

COMECON – AN INSTRUMENT OF SOVIET SOCIAL-IMPERIALISM FOR THE EXPLOITATION AND DOMINATION OF THE MEMBER COUNTRIES

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The transformation of the Soviet Union into an imperialist power, and the implementation by it of an aggressive, expansionist, hegemonic and predatory policy towards the other peoples, inevitably brought changes in the nature and aims of the Council of Mutual Economic Aid (Comecon). Exposing the capitalist nature and the exploiting, predatory character of the Soviet Union in Comecon, Comrade Enver Hoxha has said: “Comecon has been transformed into a revisionist organization for the cooperation of the industry and many other branches of the economy of its member countries. This organization is ruled by the Soviet revisionists, who, by means of it, aim to exploit and control the economies of the other member countries in their own hegemonic interests, to force them to develop in the direction they want, to tie up their economies in such a way that, together with this false socialist cooperation, they dominate these states politically too.”*

* Enver Hoxha, -Reports and Speeches 1967-1968», p. 240, Alb, ed.

This is the concrete implementation of Brezhnev’s fascist theory of “limited sovereignty” in the economic field too. The Moscow revisionists try to camouflage this exploiting practice with their unscrupulous demagoguery about the “struggle against autarchy” and make a big noise about the alleged necessity of “economic integration”, specialization, cooperation, etc the basis of which is the subordination of national interests to “internationalist” interests, i.e. the interests of the Soviet Union.

“Co-ordination” of economic policy through all the phases of the cycle of reproduction has been made the central point of the neo-colonialist program, described as a “complex program of socialist integration” of the Comecon member countries. In the framework of Comecon the Soviet revisionists have created supra-state organs such as the executive council and various commissions and committees for the coordination of activities in the main economic and financial fields, which operate according to the interests of the Soviet Union. In order to justify their open violation of the sovereignty of other countries, they clamour about the so-called international socialist property”, which they present as the highest form of socialist property, taking no account at all of the national and state distinctions created during a long historical process.

Lenin pointed out that, “National and state distinctions exist among peoples and countries – and these will continue to exist for a very long time to come, even after the dictatorship of the proletariat has been established on a world-wide scale.”* Therefore, the theorizings of the Soviet revisionists about their alleged socialist integration, or the internationalization of socialist property, are in flagrant opposition to the teachings of the classics of Marxism-Leninism.

* V. I. Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 31, p. 91, Alb. ed.

In practice, the typically neo-colonialist policy of the Soviet revisionists has led, step by step, to changes in the structure of the economies of the Comecon member countries in the direction of increasing their dependence on the social-imperialist Soviet Union. Under the pretext of “eliminating parallelisms”, “utilizing only rich resources”, etc the Soviet revisionists have deprived the vassal countries of the

possibility of producing many products and have created a situation in which they are dependent on the Soviet Union, not only for raw materials, but also for semi-processed and finished products, equipment and technology. As a result, the economies of the other Comecon member countries have developed one-sidedly. For example, through “reconstructions”, such big trusts as SKODA, CKD, TESLA, etc of Czechoslovakia, renowned for the production of heavy machinery, automobiles, electric equipment, etc have been forced to work mainly to meet the demands of the market of the Russian metropolis. Likewise, allegedly in the context of “specialization”, Hungary has been compelled to gear its “Red Star” plant in Budapest mainly to the production of tractor brakes, although it had long been producing complete tractors. Now the needs of Hungarian agriculture for tractors are fulfilled with imports from the Soviet Union. It is understandable that such restrictions imposed on the structure of the economies of the Comecon countries can only result in slowing down the all-round development of these countries and creating many difficulties and anomalies for them.

The aim of the Soviet revisionists to impose a course of one-sided development on the Comecon countries, is also apparent from their efforts to hinder the full-cycle development of the new branches which these countries are allowed to establish. A typical instance of this is the prohibition of the development of the aluminium industry in Hungary, although it is rich in bauxite. Under the plans of “cooperation and specializations which the Soviet revisionists have imposed on Comecon, this industry must be developed in the Soviet Union which secures the raw materials from Hungary, while the latter must meet its needs for aluminium products by importing them from the Soviet Union! This year, 330,000 tons of bauxite (1.5 times more than 6 years ago) will be transported thousands of kilometres to the smelting plants in the Soviet Union. In the same way, Poland’s metallurgical plants are completely dependent on raw materials and energy imported from the Russian metropolis. It is estimated that this revisionist country does not cover even half the cycle of production in this branch from its internal resources. On the other hand, under Comecon agreements Poland is obliged to deliver the overwhelming bulk of what it produces from Soviet raw materials or in the plants constructed on Soviet credits, to the Soviet Union. (Apart from other things, Poland has delivered to the Soviet Union tens of complete plants for the production of sulphuric acid, over 110.000 rail wagons etc, etc.) A typical example of complete dependence on Soviet social-imperialism and integration into the Soviet capitalist economy is Bulgaria, whose industry has been set up, either on the basis of Soviet raw materials, or as part of the industry of the Russian metropolis, to which it is obliged to send a considerable proportion of its products for finishing. As a result of this dependence, Bulgaria is indebted to the Soviet Union to the tune of 2 billion rubles!

According to the so-called complex program of economic integration, nearly all the Comecon member countries will jointly finance the construction of various projects in the Soviet Union. During the current five-year plan, for example, according to figures published by the Soviet revisionists themselves, on the basis of “coordination” within Comecon. or bilateral agreements, more than 1,000 complete sets of equipment for industrial projects, including equipment for six urea plants with an annual capacity of 6 million tons, and 21 sulphuric acid plants with a total capacity of 10 million tons a year, 46 plants for the food processing industry, etc, etc, will be delivered to the Soviet Union. According to Comecon decisions, these plants and combines become the property of the country in which they are built, hence the immense benefits to the Soviet social-imperialists from such exploiting relations with the other revisionist countries dependent on them are very clear.

The investments or credits from the Soviet revisionists within the framework of the Comecon, for the other countries of this capitalist grouping, also mainly serve their one-sided development, are intended to

achieve the best possible adaptation of the economies of the vassal countries to the Soviet economy. These credits are accorded by the International Bank of Investments, through which, amongst other things, the Soviet revisionists deepen the economic dependence of the vassal countries and their enslavement by the Russian metropolis.

The new Soviet bourgeoisie also exploits the Comecon member countries and makes colossal profits from non-equivalent exchanges, by exercising its dictate over prices, etc. For example, the prices at which the Soviet revisionists sell iron ore to the revisionist countries of Eastern Europe are 10-15 per cent higher than world market prices, those for Soviet machinery are 1.4 to 2.1 times higher, etc. However, the machinery imported from the German Democratic Republic is priced by the Soviet revisionists 25-30 per cent below world market prices. This non-equivalent exchange is even more apparent in the agricultural products which the Russian metropolis imports from its Comecon vassals. As a result of this unscrupulous robbery, during the 8th Five-year Plan alone, the Soviet bourgeoisie secured a supplementary profit of 3 billion 500 million rubles.

Whereas in the past the Soviet revisionists clamoured that within an organization such as Comecon, which represents “the model of equal internationalist relations among socialist countries”, the price fluctuations on the capitalist market must not influence the price policy, as soon as the effect of the energy crisis became apparent on this market, they dropped this thesis and went over to concrete actions. Thus, beginning from January 1975, the Soviet Union raised the price of oil to the Comecon member countries although it was always higher than the price at which the Soviet revisionists sold oil to the capitalist countries, and despite the fact that the revisionist countries of Comecon have invested their own capital for the development of the oil and gas industry in the Soviet Union. Moreover, the Soviet revisionists began to reduce the quantities of oil delivered to those countries, with the aim of increasing the amount sold on the capitalist markets for convertible currency. According to figures published by the revisionists themselves, the Soviet Union’s oil deliveries to the Comecon member countries in 1980, were 5 million tons less than in 1979.

Such a predatory practice has grave consequences for the economies and finances of the member countries of the Comecon. Solely because of the rise in the price of Soviet oil in 1975, which of course, was not accompanied by increased prices for the commodities the Soviet revisionists buy from the other revisionist countries, the Comecon member countries had to pay the social-imperialist Soviet Union an additional one billion rubles.

The neo-colonialist policy of the new Tzars of the Kremlin is the cause of ever more open contradictions in the ranks of this capitalist grouping. Faced with this savage plunder and unable to maintain some sort of internal balance to stop the outburst of the anger of their working masses against this double capitalist plunder and exploitation, the cliques of the revisionist countries are forced, from time to time, to express their discontent, their disapproval, or even open opposition to their Moscow patrons. Time after time Soviet magazines such as “Voprosy Filosofii”, “Voprosy Ekonomiki”, “Mezhdunarodnaja Zhiznj”, “Ekonomicheskaja Gazeta”, etc have pointed out: “there are acknowledged difficulties... in the process of economic integration and cooperation”, “the process of economic integration in the framework of Comecon is linked with a series of objective difficulties”, or even more openly, that “a certain discrepancy of interests”, as well as “objective contradictions”, etc exist among the Comecon member countries.

