits and starts - and ahead only because of the sacrifices which the government, employers, union collaborationists and revisionists have imposed on the masses.

Even the armed forces, the Customs Service, and the police force are implicated in this process of disintegration and vertical collapse of the capitalist regime.

Nevertheless, thanks to the special attention they receive from Pertini, the government and especially a self-styled "Socialist", Lagorio, they've been able to stave off the devastating effects of the general decadence better than other institutions. In fact, they're continually being reinforced with more equipment, more training, more means, and more men, as the recent measures passed in favor of the armed and police forces show. Why? So that the military and non-military armed forces, toned up in spirit and morale, and provided with economic incentives, will continue to uphold the expansionism and imperialistic hegemony of the Italian State in the Mediterranean and in Africa, while, at the same time, remaining willing and able to crush any civil war at home.

This ambitious and evil program forebodes disaster for Italy, her neighbors, and the very existence of the proletariat and socialist revolution.

As to internal questions, that is, the contradictions and struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie, we should say that there's no need to fear the apparent strength of the Italian military and police machine. First of all, no reactionary, mercenary army has ever been able to stop the tidal wave of mass insurrection. And secondly, can we be certain that no one in the armed forces will switch over to the revolution when the moment comes?

The weight of history leads us to believe that the armed forces, the police and the Customs Service will not stay together as one unit in the face of an insurrection. Some of them will side with the revolution. In any case, starting today, we have to do more than just use legal means to work inside and outside the various representative and elective bodies. We need to work with intelligence and skill to

plant some secret revolutionary bases inside them. While the capitalist regime is in power, we can't do anything to change the nature of the repressive military machine or the make it act according to the political views and interests of the proletariat. However, we can win over part of that machine to the revolutionary side - even if it's a small part. Today we will concentrate on the political and organizational level; tomorrow, on the military and operational level.

There are two things to be said about our armed forces and foreign affairs: 1) We don't want them employed for purposes of aggression or imperialist war, nor in the interests of the dominant Italian bourgeois class, not in the interests of Reagan and U.S. imperialism; and 2) We call for them to be transformed, educated and equipped for a war of territorial defense and partisan combat in the cities and in the mountains, to fight alongside the people which from now on, should be aimed and trained in resisting foreign invasion.

Therefore, we cast a strong "No" against atomic weaponry in Italy, and "No" against "Euromissiles" in Comiso or any other Italian town. We're not at all convinced that an atomic barrage is what it takes to keep the peace and keep our Peninsula out of the expansionistic sights of Soviet socialimperialism. We believe that the only impenetrable barrier is a united people ready to take weapon in hand to prevent the foreign occupation and subjugation of our beloved country. We say "No" to the neutron bomb and call on the Italian government to speak out against it, to publically declare that it will never allow this barbarous, inhuman implement of war transferred into Italian soil.

We are against all atomic weapons, including the SS 20, and we call for them all to be destroyed. We're against American imperialism and the socialimperialism of the Soviet Union because both of them, to the same degree, are mortal enemies of humankind.

Both are taking giant steps towards a new world war (we saw a recent demonstration of this in the disgraceful and dangerous airborne duel between U.S. and Libyan fighter planes over the Mediterranean). But this world war will be different from World War II. In the '40's, the anti-Nazi forces met on the battlefield in a just cause: to wipe out the Hitlerian and Fascist menace. The coming war, however, will be an imperialist war and its purpose will be to decide once and for all which of the two superpowers will have absolute control over the world. In such circumstances, the various peoples of the world, especially those directly involved, should avoid making pacts with one side or the other.

We believe in Lenin's classic thesis: that civil revolutionary war is the only answer to imperialistic war. His thesis is still valid today, and Mao underlined his support for it on several occasions. He said, **"As to the problem of world war, there are only two possibilities: that the war will kindle revolution, or that the revolution will prevent the war".**(9) **"Peoples of the world, unite to combat every war of aggression that is unleashed by every form of imperialism or socialimperialism - particularly a war of aggression that makes use of the atomic bomb! If a war of aggression breaks out, the peoples of the world must wipe it out with revolutionary war. They must be ready from this moment**

on"<sup>(10)</sup>.

World war doesn't postpone the revolution; it speeds up its time-table. That is only one more reason to strongly back the revolution and to zealously prepare for it - without wasting time.

### **The revolution is the work of the masses and not just of the handful**

You can't bring a revolution about by yourself. Or without mass support and willingness to leap into the fray of insurrection. "**The revolutionary war**", says Mao, "**is a war of the masses; it can be waged only by mobilizing the masses and relying on them**"<sup>(11)</sup>.

This elementary concept is exactly what those who vainly spend their lives perpetuating so-called "red" terrorism haven't understood. They don't realize the damage they're doing to the masses and the revolution. The terrorists believe that their actions can stir up the situation, can rouse the masses and generate the civil war, but they don't see that their robberies, attacks on persons and property, vendettas, kidnappings, "people's trials" and summary executions have not budged the masses an inch. On the contrary, they provide the government with a pretext to fascistize the state and shore up its special anti-guerrilla corps.

The facts should be enough to convince all terrorists in good faith that they can't take the place of the masses: strength and haphazard, isolated incidents are not enough to convince the masses to do what they don't want to do.

The proletarian and popular masses - because of direct experience, because of the circumstances that will come about in the future, because of Marxist-Leninist political action - will undoubtedly reach the conclusion that revolution is necessary. But until then, it's useless and counterproductive to force them into acting against their better judgment. First we need to win their trust on a political level, and this ground will have to be fought over inch by inch with the revisionist party.

It makes no difference how much time it will take to accumulate the revolutionary strength necessary. What is important is patience, not throwing ourselves into adventurous detours, and never tiring of striving towards our goal - even if we have to struggle all our lives long. Without or against the masses, it's impossible to win the socialist revolution. Mao teaches: "**We must act according to the concrete conditions and reach our goals naturally, without straining for them. For example, it takes nine months for a baby to be born. If the doctor forces the birth after seven months, it's a bad thing: it's a deviation to the 'left'. If, after nine months, the doctor wants to prevent the birth and the baby truly wants to be born, that's what we call a deviation to the 'right'. In short, things evolve over time. When the time comes to act, we must act. If we fail to act or hinder action, that's a deviation to the right; but if the moment hasn't yet come and we force ourselves to act, that's a deviation to the left**"<sup>(12)</sup>.

If this is the unequivocal teaching of Mao, why then do the self-styled "Red Brigades" and other similar groups who profess to be Marxist-Leninist and refer back to the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution unduly hasten the times and



practice such a ferocious type of terrorism at the expense of the working class and the popular masses? Evidently, it's because they're not communist in the least, and they have neither the interests of the masses nor of socialism at heart.

Their social practice is the negation of Marxism and the socialist revolution. Their goals<sup>(13)</sup> don't contain an iota of Marxism. Every one of their platforms baldly contradicts the October Revolution. They speak of a "communist revolution" not a socialist revolution; of "long-term anti-imperialist civil war" and not mass insurrection against the bourgeois dictatorship to build socialism. They want to convert the masses to 'armed combat', not to socialism and the path of the October Revolution; to build up "red power" "in the form of invisible red bases" within the capitalist system. They speak of "military annihilation" of the modern revisionist "hyenas" not of ideological and political struggle against modern revisionism, and of "building a fighting Communist Party", i.e., an armed organization, and not an authentic Marxist-Leninist party.

In other words, by skipping the socialist revolution phase and the dictatorship of the proletariat, their program advances the cause of the revolution on the one hand, while on the other hand, it radically changes all the preliminary steps of the true organization of the revolution. It replaces them with diversionary tactics which, in addition to representing out-tight provocations, leave the original situation unchanged.

Therefore, it's no coincidence that "red terrorism" has completely absented itself from ideological debate and political struggle. It's been silent especially toward the government. It never put in a word, for example, to condemn the government's genocidal practice of belated aid to the earthquake victims. Not even a peep about the recent scandals over the terrifying fascist slaughter in Bologna.

And if red terrorism remains speechless and positionless even about the interests of the proletariat, and says nothing against the government, employers, bourgeois institutions, imperialism, social imperialism and revisionism, that means that it doesn't care whether things change, or whether Italy becomes socialist or not.

So-called "red terrorism" will never be anything other than what it is today, and that's because its ideology is a mish-mash of trotskyism, anarchism, laborism, and "spontaneism", and its policy lines are inherently adventurist, provocative, counterrevolutionary and anti-communist. This explains why it is similar in substance (and minor details), if not in form, to "black terrorism". After, the "red" and the black are in collusion. It also explains why it's so easy for the secret services to infiltrate terrorist groups: because "red terrorism" is exploited, manipulated and guided by that wing of the bourgeoisie that is pushing for a strong state and government and hopes to pave the way for a new fascist dictatorship.

Terrorism is one of the maleficent off-shoots of our degenerate, putrefying capitalist regime. It must be uprooted and destroyed before the truly revolutionary forces can join together under one party and follow a truly revolutionary proletarian program. Only then can we make a clear distinction between revolutionaries and counterrevolutionaries, deny the government even the slightest pretext for strengthening its already repressive machinery, and prevent the tight-

wing revisionists from hiding in the tanks of the revisionists of the "left". We have long challenged the government to hunt out and punish the instigators of terrorism, but we're still waiting for action. It lacks the courage to investigate the P2 Lodge Brothers [*The "Propaganda 2" Masonic Lodge. (Translator's note)*], hidden within its breast. It doesn't dare investigate the bourgeois parties that may be involved, especially the DC and the MSI (Italian Social Movement), or the parties who are conspicuous by their dealings with the terrorists of their humanitarian gestures, and those persons or parties who are in the inner circle of finance, industry or the government itself. In other words, it has begged off investigated exactly those circles where the notorious but not-so-mysterious "Old Man" could catty on his misdeeds undisturbed.

Terrorism will receive its coup de grace from exactly those young people and others who, through naiveté, inexperience or lack of a Marxist background, were and are attracted to it. Sooner or later, practical experience will show them that terrorism defers, not hastens, the revolution; that it strengthens, not weakens, the capitalist state; and that it complicates, not simplifies, the revolution's task of winning the trust of the masses, convincing them, educating them, organizing and mobilizing them in the armed revolutionary struggle against capitalism.

The masses will not be attracted to the revolution or socialism by shrill revolutionary cries or reckless action. The only way to attract them is to take an interest in their problems, defend them from their enemies, live the same life they live, respect their sentiments and gradually raise their consciousnesses. **"I sustain before this Congress," emphasized Mao, "that we should pay close attention to the well-being of the masses, from the problems of land and labor to those of fuel, rice, cooking oil and salt (...) We should help the masses to realize that we represent their interests, that our lives are intimately bound up with theirs. We should help them to proceed from these things to an understanding of the higher tasks which we have put forward, the task of the revolutionary war, so that they will support the revolution and spread it throughout the country, respond to our political appeals and fight to the end for victory in the revolution"**<sup>(14)</sup>.

This is a priceless political lesson, and one that the PMLI holds dear. We follow it in supporting, for example, across-the-board pay raises and increased pensions for workers, full employment, 35-hour work weeks, reduced worker's categories, equalization of work contacts, the fight to decent housing, the fight to rents that are truly equitable and in proportion to a worker's income, completely free health care for workers and retired persons, general social services that will really free women from their domestic and family bondage, complete economic, political, legal and social equality between men and women, the application and improvement of Law 194, the reinstatement of the cost of living increase for severance pay, the right to study for children of workers, and all other claims - no matter how seemingly insignificant - proposed by the masses.

On the other hand, we are against the so-called "salary reform", which does nothing but aid professionals while minimizing use of the sliding scale for cost of

living increases, and penalizing workers especially in small-to medium sized industries. We are against tax and price hikes for workers - in fact, we're calling for tax and price relief; against mobility, lay-offs, part-time work, increases in productivity, self-regulating strikes and all other measures that tend to suffocate democracy in the unions or endanger fundamental union tenets.

Given these views, we are definitely against "joint management" or "joint decision-making", and the "anti-inflation pact". They would significantly worsen the personal and work situations of the working masses without compensating them in any way, or providing for today or tomorrow. Even graver would be to enter into a similar political agreement with the Spadolini government. Its first significant actions were to increase Italy's military, financial, economic and energy dependence on the United States by stockpiling Cruise missiles in Comiso and entering into the colossal ENI-OXY pact.

We mustn't grant any concessions to the Spadolini "give-an-inch, take-a-mile" government. Its stated intention of lowering inflation at all costs by slashing health, social security, education and transfer funds, freezing cost of living increases, and tying work contracts to low salaries, mobility, productivity, professionalism, and self-regulating strikes means dumping the whole burden of his inflation-fighting measures on the working class and the people.

The government isn't credible on an ethical level: parliamentary emoluments have increased a net of Lit. 300.000 since July 1, 1980. It isn't even credible as a bourgeois democracy: it jumped at the need to disband the P2 Masonic Lodge, but only so that it could put all those organizations it deemed unacceptable to the government and dominant class under its thumb.

As you can see, the bandleader may have changed - a Republican ex-"Republikin" [*repubblichino* - supporter of the "fascist republic of Salò" (translator's note)] instead of a Christian Democrat - but the song's still the same. How long can this go on? That depends on how much time it takes to set the subjective stage for the revolution.

### **The Party, a United Front, and a Red Army are the fundamental tools of the revolution**

Looking back on the epic Chinese Revolution, Mao indicated that the Party, a Red Army and a united front were the three fundamental tools necessary to organize and lead the revolution. These are his exact words: "**A well-disciplined Party armed with the theory of Marxism-Leninism, using the method of self-criticism and linked with the masses of the people; an army under the leadership of such a Party; a united front of all revolutionary classes and all revolutionary groups under the leadership of such a Party - these are the three main weapons with which we have defeated the enemy**"<sup>(15)</sup>.

It's easy to understand that the most important tool is the Party. Without it, there's neither a United Front nor a Red Army, nor a proletariat that's unanimous on revolutionary positions.

The Party is the soul and guiding light of all the battles that the proletariat wages.

Without it, it's impossible to inspire or direct the myriad activities of the workers movement of the political, social, economic, labor and cultural fronts. It's equally impossible that the hegemony of the proletariat safeguard the revolution through rocky terrain and in its every stage. In the category of non-state organizations, the Party is the maximum expression of the revolutionary proletariat.

Naturally, we're not talking about just any party. A social democratic or revisionist one would be unsuitable for democratic centralism or Marxism-Leninism. We need a party whose ideology, policy, planning and organization is definitely proletarian and revolutionary in nature, one in which these characteristics are precise, well-defined and codified, and where the working class is king and its will is law for the entire membership. Lastly its cadets must be responsible, conscientious and disciplined, ready for even the most extreme sacrifice, and capable of organizing and leading the revolutionary masses.

We already have such a party here in Italy, but it's still too small and weak to give its all to the struggle and be completely equal to the great task of waging the revolution. But what else could we have done? We had to consider our staffing point; the myriad puppet groups with the revisionists, if not the DC and the PCI, pulling the strings - and all competing for the title Marxist-Leninist; the long-standing lack of a concrete foothold from the international communist movement; the presence of the world's largest revisionist party that's not in power, and all the self-styled revolutionary organizations associated with it; plus the extreme dearth of means and meager number of activists. Thanks to the groundwork we've set up and the experience we've accumulated, we are, however, in a position to improve ourselves and to step up our program of building up the Party - if only the proletariat will lend us its strength in terms of men, support, and means.

Many revolutionaries and sincere communists haven't yet understood that if we don't build up the PMLI, the preparations for the revolution will slow down and the great potential of the proletariat will remain suffocated under the heavy hand of revisionism. They haven't yet realized that when the time for revolution is at hand, the revolutionaries must go with the revolutionaries and the revisionists with revisionists. It's useless to dream of waging a revolution with a revisionist party, just as it's unthinkable to try to change the Party from the inside when an alternative to Berlinguer might be the extreme right-winger, Napolitano, or the pro-Soviet Cossutta, who is willing to sell Italy to Moscow.

In any case, while we're waiting for the consciousness of the masses to "rise", we'll continue to focus all our energies on building up the PMLI. We'll keep our door open and hope that the more advanced elements of the proletariat and sincere revolutionaries pass over the threshold before our 2nd Congress, scheduled for next year. Their new energy and new ideas will make the Party more expert and strengthen its ties to the masses all over Italy.

Without the Marxist-Leninist party, there's no winning the proletarian revolution. But with the Party alone, there's no hope of organizing and mobilizing all the political and social forces in the revolution. Next to the Party and under its direction, we need a strong united front, a front that's as large as possible to include

the working class, the agricultural proletariat, the poorest peasants, the lowest ranks of the petit bourgeoisie, young people and forward-looking women, and all the political and social non-Marxist groups who ate in favour of the revolution and socialism.

Since we're talking about a proletarian, not a bourgeois, revolution, that is, a revolution that will put an end to private capitalistic property, clearly no capitalistic forces or groups which, in one way or another, oppose socialism, can be included in the united front. This doesn't mean, however, that individual elements from the middle bourgeoisie and the high tanks of the petit bourgeoisie who renounce their class origins and want to take part in the struggle for a new socialist society cannot be admitted.

The united revisionist front doesn't bother to distinguish between workers and bourgeoisie because its sole aim is to propose policies that are different, at least in name, from the DC, and to form a new government - but still within the present constitutional framework. However, the united revolutionary front must deafly stake out its tight-most boundary so that its nature, composition and basic goals are not corrupted.

The revolutionary front will not tolerate any discrimination on religious or philosophical grounds. It must be open to believers and non-believers alike, who, in turn, will enjoy an equality of fights and duties, and coexist with their ideological and doctrinal convictions.

Because it's the only revolutionary class true to oneself, and directly opposed to the capitalism, the working class, through its Party, must have the leading role in the united revolutionary front. It is the only class that can safeguard the revolution's socialist, all-or-nothing nature; the only class that can gather all the other classes and anti-capitalist groups together under one banner, neutralize intermediary forces and expel the bourgeoisie and its lackeys. The working class is the only class that has the strength and the capacity to build a new world.

This is how Mao described the working class: "**The proletariat is much superior in numbers to the bourgeoisie. It develops alongside it, yet finds itself under its dominion. This proletariat is the new force in history. In the initial phase, it holds a dependent position with regard to the bourgeoisie. But gradually it grows stronger, becomes an independent class, and plays a leading role in history until, at last, it seizes power and becomes the dominant class itself**"<sup>(16)</sup>.

Its place in production and society, its ideology, its productive and combat experience, its organizational and mobilizing capacities make the working class the strongest, most advanced and most revolutionary class in history. Its basic tasks will remain untouched by time or space. It is immune to cunning or guile, to all irrational and abstract theorizations.

Today, in order to down-play the working class' role in history and its weight in society, and to gain backing for their counterrevolutionary policy of capitulating to the bourgeoisie, the PCI (Italian Communist Party), through a CESPE poll conducted at the Fiat plant, and the PSI, with a CESEC survey taken of workers in small-to-medium industry, would like to depict the proletariat as moderate,

reformist, and satisfied with its lives in today's society. But the above-mentioned facts paint a different picture, and the near future won't fail to reveal the highly-charged revolutionary spirit beating in the hearts of today's working class.

Given the present state of things, if non-proletarian parties and social groups that openly support socialism fail to form in the future, our united revolutionary front will have to be built from the bottom up and not vice-versa. This is for the simple reason that the leaders and the parties that invoke socialism - the PCI, PSI, PSDI (Italian Socialist Democratic Party), PdUP (Proletarian Unity Party), and the DP (Proletarian Democracy) - have omitted socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat into their platforms.

For the moment, we have no choice but to work from the bottom up. We must zealously seek unity among the masses as well as the abovementioned parties members and sections or federations, in some cases, of the radical and liberal parties also.

Together with them, we can organize the activities and battles that are of common interest to us all and that will promote the Party's influence and the revolutionary proletarian line. Naturally, creating unity at the ground level doesn't prevent the Party from participating in the normal give-and-take of parliamentary and non-parliamentary parties, with the sole exclusion of the MSI.

We must use this united front skillfully in all fields - from politics to trade unions, culture to recreation; among industrial workers and farm workers, women and young people and students, the unemployed and the homeless, senior citizens and the handicapped, and among intellectuals, the military and sportsmen. We must alternately concentrate our efforts in those sectors where the PMLI has the greatest chance of penetration while always, unflinchingly favoring the working class.

Wherever possible, using appropriate and varied ways and means, we must follow a three-pronged plan of action. We must make the voice of the Party heard, directly or indirectly; revolutionary currents and mass organizations that we can build up gradually according to our imagination or needs must be used to bring friends and sympathizers closer to the Party. At the same time, we shouldn't neglect - in fact, we should reinforce - the work being done in the large, revisionist-run mass organizations (the CGIL [*CGIL - Confederazione generale italiana del lavoro (translator's note)*] for example). All the same, we should always be mindful of the basics - our general goals, tactics, individual and specific duties, the class we are working for - and work under the Party leadership.

Gradually, we need to build up a mass political, union, social, cultural and military network that, at a later date, can be centralized and wedded to the united revolutionary front at the ground level. In order to guarantee our leadership of the united front, we should follow two criteria as pronounced by Mao: **"The ruling class and party can direct the classes, social strata, political parties and popular organizations under two conditions only: a) that they guide those who look to them for direction (their allies) to fight resolutely against the common enemy and be victorious; b) that they bring material advantages to those who they guide or at least, avoid damaging their interests while, at the same time,**

**educating them politically. Without these two conditions, or with only one of them, no direction can be established"**<sup>(17)</sup>.

The Red Army, as we have already mentioned, is the third fundamental tool for organizing and assuring a victorious socialist revolution. But it cannot be assembled tight away. The process of building up the Party and a united front is too far behind schedule, and the times are not yet ripe for the revolutionary forces to arm themselves and take to the streets.

Most likely, the Red Army will be formed on the eve of the insurrection. There's no need for preliminary preparation or military training, or to carry out isolated aimed action away from the insurrection itself. Our revolution will not take a long time and it will not be a simple skirmish between opposing armed forces. It will be a lightning quick revolution that will explode only when we're absolutely sure of victory. It will be a great mass insurrection that will lay siege to the enemy from all sides and block off all means of escape.

Given this type of revolution, all we have to do now is design the structure of the Red Army and set out its precise functions and duties. Then, at the right moment, we can recruit its members and incorporate the worker and fanner combat squads into its pivotal positions.

Once we have the Party, the united front and the army, we'll be able to create a fully revolutionary situation. We'll pass with lightning speed to mass insurrection, topple the bourgeois dictatorship and erect a socialist state.

### **The bourgeois democracy is opposed to socialism**

According to the party secretary of the DC - and not him alone - Italy is no longer in need of a revolution. He says that it already took place in the post-war years, satisfying the masses in full - even with regard to the economy. In fact, he states, "These thirty years tell the story of a people who, for the first time in centuries, is experiencing a democracy in substance as well as in name, teaching the point where it has achieved many of the goals that democracies in other pluralist countries have achieved only after long centuries of experimentation and true revolutionary breakdown.

"Our country has avoided traumatic fractures while still experiencing a true revolution towards democratic liberty - a socio-economic revolution which shook intra-class relationships to their roots and brought a high level of economic integration to the masses"<sup>(18)</sup>.

We don't see eye to eye at all with Mr. Piccoli, especially since reality is all around us, ready to deny all his pat macro-falsehoods. First of all, the revolution that the workers want would never tolerate even the slightest exploitation of man by man. Secondly, the present democracy is a paradise of freedom and privilege for the rich capitalists but it's an inferno for the workers, the masses and the poof. And lastly, the bourgeois class is still in power.

Reflecting on the past - the Risorgimento, the period of Italian unification, the end of Mussolini's fascist dictatorship and of the monarchy, and the foundation of the Republic and the Constitution - the only truth we can see is that a bourgeois

revolution actually did take place in Italy. But this is already part of the past, and has nothing left to offer the political, economic or social progress of Italy. Those democratic, economic or institutional innovations of the past that the bourgeoisie introduced at the proletariat's urging were considered progressive at the time (with respect to feudalism and the monarchy). Today, however, they are rapidly turning into the underpinnings of an it on-fisted, reactionary - if not openly fascist - regime, in which even the tattered remains of the original bourgeois concepts of liberty and democracy are coming unraveled.

This has manifested itself through some worrisome symptoms: the repeated coup d'état attempts, beginning with De Lorenzo-Segni's 1964 attempted coup all the way up to those masterminded by Sindona in 1972 and Gelli in 1978; Pertini's presidential paternalism; the calls for a second republic advanced, in particular, by the aspiring new "duce", Craxi (although even the revisionist proposals for "parliamentary reform" and reform of the Prime Ministry smack of the same motivation); the repressive legislation clustered around the infamous, fascistic Cossiga and Reale Laws; and lastly, the integration of parliamentary parties into the state through public financing, today doubled in scope, which constitutes the most audacious fraud of workers' money yet, and the most flagrant example of systematic immorality on high.

Terrorism, scandals, corruption, immorality, institutional decay: these are not self-contained phenomena, anomalies, exceptions or contradictions in this state, constitution or type of democracy. They are all the dregs being raised as the old bourgeois regime hits bottom in terms of corruption and decay. No one and nothing can repair it or give it back the force and vigor of its youth. The decline of today's society and the gangrene infested bourgeois democracy are not so much the by-products of the "Christian Democratic system of power" as of the capitalist system itself.

The bourgeois democracy is closed off to the left and open to the right. But then against, the constitution places insurmountable restraints on the left. These game rules effectively eliminate any interference with the present power relationships between one class and the other, and prevent the working class from peacefully and legally coming to power to change our society. Therefore, it's useless to harbor constitutional illusions: to insist on moving within constitutional circles only means to give a breath of fresh air to the moribund bourgeoisie and to cut ourselves off from any hope of bringing about social change.

The bourgeois democracy, sanctioned and protected by the constitution, can play the contortionist for as long as it wants, and extend itself to the left as much as it can stand, but it will never trespass into one off-limits zone: the maintenance and protection of the capitalist system of private property.

This sacred limit, no matter what Piccoli and all the other bourgeois and revisionist politicians say, is the reason why our country is a democracy in name only, a democracy that guards the basic interests of the bourgeoisie. **"Liberty and democracy"**, says Mao, **"exist only in the concrete, never in the abstract. In a society where there is a class struggle, if the exploiting class is free to exploit**



**the workers, the workers are not free to escape from being exploited. Where there is democracy for the bourgeoisie, there can be no democracy for the proletariat and the other workers"**<sup>(19)</sup>.

How can we disagree! In Italy, just to give two examples, do the workers enjoy the same economic and social conditions that the capitalists do? Do they have at their disposal the same means of communications and information, in the same quantity and of the same quality, as the owning class has at its disposal? We aren't aware of any such equality, so what kind of democracy are they babbling about? The truth in this democracy is: once a worker, always a worker, once a rich man, always a rich man.

Universal suffrage and superficial freedoms - won at a great cost to the proletariat - cannot be considered convincing arguments for the existence of a democratic regime. Marx already unmasked electoralism and bourgeois parliamentarianism for the frauds that they are. Through them, the oppressed classes have the periodic right to vote for the members of the bourgeois class who will "**represent and crush**" them in parliament.

The principle that the power rests with the majority is pure deception and a juridical-constitutional lie. In reality, the workers, who actually make up the majority, don't have a voice in the affairs of state. Why? Because the state is set up in such a way that the workers can't express their true will, because they are excluded from the directorship of many institutions, and because they lack what it takes to assert themselves: economic and political power.

It would be unthinkable to build socialism on such a false, defective and, today, even backward and reactionary base as this kind of democracy. Berlinguer thinks differently, however. He holds that "democracy is the historically universal value on which a new, original socialist society should be founded"<sup>(20)</sup>. Modestly, he declines to state which democracy he has in mind, but the implications is that he's thinking of a bourgeois democracy; otherwise, he would have defined it with his term of class.

The truth of the matter is that by basing their policy on the bourgeois democracy, and even hoisting the old, time-worn banner of the bourgeoisie as their symbol and model, the revisionists are carrying Togliatti's idea of a "progressive democracy" - the so-called "svolta di Salerno" (Salerno turning-point) - to the extreme. They are joining up with the Social Democratic International, which since 1914 has supported the goals of defeating bourgeois power by occupying the state machine through elections, and definitely breaking with Leninism even on the important question of democracy.

Clearly, to the revisionists' way of thinking, the full institution of a bourgeois democracy, which they see as the "non plus ultra" of all other types of democracy - including a socialist one - is the ultimate goal of the proletarian struggle.

For us Marxists-Leninists, however, bourgeois democracy is only one stop along the way to social evolution. It's a stop that we must overcome in a hurry because of the involuntal and fascistic dangers it presents. But it's also a tool that we can use against the dominant bourgeois class to defend the rights of the proletariat and

create the conditions necessary for advancement to the next, higher form of democracy - one that will be more evolved and made-to-order for the workers. Unless there's a clean break with the old state order, this transformation certainly won't take place within the sphere of the old bourgeois democracy. This time, power won't pass from one minority to another, but from the minority of exploiters to the majority of the exploited. This will be the most profound revolution in the history of mankind: it will abolish man's exploitation of man by handing over the political power to the working class. It will install new forms of democracy and new institutions that will allow the workers, at long last, to completely enjoy liberty, democracy and equality.

### **The working class will have power only under a socialist regime**

There will be no change or social renewal in Italy, and it will remain fettered to the old bourgeois democracy unless it wholeheartedly embarks down the path of the October Revolution. Only socialism can heal Italy economically and morally, save it from imperialist war and fascism, and guarantee it a future blessed with peace, democracy and social well-being. Only socialism will allow the working class to exercise political power and to build a new world, free of exploitation, poverty, unemployment, social inequality, territorial backwardness, and the discrepancies between industry and agriculture, town and country.

From World War II until the present, various government coalitions have been experimented - even with the PCI and PSI participating - but none offered even the slightest. Today, the proletariat is farther away from power than ever before, and Italy has lost its bearings.

The Christian Democratic Party has worn itself out trying to manage all the various interests of the bourgeoisie. Now the PCI is bidding to take its place with its nebulous, contradictory "democratic alternative". It spent six long years running in circles with its "historic compromise", which still, after all this time, is nothing but a political strategy suspended in the limbo of its author's thoughts. We can understand that the PCI was just trying to follow the DC line from these words by Berlinguer: "What would we do if we were in power, and what are we trying to do now as the opposition? Italy is a country that's been in crisis for quite some time (...), given the circumstances, you can't have everything, and you especially can't have everything right away (...) You need four things or, better yet, four political decisions: (...) to decide what can be done (...) and how much it will cost to do it (...) to establish in what ways and proportions the state, business, families, and the citizenry will take part, and what proportion of the expenses they will have to shoulder (...) to identify the tools and mechanisms that are appropriate for reaching those goals (...) and to know, above all, that it's not possible to plan everything, that the market must be guaranteed a space - an important space (...) What we need is a plan, a plan that is as indirect as possible and not - just to make things clear - a coercive plan"<sup>(21)</sup>.

What kind of innovations are these! Once you leave the market - i.e., capitalist system of production, commerce and exchange - "an important space", and say the

plan doesn't have to be coercive, and what's more, that even the "families" and "citizenry" must underwrite it, how is it possible to escape from capitalism? What we are evidently looking at is a big deception on the part of the revisionists. They are actually working for the bourgeoisie while undermining the basic interests of the proletariat and boycotting its struggle to build socialism.

This, without even considering that fact that, under present circumstances, simply taking part in a bourgeois government means giving a little more oxygen to the dominant class, abandoning the worker's movement, and suffocating the revolution. Experience has taught us that the participation of socialist-oriented parties in bourgeois governments is nothing more than a piece of window dressing, a sort of leftist smokescreen behind which to better exploit and oppress the workers and lead them astray to the dead-end paths of reformism, pacifism and parliamentarianism.

Even the great illusion created by Mitterand and his "government of the lefts" in France is not enough to belie the experience the proletariat has gained through history, especially given his substantial political, military, foreign affairs and monetary allegiance to Reagan, and the fact that he has no intention of abolishing the classes and economic system that produces it.

When the time is right for the proletariat to seize political power and we find ourselves faced with the vertical collapse of the old society (as in Italy), the party of the proletariat can assume only one position: the class alternative - direct opposition to the government and the bourgeois institutions on all fronts and acceptance of the corresponding fight to establish socialism.

However, we must keep in mind that the socialist economy and the superstructure of the socialist state cannot be erected within a capitalist system. The new production relationships and state order are directly opposed to and cannot coexist with the old. It's a contradiction of terms to say that "socialist elements" can be established within capitalist society. First, we have to use socialist revolution to overturn and destroy the old state and abolish the capitalistic production relationships. Then and only then can we give life to a new economic system and a new society.

There's no truth to the thesis advanced at the XV Italian Communist Party National Congress, that "to create a socialist society, it isn't necessary to completely nationalize the means of production". Once again, we agree with Mao when he lightly asserted that socialism "**consists of the destruction of private capitalistic property and its transformation into the socialist property of the people; the destruction of individual property and its transformation into collective socialist property**"<sup>(22)</sup>. "**Marxism is severe, merciless. It wants to annihilate imperialism, feudalism, capitalism and even small-scale production. In this area, it's better not to be too indulgent. Some of our comrades**", continues Mao, "**are too benevolent, not severe enough. In other words, they're not totally Marxist (...)** Our goal is to eradicate capitalism, to eradicate it the world-over, and to make it become a thing of the past. Everything that appears over the course of history must be eliminated. There is nothing in the

**world, no phenomena, that is not the product of history. Life is always followed by death. Capitalism is a product of history and as such, must die. There's a perfect place waiting for it down there where it can 'sleep'""<sup>(23)</sup>.**

No truer or clearer words could be spoken to define socialism, whose features have been so distorted by the revisionists as to be almost unrecognizable. It's even become similar to capitalism and imperialism when actually, as we have seen, socialism and capitalism are like night and day.

True socialism means the complete annihilation of cursed capitalistic private property; after all, it is the main source of the differences between classes, man's exploitation of man, social injustice, war and fascism. To be even more explicit, and concrete, socialism in Italy means: nationalization of large, medium and small industry, agricultural and commercial concerns, and road, sea, river and air transportation; nationalization of all landed property, including equipment, both in the towns and the countryside, of the soil, subsoil, including mines and of water reserves and forests; nationalization of private banks and other financial and insurance institutions; and nationalization of foreign trade and all means of mass communication (radio, television, newspapers, telephone, telegraph, etc.).

In other words, true socialism means nationalization of everything that serves production, commerce and exchange which must become the socialist property of the people, controlled by the people because that is the only way that the working class can effectively manage the economy and satisfy all the material and spiritual needs of the people.

Naturally, this giant step from capitalism to socialism cannot take place in one fell swoop or in just a few days. It will happen gradually, beginning with what's judged fundamental and preliminary based on the concrete internal and international conditions that we find in the immediate post-revolutionary period. It will also depend on the attitude that the small-and medium-sized owners and producers and the intermediary classes have assumed toward the revolution and socialism.

Socialism in Italy means the abrogation of the bourgeois constitution and the institution of a new socialist constitution; suppression of the bourgeois armed forces, the police and the Customs Service, and the institution of the Red Army with an armed population; suppression of the bourgeois judiciary apparatus, and the institution of a new judicial apparatus that is formed of and directed by the people; suppression of bourgeois electoralism and parliamentarianism, and the institution of a new electoral system based on economic and production units (workshops, factories, farms, etc.), on freedom and the secret ballot (from which, for a certain period of time, the ex-exploiters and enemies of the people will be excluded), on the revocability of all elected representatives at any given moment, and on the institution of a system of popular assemblies in which executive and legislative powers are united; substitution of the old imperialistic foreign policy, NATO and EEC alliances with a socialist foreign policy based on proletarian internationalism, the five principles of peaceful coexistence with other nations and different social regimes, and an alliance with Third World and non-aligned nations. But above all, socialism in Italy means giving all power to the working class. It

must control all branches of state management - from top to bottom -, take over the structure of the state and forcefully and confidently establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. The working class, through its Party, must direct everything, from the government as a whole to individual state institutions, from business to banks, from mass media to cultural, educational, recreational and other centers, and so on. Nothing must escape its direction or control because this is the only way that the workers can effectively satisfy their rights to work, housing, education, social security, recreation and a life of full liberty and democracy.

We have no doubts that building socialism means turning a page in the centuries-old history of Italy. But this act of incalculable national and international importance will not take place, as we have seen, unless we defeat the resistance of the capitalists and vanquish their lackeys - unless we wage a socialist revolution. We are aware of the fact that the path to socialism is not strewn with roses. But we're not afraid to face the trials and tribulations waiting for us during our long march because we're motivated by the same will-power and revolutionary spirit that guided the last of the great leaders of the proletariat. **"We must let ourselves be imbued with the great, sublime aspirations of the proletariat, dare to blaze new, unexplored trails and climb as-yet unsealed heights"**<sup>(24)</sup>.

Rest in peace, beloved Comrade Mao. We Italian Marxists-Leninists will always keep faith with your teachings. We will express our eternal gratitude because, thanks to you, Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin, one day, Italy, too, will be red and socialist.

## NOTES

1. *Selected works, Vol. V*
2. *"The Role of the Chinese Communist Party in the National War", (October, 1938), Selected Works, Vol. II*
3. *"On the People's Democratic Dictatorship", (June 30, 1949), Selected Works, Vol. IV*
4. *"What to do?" (Autumn 1901 - February 1902), Complete Works, Vol. V*
5. *Judgments pronounced in 1975 and 1976*
6. *Speech given before the 2nd Plenary Session of the VIII Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (November 15, 1956), Selected Works, Vol. V*
7. *"On the Right Solution to the Contradictions in the People" (February 27, 1957), Selected Works, Vol. V*
8. *Interview in "Critica marxista", No. 2, March/April 1981*
9. *Cited in the report presented to the IX National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, held from April 1 - 24, 1969*
10. *Quoted in the editorial of January 1, 1970 in the "People's Daily"*

11. *"Be Concerned with the Well-Being of the Masses, Pay Attention to Methods of Work"* (January 27, 1934) *Selected Works, Vol. I*
12. *"Debate on Agricultural Cooperatives and the Daily Class Struggle"* (October 11, 1955), *Selected Works, Vol. V*
13. See *"L'ape e il comunista"*, Special Number of *"Corrispondenze internazionali"*, No. 16/17, October/December, 1980
14. *"Be concerned with the Well-Being of the Masses, Pay Attention to Methods of Work"* (January 27, 1934), *Selected Works, Vol. I*
15. *"On the People's Democratic Dictatorship"* (June 30, 1949), *Selected Works, Vol. IV*
16. *"On Contradiction"* (August, 1937), *Selected Works, Vol. I*
17. *"Some Important Problems in the Current Policy of the Party"* (January 18, 1948), *Selected Works, Vol. IV*
18. *Speech given before the Chamber of Deputies during the debate over faith in the Spadolini government, July 10, 1981*
19. *"On the Right Solution to the Contradictions in the People"* (February 27, 1957), *Selected Works, Vol. V*
20. *Speech given in Moscow, November 7, 1977, in occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the October Revolution*
21. *Speech given at the Conference on Housing, March 22, 1981*
22. *"It is necessary to Have Faith in the Mass Majority"* (October 13, 1957), *Selected Works, Vol. V*
23. *"Debate on Agricultural Cooperatives and the Daily Class Struggle"* (October 11, 1955), *Selected Works, Vol. V*
24. *Statement pronounced in 1962 and reported by the Chinese press in 1966*

*All quotations and titles translated from the Italian, with the exceptions of No.s 11 and 14.*