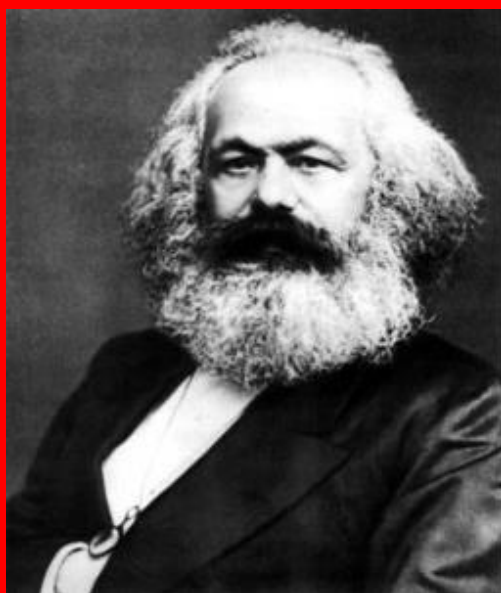


**Polemic with the Gulf Coast Communist Faction:
Weaknesses in the Understanding of the
Development of Capitalism**



In defense of Marxism

Internationalist Voice

E-mail: internationalist.voice@gmail.com

Homepage: www.internationalist.tk

Introduction

The fact that the Eastern bloc (Stalinism) was not pulled down by the working class, but instead competed with democracy in its collapse, points to democratic illusions in the working class, which somehow contributed to the perplexity of the class consciousness of the working class. The result is a rebound for the class struggle. The bourgeois ideologues have also evaluated the failure of the Eastern bloc as the logical outcome of any attempt to create a non-class society that leads to the gulag. Along with these, the left of capital, especially the radical phrase wing of it, plays an important role in channelling and deregulating the critique of the capitalist struggle by militants that approaching the revolutionary goal. Despite these, in recent years, we have witnessed the orientation of circles, whether in the periphery of capital or in metropolitan capital, towards internationalist positions. There has recently been a number of orientations towards the communist left in the US, one of which is the Gulf Coast Communist Faction (GCCF) [1]. Before proceeding with the discussion, along with our communist greetings, we send the sincerest congratulations to these comrades in the GCCF. Orientation towards the internationalist position in the pounding heart of capital is important. When the US bourgeoisie, with its “America first” slogan, wants to put the American working class behind it, so that it can more easily advance its imperialist ambitions, the advancement of internationalist positions in the US becomes even more important.

Given these conditions, these orientations will certainly not be without flaws or mistakes, and this is also quite natural. Since the growth of the working class is not linear, it gives rise to different political tendencies. In addition, given the irresponsible treatment of the main internationalist currents towards the circles that are approaching internationalist positions, the conditions for the formation of new circles with internationalist orientations are becoming more difficult. Therefore, the new orientations that will be formed will carry more uncertainties and ambiguities. Debate is vital, necessary and crucial for internationalists. The revolutionary movement cannot take any effective steps unless the internationalists play a dynamic role in the development of this movement. This is only possible through discussing and confronting different points of view within the proletarian political milieu.

Weaknesses in the Understanding of the Development of Capitalism

Let us look at the orientation of the GCCF towards internationalist positions. In our opinion, the faction does not have a dialectical understanding of the evolution of capitalism, and a serious weakness of the faction is in its understanding of the evolution of capitalism, the emergence of capitalism, and the role of the bourgeoisie in playing a revolutionary role in a particular period; in turn, the arrival of capitalism in its decadent era is visible in the positions of the faction.

Before continuing the discussion, a brief explanation of the capitalist mode of production is necessary. The history of the capitalist mode of production, as in previous class systems, can

be divided into two periods. The first involves the rise of capitalism, when the bourgeoisie played a progressive role in society, and productive relations were in the direction of the evolution of productive forces. The second period, the era of decadent capitalism, the period in which the bourgeoisie lost its progressive role, created a reactionary class, and the capitalist relations of production chained the hands and feet of the productive forces. It is worth mentioning that, with the advent of capitalism during its period of decline, the growth of productive forces has not stopped, but the growth of productive forces has become destructive.

Capitalism began to grow from the 15th century and played a progressive role in the evolution of productive forces. But, eventually, capitalism entered its decadent era and showed signs of a crisis. Capitalism finally resorted to its last solution and tried to respond to this crisis through global war. World War I was a period in the history of the evolution of capitalism, which showed that the bourgeoisie was no longer a progressive class, while the capitalist relations of production were an obstacle to the growth of productive forces, with the result that the era of bourgeois-democratic revolutions ended and the era of communist revolutions began.

The era of decadent capitalism means that the only programme is revolutionary and has an internationalist orientation and perspective, since the only social revolution that is possible is a global revolution. With the arrival of capitalism in its decadent age, the conditions of the struggle and the organization of the working class also changed along with the tasks of communists. Let us take a brief look at some of these issues.

Localism Versus Internationalism

First, let us see how factions presented themselves and evaluate their field of activity. One faction writes:

“Our fraction seeks to be a presence of attraction for revolutionaries in the Southwest Florida region.”[2]

Localism is against internationalism. It is not a question of where physically the members of the factions are on this planet; rather, the concern is that capitalism is a dominant global system and, consequently, the response of the working class to the bourgeois attacks is also global. Limiting itself to the south-west of Florida converts the faction into a local circle. The basic question is, if a militant from Japan, Afghanistan or Germany accepts the positions of this faction, why cannot he be a member of the faction and advance the positions of the faction thousands of miles away from Florida? Do the faction’s comrades regard themselves as internationalists? Are comrades who are internationalists not interested in the fate of their class sisters and brothers in all parts of the globe?

Electoral circus and national movements

Were communists always opposed to elections and national movements? Comrades write about their positions in this respect:

- “Communists oppose participation in electoral politics”[3]
- “Communists oppose national liberation”[4]

In the age of rising capitalism, the communists were not only opposed to elections; if they could, they participated in them, in order to use the parliamentary tribune to advance their positions. It is possible to provide a list of the communists who entered parliament. They did so because there was no other possibility of imposing sustained reforms on the bourgeoisie. In the same way, communists did not oppose all national movements in the rising period of capitalism, because the global revolution was not the order of the day of the proletariat. Marx and Engels had the conditional support of these national movements. The Second International, in its Second Congress in 1896, recognized the full sovereignty of all nations.

After the arrival of capitalism in the era of decadence, the communists proclaimed that, in the age of the decadence and degeneration of capital, participation in electoral campaigns and the circus of parliament only served to strengthen the illusions of democracy. The capitalism of democracy and dictatorial capitalism are two sides of the same coin, which is capitalist barbarism. In the same way, they declared, in the age of decadent capitalism, that the anti-revolutionary national liberation movements were against the class struggle, and that those fighting in the wars of national liberation were pawns in imperialist conflicts. This is because any new state that emerges will be an imperialist state, albeit a weak imperial state. In the age of decadent capitalism, capitalism is the dominant global system and the possibility of accumulating a surplus in absolute isolation is not possible; thus, the new state must integrate itself into the capitalist system which has now entered its imperialist era. The fact is that the Marxist definition of imperialism is based on a proper understanding of the development and evolution of global capitalism and the degeneration of capitalism. Imperialism is a way of life for the capitalist system in the era of capitalist decadence. Imperialism is not a specific policy issued by a particular state. It can only exist internationally.

Capitalism Is the Cause of All Misery

Capitalism smells blood, dirt and mud. Capitalism is the source of wage slavery, exploitation, and the alienation of human by human; in a word, it offers a real and terrestrial hell. Capitalism is the cause of all misery in the world. The faction in terms of its positions writes:

- “Communists support women’s and sexual liberation.”[5]
- “Communists oppose racism.”[6]
- “Communists support the decommmodification of animals.”[7]

These could be part of the goals of bourgeois-democratic revolutions, or part of a programme of feminists and environmentalists. Is not the cause of racism the existence of a class society? Xenophobia is part of the superstructure of a class society and, with the formation of national states and nationalities, is the product of capitalist growth, which in turn has caused national pride. With the disappearance of the state, the existential context of racism will also disappear. Is capitalism not the cause of environmental degradation and animal destruction? Does capitalism only think about its own profits, without considering the atmospheric changes it causes through greenhouse gas emissions, carbon dioxide from fossil fuels, air pollution, groundwater pollution, soil and hundreds of other things?

Do Theresa May, Hillary Clinton, Angela Merkel and other bourgeois women, who themselves are the organizers of the exploitation of the class of the proletariat, need the support of the communists? Should these organizers of wage slavery be placed alongside millions of working women, millions of wage slaves? The memories are still fresh of the invasion ordered by the Iron Lady, Margaret Thatcher, in the Gulf War, which killing more than 100,000 Iraqi workers in military uniforms (At the time of the Gulf War, Thatcher was not Prime Minister, but she played an important role in the outbreak of Gulf War). The world of the working woman is alien to the world of the bourgeois woman. The world of the working woman involves double exploitation, double oppression, humiliation, inferiority, being beaten down with anger, choking back tears - in a word, the same terrestrial and real hell that upside-down capitalism provides for humanity. The real emancipation of women is possible only in a non-class society.

Unions Against the Working Class

The faction in terms of its positions writes:

“The union-question was a significant point of contention among the members of our Fraction; some having strong unionist-sympathies, others identifying with the historical positions of the Dutch-German Left on unions, and the rest being neutral on the issue.”[8]

The internationalists adopt their positions, including in the specific case of trade unions, not on the basis of this or that union but on the basis of the growth and development of capitalism. In the era of growing capitalism, trade unions were real working-class organizations which fought for the interests of the working class, because it was possible to impose sustained reforms on the bourgeoisie, and the communist revolution was still not the order of the day.

With capitalism entering its decadent era, trade unions merged into the capitalist state and turned workers into cannon fodder in the first imperial war. Unions in 1919 played an active role in the bloody repression of labour uprisings. Since then, the history of unions throughout the world has become part of the capitalist state by managing sales of the workforce.

Anton Pannekoek, in his valuable work entitled *World Revolution and Communist Tactics*, wrote a century ago about the nature and functioning of unions, stating as below:

“Marx’ and Lenin’s insistence that the way in which the state is organised precludes its use as an instrument of proletarian revolution, notwithstanding its democratic forms, must therefore also apply to the trade-union organisations. Their counterrevolutionary potential cannot be destroyed or diminished by a change of personnel, by the substitution of radical or ‘revolutionary’ leaders for reactionary ones. It is the form of the organisation that renders the masses all but impotent and prevents them making the trade union an organ of their will. The revolution can only be successful by destroying this organisation, that is to say so completely revolutionising its organisational structure that it becomes something completely different.”

The left of capital

The faction in terms of its positions writes:

“The ‘left-wing of capital’ is the opportunist co-opting of proletarian struggle, and degeneration into bourgeois-democratic politics.”[9]

This position is ambiguous, especially when comrades consider themselves to belong to the communist left. Historically and in terms of Marxism, “opportunist” refers to currents which do not adopt the right Marxist position or have broken free from Marxist positions and have not yet been 100% counterrevolutionary. The fact is that, with the outbreak of World War I, all social democratic parties, which at one time were labour parties, with the exception of the Bolsheviks and a handful of others in other countries, all joined the camp of capital. With the defeat of the wave of global revolution in the 1920s, the “communist” parties joined the capital camp forever.

The advent of the wave of world revolution - and, with it, those problems that challenged the advance of world revolution - prepared the material context for the communist left. The signs of the defeat of this wave of world revolution led to the isolation of the October Revolution, which soon showed signs of degeneration. The decadent process of the October Revolution had an impact on all communist parties and revolutionary currents. In such a context, the necessity for the existence of the communist left was more and more prominent. Internationalists from Bulgaria to Germany, from Russia to America, from Britain to the Netherlands, from Italy to ... rose to defend communist positions. But, in three countries where the Marxist tradition was strong, namely, in Russia, Germany and Italy, the communist left turned out to be strong and coherent. In short, the reaction of the communist left was a global response.

Since then, the communist left has been the manifestation of Marxism. The left of capital, not “opportunist co-opting”, but as a bourgeois current, has tirelessly attempted to advance its bourgeois tasks. This tireless effort takes various forms, depending on the needs of capital,

time and space conditions. The role of the left of capital, especially its radical phrase wing, is especially important to the bourgeoisie in channelling social protests and avoiding circles and militants oriented towards internationalist positions. In such a context, the internationalists declare that all left parties are reactionary: Stalinists, Maoists, Trotskyists and official anarchists (anarchists who have merged in the state of capital) etc. represent the political apparatus of capital.

The Role and Function of the Revolutionary Organization

The faction has not published its positions in relation to class consciousness and the revolutionary organization; but, in its introduction, it has provided an accurate understanding of the form of the organization of revolutionaries when the class struggle is in a defensive position, that is, the form of faction. The comrades have rightly pointed out that the faction is a minority of the class. Even the international and internationalist Communist Party will also include a minority of the class. Labour power will be exercised through the workers' councils, which will include the majority of the class. The comrades have not explained how they have come to this understanding, because, during the growing period of capitalism, the mass parties were labour parties working for sustained reforms, while the communists' task was to organize the working class. Look at the parties of the Second International, for example. With capitalism entering its decadent era, the form of organization of the working class also changed. No longer did it impose sustainable reforms, but social revolution was the order of the day.

In the era of capitalist decadence, revolutionary organizations may only take the form of revolutionary minorities, whose task neither is to organize the working class nor take power in its stead, without being **a form of political leadership**, or a political compass, where revolutionary organizations' political clarity and influence on the working classes are **the fundamental elements for the implementation of a communist revolution**.

Despite this true understanding, we see a kind of ambiguity in the functioning of the faction in its organ. The blog of the faction, which is in fact the organ of the faction, is more like a debate bulletin than an organ for interference in the class struggle and preparation for the international and internationalist Communist Party. What is the criterion and principle of the faction to publish texts in its organ?

We are not only opposed to the bulletin of the debate, but we feel it is a necessity. After the internationalist conferences held in the late 1970s and early 1980s, there was no conference, discussion bulletin, serious cooperation etc. in the proletarian political milieu. The necessity for such discussions and even theoretical contradiction is more than ever before. But the bulletin of the discussions should not interfere with the function and duties of the faction. This should not replace the functions and duties of the faction. As bourgeois ideologues

attempt to smear communism, and in the context where the political apparatus of the left of capital is trying to offer a capitalist-friendly image of communism, the necessity of the existence and functioning of the faction as an internationalist current in the defence of the communist programme, albeit in absolute isolation, is crucial.

Last Word

In this essay, we briefly pointed out some weakness of the faction in its understanding of the evolution of capitalism and the consequences of this weakness for the basic positions of the faction. If necessary, in the future, each of these topics will be examined separately. The weakness of the faction in its understanding of the evolution of capitalism has affected not only its basic positions but also its function. Will the faction overcome these weaknesses and, as an avant-garde to the proletariat, will it both engage in everyday interference in the class struggle and be involved in the formation of an international and internationalist Communist Party? The future will mark this path; we wish the best of success to the comrades in the class struggle.

Firoz Akbary

1 May 2019

Notes:

[1] The contact information for the GCCF is as follows:

- Blog: <https://gulfcoastcommunistfraction.wordpress.com>
- Email: gulfcoastcommunistfraction@gmail.com

[2] <https://gulfcoastcommunistfraction.wordpress.com/about/>

[3] <https://gulfcoastcommunistfraction.wordpress.com/2018/03/26/points-of-unity/>

[4] As source 3

[5] As source 3

[6] As source 3

[7] As source 3

[8] <https://gulfcoastcommunistfraction.wordpress.com/>

[9] As source 3