

Generally the distinguishing nature of political parties is determined by the question of what class politics is dominant. If the objective is not destroying but just reforming capitalism, then, regardless of what sort of leftist discourse is attached, this policy ultimately amounts to a kind of left politics which does not go beyond the boundaries consented by the bourgeoisie. The result will not change whether you call this party a bourgeois left, social democratic or bourgeois workers' party. Likewise, it makes no essential difference whether the call for founding a party of this kind comes from union bureaucracy or from left-wing groups claiming to be Marxists. After all, everyone will take their own way while the truth for the working class remains the same: those who want revolution have to create its means!

On Bourgeois Workers' Parties

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tribute to the process in their own ways. The point here is to keep the class nature of these “contributions” in mind and fight against their substitution for working class’ revolutionary fight and organisation.

Lenin criticizes the tendency which reconciles with bourgeois workers’ parties on the excuse that “we do not want to break off with the masses.” Leading name of this tendency, Kautsky, tried to justify the enthusiastic support for the bourgeois workers’ parties on the excuse that “we do not want to break off with the masses and mass organisations.” Yet, the attitude followed by Marx and Engels on this issue is completely different. When the “mass organisations” of the British unions defended a bourgeois workers’ party, they did not reconcile with this idea but criticized it bitterly and showed its erroneousness.

The basic deformity of the “workers’ mass party” conception of some political groups, that claim acting in the name of Marxism, is understood clearly at this point of difference. The first Turkish Workers’ Party (TİP), which could be considered a mass workers’ party under Turkey’s conditions of its time, can also be examined as a similar case. Though TİP represented a general progress in that era, those years are also marked by the specific failure in building the revolutionary organisation of the working class. Disregarding this fact, the political tendencies which claimed that TİP was the self-organisation of the working class, gave an example of the erroneous attitude similar to those who supported PT feverishly in recent years. Those who rather care about finding an umbrella under which they would maintain their own political identities, instead of building the revolutionary organisation of the working class approach the issue of workers’ mass party always in terms of their own interests. That explains their feverish support for a party like the Freedom and Solidarity Party (ÖDP) here in Turkey.

The pages of history are indeed full of recurring mistakes of those who did not take lessons from experience. While it is precisely needed to distinguish between the rights and wrongs of the past at this very time, some seem insistent on taking the same wrong paths. In today’s Turkey, some segments of the bourgeoisie seek a European-type social democratic party and some union bureaucrats similarly defend a workers’ party. These quests and endeavours, which at first sight seem to root in two different class fronts, coincide on one common point after all. To create a politically bourgeois mass party with workers in its grassroots! No wonder they make efforts to build it. The main point of criticism must be that some socialist groups claiming to be Marxists do not hesitate in joining this queue as pleased as Punch.

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28 November 2005

http://en.marksist.net/elif_cagli/bourgeois_workers_parties.htm

Everyone to go their own way!

History witnessed a lot of workers' parties that adapted themselves to the conditions of relatively calm periods of class struggles. Even though some of them succeeded in achieving massive sizes, they could never go beyond being bourgeois workers' parties. The German Social Democratic Party, which was the main pillar and founder of the Second International and gathered millions of workers under its roof, ended up a bourgeois left party in its historical course. Similarly and recently, the Workers' Party of Brazil (PT) has clearly displayed its essence of a bourgeois workers' party when it came to power under Lula's leadership.

The nature of PT has been, and should have been, obvious from the viewpoint of revolutionary Marxists from the very beginning. Nevertheless, there have been also some Marxists who supported this kind of parties and advertised them as model on the excuse that they were organising the working-class masses. Some of them may be shedding tears for PT nowadays when looking at the bourgeois government of Lula. The life in Brazil, however, points out another reality. As if teaching a lesson to Lula's supporters who supported him as the representative of the poor, a bank owner says "he talked in favour of them, but worked for us."

It is said that the PT government is remarked by its swiftness to slide towards the right more than any other examples, sank deeply into corruption and caused a deep disappointment on the part of the poor voters who supported it at the beginning, which shows that building a mass party in the name of the working class is not the way out. Actually, the basic issue lies in the essence of the mass party model which is being advocated. For instance, PT has long been a mass party which is based on the bourgeois parliamentary system. Decision making mechanisms, which used to belong to the people's assemblies during the period of revolutionary upsurge, have long been passed into the hands of parliamentary and bureaucratic officials.

What happened yesterday in Brazil is a teaching lesson for today's Chavez government in Venezuela. Making reforms in favour of the poor while standing on the bourgeois system, statesmen could succeed in creating resounding mass movements. But it is obvious from the very beginning that the nature of such movements could not go beyond bourgeois left's limits. The problem does not lie in the emergence of such mass movements, but in considering them adequate and supporting them in the name of Marxism. In fact, the life in capitalist society does not at all proceed just on the grounds of working-class' revolutionary fight. Bourgeois liberalism, bourgeois left, bourgeois workers' parties in turn can con-

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Need For Unity

Most of us must have heard the slogan chanted in workers' actions of various size and level, from strikes to mass rallies: "Workers united will shake the world!" Hearing this slogan chanted in a cheerful rhythm and militant dynamism fills one with revolutionary enthusiasm. The raised and clenched fists of the working class say "I'm still alive!" against the reactionary propaganda of the bourgeois all over the world!

Even a modest leap forward of consciousness during a strike in a single workplace shows workers that they are not single individuals in the face of bosses, but they constitute a giant class. Having recognised that they are members of the same class, each worker begins to express the burning need for organising and uniting. That is, the struggle and life experience in capitalist society somehow bring the workers face-to-face with these basic realities.

Although such experiences are pleasing in themselves since they carry forward the mass of the class, they are by no means enough for the working class to break the chains of wage-slavery and achieve freedom. Conditions of emancipation can develop depending on the quality and quantity of the distance taken by workers towards political consciousness and organisation. In this respect, it has a vital importance to make sure that at least the vanguard elements of the class are capable of answering the questions such as "what kind of organisation?" or "what kind of a unity?" in a way to carry forward the struggle.

It is a well-known fact that class struggle does not take place only in one form or realm but it has theoretical, economic and political aspects. Therefore, the need for consciousness, organising and forming larger unities continues to exist on

different levels. However, different aspects of class struggle are in the final analysis not isolated from one another, but they react on each other. But, it is, and will always be, the political factor which ultimately stands out and prevails over the others. Then, the question “what kind of political organisation and unity should the working class have in order to build a social order where there is no oppression and exploitation?” has to be given a correct answer.

The experiences of far and recent past show that the revolutionary revolts and uprisings can overthrow the bourgeois rule and stop capitalist exploitation only if they march forward under revolutionary leadership of the working class. No matter how whetted and furious they are out of hunger, joblessness and ill-treatment poor masses of people cannot achieve victory without a revolutionary leadership. No need to go back too far. Recently, in France, one of the EU’s pivotal countries, poor and jobless youth’s flames of revolt turned the sky into red while reactionary and fascist forces of capitalist order prowl and wait for the day on which they will suppress the armies of hunger lacking a revolutionary compass.

Those who want a revolution must seek and create its means. Otherwise, everything turns into revolutionary verbalism. In a capitalist, class-divided society, it is clear that this means must be a revolutionary party which will stand against bourgeois parties and bring about the political organisation of the working class. However, as there has been a lot written and said on this issue and also a lot of different political movements and organisations came into existence, it should not be expected that everybody could agree on what kind of party this would be and how it would be created. Therefore, as is the case in the past, diverse ideas will be put forward and diverse courses will be taken on what kind of a left party does the working class need and debates on this subject will never end.

Although at first sight it appears to contradict the workers’ desire for unity, this is an inevitable fact and manifestation of capitalist life. Because, it is natural to see various political movements and parties on the left and right as long as different classes exist. An opposite situation could arise only in despotic or totalitarian political regimes which are both untenable. It is an established fact by experience that the kind of “unities” on trade-union or political level enforced from above as a result of plans and initiative of rulers do not improve but hinder the working class’ struggle. A unity which is not based on a correct political conception, not gained through struggle and not weaved knot by knot with a rank-and-file work cannot be healthy and lasting. Thus it is utterly useless to pay attention to those political groups, who foster hollow wishes and chatter emptily on unity, without taking such important issues seriously and making a real effort to find out the

embracing unskilled workers emerged. In Engel’s words these unions had superiority as they created a virgin soil free from the sickness of bowing down to the bourgeois “respectability” which had degenerated the old unions.

Even though the old-fashioned labour aristocracy had vanished into history, the privileged elements which emerged among the working class or workers’ movement did not come to an end. To admit this fact does not come to mean swinging to an erroneous point, such as labelling the working classes of imperialist countries as aristocrats on account of that they take a share from the monopoly profits. The uneven development of capitalism leads to differences between countries or even within a country, in terms of the living standards of the working class. On the other hand, however, the working class on the whole is being exploited increasingly in all capitalist countries.

It is nonsensical to attach the distortion of consciousness among the proletariat to mere economic factors and develop ideas on this basis which would mean that the least paid worker would be the most revolutionary or the most unlikely to fall under bourgeois influence. Nevertheless, in a capitalist society, workers do not live isolated from other classes and those elements that carry bourgeois influence into the working-class movement never come to an end. A thin layer of crème keeps living, admiring the bourgeois way of living, selling their souls to fill their pockets on this way and succeeding in climbing the social ladder or joining the bourgeois world thanks to the privileges obtained within the working-class movement. Lenin pointed out that the bourgeoisified layer of workers in terms of their way of living, wages and world views, provided the main point of support for the social-chauvinism of the Second International. High-level positions in unions or party bureaucracies, parliamentary royalties, reputation gained through legal activities etc. are the main sources that spread the bourgeois influence into the working-class movement.

These people who are fed on these sources are part of the bourgeois world in terms of their ways of living and moral values. They bourgeoisify the working-class movement as much as they could and turn workers’ parties into bourgeois workers’ parties. This layer as the carrier of bourgeois influence still keeps suffering from the illness which has its roots in their admiration for bourgeois “respectability” as the past. One of the important signs of this illness is being proud of intimate relationships with “respectable” people and bourgeois statesmen. In his letter to Sorge, Engels mentions this attitude, reminding that even Tom Mann, whom he considers the best among socialists in Britain, is fond of mentioning that he would be lunching with the Lord Mayor.

Because it is directly related to our subject, we shall touch this important issue briefly in passing. There is a world of differences between certain suggestions of Lenin, who was a genuine and creative leader on organisational matters, on working within mass workers' parties and hollow organisational tactics of Trotskyist groups. For instance, the organisational tactic known as entrism in political literature generally means communists conducting work within a mass party and has been the subject of many controversies for years. The most important one of them is about completely opposite interpretations of it, i.e. revolutionary and opportunist. If the independent work of building the revolutionary organisation is given primary importance and the tactic of entrism is subjugated to this, then the revolutionary attitude will not be compromised. But the tactic of entrism employed in a way that would mean that the revolutionary organisation would somehow take shape via political work within a mass workers' party is a totally erroneous and opportunist approach.

Things to remember about Bourgeois Workers' Parties

Observing closely the capitalist leap forward in Britain along with the industrial revolution, Marx and Engels noted the bourgeoisification among the British workers movement at the very beginning. In a letter to Marx, Engels was saying that the British proletariat was becoming more and more bourgeois. It was also remarked in the letter that as the most bourgeois of all nations, Britain was aiming at possessing a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat alongside the bourgeoisie that exploited the world.

Similarly, in another letter to Marx, Engels was speaking about those very worst British trade-unions which allowed themselves to be led by men sold to, or at least paid by, the bourgeoisie. Linking this trend with the Britain's monopolistic position, Engels pointed out a privileged layer that had been created among the working class, i.e. the labour aristocracy.

On the other hand, it would be a mistake to subscribe to an exaggerated interpretation of this relatively privileged layer's qualitative and quantitative position. Because, at that time, Britain represented an extreme case. Its colonial monopoly became a thing of the past as a result of enormous capitalist growth in other countries. Also the craft unions that were based on privileged skilled labourers vanished into history. With the end of the Britain's unique dominance over the world, the privileged layer of workers which were based on old-fashioned craft unions became more and more weakened. In time, new type of unions that were

right way and implement it.

Because of its historical peculiarities, in a country like Turkey the question of the working class unity needs a meticulous approach both on trade-union and political level. Against a corporative historical background, with politics restricted into one-party system for many years, Turkey did not go through significant revolutionary experiences and a working-class left came on the stage of history very late. Turkey is a country where state is expected to meet a lot of things, civil society has not developed, grassroots initiative and its organisation are largely unknown and, worst of all, "unities" are always enforced from above. Under these conditions it is quite likely that an erroneous and counterproductive conception of unity take over the working class. Thus, it is very important to act in a careful and principled way on the issue of forging the working class unity.

Another issue that requires a cautious approach is the calls for a mass workers' party containing all sorts of left-wing tendencies. In 90's, inspired by the Workers' Party of Brazil led by former union leader Lula, there was a propaganda for a mass workers' party under the leadership of Şemsi Denizler, a union leader who came into prominence during the miners strike in Zonguldak. Supported by some Trotskyists with the idea that "workers should found their own party" and brought up by this or that union bureaucrat now and then, mass workers party is now being brought forward by DİSK (The Confederation of Revolutionary Workers Unions). One must keep in mind that although such calls may sound somehow positive under conditions of far-reaching disorganisation and atomization of the working class, they have a negative side in that they blur the conception of the working class' party and inherently contain a tendency towards building a bourgeois workers party. Therefore, a principled and distanced attitude in response to those calls would not weaken the revolutionary working class movement, but prevent the primary tasks from being blurred.

Historical background of the question

Many years ago, when the foundations of revolutionary Marxism was being laid, Marx and Engels found it necessary to make one thing clear, which would be very important all along the course of struggle, that there could be different left-wing and socialist currents with different class bases in capitalist society. As a widely accepted guide for the revolutionary working-class movement, The Communist Manifesto was clear on this point. Even the name of this document which represented a declaration of struggle by the proletariat against bourgeois order,

was chosen intentionally to distinguish revolutionary left movement from bourgeois left movement.

In his preface to the German edition of the Communist Manifesto in 1890, Engels was to remind that they named it as “Communist Manifesto” on purpose. Because, at that time the term socialism was hollowed out and reduced to bourgeois socialism which referred to reformist bourgeois movement. The combative workers who believed in the necessity of social revolution called themselves communist. Although this was an elementary and instinctive perception of communism, it was unmistakably indicating the goal to march forward. Believing sincerely that the emancipation of the workers will be their own act, Marx and Engels chose the name communist without any hesitation.

And the first organisation to draw the principal framework of revolutionary organisation formed thanks to the participation of Marx and Engels drew the demarcation line with bourgeois reformists and assumed the name The Communist League (1847-1850). Founders of Marxism were to maintain their political work of organising in the International Workingmen’s Association (First International), established in 1864. The First International contained worker organisations from various left-wing movements and countries. Its existence was as if the embodiment of the Manifesto’s call, i.e. “workers of all lands, unite!” Unfortunately, this first international organisation did not last long. Lacking an ideological and political unity from the beginning, the First International came apart through strives between various tendencies such as anarchism and reformism.

After Marx’s death a new international organisation (Second International) would be born in 1889, following the emergence of mass workers’ parties in European countries. Nevertheless it would dilute the revolutionary working class movement with the degeneration it represented. Indeed, the leading element of this international organisation, the German workers’ party, scrapped the name communist from the very beginning and assumed the name social democrat. The political tendencies that grew in the Second International and betrayed Marx’s revolutionary heritage such as revisionism, legalism, opportunism, reformism, etc. succeeded in presenting themselves as the representative of the Marxist vein in the workers’ movement for a long time.

Sweeping the criticisms of Engels under the rug and showing him like a lover of legalism, the revisionists of the Second International ensured the dominance of the attribute social democrat in other countries too. It is for sure that this sliding backwards and ambiguity was not just an issue about the realm of concepts. The

organisational principles, he chose a distanced relationship with the Second International. After completely realising the degeneration of this organisation, Lenin started his efforts to build a new international.

On the other hand, there are some problems in Trotsky’s political course in the context of his conception of party and his treatment of mass workers’ parties. For instance, according to Lenin, a massive growth of a workers’ party would be meaningful on condition that it would not change its revolutionary and independent political course. And since the working masses tend under normal conditions to try to follow the line of least resistance and reformists, a revolutionary kind of massive growth can only happen in revolutionary crises. Trotsky’s approach, however, is a little bit problematical, as it can be seen in his article wherein he explained his thoughts on the need of a mass workers’ party in the USA. (On the Labor Party Question in the United States, 31 May 1938)

Because the Fourth International was at its infancy and weak, Trotsky defended that mass workers’ parties outside the Fourth International needed to be founded. He said that slogans could simultaneously be raised for both parties. He was of the opinion that an “independent workers’ party” which was hoped to become a mass party “would prepare the ground for our own party.” Creating confusion on how to build the party, in a way to offer something like a double-entry book-keeping, Trotsky’s approach was to be treated as a frozen template by most of the Trotskyists (United Secretariat, as the official representative of the Fourth International, being in the first place) after his death. This attitude resulted in overrating and offering unprincipled support to social democratic parties or parties like the Workers’ Party of Brazil, on the grounds that they are mass parties.

It is obvious that the Bolshevik organisation in Russia led by Lenin was linked to the red thread of Marxism on organisational questions. However, there is a risk of copying and making a caricature of Bolshevism, against which Lenin himself fought. Organisational tactics must always be determined according to concrete circumstances. Unless this rule is followed, even the most correct approaches on building the party would degenerate and turn into dead and hollow templates. For instance, Lenin recommended the British communists who were split into four to work within the Labour Party instead of conducting separate election campaigns, as long as the principles were not compromised and the flags not mingled. Lenin was well aware of the fact that the Labour Party was a bourgeois workers’ party. But his recommendation did not aim at holding the British communists back from an independent organisation, but, on the contrary, strengthening it.

ism has always been in fight against sectarian tendencies that could do harm to the workers' movement.

On the opposite side stand those political tendencies that stand for big mass workers' parties under the pretence of avoiding the error of creating political sects. And what's wrong with demanding big mass workers' parties and endeavouring to build them? Indeed, when we isolate from the other factors, it seems nonsense to think otherwise. However, a very important line of distinction lies here which should not be overlooked. There is a world of differences between the two sides of this line. On the one side, there is a growth into the size of a mass workers' party of a political organisation formed by the vanguards who dedicate themselves to the emancipation of the working class with all their hearts and minds and hard-working revolutionary workers who fight to this end. On the other side, there is a mass party that contains all sorts of political tendencies put together into something like a bedlam. While the former option is undoubtedly the choice, this kind of goals could not be achieved just through ambitions or voluntary decisions or under ordinary circumstances. A political organisation that deserves to be the revolutionary vanguard of the class can turn into a mass workers' party only in actual revolutionary situations.

It is no wonder that Lenin has a distinguished position among other Marxists of his time in the context of building the revolutionary political organisation of the working class. Because, to defend and develop revolutionary Marxism on the level of ideas is one thing, and to build the revolutionary Marxist political organisation is another thing. These two do not always coincide. Having devoted his life to turning the Marxist thought into a material force in the field of political organisation, Lenin became the revolutionary leader who demonstrated how the revolutionary organisation of the working class could be created. His name represents the political organisation that began with the founding of the RSDWP in Russia and named as Bolsheviks after the Menshevik-Bolshevik split.

The principles characterising this political organisation (an organised, disciplined mode of workings based on democratic centralization on every level) are the corner-stones of the Leninist conception of party. The aim of this party is basically to try to arm the vanguard workers with communist consciousness and draw the working class into struggle in organised circles on different levels. The party conception developed by Lenin is based on such principles as not covering the differences with the other left political currents but drawing the lines of differences in a clear way, not resorting to unprincipled agreements and minding not to mingle the flags even when a unity is needed. And, sticking with his or-

main issue was the substitution of bourgeois and petit-bourgeois socialism for revolutionary Marxism, i.e. communism, which is the only political current that aims at the emancipation of workers.

Another point to underline here is that the Second International's incompatibility with Marxism was not something that showed up years later in the form of degeneration. The Second International parties that betrayed the proletariat expressly by rushing into rescuing their "own" bourgeois in the First World War had already been stained in their very birth. Because, from the very beginning, they built themselves upon the social-democratic current which had been clearly criticized by Marx before.

As is known, this political tendency had arisen in France in 1848 as a result of an unprincipled alliance between petit-bourgeois democrats and socialists. For the sake of reconciliation, revolutionary sharpness of the proletariat's social demands was softened and they were given an acceptable democratic expression to suit the petit-bourgeois democrats. And the democratic demands of the petit-bourgeoisie were seasoned with the oil of socialism and saved from their sole political forms. Marx said that the distinctive feature of social democracy could be summarized as alleviating the antagonism between capital and wage-labour, ensuring a harmony between them, and not abolishing them.

The name social democrat which had been made common thanks to the Second International was accepted as default without questioning at the birth of Russian revolutionary working-class movement. Thus the name of the party became Russian Social-Democratic Workers' Party (RSDWP) with Lenin taking part in its founding. It would take a long time before Lenin realized this mistake and retake the name communist party which had been pushed into oblivion for years. With his April Theses (1917), Lenin raised the issue that the name social democracy was politically unsuitable and scientifically incorrect, and succeeded in turning the party's name into communist.

As a result of a transformation process passing through several stages, social democrat parties moved completely away from their Marxist roots which had been assumed to exist to some extent at the beginning. Over time, various bourgeois workers' parties, calling themselves social democrat or socialist, emerged in various countries, most notably in Europe. Even though there were differences in size and some other nuances, this kind of left parties were essentially bourgeois workers' parties with a base consisted of workers and unions with bourgeois politics being pursued on the top. Social democratic politics turned into bourgeois

left politics more and more clearly over time. Political parties are living organisms. And in politics, those who cannot move forward would slide back. In fact, the risk of such a transformation is valid for all left-wing parties. Thus, in 1970's, most of the official communist parties of Europe moved towards social democracy as they were overcome by the winds of "European Communism". Likewise in so called socialist countries, most of the official communist parties had a similar metamorphose following the collapse which occurred in the end of 80's and beginning of 90's.

With the wave of growing political reaction and retreat in the working-class movement across the world in the 80's, there was a general shift towards the right and downright surrender to the bourgeoisie, from the British Labour Party, to German Social Democratic Party and Workers' Party of Brazil. Therefore, the question whether there was any difference between bourgeois workers' parties and bourgeois left parties which might had been to some extent meaningful in some cases before, lost its significance. Today, even though there is no need to abandon the concept of bourgeois workers' parties, it would be useful to bring an explanation to its content without turning into a mechanical exaggeration. The parties mentioned were the "bourgeois" parties of the working class before. Today they have turned into downright "workers" parties of the bourgeoisie.

What Example to Follow?

The history of revolutionary working-class struggle indicates what political way to follow. The emancipation of the working class can only be its own act and it is clear that tailing the bourgeois workers' parties would not serve this end. Workers need an internationalist revolutionary party independent from other classes' politics. Let us make the duties for workers' parties, and communists, clear at this point with the help of an historical document.

The Communist Manifesto says "the Communists do not form a separate party opposed to other working-class parties." This guideline has been continually distorted by those who have incorrect ideas on building the working-class party and try to reduce the duty of the communists to supporting a mass workers' party. Yet, as explained in the Manifesto, this guideline means that communists do not have interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat. Communists strive to organise the working class on the grounds of revolutionary politics and while doing this, they cannot come up with sectarian principles which contradict the goal of the emancipation of the working class. The two points emphasized in

The Manifesto that distinguish the communist political organisation from the other workers' parties are: first, to point out the common interests of the entire proletariat independently of any nationality, that is, to be internationalist; second, in the various stages of development which the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie has to pass through, always and everywhere, to represent the interests of the movement as a whole.

These principles that explain the nature of the proletariat's organisation in a revolutionary way are not temporary but historical and not formal but essential. Of course form can change according to the concrete situation, on condition that it would not taint the essence. For instance, at the time of the appearance of the Manifesto communists made a decision to work in existing workers' parties in some countries in order to spread their ideas and expand their political organisation. However, as the working class developed both in quantity and quality in the following years, form did not remain the same.

Let us go back to 1917 October. In this period, in Russia, the working class showed what the nature of a really world-shaking revolutionary action and class unity is. Taking its part in history as ten days that shook the world, The Great October Revolution, demonstrated to the whole world that fighting workers led by a revolutionary party, like the Bolshevik Party under Lenin's leadership, could make the revolution victorious. Campaigns of reactionary propaganda and slanders which has been carried on for years by the bourgeoisie cannot hide this fact. Actually, if you look deeply into the problem, it would be seen that the factor that leads to confusion is more of the lies of the sly bureaucracy that pretends to be the follower of the Bolshevik tradition, rather than overt bourgeois slanders. The Bolshevik Party as leader of the October Revolution was unfortunately crushed under the boots of the bureaucracy that took over after Lenin's death. Therefore, history did not and shall not vindicate those who abuse the sins of Stalinism in order to condemn the Leninist conception of party.

However, the Leninist conception of party is not a panacea, a frozen frame or a catalogue of formal rules. Those who treat it in this way are grossly mistaken. There are a lot of "Leninists" around with the claim that they have built or are going to build the party of the working class without ever accomplishing a necessary minimum quantity and quality. Although they may keep their circles alive at best in the form of a sect, they have been of little help to the working class. Nevertheless, these kinds of pathologies have considerably increased in recent years, especially under the conditions of political decline and vacuum following the fall of the Soviet Union. But it cannot be said that they are new. Since its birth Marx-