

Communist Organisation October of Spain

**The Anti-Communist campaign, distortion and
falsification of history**

First Published: Unity & Struggle #1 August 1999 pp58-61

Transcription, Editing and Markup: Paul Saba and Sam Richards **Copyright:** This work is in the Public Domain under the Creative Commons Common Deed. You can freely copy, distribute and display this work; as well as make derivative and commercial works. Please credit the Encyclopedia of Anti-Revisionism On-Line as your source, include the url to this work, and note any of the transcribers, editors & proofreaders above.

SPAIN**THE ANTI-COMMUNIST CAMPAIGN,
DISTORTION AND FALSIFICATION OF HISTORY**

The ferocious anti-communist campaign is continuing. Everywhere, the bourgeoisie is using all means at its disposal, and that means ALL, to attack the communist forces, and especially the very idea of communism. That is to say, not only have they caused us, in some places more than in others, serious losses, in some cases even leading to the pure and simple elimination of the party, but they have tried to erase the historical memory of the peoples, or at least to distort it so as to make it unrecognizable. They put forth the cynical phrase: "a slander that something remains."

One of the latest examples of this vile campaign is the "Black Book of Communism," published in France by Laffont publishers, by a team of "historians" headed by one StJphane Courtois and others, among whom are to be found, of course!, various ex-communists, those who fatten "the industry of renegades" (Benedetti). As far as I know, this book has only been published, until now, in France and Italy (it will soon come out in Spain), but the echo of the inevitable controversy has reached here.

From the excerpts printed by the Madrid papers, these historians, known as "revisionists," in order to combat and denigrate the communists and the communist ideal, employ the same methods as were used to try to rehabilitate the 3rd Reich: deny the evidence itself, distort the facts, lie and slander. The crematoria? Pure anti-German propaganda; The gas chambers? They did not exist, etc., etc. The anti-communist "revisionist" historians are no less crude, they are the equal of their colleagues in cynicism and falsehood. Thus we see that they present the Communist Manifesto, the October Revolution, the liquidation of the tsarist empire and the seizure of power by the people led by the communists, as mere incidents. Such incidents are the exploits of the "Aurora", or the International Brigades in Spain, or the Long March in China, or the red flag over the Reichstag, in the heart of Nazi Germany... For them, there were only purges, "gulags," Budapest in 1956, Tien An Men Square, etc. in an abominable historical-ideological-political mishmash.

It used to be said that things appear different depending on the color of the glass through which they are looked at. In this case, we find ourselves in front of a distorting mirror of enormous dimensions. By way of example, let us take what has been confirmed recently in Madrid by Mr. Rubial, Chair of the PSOE [Socialist Workers Party of Spain, the party of Felipe Gonzalez, of the GAL [Anti-terrorist Groups for Liberation] the 29 assassinations, the robbery at a state level, the fraud and swindle). This person claims with all audacity that from the start of the German-Soviet Pact (August of 1939), "the communists began to say that Hitler's ideology was the best for the workers" (Madrid daily El Pais, January of 1998). Such nonsense does not deserve us wasting a single line of our magazine (here we are referring to our journal October). But one must stress that there was not a single protest, not a single article against such a scoundrel, not a single refutation, nothing, despite the fact that it was published in the daily newspaper with the widest circulation in Spain.

It is evident that this slander, as so many others, is seen as a challenge by the bourgeoisie, by reaction, and to judge by their silence, it also does not disturb the CP of Julio Anguita, nor any of those who still call themselves communists with whom we have had serious differences for years. This attitude of the revisionists reminds us that it is one thing to make alliances and agreements on concrete issues, even within a sort of united front, which can lead to a "United Left", agreements and alliances which can be tactically correct and even necessary; but it is another thing to downplay, to reduce the level of the ideological confrontation. We can not fall into the trap of hushing up the ideological struggle because the bourgeoisie puts us all into the same bag.

It is true that the anti-communist campaign does not make a distinction between Marxist-Leninists and revisionists, between parties which were in Power and those which are in opposition, between legal and clandestine parties. The blows concern all of us, although in certain cases we have taken this into account a little late. This can help bring about joint responses in certain aspects, but not in all. And of course, in no case can it lead us to keep quiet about our ideological positions, however much we have to work together with them in concrete situations.

One of the "arguments" used by these historians is that, communism is certainly worse than Nazism, and therefore it must be hit harder. Looked at from a class point of view, they are right: for the bourgeoisie communism is the real enemy, since Nazism is nothing more than a concrete form in concrete situations of capitalism itself. This has been shown clearly in the case of Spain. Franco was isolated after the Second World War, not so much for his terrible repression of the Spanish people, for his treachery towards the legally elected Republic, as for his collaboration and support of the Nazi-fascist Axis during the war.

But rapidly, with the advent of the so-called cold war, the bourgeois governments abandoned their hypocritical scruples and supported the Franco dictatorship, for its savage anti-communism. Franco appeared as a standard-bearer of anti-communism and defender of "Western civilization." That is to say, for the bourgeoisie Franco in the final analysis was their product, while communism in general was the enemy to be eliminated. Or, as it is said that a U.S. president said about the dictator of Nicaragua: "Somoza is a son-of-a-bitch, but he is our son-of-a-bitch."

In this anti-communist campaign, which is causing such damage, the bourgeoisie is making full use of the weapon of the means of communication and disinformation. It does not use carefully elaborated arguments, but bombards one continually, without stopping, monotonously, with made-up phrases and stereotyped schemas. Let us not be deceived, they have been able to convince some and make others vacillate; they sow pessimism and defeatism. They use slander and falsehood and sow demoralization.

Therefore we can not let down our guard. These divisive attempts that we have experienced recently in some countries are in good part the fruit of this counter-revolutionary seed. Theories of catastrophes have arisen which, without saying so, deny the validity of Marxism and under the pretext of "enriching" their analysis come to conclusions which they will later use to justify their treason. They use the pretext that this or that phrase - always taken out of context, of course - is not completely correct, to reject the whole thing. As if Marx or Lenin were gods who were not allowed to make the smallest mistake!

One can not deny that the communist movement, as a whole, is passing through an ebb period, and in various aspects, of retrogression (this happened in Spain, for sure). However, these blows that we have suffered do not mean that reaction has achieved a definitive triumph over communism. It has not achieved this, nor will it, because the march of history, with all its ups and downs, is moving in the opposite direction. For this reason, because reaction knows that the communist ideals are alive, it must maintain and develop this ferocious anti-communist ideological campaign, using all the means at its disposal, including traitors and degenerates.

The bourgeoisie, with its ideologues of various labels, tries to sow pessimism among the peoples, the idea that "one can not do anything," it says clearly that rebellion is impossible, that the revolution has failed "as the collapse of the USSR and the socialist camp proves." The anti-communist campaign is aimed at disarming, in the first place, of the working class, which is logical from a class point of view. But if we look around us, and it seems to me that it is not only the case of Spain, if it is the case that the workers are struck in the first place, it is also the workers who are resisting these attacks best. At times they remain without arguments, they do not know how to respond, but they

maintain themselves firm along general lines. On the other hand, the petty bourgeoisie, a good part of those intellectuals who previously considered themselves "red," are the most vacillating, they are the ones who fall down, lose their direction and are given to philosophizing lamentably. They separate themselves from the working class, and therefore lose what would be the most valid reason for being, to convert themselves, some consciously and others unconsciously, into shamefaced and shameful mouthpieces of the bourgeoisie.

The bourgeois monotony about "the failure of socialism," "the impossibility of the revolution," seeks to identify the degenerate States of the former socialist camp with the idea of communism and revolution. And these petty bourgeois strata also fall into that trap, strata that are always vacillating, but which definitively "end up playing the game of the bourgeoisie" (Engels). It is again a crude but dangerous distortion. What collapsed was not socialism, what had failed was not the noble ideals of communism. Nor is this a new distortion:

"Our opponents cry out about the collapse of socialism... What is dying at this hour is not socialism in general, but a brand of socialism, a saccharine socialism without the spirit of idealism and without passion, with the manners of a governmental office-holder, and with the paunch of a respectable paterfamilias; a socialism without audacity or frenzy, a devotee of statistics, up to its neck in amicable agreements with capitalism; a socialism preoccupied only with reforms; a socialism that has sold its birthright for a mess of pottage; a socialism that controls people's impatience in order to aid the bourgeoisie - a sort of automatic brake on audacious proletarian action." (Paul Golay, quoted by Lenin in "The Voice of an Honest French Socialist," [Collected Works, Vol. 21, pp. 350-51].)

Years have passed and the circumstances have changed a lot, but it is still clear that it is not socialism that collapsed, but that form of opportunism rooted in the USSR. The USSR that collapsed noisily has nothing to do with the USSR that shook off the chains of tsarism, which, with the heroic spirit of its workers and peasants headed by the communists, began to build socialism, it is not the USSR that defeated Nazism. It was not the State created by Lenin and the Bolsheviks.

Those countries, the USSR, Hungary, Poland, etc., etc., had ceased to be socialist, their governments had fallen into the hands of bureaucratic cliques which, little by little, were eliminating the socialist gains and achievements of their peoples and of the communists; cliques which ended up converting themselves into a new bourgeois class, with their own interests alien to those of the people; which transformed the dictatorship of the proletariat (or proletarian democracy) into a dictatorship of the apparatus over the proletariat.

We have to recognize that we have suffered a setback; it is useless to deny it. A setback which has much to do with our own errors. It is also useless to deny this. But that is another subject. It is a question of seeing how to face more efficiently the anti-communist offensive. The philosopher Carlos Paris was right when he said:

"Should the left resign itself to bowing to the inevitable before this situation, looking for a little corner in which we can put some balm on injustice and repression? Or should it continue its criticism and its historical struggle to transform the world and to create a new society? It seems to me that the answer is transparently clear."

Despite the difficulties suffered, we should not fall into pessimism. Moreover, we are overcoming the difficulties and problems which have tormented us. Little by little we are getting out of the tunnel. Everywhere our parties and organizations are registering advances, in some places vigorously, in others slowly, but we are moving forward. One of the factors, in my judgement, of this movement is in the formation of the Conference of M-L Parties and Organisations. It is true that there are many things holding us back, that there are still ambiguities and a lack of definitions in

various aspects, that there are organizational and functional deficiencies. Nevertheless, the little that we have already achieved lets us look to the future with lucid optimism.

With a common effort, we will let the Conference move forward, develop and assume a much more important role, more effective (perhaps in the beginning only in orientation), in the ideological as well as the organizational sphere.

And returning to the anti-communist campaign, it would be very positive to coordinate our efforts and responses, responses which should not limit us to reaffirming our principles, but also:

- 1- Delimiting clearly the boundaries between communists and social-democrats.
- 2- Regaining possession of the achievements of the past, beginning with the Great October Revolution, and without forgetting a principal aspect of our conception of the struggle, which is international solidarity, of which the glorious and heroic International Brigades are just one example.
- 3- Centering our propagandistic efforts among the working class and the popular sectors (giving special attention to the youth), and not leaving aside the intellectuals who, at a particular time, can play an important role.

It is evident that these three points (they do not have to be the only ones, or perhaps even the most important ones) can be separated. The subjects are vast, as is the work that we have ahead of us. Our forces are scarce, in some places more than in others, and our development is unequal (dialectically it could not be otherwise). It seems to me that the unity of efforts, despite the problems that endure, will help us to clear the road. "... the answer is transparently clear."

Raul Marco
March 1998

Communist Organisation October of Spain