

**NINTH CONGRESS OF THE PARTY OF LABOR OF ALBANIA —  
A DISAPPOINTMENT FOR MARXIST-LENINISTS AROUND THE WORLD**

A summary of this article appeared in the Feb. 1 issue of the **Workers' Advocate**.

The 9th Congress of the Party of Labor of Albania was held at the beginning of November in 1986. Such congresses are major events in the life of the PLA. They are held every five years; they set the major policies and stands of the PLA.

**Only Socialist Country in the World**

Albania has attracted international interest because it is the only country in the world today which is socialist. It also has refused to bow down to the Soviet and Chinese revisionists. At a certain point in the anti-revisionist movement, attention focused on the Party of Labor of Albania as it put forward revolutionary stands that inspired activists who were fighting hard to remain loyal to the historic mission of the working class.

Since the 8th Congress, the PLA no longer plays this role in the anti-revisionist movement.

But it still has certain socialist achievements to its credit. It is still a country where the workers and peasants live without capitalist overseers, and it is the toilers' party which governs the country. And this had notable results.

During these years, in the capitalist world, the conditions of the workers and peasants have worsened. But in Albania, despite three years of bad weather and despite difficulties caused by fluctuations in the export market, there were no emergency measures against the masses. The growth rate was less than planned, but the conditions of the toilers continued to improve.

As well, Albania continued to stay outside the game of imperialist alliances. The Albanian people remained free of the threat of being cannon fodder for aggressive war.

**Obtained by Revolution**

These things were not just handed to the Albanian working people as a gift from a benevolent ruler. To achieve them, the Albanian working class had to found its own party, the Communist Party of Albania (now called the Party of Labor of Albania). This party led the working people to win liberation by a revolution, won in armed struggle against German and Italian fascist occupiers in World War II and against local, Albanian exploiters.

Furthermore, the need for revolutionary vigilance continued after the war. The Albanian people had to face both the hostility of the capitalist countries and the treachery of the various brands of revisionism that emerged over the years--Yugoslav, Soviet, and Chinese.

The working class movement is a world movement. The workers all over the world must learn from the accomplishments of the workers of other lands. The history of the PLA shows the need of the workers to build a revolutionary party if they are to lead all the toilers in overthrowing their exploiters and oppressors. It shows the need to fight revisionism if the revolution is to be safeguarded. And it shows that the power of workers and peasants who rise in struggle, as the Albanian people, small in number, defeated the fascist hordes in World War II.

**New Times, New Tasks**

But socialism is not something immobile and lifeless, established as something perfect on the day of revolution and unchanging thereafter. The

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socialist system and communist parties must always move forward. They must correct weaknesses and the errors of the past. And they must face the new tasks of the class struggle that emerge over the course of time.

**The Struggle Against "Three Worldism" and Chinese Revisionist Betrayal**

In the middle 1970s the PLA was faced with a heavy task. At this time, revisionism resulted in the final degeneration of any communist or revolutionary character in the CP of China. The PLA was the only party with the prestige and the possibilities to rally the Marxist-Leninist movement on a world scale.

For a time, the PLA attempted to rise to this task. The 7th Congress of the PLA in November 1976 ushered in a period where the PLA sought to carry the banner against the "three worlds" theory, and a few years later the PLA openly denounced Mao Zedong Thought. Yes, there were serious and profound weaknesses in the PLA's stands. Nevertheless, it sought to put forward the path of revolution. For a time, the views of the PLA had a liberating effect for our Party and many other revolutionary communists and parties around the world. And, had the PLA continued on this path, and had it displayed the loyalty to Marxism-Leninism and to the revolutionary interest that is required to do serious self-examination of its own views, it could have continued to march forward.

But the struggle with Chinese revisionism did not bring immediate dramatic revolutionary victories around the world. The Marxist-Leninist parties faced a difficult process of reconstruction of their methods and theoretical basis. Moreover the objective situation facing the working class became even more difficult around the world. Yes, revolutionary outbreaks continue in various places. And yes, the world crisis is eating away at the foundations of capitalism and creating further conditions for revolutionary developments. But there is not the big turmoil of, say, the 1960's. Instead there is a world capitalist offensive.

**The PLA Falters**

In these conditions, the PLA faltered. It did not carry through the struggle against Chinese and Soviet revisionism. It refused to examine various wrong traditions that had exercised bad influence in the world communist movement from the late 1930's on. It continued to refuse to take a self-critical attitude to its own views; as a result, its views have degenerated and even resemble various of the "three worldist" views that it itself repudiated earlier. And it grew discouraged with the

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--A Disappointment for Marxist-Leninists  
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prospects of the Marxist-Leninist parties and disoriented in face of the difficult world conditions of the capitalist offensive. Today it fails to see the revolutionary factors in the world; and it has given up on any serious attempt to rally the revolutionary forces in the world.

Already at the 8th Congress of the PLA in November 1981 the PLA, and comrade Enver Hoxha's Report, had failed to deal with the needs of the time. We discussed the weaknesses which it showed at and following the 8th Congress in "Our Differences with the Party of Labor of Albania" and other articles in the March 20, 1984 issue of the Workers' Advocate. The influence of the errors of the PLA, the influence of the line from the 8th Congress, has been a contributing factor to the disasters that overtook a number of Marxist-Leninist parties in the last few years.

It is therefore unfortunate that, with respect to its views on the world situation, the 9th Congress of the PLA again failed to live up to the challenge of the time. It has continued the errors of the 8th Congress. In the past, the 7th Congress has inspired revolutionary deeds around the world. The 8th and 9th Congresses have had no fire. On the contrary, the revolutionaries around the world will have to give the PLA a transfusion of their own fiery spirit.

#### What is True Solidarity?

If the world Marxist-Leninist movement is to survive and thrive, it must repudiate the mistaken views expressed by the 9th Congress on the international situation and the orientation for the world's Marxist-Leninists.

And this is also the only stand possible for a true friend of Albania. The errors of the 9th Congress are a danger for the PLA as well as the rest of the world movement. The genuine comrades of the Albanian communists will not praise these errors. They will strive to help the Albanian communists and working class. No matter how vengeful the PLA leadership is against those who criticize its errors, this cannot justify servile yes-men. **Yes-men and sycophants are precisely examples of that bureaucratic rust that is the worst enemy of socialism.**

Only those are true friends of the Albanian workers and peasants and their Party who tell the truth fearlessly. Only those are true friends who both study the successes of the Albanian comrades and criticize the weaknesses.

Furthermore, the workers in each country must support each other by building the revolutionary movement in their own country. This is the only way to give powerful support to socialism and revolution in all countries. And it is impossible to

build a revolutionary movement according to the views put forward by the 9th Congress.

#### Abandoning the Revolutionary Standpoint on World Events

Let us examine comrade Ramiz Alia's Report to the 9th Congress. (Since the death of Enver Hoxha, Ramiz Alia has been the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the PLA. There does not appear to have been any change in the PLA's stands after Hoxha died. The PLA was already faltering at the 8th Congress, which comrade Hoxha presided over.)

Comrade Alia's Report is the most important single document of the Congress. It gives the general line of Albanian policy. (Page references to this Report will be to the official English edition published in Albania by the "8 Nentori" Publishing House.)

The most noticeable feature of the 9th Congress on the international situation is that the PLA has abandoned the task of rallying the world's revolutionary forces in general and the proletarian struggle for socialism in particular.

Oh yes, comrade Alia can give any number of general platitudes about **"The contradictions of capitalist society lead towards the revolution and socialism"**. He is full of official optimism and stereotyped expressions when talking about things in general. But these words turn to ashes in his mouth when it comes to analyzing the particular revolutionary events of the world and giving encouragement to the fighting forces. When it gets down to the actual tasks of the day, revolution flies out the window.

Comrade Alia is full of talk about diplomatic relations with this or that capitalist country or group of countries. But he mentions only a handful of struggles against existing governments and barely lists them. Here is his full description of three events agitating the world: **"The mounting discontent and protest of the masses in countries such as Haiti, the Philippines, Salvador and elsewhere led to popular revolts against reactionary regimes."** (p. 163) He praises the struggle against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in one sentence (pp. 163-4); his official optimism misses the problem of the bulk of the resistance being utterly reactionary, medievalist, pro-Western imperialist bands. He mentions in individual sentences the struggle in West Sahara, the struggle of the Palestinians, the situation in Nicaragua, and the struggle against the South Africa racists. And that's it.

And comrade Alia's Report accurately reflects the preoccupation of the PLA. The Albanian Telegraphic Agency denounces the superpowers but rarely mentions any other world event. It is en-

thusiastic about Kings and Presidents, professors, rectors of universities, and bigshots, film exhibitions, trade agreements, ambassadors coming and going, ambassadors being appointed or replaced, ambassadors giving receptions, etc.

In the old days, that now seem so long ago, the PLA breathed fire about the world revolution. In 1978 the late comrade Hoxha wrote that **"Socialism is in struggle with capitalism, the world proletariat is locked in a merciless and continuous struggle with the capitalist bourgeoisie, the peoples of the world are in struggle with their external and internal oppressors."** (Imperialism and the Revolution, Part One, I, P.I. edition, p. 5) And he tried to analyze the tasks facing the revolution both in general and in particular areas.

But the PLA leadership has become disappointed. It has decided to play the game of "realistic" politics. It seems to be repeating over and over: we are not isolated! We praise the National Day of most every country in the world and send messages to the Kings of Spain, Norway and Sweden, and to Presidents by the score! We have trade agreements, attend diplomatic receptions, and professors around the world love to look at Albanian folk art! But as to the fierce clashes around the world, we no longer expect much from them.

#### **Diplomatic Relations Are One Thing, What One Expects of the Capitalist World Is Another**

We stress that we do not oppose or disapprove of the development of diplomatic relations between Albania and the rest of the world. On the contrary, we believe that this is a fierce front of struggle that a socialist country must engage in. But diplomatic relations are one thing; illusions about the capitalist countries are another.

For example, we see nothing wrong with Albania having diplomatic relations with Iran. But we believe that is shameful for the PLA to praise the bloodstained regime of Khomeini and to denounce the heroic workers and peasants who have stood up to the murderous repression of this regime. It was shameful for ATA to glorify this regime in such articles as "In the land of Iran" (ATA, March 4-6, 1984, reprinted as reference material on the PLA's stand in the Workers' Advocate of March 20, 1984.)

There was a time when the PLA, while actively pursuing diplomatic relations with other countries, talked of the dangers of the "imperialist-revisionist encirclement" of Albania. Comrade Hoxha wrote that **"...socialist Albania is a thorn in the side of the imperialists, revisionists and all the capitalists of the world, and not one of them, at any time, has wished her well. As regards their activity against us, it can and does differ in intensity,**

**kind, method and circumstances."** (How we should understand and fight the imperialist-revisionist encirclement of our country and the effect of its pressure on us in Speeches (1971-1973))

But now the impression is created of the sincere (from both sides) and equal relations that can be established with the capitalist world. All it takes is to remove the "thorns" that come from each side being concerned with the social system of the other. And then the era of struggle will be over; the era of peace and harmony with the capitalist world is almost upon us! This is why ATA pays such absurd attention to the most trivial details of diplomacy while ignoring most major world events.

#### **No Condemnation of European Imperialism**

Comrade Alia's discussion of the imperialist powers is typical. He condemns both superpowers, but he has toned down the opposition to the imperialism of the other European powers and Japan to a whisper. He talks of the superpowers and "other imperialist states", but he generally avoids mentioning these other imperialist powers by name. (The only exception is when he points to the contradictions between these imperialisms and the U.S., stating that "The economic crisis has greatly aggravated the contradictions between the big imperialist powers and groupings, the United States of America, Japan, the European Common Market and Comecon." (p. 145))

There was a time when the PLA had no such inhibitions about naming these other imperialisms. It bitterly denounced the French, British, West German, Italian, Canadian and other imperialisms. And it castigated the Chinese revisionists **"who consider Europe a continent of second world countries, which they put in alliance with the third world'... This grouping of capitalist states can never be for the general weakening of world capitalism. To say that such a thing can be achieved with the assistance and collaboration of the aristocratic bourgeoisie of Britain, the revanchist bourgeoisie of Western Germany, the cunning French bourgeoisie and the other big capitalist groups, is deplorable naivety."** (Imperialism and the Revolution, Part Two, I, "The Chinese View about the Unity of the Third World" is Reactionary", P.I. edition, p. 87)

But now these imperialisms have become nameless. And comrade Alia's Report is no fluke. It reflects the day-to-day stand of the PLA.

#### **European Capitalism Is Supposed To Have Become Civilized**

- Thus the A.T.A. reports from Albania also re-

frain from denouncing by name any imperialist country other than the U.S. and USSR. It prefers to talk of "other imperialist powers". Mainly, there is only general denunciation of capitalism, but no denunciation of the particular crimes of capitalist countries other than the superpowers.

#### Switzerland

Take Switzerland, a land of powerful companies, whose tentacles stretch around the world. Last year ATA reported on an article in the Albanian journal Bashkimi that noted with enthusiasm the 695th anniversary of the Swiss state and stated that **"The Swiss stand in the international arena has been appreciated by the Albanian people."** (ATA, July 30-Aug. 2, 1986)

But ATA has not yet reported on the poisoning of the Rhine River by Swiss chemical companies, although this is a major scandal in Europe. Nor has it reported on other crimes of the Swiss exploiters.

#### Austria

Take Austria. A few months ago ATA cited an article by Bashkimi on the occasion of Austria's National Day. It claimed that **"The stands of Austria in the international relations are appreciated by the Albanian people and government. The Austrian people and distinguished state and social personalities have expressed their respect for the principled policy of the PSR of Albania."** (ATA, October 26-28, 1986) Are we really to believe that Austrian and Albanian foreign policy support each other?

Meanwhile ATA has carried nothing about the world exposure of Austrian President Kurt Waldheim as a Nazi officer who committed atrocities in World War II in the Balkans. Nor is there other criticism of Austrian capitalism. Instead, they sent a National Day message to Austrian head of state Waldheim at a time when even some capitalist countries refrained from sending their diplomats to attend Waldheim's inauguration. (Same issue of ATA.)

#### West Germany

Take West Germany. At one time comrade Hoxha condemned the Chinese revisionists for their dealings with German reactionaries. He wrote: **"Now we may say that the policy of West Germany is assuming the features of totalitarian fascist revanchism, seeking to create its own spheres of**

**influence."** And he singled out Franz Josef Strauss, stating: **"The fascist group around Strauss, the Hitlerite generals, the powerful real revanchists of Bonn, are openly advertising themselves as China's closest allies."** (Imperialism and the Revolution, Part One, I, "The Strategy of World Imperialism", P.I. edition, p. 11) But last year ATA informed the world that **"The prime minister of Bavaria of the German Federal Republic, Franz Josef Strauss, arrived in Tirana on a private visit"** and he **"had a meeting with the chairman of the Council of Ministers of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania"**. (ATA, May 21-24, 1986) Yes, this is the same Strauss. Strauss hadn't changed -- the Albanian stand on foreign relations had.

#### France

Take the French imperialists. ATA is full of talk of relations with France, of French visitors (but not of French Marxist-Leninists), of French culture, etc. But it does not denounce by name the crimes of the "cunning French bourgeoisie".

For example, ATA recently carried an article, "Who benefits from the conflict in Chad?", in which it appeals for driving "all foreign military forces out of Chad." (ATA, Dec. 28-30) Chad is a former French colony; it is still dominated by France; and France and Libya are the two countries with troops in Chad. But ATA speaks of the **"involvement of American imperialism and other imperialist powers"** and of weapons that **"may be of American production or of other countries"**. It even denounces the Soviet social-imperialists in the article, but France remains unnamed. And, for that matter, it is not that common for ATA to write about such current events at all.

#### Ideological Struggle with the Capitalist Countries?

Of all the countries with which Albania has relations, comrade Alia mentions the ideological struggle only with respect to Yugoslavia. He does state that **"The Yugoslavs do not like our social system and oppose it, indeed, with great heat. We say to them openly: we are for peaceful coexistence, but not for ideological coexistence."** (p. 199) At the Seventh Congress the PLA had not restricted this to Yugoslavia. It had opposed the view that **"to trade with a given country means to cease polemics, to refrain from expressing one's opinions on the policy pursued and ideology upheld by that country."** But now the ideological struggle with most capitalist countries has been allowed to grow so cold and stale that there is no need to say anything about it.



## Turkey

For example, with respect to the brutal Turkish regime, all comrade Alia says is **"Our differing political systems have not become obstacles to the harmonious development of relations."** (p. 197) Yes, indeed, ATA is full of stories about good relations with Turkey but has nothing about the struggle of the Turkish workers and peasants against barbarous oppression.

### European Capitalism Would Be Fine -- If It Only Were Independent

In fact, comrade Alia sets forth a whole plan to justify this hushing up of the crimes of European imperialism. What is necessary for progress in Europe? Is it the class struggle, the overthrow of the regimes of exploiters, and the carrying out of the socialist revolution? No, it is simply breaking links with the superpowers.

Comrade Alia pontificates that **"The disbanding of these alliances [both NATO and the Warsaw Treaty] is the fundamental condition for the elimination of divisions and splits in Europe and for the reduction of tensions not only on our continent, but throughout the world. The liquidation of them will create precisely that spirit of trust and understanding which is lacking in order to establish a fruitful and equal collaboration between the peoples of Europe."** (p. 188)

There was a time when the PLA spoke differently. It used to state, with respect to **"such imperialisms as the West German, Japanese, British, French, Canadian ones, etc."** that **"the countries of the so-called second world are the main economic and military support of the aggressive and expansionist alliances of the two superpowers."** (The Theory and Practice of the Revolution, Section II, Zeri i Popullit, July 1977, COUSML pamphlet edition, pp. 23-24)

But now the PLA has different tactics. It presents the plan that the existing regimes, the "main economic and military support" of the war blocs, can simply throw off the superpowers and then collaborate equally and fruitfully with each other. The "fundamental condition" is not revolution, but a diplomatic realignment of these powers.

And why should these powers do this?

Comrade Alia preaches to the existing regimes that **"Practice proves that the blocs [NATO and the Warsaw Treaty] lead to ever greater subordination of the partners to their leaders. The illusion that by entering into blocs their defence can be strengthened and their independence ensured has cost them [the existing European states] dear. For the sake of the co-ordination of policies and strategies, many countries have accepted major re-**

**strictions which have greatly limited their sovereignty on many capital questions, have hindered their independent activity in the international arena, and have put them in a position that they cannot freely decide their future themselves."** (p. 188)

Why, it was all a mistake. All you have to do is correct it.

Revolution has vanished. Class struggle has vanished. The talk of struggle against the superpowers is no longer put in the context of an appeal for revolution to overthrow the local ruling classes which have many crimes, including joining the big imperialist war blocs. Instead comrade Alia is appealing to these countries as they exist today, with the same social system, with the same ruling class. He all but says this in so many words.

He fails to distinguish between the ruling class and the working class in this passage; he just talks of the "partners" of the superpowers, and of the level of their "independent activity in the international arena", etc. Is it, for example, the French working class or the French ruling class which is the "partner" of the Pentagon and which direct French government "activity in the international arena"? And isn't French "independent activity in the international arena" such things as the French military intervention in the former French colony of Chad?

### Switzerland Again

In this regard, it can be noted that ATA carried an article entitled **"Switzerland condemns the domination of the two superpowers at the Stockholm Conference"** (ATA, Sept. 24-27, 1986) This presumably is an example of how to fight the superpowers.

### But European Capitalism is Vicious in Its Own Right

But even without the superpowers, European capitalism would remain a man-eating system of exploitation and oppression. It can be recalled that the French, German, Austrian, Italian and other lesser imperialists are quite capable of mass slaughter and atrocities on their own. Europe wasn't dominated by the superpowers in World War I and II, and yet the world was plunged into devastating wars:

Nor is it true that, for example, the NATO powers entered into alliance with U.S. imperialism out of some mistake. On the contrary, these alliances have served the interests of the lesser imperialists, and helped them maintain exploitation and oppression. Naturally, the local exploiters paid

a price for the domination of U.S. imperialism, and the time may come when they no longer will accept this domination. But a re-division of the imperialist spoils will not bring an end to "tension" nor bring an era of "fruitful and equal collaboration between the peoples of Europe."

### **The Dream of "Complete Democratization" of Relations**

What is left when one removes the revolutionary struggle for socialism? There is the dream of "complete democratization" of relations between states, which presumably could be created if only the domination of the superpowers was broken.

Comrade Alia states that the PLA and Albania **"are opposed to all practices of inequality, discrimination and great-state dictate in international relations. They are for the complete democratization of these relations. The states are not equal in regard to the extent of their territory, the number of population, their economic potential and so on. But this does not give the big and powerful states the right to special privileges in international relations, to positions of domination over the others."** (p. 190)

Naturally Albania must fight tooth-and-nail against attempts to impose on it. But look how comrade Alia discusses the issue. There are big and small countries, countries with a lot of people and countries with a few people, maybe even countries with mountains and countries with valleys, but there is no mention of the ruling classes of these countries. There is no struggle between socialism and a capitalist-revisionist encirclement, but only the struggle of the small innocents versus the big bullies.

There is not a class struggle, but simply abstract "rights" that spring from some unnamed source. So being big and powerful "does not give" a state the right to "special privileges". What is comrade Alia talking about? The big and powerful take their privileges by force; they are not deterred by sermons on ethics.

In the real dog-eat-dog world of capitalist international relations, force (military and otherwise) and constant struggle decides the status of countries. The capitalist diplomats talk morality to throw dust in the eyes of the working class that is to serve as cannon fodder. But comrade Alia puts forward a utopia in which the relations between different capitalist countries and between capitalist countries and socialist Albania can be "equal, sincere and fruitful".

He writes that: **"In our relations with other countries we do not lay down discriminatory or denigrating conditions. We do not seek to impose our way of life or our way of thinking on others."**

**But neither can we allow others to impose theirs on us. This, we think, is a universal principle for equal, sincere and fruitful relations between free and independent states."** (p. 189)

Incredible! The issue of different social systems can be thrown aside by the two sides simply deciding to follow the principle of not imposing on each other. Neither will the capitalists agree to give up attempts at imposing their system, nor can a socialist country agree to give up giving support to the international proletarian movement. But comrade Alia is drawing pretty pictures of what international relations can be, if only they were between truly independent regimes.

Is there a struggle between capitalism and socialism? Why, gentlemen don't discuss such things. As comrade Alia says: **"Respect for the internal social order and the international status freely chosen by different states and nations is an issue which cannot be a matter for discussion."** (p. 189) Well, it certainly isn't a matter of discussion in ATA, which stays as far away as possible from commenting on the crimes of various individual capitalist countries, except for the superpowers. But does this self-restraint really mean that the capitalists have given up their attempts to impose on Albania?

And what is this utter nonsense about an "internal social order and international status freely chosen by different states and nations." (emphasis added) Ruthless exploitation and oppression isn't freely chosen by the wage-slaves but are imposed on them with deception, with force, with brutality. The European and American capitalists "freely choose" to impose austerity on the workers, but this is imposed on the working class with all the weight of capitalist "law and order". The U.S. bourgeoisie "freely chose" to have slavery prior to the Civil War and to have a racist, Reaganite administration today, but this was hardly freely chosen by the slaves yesterday or the oppressed nationalities today. Comrade Alia's talk of a "freely chosen" social order presents international relations from the point of view of the freedom and independence of the state apparatus of each country, not the freedom of the toilers.

And comrade Alia goes on to paint one pretty picture after another of what relations between "free and independent states" will be, independent of their social system which is not "a matter for discussion".

Take trade relations. The PLA is for **"the development of trade and economic cooperation ... not only as a means for reciprocal economic benefit, but also as a valuable contribution to the normal development of international relations."**

Leaving aside the fact that the "normal development" of international relations under the pres-

ent system is precisely not the pretty picture comrade Alia is painting, but inequality, domination, exploitation, etc., the issue arises of how comrade Alia thinks this trade and economic cooperation will be achieved? Why, it's simple. It doesn't involve capitalism or socialism. Instead, **"...it is necessary that all countries should make trade exchange solely on the basis of reciprocal benefit and should struggle to ensure that they are not used as a means of pressure to impose political concepts and stands unacceptable to the partner."** (p. 190)

It is absurd to think that the monopolies, the multinational corporations, the imperialist governments will give up their striving to dominate. As long as capitalism exists, it will exploit. And, in exploiting, it will seek advantages, privileges, super-profits, domination. A socialist country can and must fight to have trade based on "reciprocal benefit" (i.e. so that it benefits from the trade and not just the capitalists). But there should be no illusion that the imperialist world market will become civilized and based on reciprocal benefit, the economic progress of everyone, and high standards of morality. It is always a dog-eat-dog struggle in the capitalist jungle.

#### **On the Nature of Alliances in Europe**

More generally, comrade Alia sets down a general principle that will ensure the achievement of proper relations among the European states and peoples. All that is necessary is that the various alliances should not be directed against third parties. He states: **"The alliances and friendships between states, naturally, are matters which are up to each of them to decide, just as collective security cannot be denied to those who want it. But what is unacceptable is when these alliances and friendships are directed against others, when the commitments made within them threaten the interests and security of other countries."** (p. 187)

Some of this is really bizarre. Comrade Alia claims that "collective security" is one of the acceptable forms of alliance between the present-day regimes of Europe. But, he says, this "collective security" should not be directed against some threat by a third party. Then what is being secured against? Invaders from Mars?

In fact, the key issue is how one determines the nature of alliances. Should one be concerned with the class nature of the states involved, with which class is the ruling class? Or should one restrict oneself to the fine words of some diplomats? Is it possible that the "cunning French bourgeoisie", the "revanchist German bourgeoisie", etc. will conclude beautiful alliances and friend-

ships which are not directed against third parties?

Can the capitalist regimes change their spots?

In another passage, talking about the superpowers, comrade Alia denounces illusions in the possibility of the imperialists changing their policy. He states that **"Historical experience has shown and the practice of our time confirms that both retreating in the face of the pressures of imperialists and illusions about the possibility of correcting their policy have caused great damage to the peoples' freedom, sovereignty and international security."** (pp. 151-2) Yet we are to believe that all the bourgeois states but the superpowers can simply change their policies, have alliances and friendships which are not directed against others, have good trade policies, respect the social systems of other countries, etc.

#### **A Non-revolutionary Stand**

Indeed, comrade Alia tells us that **"In any country security is a task which cannot be neglected."** (p. 187)

If the proletariat of an imperialist country is to admit the legitimacy of the security forces, the armies and police forces, of the ruling class, then how is it going to make a revolution? Such a proletariat will become simply a social-chauvinist pawn of the ruling class. To admit the "security" of the capitalist powers is to admit that one's perspective is confined to maneuvering within the confines of the presently existing system.

Perhaps someone will be found who says that comrade Alia believes that "security" can only be obtained by revolution. But if he believes this, he certainly doesn't say so. His passage on security occurs in the middle of the discussion of the current talks and meetings and alliances between the present-day regimes. It is part of his discussion on how to handle the present-day capitalist regimes.

Besides, "security" would hardly be the correct slogan for the class-conscious working class of Europe. For the Marxist-Leninists of Europe to take this as their battle cry, presumably along with normal trade and respect for all social orders, would be ludicrous.

Lenin dealt with variants of such slogans with respect to capitalist powers divided into two world groups of imperialist, plundering bourgeoisies. Then, as now, the European ruling classes were divided between various war blocs. He stated that "The Frenchman, German or Italian who says: Socialism is opposed to violence against nations, therefore I defend myself when my country is invaded, betrays Socialism and internationalism, because such a man sees only his own country, he puts his own... bourgeoisie' above everything



else and does not give a thought to the international connections which make the war an imperialist war and his bourgeoisie a link in the chain of imperialist plunder." (The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky, Ch. 7 - "What Is Internationalism?", Foreign Languages Press, Peking, p. 79)

Lenin pointed to the need to judge what class is waging the war and what was the politics behind the war. Can it be said that the slogan of "security" would help the European workers understand the class nature of the war threat hanging over the world? Or would it simply reinforce the "petty-bourgeois nationalist narrow-mindedness" of "my country is being wronged, that is all I care about"? (Ibid.)

### Asia, Africa, and Latin America

Although in this article we have dwelt on Europe, the PLA has always paid much attention to Asia, Africa, and Latin America as well as to Europe. And comrade Alia's view on the situation in these countries is also wrong. Much of this is developed in the section of comrade Alia's Report entitled "The Right of the Peoples to Be Free and Independent Is an Inalienable Right".

### Avoiding Class Characterizations

The first thing that strikes the eye is that he avoids class characterizations of the states of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. He talks of countries and nations and "**undeveloped nations**" and "**developing nations**" (just as, in talking about Europe, he often talks about "developed" countries, etc.)

There was a time when the PLA denounced the preoccupation with such terms. At the Seventh Congress in 1976 comrade Hoxha had mentioned "**what is called the second world, the third world, the non-aligned world or the developing countries**" and went on to say that "**All these terms, which refer to the various political forces acting in the world today, cover up and do not bring out the class character of these political forces, the fundamental contradictions of our epoch, the key problem which is predominant today on a national and international scale, the ruthless struggle between the bourgeois-imperialist world, on the one hand, and socialism, the world proletariat, and its natural allies, on the other.**"

### Casting Aside the Class Struggle

Instead comrade Alia claims that the struggle for independence, in various forms, is the key issue in this whole, vast region. He does not talk at all of the struggle of the workers and peasants

against exploitation by the local ruling class. And there is no struggle for socialism at all. There is only struggle for independence and struggle for democratic rights against a few particularly barbaric regimes.

So comrade Alia talks of "**the great efforts of various peoples and nations to defend their freedom and independence and national wealth, to be sovereign in their own countries, to rid themselves of the foreign yoke and decide their own course of development.**" (p. 163)

There was a time when the PLA talked, to some extent at least, about the relation of the socialist revolution to these countries. It stated that "**In the countries which have won full or partial political independence, the revolution is at various stages of development... Among them, there are countries which are directly faced with the proletarian revolution, while in many other countries, the tasks of the anti-imperialist national democratic revolution are on the order of the day. ...**"

"**But does this meant that such countries must remain at the national democratic stage and the revolutionaries should not speak about and prepare for the socialist revolution, for fear that stages may be skipped or cut out and someone may call them Blanquists?**" (The Theory and Practice of the Revolution, Section III, COUSML pamphlet edition, p. 35)

Now, however, all comrade Alia sees in the world are struggles for independence, for purer independence, or on democratic issues. Comrade Alia continues the passage cited above by stating that: "The wide extension and growth of peoples' liberation and democratic movements ... are now evidence of this." (p. 163)

As a matter of fact, all the revolutionary movements that comrade Alia endorses by name in his Report are classified by him as democratic or people's liberation movements.

But comrade Alia is not referring simply to the popular movement. His talk about the fight to defend "freedom and independence and national wealth, etc." is the ordinary "third worldist" rhetoric that leads to support of various of the bourgeois regimes that sit on the backs of the workers and peasants. It is hidden praise for various stands of the very regimes which must be the target of the revolution and which are also the local base of imperialist domination of the country. And this hidden praise comes out in various articles in ATA.

### Argentina

Consider Argentina. Last year ATA praised the Argentine government for allegedly pursuing "**a foreign independent policy**". (ATA, May 25-27,

citing a Bashkimi article on the occasion of Argentina's National Day)

In this way ATA endorsed the regime of President Alfonsín, who is involved in oppressing the workers for the benefit of the Argentine exploiters and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). It goes without saying that ATA has not carried any news of the recent workers' struggles in Argentina.

For that matter, the PLA had a wrong assessment of Argentine policy even in the days of the war over the Malvinas or Falkland Islands (summer 1982) when there was a brutal military regime. The PLA supported the military adventure of the Argentine generals; it took the nationalist stand that the only issue that mattered was who owned these tiny islands. It did not consider or support the mass struggle against the generals, or notice that the generals launched the war in an effort to drown the mass struggle in nationalist fervor. The PLA did not say anything about the atrocities of the regime, such as the "disappearances" of over 30,000 people.

#### Mexico

And then there's Mexico. The Mexican government has been enforcing austerity against the working masses. It is sitting on a powder keg, and even the American bourgeoisie is worrying out loud about the mass anger that is building in Mexico and the prospects of a new revolution. But all that ATA could think of doing was to present the Mexican government as truly concerned for the masses. It recently carried an article entitled "Successes of Mexico in the Struggle Against Illiteracy" (ATA, Dec. 7-9, 1986). The Mexican students are protesting and striking against education cutbacks, while the PLA is praising the Mexican government for teaching the people to read and write.

The PLA has praised the stand of the Mexican government for some time. For example, Bashkimi took Mexico as one of the models of a country undergoing "independent development". It declared that the Mexican government opposes "the policy pursued by the two superpowers" and has "support for the liberation struggles of the peoples of the nearby regions against the dictatorial regimes and against American imperialism". (ATA, Sept. 14-17, 1983.) Among other things, this amounts to support for the bourgeois Contadora group, of which Mexico is one of the prime movers, although the PLA doesn't openly comment on Contadora one way or the other. (The Contadora group is comprised of the bourgeois governments of Mexico, Panama, Venezuela and Colombia. Posing as being somewhat critical of U.S. military intervention, it proposes its own method of putting out the revolu-

tionary fire in Central America.)

The PLA also promotes the internal stands of the Mexican government. The Bashkimi article praised "the measures for the progress and development of the country in various fields". And now the PLA has come out to support the Mexican government's education policies at a time when the students are rising against it. As well, the PLA has not carried news of or given support to any of the mass struggles breaking out against hunger and repression in Mexico.

#### A General Theory of History: Replacing Class Struggle with Petty-Bourgeois Nationalism

Thus the 9th Congress ruled out socialist tasks almost anywhere in the world. In Europe the basic task is supposed to be independence from the superpowers. In Asia, Africa, and the Latin America the basic task is supposed to be independence from foreign domination, mostly the superpowers and also some unnamed other powers. In the superpowers, the PLA can't really see what movement is going on anyway. And in the international arena in general, the task is supposed to be ensuring the "complete democratization" of relations between states.

Comrade Alia replaces the class struggle with the struggle for independence. He goes so far as to elaborate a petty-bourgeois nationalist theory of history. He has made a marvelous new discovery -- that the struggle for independence is the motive force of history. According to him, **"The right of peoples to be free and independent cannot be denied. It was born together with man and human society and has been an unvarying constant through all the epochs of history. The reactionary powers of all times have tried to deny the people this right, have tried to subjugate and rule them. Mighty empires were created, whole continents were transformed into colonies, various peoples remained enslaved for centuries on end, but the spirit of freedom and independence has never died."** (p. 166)

Thus the struggle for independence has supposedly been an "unvarying constant through all epochs of history." Is that so?

Marxist-Leninists have a different view of history. The first programmatic declaration to the world of communism began as follows:

**"The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles.**

**"Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time**

**ended, either in a revolutionary re-constitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes."** (Manifesto of the Communist Party by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels).

It is the class struggle, not the struggle for independence, that provides the key to all history since the beginning of the exploitation of person by person.

At one time the PLA also talked of this. It declared that **"In defining the present epoch, Lenin proceeded from the class criterion. He said that it is important to keep well in mind which class stands at the hub of one epoch or another, determining its main content, the main direction of its development, the main characteristics of the historical situation in that epoch, etc.'"** (The Theory and Practice of the Revolution, Section I, COUSML pamphlet edition, p. 8)

But Comrade Alia's new view on the historical role of the struggle for independence replaces Marxism by petty-bourgeois nationalism. It looks at history from the viewpoint of the building of nation-states, not from the viewpoint of the workers and peasants. It idealizes the present international situation and dreams of it being purified into a system of absolutely "free and independent" nation-states. (Here, of course, this "freedom and independence" refers mainly to the rights of the national government in relation to other countries, not to the rights of the working people, which is a matter of the internal "social order" and "course of development".)

Comrade Alia's new theory is also absolute nonsense. First of all, not even the class struggle is an "unvarying constant", but instead constantly changes in form and content from one epoch to another. And the same goes for the struggle for independence. The present type of nation-state only came into existence in the last few centuries. History has seen the struggle for independence of various entities (clans, tribes, kingdoms, nation-states, etc.)

Furthermore, history has also seen both the amalgamation of various entities and the struggle for independence. Amalgamation is just as important a concept as independence. Indeed, even a small people such as the Albanians could only be formed through the amalgamation of a truly huge number of smaller entities. Without such amalgamation, the struggle for the national independence of Albania would have been utterly impossible.

#### **The Communist Proletariat Supports the National Liberation Movement**

The class-conscious workers and communists understand the revolutionary significance of progressive national liberation struggles. They not

only oppose national oppression in general, but they make a special point of opposing the chauvinism, racism, and imperialism of their "own" bourgeoisie. It is their task to be the foremost champions of the liberation movements of the peoples oppressed by that bourgeoisie.

#### **The Movement Is Based on Internationalism, Not Petty-bourgeois Nationalism**

But the revolutionary proletarians also understand the importance of the amalgamation of peoples -- but not by force. One of the main reasons the communist proletariat supports the national liberation movement and the struggle against all national oppression is precisely to encourage the voluntary amalgamation of peoples. Furthermore, the revolutionary proletariat fights national egoism, the view that all that matters is what happens to the country in which one lives. This struggle against national egoism is one of the reasons why it is able to champion the national liberation movement.

The working class movement is a world movement, an internationalist movement. Proletarian internationalism, the world character of the working class struggle, is one of the greatest driving forces of the struggle for the new, communist society.

#### **The Balkans**

This replacement of the class struggle with something else shows up in one aspect after another of the views of the 9th Congress. Take comrade Alia's remarks on relations in the Balkans. What has created the problems in the Balkans? Does it have any relation to exploitation and the exploitative character of all the Balkan states except Albania?

Apparently not. Comrade Alia suggests that everything would be solved if the various regimes just adopted better policies towards the various minorities.

Undoubtedly the end of national oppression would be very useful for the proletariat. The class-conscious proletariat must champion the struggle against this oppression. But comrade Alia has nothing to say as to why this national oppression exists, and hence he has nothing serious to say as to how to fight it. He simply says that all that is needed is **"the political will and sincere desire for collaboration"** (p. 194). As he says:

**"History has mixed up the peoples of the Balkans a great deal, ... Ethnic minorities of each people are found within the state borders of other states. ... Good or bad relations between the states of our peninsula have been largely depend-**

ent on this treatment.' The big powers have played on these feelings in order to stir up quarrels...

"The situation in the Balkans would be greatly improved if the minorities were regarded not as a source of feuds and divisions, but as a bridge for unity and friendship between the peoples of this peninsula. Recognition and acceptance of their identity, respect for their language, culture and national traditions, and their spiritual links with their own nation would create precisely that atmosphere which the peoples of the Balkans need, the atmosphere of friendship and sincere collaboration, the strengthening of their freedom and independence, peace and their common security." (p.194)

Thus all that is necessary is to change how the ruling regimes "regard" the national minorities. The way to catch a bird is simply to convince it that it wants to be caught. That's the type of profound wisdom one can expect when someone gives up class analysis and the revolutionary standpoint.

#### Abandoning the International Marxist-Leninist Movement

One of the most disgusting features of the stand of the 9th Congress is its lack of concern for the international Marxist-Leninist movement. The PLA has lost its interest in these parties. It is more interested in parliamentary deputies, mayors, and rectors of universities. Where are big trade unions, big parliamentary groups, led by the parties? Instead of helping the parties at this difficult juncture, all the PLA can say to them is grow rapidly, become a major factor that even the bourgeoisie recognizes, and then we may pay some attention to you.

Comrade Alia devotes just three paragraphs to the other Marxist-Leninist parties. One of these paragraphs consists simply of lying boasts about how well the PLA treats these parties. Comrade Alia, leader of the same PLA which now rarely even mentions the other Marxist-Leninist parties in ATA, which pays far more attention in ATA to film exhibitions than to the building of the parties, boasts that the PLA "has given and gives the greatest attention to relations with the sister parties." (p. 178)

He boasts of adhering "to the principles of complete independence and equality, solidarity, mutual aid and support and internationalist collaboration." But in fact the PLA leadership now brutally attacks those parties which dare to criticize its stands. It has thrown its influence against the development of various forms of contact between the parties. And it displays only minimum solidarity even with those parties which it favors.

#### Platitudes

The other two paragraphs comrade Alia devotes to the world Marxist-Leninist movement also say little.

The first one simply says that the parties "are subjected to all-round, continuous, ideological and political pressure from the bourgeoisie and the revisionists, as well as from the pseudo-revolutionary and petty-bourgeois leftism'..." On the surface, this appears to be just a platitude -- the parties face pressure from the bourgeois and revisionist right and from petty-bourgeois "leftism".

And the next paragraph expresses official optimism that "...the sister Marxist-Leninist parties have achieved notable successes in their efforts to extend and deepen their links with the masses, ... to affirm themselves in political life and to extend the horizon of their revolutionary work." In fact, there has been a series of crises and fiascos among various parties since the 8th Congress of the PLA. The line of the 8th Congress, which has a good deal of the responsibility for this, has received a stunning rebuff in practice. But comrade Alia just shrugs and says everything is fine.

#### Behind the Platitudes

However, it should be noted that various parties that are close to the PLA, or influenced by the line of the PLA, are giving the view of going to the right in the hope of gaining mass influence rapidly. This is their conception of "becoming an alternative to power", "taking part in political life", etc. This is supposed to be the way to grow rapidly.

In this atmosphere, the statements by comrade Alia are like wishing mourners at a funeral many happy returns of the day. He is claiming that, aside from the bourgeoisie and open revisionists, the problem in the international communist movement is petty-bourgeois leftism (so move further to the right) and that this is the way to gain mass influence. These statements, and his Report generally, encourage liquidationist pressures on the parties and petty-bourgeois nationalist conceptions.

The PLA has also, for some time, given a particular meaning to its talk about the "complete independence" of the parties. It has opposed various forms of contact between the Marxist-Leninist parties as a violation of their "complete independence". Any criticism of the PLA's policies, or of the stands of those party leaderships that follow the policies of the 8th and 9th Congresses, is called a violation of the "independence" of the parties. It is not supposed to be necessary to deal with the content of the criticism; simply the fact that it was made is enough to condemn it. Public

discussion of the controversial issues in the international Marxist-Leninism movement is denounced as an attack on the world movement. Meanwhile the PLA places brutal behind-the-scenes pressure on the parties.

#### **Developments in the World Anti-Revisionist Movement**

You wouldn't know it from the Report, but there are important developments going on in the world anti-revisionist movement.

There is a struggle against liquidationist and petty-bourgeois nationalist influences, but the PLA actively opposes it.

And there are important struggles in various countries. For example, the Communist Party of Iran is organizing against the Khomeini regime, and it has armed forces in Kurdistan.

But the PLA has supported the Khomeini regime. Recently it has toned down its statements on Iran. But it has neither renounced its previous views nor expressed support for the heroic struggle of the Iranian workers against the barbaric, clerical regime. For example, ATA reported on Zeri i

Popullit hailing the 7th anniversary of the overthrow of the reactionary Shah of Iran. Zeri i Popullit praised the developments in Iran since then as "safeguard[ing] the victories from the intrigues of superpowers and reaction". (ATA, Feb. 9-11, 1986) (But some sycophants of the PLA pretend that the PLA never supported the Islamic Republic regime, while others are still denouncing those who oppose the Khomeini regime as supposedly 'trotskyites, pro-imperialists, etc.)

The building of the Marxist-Leninist parties is essential if the workers' movement is to surge forward. The PLA leadership's refusal to examine its own inadequacies in giving advice to the parties, and its abandonment of the Marxist-Leninist parties, is a dramatic sign of the nonrevolutionary stand of the 9th Congress.

But the class-conscious workers and revolutionary activists around the world will not abandon the struggle for socialism, for revolution, for organization. They shall not liquidate the movement in the face of the offensive of the bourgeoisie. The struggle continues. But it cannot be waged according to the mistaken views of the 9th Congress. It can only be successfully waged according to the revolutionary principles of Marxism-Leninism. <>