

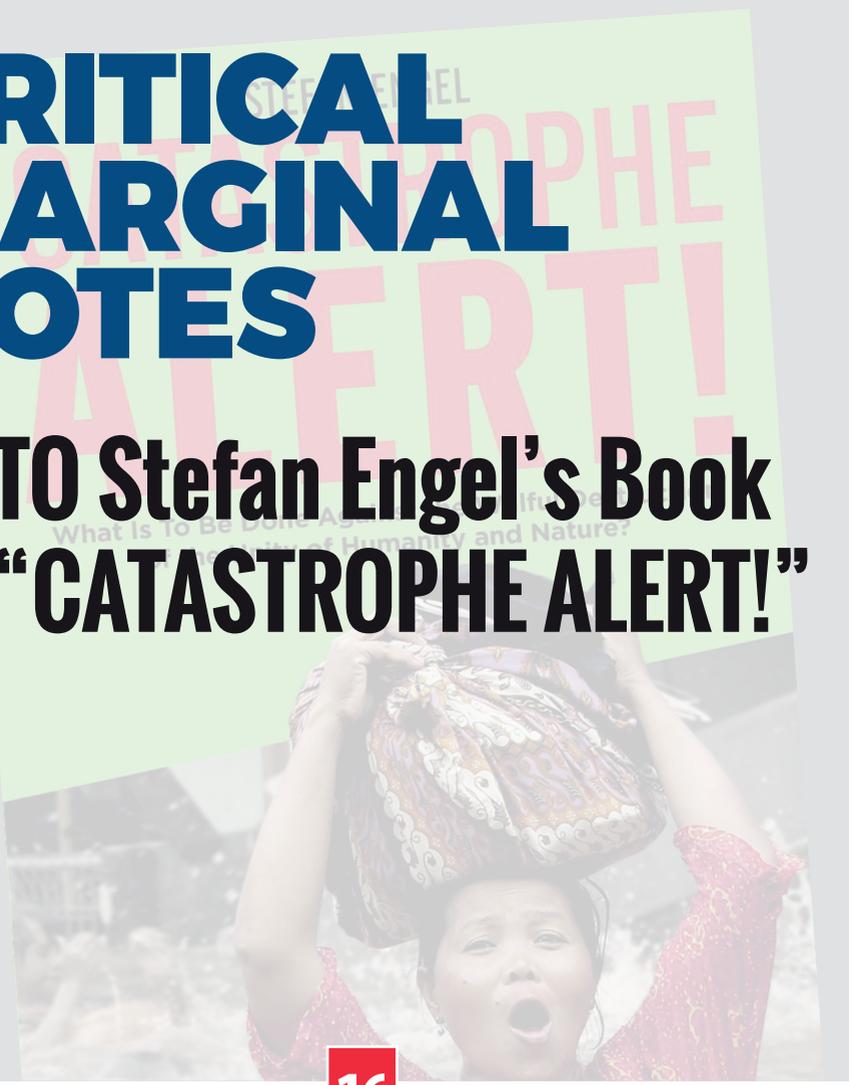
IMPORTANT ARTICLES FROM

**BOLŞEVİK
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**CRITICAL
MARGINAL
NOTES**

**TO Stefan Engel's Book
"CATASTROPHE ALERT!"**



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CRITICAL MARGINAL NOTES TO Stefan Engel's Book "CATASTROPHE ALERT!"¹

Having published "Twilight of Gods over the `New World Order`" (2003) and "Dawn of International Socialist Revolution" (2011)², Stefan Engel, in his third book "Catastrophe Alert! What Is To Be Done Against Wilful Destruction of the Unity of Humanity and Nature?"³ continues to argue that from 1990's on the "**imperialist world system has entered upon a new phase**".⁴

We have already extensively dealt with "New Phase Theory" in our "Critical Marginal Notes" in which we criticised his first two books. This theory suggests that there has been a qualitative change in imperialist world system. This starting thesis is totally misleading. Despite enormous concrete developments and shifts, imperialist world system has remained unchanged with regard to its fundamental features. In our "Marginal Notes" we proved that by basing our arguments on Marxist-Leninist theory and concrete analysis of global developments.

In his newly released book called "Catastrophe Alert", the author focuses on environmental problem and holds the view that:

*"The so-called **environmental issue** has long since become a **highly political issue**. What is the justification for a social order whose entire existence is based on a foundation, which threatens humans and nature?*

Instead of doing anything of significance to counter this threat, those in power have instituted a whole system of imperialist and petty bourgeois environmentalism in order to manipulate the whole of humanity. With appeasement, lies, cover-ups and specious solutions they attempt to prevent active resistance by the masses or under-

1 Translation from Turkish, "Stefan Engel'in Kitabı 'Felaket Alarmı' üzerine Eleştirel Kenar Notları", Bolşevik Partizan, Nr. 170, January 2015

Stefan Engel, "Catastrophe Alert! What Is To Be Done Against Wilful Destruction of the Unity of Humanity and Nature?", 2014, Verlag Neuer Weg – Engel, "Catastrophe"

2 Stefan Engel, "Twilight of Gods over the `New World Order` The reorganization of International Production", 2003, Verlag Neuer Weg – Engel, "Twilight"

- „»Yeni Dünya Düzeni« üzerinde Tanrıların Alacakaranlığı' Kitabı Hakkında Eleştirel Kenar Notları", Bolşevik Partizan, Nr. 164, May 2013;

- "Critical Marginal Notes to Stefan Engel's Book 'Twilight of the Gods – Götterdämmerung' over the »New World Order«, Important Articles from Bolşevik Partizan, Nr. 14, April 2014 – BP, "Notes Twilight"

- Stefan Engel, "Dawn of International Socialist Revolution", 2011, Verlag Revolutionärer Weg – Engel, "Dawn"

- „Uluslararası Sosyalist Devrimin Şafağı' kitabı hakkında eleştirel kenar notları", Bolşevik Partizan, Nr. 169, December 2014, no Translation in English

mine it. This book leaves no room for doubt that humanity must **not leave the environmental issue up to the ruling social system**. If it does, it will sink into capitalist barbarism!"⁵

We, Bolshevik Party (North Kurdistan/Turkey), have already dealt with environmental problem as a central problem of communist politics in our fourth Congress in 1990. In the political report submitted to the fourth congress, we confirmed that: *"By destructing and distorting nature and by demolishing life conditions of the next generations, imperialism showed that it is barbarism.*

In this sense, future of the humanity depends more than ever on the collapse of imperialist world system. Because imperialism has already brought damages that take too much time to be fixed. If it does not collapse, these damages will inevitably become fatal.

Either we will see a destruction of the nature in favour of making profit, utilizing natural resources bestially, making nature a slave for capital in the name of humanity, restructuring nature for the benefit of capital and destabilizing natural balance, ruining life conditions of human beings;

Or we will see destruction of imperialist exploitation system through Proletarian World Revolution and introduction of an economic system, which protects nature based on the scientific knowledge of laws of nature and in accordance with the balance of nature.

In short:

Either Imperialism or revolution!

Either Barbarism or socialism!

*Nowadays these are the real alternatives for humanity.*⁶

We observed on the alleged "Climate Disaster": *"Bourgeois scientists define the current situation with two words: 'Climate Disaster'. However, the real 'disaster' for humanity is imperialism. Climate disaster is one of the 'disasters' created by imperialism."*⁷

We agree that environmental problem is a genuine political problem and we have to struggle against capitalist/imperialist system in order not to neglect the environment. This is not the first time we say this. Moreover, an environmental struggle against the system has been an integral part of our quotidian political struggle since 1990.

The fact that this issue has been an integral part of our quotidian political struggle since 1990 has nothing to do with the misconception which was introduced by Marxist/Leninist Party of Germany in 2003 that imperialist world system has

5 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 8

6 "Recent Situation in the World and in Our Country; Current Situation;

On Expansion Perspectives and Duties"; p. 62-63, Dönüşüm Publishing, March 1991, Istanbul

7 op.cit. p. 58

entered upon a new phase⁸ since the beginning of 1990's⁹.

We, communists from North Kurdistan/Turkey, now know that it was a mistake to "discover" environmental problem much later than the environmental movements of bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie and not to make it an integral part of our quotidian political struggle as one of the most urgent problems of the proletarian world revolution. One of the reasons of our mistake was related to a reaction to bourgeois and petty bourgeois ecologism developed in early 70's. Bourgeois and petty bourgeois environmentalism with its emphasis on an environmental doom have focused on common interests of "humanity" independently of class relations. It follows from this perspective that class antagonisms are denied and removed. According to bourgeois imperialist and petty bourgeois environmentalism, environmental catastrophe is not a system problem. They argue that the problems can and have to be overcome through a struggle of "all humanity", which adopts a supra-class point of view. We just confined ourselves to criticise this misleading theories, which were intra-system and class reconciliatory, and we remained to be uninterested in environmental problem. This was partly because that we had some other priorities for 8 years after we established Bolshevik Party (North Kurdistan/Turkey). During these formative years, environmental problem seemed to be totally irrelevant in discussions over Global Communist Movement. Moreover, despite the alarmism of bourgeois and petty bourgeois environmentalism we did not have enough knowledge on global extent of the destruction created by capitalist imperialist production system. That's why it took us so long to develop a line of argument.

A great deal of Engel's book "Catastrophe Alert!" comprises facts on current situation of environment. It is possible to find these facts on environment from various sources, which are provided by bourgeois sources and scientific collections of petty bourgeois civil society organizations that focus on environmental issues. What matters politically is not the simple restatement of these facts but rather the conclusions that have been drawn from these facts. In this respect, the main argument of the book can be put as followed:

*"Humanity meanwhile finds itself in the middle of a progressing transition to a global environmental catastrophe."*¹⁰

We believe that we should be careful when we use these concepts such as "**environmental catastrophe**" since those who are really responsible for these issues remain to be subject to no criticism. However, it is a fact that destruction of the basis of natural life has been going further. In fact, it is useful that the book has researched and documented the current situation of the nature in details although one might find the same information from bourgeois sources. Moreover, it is quite relevant that the author has displayed the stance of Marx and Engels with regard to the problem (although his interpretation of a citation from "Critique of the

8 Engel, "Twilight", p. 14

9 Engel, "Dawn", p. 9

10 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 9

Gotha Programme" is false and misleading) and has used the dialectical method, which can contribute to the current debates over the problem.

Nevertheless, we disagree on many points with the ideas, which are introduced in "Catastrophe Alert!" and we criticize some of the arguments of the author regarding the analysis proposed as well as its results for class struggle.

In his "Marginal Notes to the Programme of the German Workers Party" Marx criticizes the statement that "Labour is the source of all wealth and all culture" which is found in the first paragraph of the first article in the Programme:

*"Labor is **not the source** of all wealth. **Nature** is just as much the source of use values (and it is surely of such that material wealth consists!) as labor, which itself is only the manifestation of a force of nature, human labor power...And insofar as man from the beginning behaves toward nature, the primary source of all instruments and subjects of labor, as an owner, treats her as belonging to him, his labor becomes the source of use values, therefore also of wealth."*¹¹

Stefan Engel interprets this citation by arguing that Marx positions himself in environmental problem and "made the *dialectical unity of humanity and nature* one of the programmatic foundations of Marxism".¹²

In fact, Marx did not mean here to position himself within the confines of environmental problem. Marx challenges the bourgeois idea that "falsely ascribes supernatural creative power to labor". Here Marx just affirms the general communist stance that refuses private ownership on means of the production and on nature.

1. Qualitative Leap or Increasing Quantitative Development?

"Catastrophe Alert!" is contradictory, indecisive and eclectic on this issue.

The following observations, which are based on Lenin's ideas, are correct:

*"The qualitative changes in nature proceed in leaps. 'What distinguishes the dialectical transition from the undialectical transition?' Lenin asks and replies: 'The leap. The contradiction. The interruption of gradualness.' ('Conspectus of Hegel's Book Lectures on the History of Philosophy: Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 38, p. 284)'"*¹³

The position of MLPD is explained as follows:

*"Qualitative leaps indicate their approach through accelerated quantitative changes and through intensification of the internal contradictions in things or processes. Based on scientific analyses of the speedup of global warming, the increase in extremely contradictory weather patterns, the accelerated extinction of species, the conspicuous acidification of the oceans, the destruction of the forests, the thinning of the ozone layer and the increase in regional environmental catastrophes since the 1990s, the MLPD came to the trenchant conclusion that in the process of the global environmental crisis a qualitative leap, **the transformation into a global environmental***

11 Karl Marx, "Critique of the Gotha Programme"

12 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 55

13 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 14

*catastrophe, already has been initiated. Further scientific observations meanwhile confirm that this process has **broadened and accelerated.**"¹⁴*

According to Engel, "**initiation of the transformation into a global environmental catastrophe**" is a qualitative leap. For him, this **process** "has broadened and accelerated."

According to the author, **qualitative leap** is not a leap or as Lenin said "elimination of graduality", but rather a **process**. For the author, qualitative **leap** is not a **sudden transformation of quantity into quality**. (That's the reason why the term "**leap**" is used in dialectical materialist theory.) On the contrary, leap appears when the process of transformation starts. This is how qualitative leap is defined for Engel. However, if what matters here is a process of transformation which leads to something new, something totally different, then a leap into something new/something totally different does not appear. In this respect, German MLP has a unique understanding of "Dialectics", which does not correspond with Marxist-Leninist dialectics. For Engel, increasing quantitative development, gradual evolution is considered as qualitative leap.

The current situation appears to be similar to our observations we made in our 4th. Congress in 1990. Environmental problems have been increasing enormously because of capitalist-imperialist economy. The earth is in danger of being destroyed. If we do not stop it through a proletarian world revolution, human civilization is under the threat of leading to a collapse into barbarism only by dint of the destruction of environment. In this case, qualitative leap appears as decay. We have the duty to warn all workers about environmental issues. We need to convince them to think that this problem is an existential problem and they have to struggle against imperialism. Only in this case, we can use concepts as "Catastrophe Alert!" for a political agitation. However, if this concept is used to designate a qualitative leap and if a "Catastrophe Alert!" is announced then this has nothing to do with the reality of our current situation. This is a pure Environment-scare. Life-sustaining basis of the humanity still continues and enormous degradation in environmental issues is still gradual and quantitative changes. Engel's claim that "qualitative leap" has been going on since early 1990's has not been properly justified. There is no answer to the question when exactly was the breaking point or decisive moment for this change. Marxist-Leninist dialectics is distorted in order to justify this misleading thesis of qualitative leap from early 1990's. This aggravates the false thesis.

2. Wrong Periodization of the Imperialist World System

In our opinion, we live in an age of imperialism and proletarian world revolutions since the transition from competitive free market capitalism to monopolistic capitalism/imperialism. This age will continue until imperialism will be defeated

¹⁴ Engel, 'Catastrophe', p. 15

through proletarian world revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat will be established in entire world.

In theory, imperialism can develop into a single “ultra-imperialism” and to imperialist united states of world regardless of the form of the imperialist nation states. Such an “ultra-imperialism” would of course mark a new phase in the development of the imperialist system.

“From the purely economic point of view,’ writes Kautsky, ‘it is not impossible that capitalism will yet go through a new phase, that of the extension of the policy of the cartels to foreign policy, the phase of ultra-imperialism,’ i.e., of a superimperialism, of a union of the imperialisms of the whole world and not struggles among them, a phase when wars shall cease under capitalism, a phase of “the joint exploitation of the world by internationally united finance capital.”¹⁵

However, this claim is just a theoretical possibility, which has not been confirmed through historical facts.

By referring to the facts, Lenin unveiled these petty bourgeois frivolities in 1915 in his Preface to Bukharin’s Pamphlet, ‘Imperialism and World Economy’:

*“Can it be denied, however, that a new phase of capitalism is “imaginable” in the abstract **after** imperialism, namely, ultra-imperialism? No, it cannot. Such a phase can be imagined. But in practice this means becoming an opportunist, turning away from the acute problems of the day to dream of the unacute problems of the future. In theory this means refusing to be guided by actual developments, **forsaking** them arbitrarily for such dreams. There is no doubt that the trend of development is towards a single world trust absorbing all enterprises without exception and all states without exception. But this development proceeds in such circumstances, at such a pace, through such contradictions, conflicts and upheavals—not only economic but political, national, etc.—that inevitably imperialism will burst and capitalism will be transformed into its opposite long before one world trust materialises, before the “ultra-imperialist”, world-wide amalgamation of national finance capitals takes place.”¹⁶*

All the subsequent developments have confirmed this insight and still confirms repeatedly. From this it follows that all the communists have the duty to disagree on wrong periodization that claims that imperialism has entered a new phase just by referring to the existence of some new developments in the world imperialist system. Those who make such periodization claim that these changes in the imperialist system are related to the very nature of the system, and the world proletarian revolution needs new strategies.

This wrongly periodization is concerned with the so-called phase of state monopoly of the imperialism. “Catastrophe Alert!” remarks on this problem as follows:

*“During the Second World War, **state-monopoly capitalism** asserted itself against monopoly capitalism, and the **new economic and political basis of imperialism***

15 Lenin, “Imperialism, Highest Stage of Capitalism”, Lenin’s Selected Works, Progress Publishers, 1963, Moscow, Volume 1, pp. 667– Lenin, “Imperialism”

16 Lenin, Collected Works, Moscow, Volume 22, pp. 103-107

emerged in a comprehensive way. Since then the monopolies have completely subordinated the state, their organs are fused with the organs of the state, and the monopolies have established their dictatorship over all of society.

In this new phase of imperialist development, multinational corporations quickly emerged and grew; the internationalization of production accelerated. Whereas before the Second World War multinational corporations were only an isolated phenomenon, by 1969 their number had increased to 7,300. Through 2010 their number grew to 103,796; they controlled 892,114 foreign subsidiaries.

In the period of the old colonialism, the foreign direct investments of monopoly capital aimed at securing the supply of raw materials and tropical agricultural products. These **low-cost means of production** served chiefly to ensure the **continuity of production in the highly industrialized imperialist centers**.

But the old colonialism could not be perpetuated after the Second World War. The socialist camp gained strength and armed liberation struggles broke out in the colonies. State-monopoly capitalism in the imperialist countries provided the basis on which **neocolonialism** was able to replace the old colonialism.

Technically, the neocolonial countries remained politically independent. International finance capital subjugated them through the method of economic and political penetration. The monopolies' foreign investments aimed at the control of spheres of influence and, increasingly, the building of subsidiaries for the manufacture of goods in foreign factories, for the exploitation of raw materials and cheap labor, and for the control of the national markets.

The **emergence of the system of neocolonialism** tremendously sped up the growth of international production. When the social-imperialist Soviet Union broke up at the beginning of the 1990s and its successor states were integrated into the common world market, for the first time, capitalist production took on a **mainly international character**. This also had the effect of intensifying the development of the global environmental crisis.¹⁷

That "the monopolies have completely subordinated the state, their organs are fused with the organs of the state, and the monopolies have established their dictatorship over all of society" does not indicate the nature of the monopolistic state capitalism but rather imperialism. These phenomena do not refer to a new phase, which appeared during Second World War. Lenin observes in his basic theoretical work "Imperialism, Highest Stage of Capitalism" that

"A monopoly, once it is formed and controls thousands of millions, inevitably penetrates into every sphere of public life, regardless of the form of government and all other 'details'."¹⁸

(...) Monopoly has sprung from the banks. The banks have developed from humble

17 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 74-76

18 Lenin, "Imperialism", pp. 667-766

*middleman enterprises into the monopolists of finance capital. Some three to five of the biggest banks in each of the foremost capitalist countries have achieved the “personal link-up” between industrial and bank capital, and have concentrated in their hands the control of thousands upon thousands of millions which form the greater part of the capital and income of entire countries. **A financial oligarchy, which throws a close network of dependence relationships over all the economic and political institutions of present-day bourgeois society without exception — such is the most striking manifestation of this monopoly.***¹⁹

Another form of the monopolistic state capitalism is the creation of state monopoly through direct state intervention. In this case, monopolies appear in the form of state monopolies. Regarding state monopoly, Lenin, in his article, “The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat it”:

“Everybody talks about imperialism. But imperialism is merely monopoly capitalism. That capitalism in Russia has also become monopoly capitalism is sufficiently attested by the examples of the Prodigol, Coal Syndicate, the Prodamet, Iron Syndicate, the Sugar Syndicate, etc. This Sugar Syndicate is an object lesson in the way monopoly capitalism develops into state-monopoly capitalism.

And what is the state? It is an organisation of the ruling class – in Germany, for instance, of the Junkers and capitalists. And therefore, what the German Plekhanovs (Scheidemann, Lensch, and others) call “war-time socialism” is in fact war-time state-monopoly capitalism, or, to put it more simply and clearly, war-time penal servitude for the workers and war-time protection for capitalist profits.

Now try to substitute for the Junker-capitalist state, for the landowner-capitalist state, a revolutionary-democratic state, i.e., a state, which in a revolutionary way abolishes all privileges and does not fear to introduce the fullest democracy in a revolutionary way. You will find that, given a really revolutionary-democratic state, state-monopoly capitalism inevitably and unavoidably implies a step, and more than one step, towards socialism!

For if a huge capitalist undertaking becomes a monopoly, it means that it serves the whole nation. If it has become a state monopoly, it means that the state (i.e., the armed organisation of the population, the workers and peasants above all, provided there is revolutionary democracy) directs the whole undertaking. In whose interest?

Either in the interest of the landowners and capitalists, in which case we have not a revolutionary-democratic, but a reactionary-bureaucratic state, an imperialist republic. Or in the interest of revolutionary democracy – and then it is a step towards socialism.

For socialism is merely the next step forward from state-capitalist monopoly. Or, in other words, socialism is merely state-capitalist monopoly which is made to serve the interests of the whole people and has to that extent ceased to be capitalist monopoly.”²⁰

19 Lenin, “Imperialism”, pp. 667-766

20 Lenin, “The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat it”, Collected Works, Volume 25, pp. 323-369

This is exactly what Lenin calls state capitalism. In a country where everything is governed by monopolies and finance oligarchy, state belongs to these forces. This sort of imperialist state serves the interests of monopolies from the beginning. This is a genuine fact for Lenin and Leninists. Another fact is that the highest stage of monopoly in capitalist states is a direct state monopoly, which can create the best conditions for a transition to socialism. This is what Lenin talks about the above quotation.

Nevertheless, modern revisionists have developed a totally different theory of state monopoly capitalism (Stamokap), which has nothing to do with Leninism. Their aim was to justify a new revolutionary stage of anti-monopoly, which was a necessary stage before a socialist revolution. Theory in this case functioned as a theoretical ground for a revisionist politics.

Now we come back to the point of view of MLPD: According to MLPD, **new colonial system** is the outcome of "state monopoly capitalism", which is considered as a new stage of the imperialism. We believe, however, that old colonial system had already started to disintegrate with the emergence of the imperialism. Let us cite Lenin once again:

"Since we are speaking of colonial policy in the epoch of capitalist imperialism, it must be observed that finance capital and its foreign policy, which is the struggle of the great powers for the economic and political division of the world, give rise to a number of transitional forms of state dependence. Not only are the two main groups of countries, those owning colonies, and the colonies themselves, but also the diverse forms of dependent countries which, politically, are formally independent, but in fact, are enmeshed in the net of financial and diplomatic dependence, typical of this epoch. We have already referred to one form of dependence — the semi-colony. An example of another is provided by Argentina.

'South America, and especially Argentina,' writes Schulze-Gaevernitz in his work on British imperialism, is so dependent financially on London that it ought to be described as almost a British commercial colony.' Basing himself on the reports of the Austro-Hungarian Consul at Buenos Aires for 1909, Schilder estimated the amount of British capital invested in Argentina at 8,750 million francs. It is not difficult to imagine what strong connections British finance capital (and its faithful "friend", diplomacy) thereby acquires with the Argentine bourgeoisie, with the circles that control the whole of that country's economic and political life.

A somewhat different form of financial and diplomatic dependence, accompanied by political independence, is presented by Portugal. Portugal is an independent sovereign state, but actually, for more than two hundred years, since the war of the Spanish Succession (1701-14), it has been a British protectorate. Great Britain has protected Portugal and her colonies in order to fortify her own positions in the fight against her rivals, Spain and France. In return Great Britain has received commercial privileges, preferential conditions for importing goods and especially capital into Portugal and the Portuguese colonies, the right to use the ports and islands of Portugal, her tele-

*graph cables, etc., etc. Relations of this kind have always existed between big and little states, but in the epoch of capitalist imperialism they become a general system, they form part of the sum total of "divide the world" relations and become links in the chain of operations of world finance capital."*²¹

The same holds for the thesis of MLPD that **"capitalist production has basically assumed an international aspect"**. It is alleged that capitalist production has "assumed basically an international aspect" **firstly** since early 1990's. What was then the nature of capitalist production before? Was it basically national? MLPD does not understand that capitalist production has always had an international character from the beginning. Imperialism means that imperialist capital circulates internationally is related to an international network and produces at international level.

Lenin makes the following observations when he mentions five fundamental features to define imperialism:

*"3. the export of capital as distinguished from the export of commodities acquires exceptional importance; 4. the formation of international monopolist capitalist associations which share the world among themselves."*²²

This quoted passage shows that capitalist production in the age of imperialism has from the beginning had an international character. Increase and enlargement in international character of imperialism in the last decades does not imply that capitalist production was not basically international before 1990's.

3. What is missing is a genuine self-critical stance

Marxist-Leninist movement, including German MLPD, is not self-critical enough with regard to their own mistakes and weaknesses in the environmental issue and in "Catastrophe Alert!". Some petty bourgeois political actors recognized the importance of this problem long before Marxist-Leninist movement realized it at the end of 1960's. This fact cannot be denied. In its early stage, environmental movement was a petty bourgeois movement. Marxist-Leninists and worker's movement paid little attention to the environmental issue or they considered it as a trivial subject among many other unimportant problems. In our opinion, to neglect this issue is a mistake. Ignoring this fact means not to grasp the scope of our own mistakes. This behaviour removes the possibility of a self-critical evaluation of our past and does not improve us.

"Catastrophe Alert!" mentions an environmental movement that "acts globally" and "puts pressure on national governments". However, it never mentions the presence of Marxist-Leninists, or should we say, the absence of Marxist-Leninists in this movement.

Somewhere in the book it says:

*"It was an undisputed achievement of the **globally active environmental movement** that the environmental issue became a central topic of societal debate. A **general environmental awareness developed among the masses**. Against this backdrop, the governments of the capitalist countries adopted a number of legal regulations and other measures intended to protect the environment.*

In the Federal Republic of Germany, in 1974, for the first time, a Federal Environment Agency (UBA) was set up and various environmental institutes and research facilities were established or sponsored. Since the 1970s/1980s, filters to clean exhaust gases and clarification plants for treating wastewater have been made a requirement. The 1974 Federal Ambient Pollution Control Act resulted in improved noise protection and air pollution control. However, these measures were not comprehensive and far-sighted, but as a rule reactions to worsening environmental problems, to the massive resistance of the population, or were implemented with new, profit-yielding markets in mind.

That no decisive change in policy was initiated despite the growing number of alarm signals shows the decadence of the capitalist system. Investment in environmental protection in the USA and West Germany increased to nearly eight percent of total investments through 1975 - in Japan even to 20 percent - but declined again later to less than five percent.

*Well into the 1980s the global environmental crisis remained a general **accompanying manifestation of the capitalist mode of production**. As long as it did not yet have a law-governed character, the ecological balance could have been restored by the **active resistance of the masses of the people against the policies of the monopolies and their governments.**"²³*

The book here exaggerates what's going on. As if there were never "an environmental movement that acted globally", let's say in Turkey, in the late 1960's! In the beginning, the environmental movement was an emergent mass movement in western imperialist countries and consisted of petty and middle bourgeoisie in terms of class structure. The first international alarming report on the environmental issue was written and released in 1972 by a think-tank Club of Rome which was funded by western imperialist powers!

Moreover, this sort of questions is neglected: who are **the actors** of this environmental movement that **acts globally**? What role did Marxist-Leninists play within this movement? The correct answers to these simple questions would be harsh since our own mistakes might be revealed.

As "Catastrophe Alert!" says, a "federal environment department" was established by the imperialist government in FRG in 1974. Here is the question: what did communists in FRG do with regard to the environmental issue? Nothing or almost nothing. Some people followed just a bunch of militant demos of the

23 Engel, "Catastrophe", p.72-73

environmental movement, which was not led by communists. Since these people participating in this movement did not realize that the environmental issues were an integral part of class struggle, they could not be leading figures in this problem. This fact is not debated self-critically in the book.

The chapter called "Petty bourgeois environmental movement" in "Catastrophe Alert!" answers this question by referring to the MLPD's historiography:

"In the mid-1970s, when the West German economy went from the upswing phase into a state of fluctuating stagnation, those in power reneged on central elements of their environmental policy measures, pitiful though they were. Arguing that they wanted to achieve independence from oil, they hastened the expansion of nuclear energy.

The traditional bourgeois nature conservation and environmental protection associations reacted for the most part passively at first. Marxist-Leninist party building was still in its initial stages then and dealt with the environmental issue only in passing. In the working-class movement the petty-bourgeois reformist mode of thinking still exerted mass influence. And so, a spontaneous environmental movement with a petty-bourgeois mold emerged in West Germany. But as time went on, it became one of the strongest in the world, made important contributions to the development of a critical environmental consciousness of the masses and was able to achieve successes in individual questions.

Upon the development of the global environmental crisis and the reorganization of international production in the 1990s the international environmental movement also gained strength. The awareness prevailed that the environmental crisis and all the threats it poses to the existence of humanity have an international character. Environmental struggles spread throughout the world. In nearly all countries environmental organizations were formed and militant activities and mass struggles developed."²⁴

MLPD's self-criticism seems to mean that: in that time Marxist-Leninist party was relatively new and for this reason it was concerned with the environmental issue accidentally. Instead of saying that 'in that time we could not yet find out the importance of the problem, so it was a mistake', it is argued that "party was relatively new". This is totally a wrong attitude. Moreover, a second explanation follows:

Petty bourgeois ideas still had an influence within the workers movement. STILL! So, what is the current situation then? Or early 1990's? Have things become any better? Have petty bourgeois-reformist ideas within the workers movement been eliminated? Is this sort of opinions still dominant? Are they effective in a global context?

The answer to all these questions is just NO!

Revolutionary enthusiasm has been diminished when compared to early 70's. Petty bourgeois-reformist thinking is today stronger than early 70's within the workers movement.

International environmental movement became more effective in 1990's. The idea that the existential threats to humanity and nature are international in character has been prevailing more than ever. Indeed, however this had nothing to do with the reorganization of international production mentioned by Stephan Engel. What was determining was **the super atomic disaster in Chernobyl!** People felt the effects of it inside their body: deadly rays do not know any national border. MLPD fabricates "theories" designed for its use instead of exposing simple facts and historical process.

"Catastrophe Alert!" describes how petty bourgeois environmental movement has developed:

"The environmental movement with a petty-bourgeois stamp in West Germany flourished in the mid-1970s, partly in close union with offshoots of the petty-bourgeois student movement. More and more local citizens' action groups sprouted up, increasingly independent of the bourgeois parties and usually with a critical attitude towards government and monopolies. In 1980 the Federal Environment Agency counted 11,238 regional and 130 national environmental protection groups. About half of them were directed against the construction and operation of nuclear power plants. Large parts of the antinuclear movement viewed themselves as a movement of political resistance against the "nuclear state." In this environmental movement an intense struggle raged between the progressive, proletarian and socialist mode of thinking on the one side and the petty-bourgeois reformist and petty-bourgeois revisionist mode of thinking on the other."²⁵

This is simply a pseudo history. Could somebody please tell us where the proletarian and socialist thinking was in this movement in the mid-1970s? The then Marxist-Leninist movement (including MLPD's predecessor, KABD founded in 1972) did not produce an alternative politics and did not have almost any influence in the environmental movement. Marxist-Leninist groups and parties got involved in the "environmental issue" on partially as MLPD defined!

Disturbing history and minimizing its own responsibility are combined with that observation below:

"The anti-nuclear movement was for the most part isolated from the working-class movement. The rightist SPD and union leaderships bear the chief responsibility for this. They organized rallies in favour of nuclear power plants which were explicitly directed against the environmentalists, and for a long time defamed environmental protection of any kind as a destroyer of jobs"²⁶

Who is responsible for the absence of the working class and the workers move-

25 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 228

26 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 230

ment with a right perspective within the environmental movement? Is raising a socialist consciousness inside the working class a task assigned to SPD and right-wing unions? What responsibility do Marxist-Leninists have for the "isolation of the working class from Anti-Atom Movement"? Did they do their job properly? Simply NO! However, MLPD abstains from answering. It is so easy to put the blame on those who are distant from you. It seems that MLPD clings to the idea that 'criticism is easier than self-criticism'. Yet, this idea does not conform to the people or organizations that define themselves as Marxist-Leninist.

Here is another example of how "Catastrophe Alert!" distorts history.

"Subsequent to the revisionist degeneration of large parts of the old communist movement, since the 1960s new Marxist-Leninist parties emerged, which justifiably first concentrated on the principled defence of Marxism-Leninism against revisionism and on party-building. But they, too, were influenced by the scant regard paid to the environmental question in the old communist and working-class movement.

The 1972 Declaration of Principles of the Communist Workers' League of Germany (KABD), forerunner organization of the MLPD, also does not yet deal with the environmental issue. Willi Dickhut, however, criticized the use of the slogan "labor is the source of all wealth" in publications of the party. And the MLPD also criticized the treatment of the environmental issue in the petty-bourgeois environmental movement. Nonetheless, the underestimation of this issue was not subjected to thorough criticism until during the ideological, political and organizational preparation of the party's founding".²⁷

Here it is argued that the reason why environmental issue was neglected by the MLPD's predecessor is that KABD was influenced by "the old communist and the worker movement". Then, KABD's mistake of neglecting environmental issue is relativized through an argument in which Willi Dickhut criticized the dictum 'Labor is the source of all wealth'. Thereby we come to understand how and why the book argues that Marx's dictum that "Labor is not the source of all wealth", an argument which has nothing to do with the environmental issue, turned dialectical unity of human and nature into the pragmatic foundation of Marxism. Thus, Willi Dickhut is made to be true Marxist regarding the environmental issue by referring to Marx's critique introduced in the Critique of the Gotha Programme. Despite all, says Engel, "neglect of environmental issue was harshly criticized only during ideological political preparation of the party. Where are the documents of this harsh criticism then? We are all unfamiliar with these documents!

Nevertheless, Engel shows us what "this harsh criticism looks like through a summary in "Catastrophe Alert!":

"Since the founding of the party in 1982 the MLPD has taken a fundamentally correct stand in both its Basic Programme and Practical Programme. The Basic Programme stated: "On the basis of the law of profit maximization, which aims only at immediate effects, scientific progress in utilizing nature and its laws leads to

unrestrained wasteful exploitation of the natural environment. The deformation and poisoning of air, water, and land is a growing threat to man, animals, and plants” (p.7) The Practical Programme adopted by the Founding Party Congress stated: “Effective protection of the environment and stricter control over industrial pollution - full liability of those responsible for all damages done! (p. 27)”²⁸

The basic correct attitude regarding the environmental issue, according to Engel's reading of Principle Programme, consists of complaining about the “law of profit maximization” and observation of “the deformation and poisoning of air, water, and land is a growing threat to man, animals, and plants”. Here Marxist-Leninist truth that this is all what is going on under the imperialist system and the struggle for a better environment must be carried out as a struggle against the imperialist world system is simply ruled out. What Engels calls as fundamentally correct stand is compatible with the stand of any petty-bourgeois ecologist.

“Catastrophe Alert!” makes further remarks:

“The book, ‘Dawn of the International Socialist Revolution’, published in 2011, put forward the thesis that capitalist production and consumption now only function on the basis of the chronic, crisis-ridden destruction of the natural foundations of human life.

Firstly, with the reorganization of international production the **over accumulation of capital** became **chronic**: the opportunities for investments promising maximum profit did not keep pace with the expansion of capital. For this reason, the ruthless exploitation of the natural resources as a source of wealth at a level of **systematic and all-around destruction of the vital unity of humanity and nature** for the first time became an **economic compulsion**; there was no other way for solely ruling international finance capital to continue realizing maximum profits.

Secondly, the transition to the global environmental catastrophe has reached a point where **irreversible damage** has occurred to the **global material cycles and the global ecological balance**. In the crisis-laden environmental destruction, factors have developed which unfold devastating self-reinforcing tendencies and additionally hasten the transformation to a global environmental catastrophe.²⁹

The first point deals with a modification of the law of capitalist accumulation in the phase of internationalized production in the imperialist world system, while the second deals with new law-governed processes in nature to which the development of the environmental crisis has given rise. The **environmental crisis** changed from an accompanying manifestation **to a law-governed manifestation of the capitalist mode of production!**³⁰

Without any hesitation, here it is argued that “the ruthless exploitation of the natural resources as a source of wealth at a level of **systematic and all-around destruction of the vital unity of humanity and nature** for the first time became

28 Engel, “Catastrophe”, p. 57

29 Engel, “Catastrophe”, p. 180

30 Engel, “Catastrophe”, p. 73-74

an economic compulsion” through the reorganization of international production. [According to the interpretation of MLPD, early 1990’s mark the beginning of this period, Twilight, p. 9, German Edit.] In other word, before 1990’s destruction of nature and environment was not necessary! This argument is in contradiction with the undeniable fact that the basic economical law of “modern” monopoly capitalism is maximum profit.

Stalin speaks about this issue in 1952 in his booklet called “Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR”:

“It is said that the law of the average rate of profit is the basic economic law of modern capitalism. That is not true. Modern capitalism, monopoly capitalism, cannot content it-self with the average profit, which moreover has a tendency to decline, in view of the increasing organic composition of capital. It is not the average profit, but the maximum profit that modern monopoly capitalism demands, which it needs for more or less regular extended reproduction.

Most appropriate to the concept of a basic economic law of capitalism is the law of surplus value, the law of the origin and growth of capitalist profit. It really does determine the basic features of capitalist production. But the law of surplus value is too general a law; it does not cover the problem of the highest rate of profit, the securing of which is a condition for the development of monopoly capitalism. In order to fill this hiatus, the law of surplus value must be made more concrete and developed further in adaptation to the conditions of monopoly capitalism, at the same time bearing in mind that monopoly capitalism demands not any sort of profit, but precisely the maximum profit. That will be the basic economic law of modern capitalism.

The main features and requirements of the basic economic law of modern capitalism might be formulated roughly, in this way: the securing of the maximum capitalist profit through the exploitation, ruin and impoverishment of the majority of the population of the given country, through the enslavement and systematic robbery of the peoples of other countries, especially backward countries, and, lastly, through wars and militarization of the national economy, which are utilized for the obtaining of the highest profits”³¹

In the context of human and nature relationship, the securing of the maximum capitalist profit means systematic destruction of the natural resources and natural unity of human and nature. This is the basic economical law of monopoly (in other words imperialist) capitalism. This has been from the beginning a necessity for imperialist economy, not just from early 1990’s on.

What matters here is that destructive exploitation of natural resources through the development of imperialist economy has constantly been going on and human environment has increasingly been threatened. This phenomenon has not been known “only since 1990”.

Scientists of the Club of Rome funded by Bourgeoisie already proved in 1972 that how growth has reached "its ends" because of the uncontrolled plunder of human and natural resources. They favoured certain environmental reforms within the confines of imperialist system. This system reacted without abandoning ambition for a maximum profit. It was impossible for the system to abandon maximum profit since it means a rejection of the entire system.

Theory of Engel and MLPD that "systematic destruction of the natural resources and natural unity of human and nature" became an economic necessity for the first time in early 1990's is just a failed attempt to conceal the failure of Marxist-Leninist world movement, which realized very lately that the problem was of vital importance for the proletariat. This is a theory of relativizing its own mistakes.

Engel, too, knows the history of report of the Club of Rome. In "Catastrophe Alert!" he says:

"As the global environmental crisis unfolded in the late 1960s/early 1970s, the ruling monopolies could not but see that environmental destruction was on the increase and had begun to have a negative impact not only on their capitalist production, but on the development of society as a whole. In the face of the emerging environmental movement, the imperialists recognized that they were in danger of isolating themselves politically; they found themselves forced to react..."

The Club of Rome was established in 1968 on the initiative of Aurelio Peccei, a top executive with the two world-class Italian groups Fiat and Olivetti, Alexander King, a director-general at the OECD, and several eminent scientists. It describes itself as a 'think tank and center of research and action, innovation and initiative.' As goal it stated it is committed to 'a common concern for the future of humanity.'

On the initiative of the Club of Rome and financed by the Volkswagen Foundation, the highly regarded study Limits to Growth appeared in 1972. In the study, a group of 17 committed scientists around Dr. Donella H. Meadows and her husband, Dr. Dennis L. Meadows, came to the conclusion: a catastrophic decline in the world population and its standard of living threatens within the next 50 to 100 years. With its alarming study the Club of Rome appealed to the world public with the intention of spreading the illusion that the environment could be saved simply by bringing about a change in thinking in society.

'We are convinced that realization of the quantitative restraints of the world environment and of the tragic consequences of an overshoot is essential to the initiation of new forms of thinking that will lead to a fundamental revision of human behaviour and, by implication, of the entire fabric of present-day society.' (<http://collections.dartmouth.edu/published-derivatives/meadows/pdf7_meadows_ltg-001.pdf> 24 Nov. 2013)

*The worldwide environmental movement unsettled the monopolies and their politicians. They had lost much credibility among the people with their environmental policy and now sought to regain it through the wholesale institutionalization of environmental policy nationally and internationally. They propagated the line of the **compatibility of capitalist economy** and ecology and enhanced this illusion*

with the quality label 'sustainability.' However, all that was achieved was a cynical regulation of environmental protection policy according to the motto: environmental protection only if the profits of monopoly capital do not suffer from it, but can be increased further.

Modifications of imperialist environmentalism:

The capitalist profit system increasingly came into contradiction to the unity of humanity and nature. In the area of environmental policy, **those in power** no longer **could continue to rule in the old way** without running the risk of destabilizing their system of rule in the long run."³²

All is good and true. **However, only one thing is missing here:** What was the position of Marxist-Leninists on this issue, when "a number of scientists" funded by high financial circles revealed their "alarming" report. Were we ahead of Bourgeoisie? Were we able to figure out the problem before Bourgeoisie and to provide working class with the knowledge of facts? NO, we were not! Environmental issue was secondary for us when bourgeois scientists were warning about the issue. This problem was not considered as one of the most important problems of the working class. This is the reality!

"Catastrophe Alert!" continues to introduce a petty bourgeois, retrospective criticism. It is argued that:

*"Renewable energies, too, mainly are supported so that the energy companies can continue to obtain maximum profits. (This is a mere fact. However, this is exactly what energy companies do! BP) The corporations especially push **centralized large-scale projects** and megaprojects which are often counterproductive as far as environmental protection goes. For example, offshore wind parks are furthered, the electricity from which then has to be transported into the country via new transmission lines, **instead of producing the alternative energy chiefly in smaller units on a decentralized level!**"³³*

According to Stefan Engel, energy policy of a future global socialist republic consists of alternative energy models in "smaller units on a decentralized level". This is a reactionary and petty bourgeois utopia which does not understand the importance of centralized large-scale and mega projects that might be useful in producing solar, wind, water and wave and other renewable energies.

What is interesting here is that Catastrophe Alert! is making a good point somewhere else:

*"**Arrogance towards the working-class movement** can only weaken the environmental movement. It is often combined with the rejection of the modern forces of production and technical progress, although they alone can create the material basis for restoring the unity of humanity*

and nature. **Salvation through ecological small-scale production and self-sufficiency is just a reactionary dream.**³⁴

Engel does not even realize that he is having this same “reactionary dream” in his book!

4. A New Fundamental Contradiction in Imperialist World System?

We live in an age in which a worldwide proletarian revolution is the only alternative to imperialism. Let us now take a look at the “primary” contradictions that Stalin called the “most relevant ones”³⁵, which belong to imperialist period. In the book “The Polemic on the General Line of the International Communist Movement” Chinese Communist Party used the concept of “fundamental contradictions”. Stefan Engel mentions basic contradictions. Here we are using conceptual framework of MLPD and we do not want to discuss relevancy of these concepts for the moment. All these concepts refer to the one and same thing. What is important for us is not to discuss the concepts but their contents.

The fundamental/primary/basic contradictions of imperialist system will lead to the destruction of this parasitic system through a world-wide proletarian revolution, construction of the dictatorship of the proletariat, elimination of all kinds of dictatorship, withering away of all the states, global free unity of free individuals and communist society. First step that will be taken in this long process of permanent revolution is to take over the political power by proletariat through a proletarian revolution in the countries where bourgeoisie imposes its dictatorship in various ways.

Revolution against imperialism has two main tendencies. Objectively, **these two tendencies** develop around two primary/essential/fundamental contradictions. On the one hand, there is this contradiction between exploiters and oppressors and on the other hand, there is the contradiction between the exploited and the oppressed.

The **first fundamental contradiction** is an irreconcilable contradiction between bourgeoisie and proletariat or capital and labour. This contradiction, which appears in all the countries that belong to imperialist system, can be best observed in developed capitalist-imperialist countries. This contradiction and the class struggle of the proletariat against bourgeoisie lead to socialist revolutions that directly aim to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat in these countries. Socialist revolutions in the core countries of imperialist world system are a main-stream for world proletarian revolutions.

The **second fundamental contradiction** is between a few imperialist powers and the oppressed peoples who are dependent on imperialism. Stalin remarks:

34 Engel, “Catastrophe”, p. 255

35 Stalin, “The Foundations of Leninism”, Works, engl vol. 6, pp. 71-196, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1953 - Stalin, “The Foundations”

*"the contradiction between the handful of ruling 'civilised' nations and the hundreds of millions of the colonial and dependent peoples of the world."*³⁶ if the struggle of the oppressed people against imperialist hegemony is carried out under the leadership of the proletariat, this contradiction leads to anti-imperialist, democratic revolutions. Out of these revolutions, democratic people's dictatorships, which are neither bourgeois nor proletarian, appear. Anti-imperialist, democratic revolutions of the oppressed people are objectively the second mainstream of a global proletarian revolution.

Socialist revolutions in core imperialist countries and anti-imperialist, democratic revolutions in countries which are depended on imperialism affect and support each other mutually and converge on the mainstream of a global proletarian revolution. There is yet another contradiction along with the main contradictions between revolution and counter-revolution:

"The contradiction among the various financial groups and imperialist Powers..." This contradiction *"leads to the mutual weakening of the imperialists, to the weakening of the position of capitalism general, to the acceleration of the advent of the proletarian revolution and to the practical necessity of this revolution."*³⁷

Unlike the first two fundamental/primary/basic contradictions -no matter how we call them- this third contradiction is not between revolutionary and counter-revolutionary powers but rather it is an internal contradiction among the counter-revolutionary powers. By weakening counter-revolution and providing suitable conditions for proletarian revolution, this contradiction may help to reach a proletarian revolution **not directly but indirectly**.

A fourth contradiction was added to these three contradictions when socialist camp emerged out of socialist and democratic people's states after WW 2: "the contradiction between socialist and imperialist camps"³⁸

This fourth contradiction is not an internal contradiction of imperialism. On the contrary, it is between two fundamentally different social systems, which stand against each other as organized states. Naturally, existence of a socialist camp paves the way for a proletarian revolution in countries where revolution has not yet achieved.

However, this socialist camp existed from mid-1950s until early 1960s. Today, there is not any single socialist state. For this reason, today we can only talk about basic or fundamental contradictions of the imperialist system as it was in its initial years.

Stefan Engel discovers a new "fundamental" contradiction. The book speaks about it: *"The accelerated development of all main features and other factors of the environmental crisis is slowly calling **all life processes and the life of all humans** into question. The process of the transformation of the global **environmental crisis into a global environmental catastrophe** has entered a **new phase**. Humanity is no*

36 Stalin, "The Foundations", pp. 71-196

37 Stalin, "The Foundations", pp. 71-196

38 Polemic, p. 7, German edit., Turkish edit., ibid, p. 12

longer at the beginning of a qualitative leap, but already **in the middle of the self-destructive process of the all-around dissolution of the unity of humanity and nature**. The world is drifting at an accelerated pace towards a global environmental catastrophe. Already today, damage which as far as is currently known is irreversible exposes humanity to permanent, partly existence-threatening hazards, and places heavy burdens on future generations.

*"The threat to humanity from a global environmental catastrophe has given rise to a new major contradiction within the imperialist world system: the **contradiction between the capitalist mode of production and the natural foundations of human life**."*³⁹

*Solely ruling international finance capital is neither willing nor able to grasp completely the real threat to all human life and reverse the catastrophic development. But the masses do not want to perish in a global environmental catastrophe. They will resist and sooner or later take up their active struggle."*⁴⁰

Here it is explicitly argued that a "new major contradiction" appears between the capitalist mode of production and the natural foundations of human life. In materialist dialectics, essence of the contradiction is defined by two sides of the contradiction that are in conflict with each other. Examples of these contradictions are proletarian versus bourgeois or the oppressed people versus imperialism. A contradiction, which involves both, the mode of production and natural foundations of human life, is so general and so obscure in terms of class relations that we can dub it as non-sense.

Can anybody ever tell us that what kind of developmental dynamics is supposed to emerge out of this contradiction? Are "natural foundations of human life" now supposed to introduce a struggle against the capitalist mode of production? This verbalism which pretends to be philosophical is just non-sense when transcribed into everyday language.

Environmental problem is naturally one of the most important problems of survival for human beings and in their struggle to destroy the imperialist world system, proletariat and the oppressed people have to grasp this problem as an inseparable and significant aspect of the revolutionary class struggle like national question, women issue and every type of struggle against discrimination. However, in order to do so, we do not need to invent new basic contradictions. As much as we appreciate MLPD's efforts to pay attention to environmental problem, its theoretical inventions are still futile and wrong.

5. Problem of Alliance in the Environmental Issue

Environmental problem and destruction of the natural foundations of human life concern not only working class and the oppressed people but also entire human-

39 Engel, "Dawn", p. 195

40 Engel, "Dawn", p. 227-228

ity. This problem is matter of existence and future of humanity. Nevertheless, maximum profit within a short time always comes as a priority for the imperialists. This is the essence of imperialist economics. All the rest is irrelevant for them. Since this is the way the imperialists consider the problem, there is only one solution regarding the environmental problem: Elimination of the imperialist world system through a proletarian revolution. There are two important cornerstones of this revolution: socialist revolutions and anti-imperialist, democratic revolutions. Within the context of socialist or anti-imperialist, democratic revolutions, struggling against the destruction of the natural foundations of human life are one of the most important aspects of these revolutions. Any environmental struggle, which is not carried out against the imperialist system, will have to remain to be partial and uncompleted. Quite naturally, the proletariat and the oppressed people under the leadership of the proletariat will struggle for reforms and will occasionally ally with bourgeois-petty bourgeois activists of the environmental struggle.

However, when we are in solidarity with these groups, we have to tell this truth to the masses: Either Barbarism or Socialism. The imperialist system is still the archenemy in the environmental issue. Whoever wants to struggle for a healthy environment has to struggle against the imperialism as well.

Unfortunately, we, communists, have a limited effect in the environmental movement. Because,

a) Revolutionary movement of the workers and labourers is very weak in the entire world and

b) We are not well organized in the class movement and we failed to raise a consciousness for environment within this movement.

For this reason, today's environmental movement is basically a bourgeois and petty-bourgeois movement. Since the environmental movement is one of the strongest movements in the core imperialist cities, we, communists, have to join in these movements and have to introduce communist ideas to these movements. Yet, we have to be aware of the class character of these movements. As long as communists remain to be marginal within the working class, class character of the environmental movement will not change. This is our view based on the concrete analysis of the concrete conditions.

In "Catastrophe Alert!" Engel remarks on this matter:

*The **environmental movement** does not have a uniform class base, but **comprises** the **proletarian**, the **petty bourgeois** and the **bourgeois environmental movements**. This is possible on the basis of the common criticism of the destruction of the natural foundations of life. Chiefly responsible for the environmental crisis is international finance capital; so, its representatives and its henchmen in the bourgeois parties, the state machine and the modern mass media cannot be a part of the environmental movement. On the contrary: their greenwashing, with which they merely seek to camouflage their environment destroying dictatorship, must be exposed.*

In contrast to proletarian class-consciousness, environmental consciousness comprehends not only different stages of development, but fundamental contradictions as well. Along with coinciding demands, in the environmental movement there are also **conflicting class interests**.

This fact inevitably leads to **the struggle between the proletarian modes of thinking and petty bourgeois or imperialist environmentalism**.

Only if this complex, objectively progressing struggle over the mode of thinking is consciously fought to an end, can an environmental consciousness on the level necessary today emerge and develop to higher levels. The stronger the influence gained in the environmental movement by the proletarian mode of thinking, the higher the level of environmental consciousness will be and the more quickly the breadth and fighting power of the new environmental movement will grow.

New demands on class-consciousness

The degree of **class-consciousness of the working class** essentially determines the level of **environmental consciousness** of the masses. Under present-day conditions, **the degree of maturity of proletarian class-consciousness depends also to a substantial extent on the environmental consciousness of the working-class movement**.

Every class-conscious worker must understand that the class struggle within the scope of the internationalized mode of production has a national aspect and an international aspect. A small stratum of international finance capital reigns alone over capitalist world production and the imperialist world system. In every imperialist country the international supermonopolies headquartered there have completely subordinated the state apparatus, and their organs are fused with the organs of the state. They have established their dictatorship over all of society, including the weaker monopolies and the non-monopoly bourgeoisie. From this national power base, the international supermonopolies fight for bigger shares of the world market and for the expansion of their political spheres of influence. The only force that can decisively oppose them is the worldwide

working class, if it forms a revolutionary alliance with all the world's oppressed under the leadership of the international industrial proletariat, which is concentrated in the huge production centres of the international supermonopolies.

If the working class wants to 'influence affairs of state' (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 113), it must overthrow the power of the ruling monopolies in its own country and fight jointly with its international class brothers for the victory of the international socialist revolution.

Liberation from exploitation and oppression requires the working class to overcome the system of wage labour as well as the bourgeois family system. The working class can only liberate itself from the exploitation of wage labour if women, too, liberate themselves - and vice versa.

Class-conscious workers today must understand that the solution of the social question is most closely linked with the solution of the ecological question, with the struggle against the threatening environmental catastrophe. The ruthless exploitation of

humans and nature has become an essential characteristic of the imperialist world order and can only be overcome together with imperialism. Only a socialist/communist society can maintain the unity of humanity and nature and continuously advance it.

However, the struggle for socialism/communism today, more than ever, requires the working class to embrace the historical lessons from the revisionist betrayal of socialism and the restoration of capitalism in absolutely all formerly socialist countries.

For this purpose, it must come to grips with the social system of the petty-bourgeois mode of thinking, which the international monopolies have organized in a comprehensive way today as new method of rule. Above all, the working class must successfully cope with modern anticommunism, which robs the working-class movement of any perspective beyond the exploitative capitalist society, hinders it from developing and unfolding its potential, and seeks to oppress it.

In 2012, 35 percent of the respondents of a survey considered the environmental problem 'the most important problem in Germany' (Federal Environment Agency, 'Umweltbewusstsein in Deutschland 2012,' p. 18). In 2002 it was only 14 percent. This **environmental consciousness of the masses** is becoming increasingly immune to the official government propaganda.⁴¹

"Marxist-Leninists are committed to a broad, independent and **militant environmental movement on an antifascist basis**. It should comprise the masses of people concerned about the environment along with increasing numbers of workers from the factories. Environmental consciousness develops best on the basis of struggle. Active resistance against the threatening global environmental catastrophe then can become a **school for preparing and carrying out the international revolution**."⁴²

Above we had to cite Engel in a detailed way because we wanted to show how much Engel's position and MLPD have in common. The real problem here lies in the general position of MLPD: The basic features of this position are as follows:

-Struggle for the sake of way of thinking

-Invention of a new phase in the development of the imperialism

-The assertion that "*they* [supermonopolies] have established their dictatorship over all of society, including the weaker monopolies and the non-monopoly bourgeoisie".

MLPD drew this conclusion from these basic features: "**Marxist-Leninists are committed to a broad, independent and militant environmental movement on an antifascist basis**."

MLPD proposes an environmental movement, which targets only "*international supermonopolies*" rather than an environmental movement **based on anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist** struggle! What MLPD proposes is exactly an alliance in which weaker monopolies and non-monopoly bourgeoisie take place! The only requirement is to be challenging and to be anti-fascist! This is MLPD's alliance

proposal for the environmental issue to Marxist-Leninists. So, what is the genuine task for Marxist-Leninists?

Before anything our duty is to raise a communist environmental consciousness among workers on the way to the establishing Marxist-Leninist parties. However, MLPD's proposal only disguises the theory of state monopoly capitalism (Stamokap) with these ridiculous alliances.

6. An Environmental Union as an Organization of Environmental Movement based on Anti-Fascist Struggle?

In "Catastrophe Alert!" an "**environmental union**" is proposed as an organization for the environmental movement. To understand the line of thought of Stefan Engel we give below another long citation from the book:

*"Action groups usually are organized for a limited time and concentrate on one problem or a few problems. This may be useful to involve more of the directly affected people in the activities and to formulate more specific goals. What is decisive, however, is a **new quality of environmental consciousness** and lasting forms of organization, which contribute to building up a **force superior to international finance capital**. If a strong, fighting national environmental organization can be created, it can cooperate and coordinate its activities with the internationally organized environmental movement. This will increase the possibilities for small initiatives active within it to do effective educational work and wage struggles. That in turn will strengthen the confidence urgently needed to avert the catastrophe.*

*At the Second International Environmental Counsel in October 2011 the proposal first came up to build a democratic and financially independent **environmental union** above party lines in Germany. Unions traditionally are class organizations in which working people unite to defend their elementary interests and improve the conditions of their lives. Unions stand for organization and joint struggle.*

An environmental union can become a significant step forward in the environmental struggle of the masses because essential elements of the necessary self-transformation are contained within it. Such an environmental union

- *Must target those mainly responsible, international finance capital and the bourgeois states, and must not allow itself to be taken in by imperialist environmentalism. With the international industrial proletariat, it must organize the force, which is destined to become the main force in the environmental struggle.*
- *Can unite more and more of the splintered environmental activists in a unified organization that has a strong clout.*
- *Enables the workers organized in it to join forces with all strata of the population and with the people who are already active in the environmental field to form a broad alliance.*
- *Educates its members and the interested public about the complexity of the environmental problems and the necessary environmental struggle and raises a bulwark against petty bourgeois and imperialist environmentalism.*

- Can organize youth, with its special interest in a future worth living in, as most active force.
- Will be a strong fighting organization, which adopts forms of struggle common to the working-class movement and uses them to assert its demands.
- Includes the goal of socialism as an integral and equal part of the union movement in its work. It encourages discussion of a societal alternative, but does not require members to declare themselves adherents of a certain program and does not exclude members who fight for a socialist future.

Such an environmental union will not become **competition or the industrial unions or other unions of the German Trade Union Federation (DGB)** [Confederation of German Trade Unions], because its field of activity is not mainly the wage and working conditions of the wage and salary earners. When interests coincide, as in the struggle against environmentally harmful substances in production or against unhealthy working conditions, the environmental union will seek **cooperation** with the industrial unions **on the basis of joint struggle.**⁴³

What is the most urgent task of Marxist-Leninists for the environmental issue? This task is to raise consciousness of the agents of a proletarian world revolution, that is to say, subjects of the working class and the oppressed people. Our duty is to introduce the environmental problem as survival of humanity into the programmes of all the organizations of the proletariat and the oppressed people, communist parties and organizations, unions, anti-imperialist front organizations and cooperatives. For communists, struggles for wage and working conditions (unions), socialism and people's democracy (political parties) and environment are not separate struggles but rather one and the same. If class-conscious proletariat considers these struggles as a part of its own class struggle, then it can defeat imperialism.

Rather than struggling to include this issue in their programme as in the struggle for wage and working conditions, creating a particular "environmental union" which considers the struggle against the destruction of the natural foundations of humanity as its most important task is totally wrong. We must admit that to give up in the face of a difficult task is to take the easy way out. The idea of establishing an environmental union, which is independent of workers' existing organizations, is related to this false politics of alliance that relies on "weaker monopolies and non-monopoly bourgeoisie".

When it comes to petty-bourgeois environmental movement, which we can make alliance regarding some concrete points, there is no reason at all to create "an environmental union" that can only divide the already weak union movement and that can make it even weaker. There are already so many environmental organizations such as BUND and Greenpeace in which we can work and disseminate communist ideas. Under the current conditions, an environmental organization

founded by MLPD will be another "mass organization without masses" in which there are only people who are close to it.

7. Against Whom and with Whom? A New Strategy!

In the "programme for a struggle against an environmental disaster" presented in "Catastrophe Alert!" these are the proposals:

"Solely the dictatorship of international finance capital stands in the way of effective environmental protection and the saving of humanity from an environmental catastrophe. Active environmental protection in struggle against the profit system! Elimination of environmental damage at the expense of those who cause it! Active worldwide resistance against the threatening global environmental catastrophe! Struggle for a socialist society in which the unity of humanity and nature is society's guiding principle!"⁴⁴

For MLPD, the only and unique enemy in the fight against the destruction of environment is **solely ruling international finance capital**. Neither imperialism as a system, nor capitalism in general, but rather international finance capital is the only and unique enemy! *"Weaker monopolies and non-monopoly bourgeoisie"* are the new allies of MLPD's international socialist revolution!

After *"his meticulous researches"* it is not possible for Engel not to know that some dirty job of stronger monopolies (such as transport, storage and garbage disposal systems) is carried out by *"weaker monopolies and non-monopoly bourgeoisie"* that they are the sources of the problem itself and that they even pose real threats to the environment. It is the entire establishment of the capitalist-imperialist economical system that prevents an effective protection of the environment and it is not solely ruling international finance capital that is responsible for the destruction of the environment.

This so called *"solely ruling international finance capital"* and sectors of bourgeoisie that do not fall under this category are simply ruled out. We remember this line of thinking from the supporters of Stamokap and theoreticians of third world!

Now let's take a look at **revolutionary forces** of the international socialist revolution.

These remarks are taken from "Catastrophe Alert":

*"The **leading force in the international revolution** to resolve the environmental issue in socialism/communism are the industrial workers in the centres of international production - the international industrial proletariat."⁴⁵*

Let's pay attention to this point: According to MLPD, the leading force in the international revolution is **no longer the international working class**, but rather **"international industrial proletariat"**. We know how Engel defines this interna-

44 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 265

45 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 266

tional industrial proletariat. According to his book called "Dawn" there are 400-500 million international industrial workers:

"Permanent workers of the 500 biggest international monopolies among International Production Associates tripled from 1990 to 2009 by raising from 37,2 to 108,8 million. To this, those who work in independent companies, 20 million subcontracted workers and some of the 214 million immigrant workers have been added. Thus, in 2010, 400-500 million man-woman workers belong to the international industrial proletariat".⁴⁶

If we want to answer to the questions such as which classes will participate in "international socialist revolution" and which classes will lead the revolution, here is the Marxist-Leninist answer: international working class. To say that only one part of this class will lead the revolution means not to understand that this class does not have the private property over the means of production, must sell its labour power in order to survive and has to distinguish itself from the other exploited classes.

These features make the working class the most revolutionary class of the "modern" capitalist society and assign the task of leading the revolution against the capitalist class as a whole.

It is not a surprise that Communist Manifest ends with this sentence: "*Workers of the world unite!*". Please pay attention: not the "*industrial workers of the world*" or the "*industrial workers of the biggest businesses!*".

In the time of Marx, Lenin, Stalin and Mao, the international working class was not a homogeneous mass, but rather consisted of many different sectors: industrial workers, transportation workers, construction workers, agricultural workers, workers in the service sectors and so on. There were also differences between men and women workers. Among the industrial workers, there were those workers who worked under more difficult conditions such as mine workers and high oven workers. There were workers who worked in big, middle and small businesses. Their working conditions were slightly different. Nevertheless, nobody thought to assign the task of the leading world proletarian revolution to only this part of the working class. The problem of leadership of a class is not a tactical problem. Communists from every country can focus on the questions such as which parts of the working class is better to work with and can find concrete answers. Yet, this does not lead to the conclusion that the proletariat can transfer its leadership to a specific part of it.

By choosing a very small part of the class as the global leader of the revolution, MLPD abandons Marxism-Leninism in this matter. The international working class is far bigger than MLPD's international industrial proletariat; proletariat comprises more 700 million workers in China.

In addition, concretely speaking this part of the global proletariat, which is chosen as leading force by MLPD, is not a leading force at all in current class struggles. In almost all countries, this part of the proletariat is in the best position in terms of

living conditions.

In Marxist-Leninist theory, the leading force in the history of world revolution, the international working class is not totally forgotten by MLPD. The international working class is assigned the task of being the main force in an international socialist revolution. "Catastrophe Alert" argues that:

*"The **main force is the international working class**, which cannot become a superior force and defeat powerful imperialism alone."⁴⁷*

According to MLPD, leading force is the international industrial proletariat. The international working class is the main force.

In the strategy of the proletarian world revolution, the international working class is the leading class of revolutions: the main force of the world revolution consists of the exploited and the oppressed masses comprising the majority of the working population in the world and the oppressed people.

For this reason, the main motto of Marxist-Leninist global strategy is **"Workers of the world and the oppressed people unite!"**

In the new strategy of MLPD, leadership of the world proletariat is given to one sector of the world proletariat. Moreover, new methods are proposed in making new alliances. In the strategy of the proletarian world revolution, **main alliance** is the alliance the international working class made with the oppressed people. This means that the two mainstreams of the world proletarian revolution (socialist revolutions in the developed capitalist countries and new-democratic revolutions in the countries depended on imperialism) are united under one mainstream.

Here is how Engel "develops" the strategy of the Marxist-Leninist world revolution: *It [which is main force under the leadership of international industrial proletariat] must enter into **a firm alliance with all those oppressed** by the imperialist system of rule: **with nationally oppressed peoples, with the millions of fighters against political, cultural, religious and sexual oppression, with the billions of doubly exploited and oppressed women in all countries of the world, with rebellious youth, with the millions who make a stand against hunger, malnutrition and impoverishment. The largest group of oppressed in future will be the masses of people who confront the threatening global environmental catastrophe.***

*To create the broad alliance necessary today, the MLPD has supplemented the class slogan of the Communist Manifesto - "Workers of all countries unite!" - with the new strategic alliance slogan: **"Workers of all countries and all oppressed, unite!"***⁴⁸

In plain terms; the struggle of the nationally oppressed people, which has hitherto been considered as the main ally, is made equal with the other struggles against all kinds of oppression.

On the pretext of a "supplement", the hitherto strategic motto of the world prole-

47 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 266

48 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 280

tarian revolution, "*Workers of the world and the oppressed people, unite!*" is replaced by a new strategic motto: "*Workers of all countries and all oppressed, unite!*"

Over some current debates, MLPD seems to have changed its position and has argued that it did not wish to change the motto "*Workers of the world and the oppressed people, unite!*" but rather "just" to supplement it with a new motto. However, this explanation does not comply with the position of "Catastrophe Alert". As it was in the past, today world proletarian revolution is made to proceed by two revolutionary streams- even though it proceeds very slowly and there are some returns. The struggle of the working class for socialism and the struggle of the oppressed people for independence, democracy and freedom...

All other struggles are either integrated into the revolutionary struggles or they are struggles within the system, reformist struggles.

The duty is to subsume these other struggles under the two revolutionary streams and not to follow them!

We can also say this about the new strategic motto of MLPD: it is not something new to confuse the category of "the oppressed" with every kind of oppression and to create a new revolutionary subject out of these oppressed. The so-called new positions regarding "Multitudes" which are accepted as a "new revolutionary subject" in globalization theory are precursors of this attitude. "Multitude" was introduced as a concept to define all the marginalized and the oppressed of the world without any class differences and make all those a new revolutionary subject. Engel translated the concept of multitude into German as "*all oppressed*". This is his "innovation". (See Negri/Hardt)

8. Non-Self-critical attitude regarding Environmental politics in Soviet Union and especially in China

The most important effort made, and the longest time spent for the construction of a socialist society was seen in the **Soviet Union**. This period lasted from 1917 until mid-1950s. Political power was in the hands of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the aim was to establish socialism, which is a precondition for state power to be defined as a dictatorship of the proletariat. Since CPSU's 20th party congress in 1956 in which modern revisionists plainly declared their hegemony, we can no longer speak about socialism or socialist construction in USSR.

Socialist period lasted 35-40 years. 4 years of civil war and 6 years of world war must be removed from this calculation because during these turbulent years the only dictatorship of the proletariat in the world was struggling to survive.

Apart from Soviet Union, there were other states, which defined themselves as socialist. We shall now speak about those who see their organizations as Marxist-Leninist and those who are considered socialist by revolutionary organizations.

People's Republic of China (PRC) was established as a people's democracy. Rather than a dictatorship of the proletariat, people's dictatorship, which consisted of a worker-peasant-petty bourgeois-national bourgeois coalition, was the political

power. Communist Party of China (CPC) was the leading force of the proletariat. A shared hegemony of many classes was declared as "socialist" in China since mid-1950s. In 1960s newly emerged global Marxist-Leninist movement (including us) inspired by the thoughts of Mao Zedong contributed to this propaganda. According to our analysis (see: Turkish edit: "Mao Zedong ve Çin Devrimi", Dönüşüm Yayınları, Ocak 1993 İstanbul), apart from the period during which the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966-1969) was introduced, there was no socialist revolution or socialist construction in China. In PRC there was no state power through which proletariat ruled alone without sharing its power with another class, which is a precondition for socialism. We can nevertheless refer to the conditions created for socialism (for example, monopolist state capitalism which can create better conditions for socialism as Lenin suggested) but we cannot say that this was socialism.

On People's Socialist Republic of Albania: This republic was established as a people's democratic power after an anti-fascist independent war under the leadership of the Party of Labour of Albania which concealed itself within the Democratic Front. After People's Socialist Republic of Albania was established, Communist Party of Albania replaced its name with Party of Labour of Albania. The party claimed that "*People's democratic order was a dictatorship of the proletariat*".⁴⁹ However, it was a kind of dictatorship of the proletariat that people were not aware that it was a dictatorship of the proletariat! In the first constitution of this people's democracy, neither the dictatorship of the proletariat nor socialism was ever mentioned. In fact, the PLA was alone in power. If we consider PLA as a party of the Albanian proletariat then we can talk about a "clandestine" dictatorship of the proletariat. Yet if we think of the strategy of the Communist Party, it is still controversial to judge whether there was a socialist construction and whether the objective/material conditions were available in the least developed country in Europe. In countries such as Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, North Korea that are considered socialist by bourgeois, many revolutionaries and partly by us, no dictatorship of the proletariat was established.

This is how we understand historical events. In this sense, we do not have too much experience regarding the construction of socialism, which is the very first step to arrive at global proletarian revolution. Despite that, the historical experiences are our treasure through which we can and have to learn a lot. When we are scientific, objective and self-critical (in two senses of self-critical: first, these are the experiences of a global communist movement of which we are a part, their mistakes are our mistakes. Second, how we have evaluated mistakes and gains of our precursors until now) only then we can obtain desired results for the future. Even though plain mistakes are revealed by counter revolutionary campaigns we should not ignore but face these mistakes.

49 German edit: Party of Labour of Albania- History p. 296, Tirana, 1971

Our mentor Lenin remarks over this matter:

"One more word to the opponents of Social-Democracy. They gloat and grimace over our disputes; they will, of course, try to pick isolated passages from my pamphlet, which deals with the failings and shortcomings of our Party, and to use them for their own ends. The Russian Social-Democrats are already steeled enough in battle not to be perturbed by these pinpricks and to continue, in spite of them, their work of self-criticism and ruthless exposure of their own shortcomings, which will unquestionably and inevitably be overcome as the working-class movement grows"⁵⁰.

Now what follows are our remarks on political attitudes suggested between 1917-1956 in Soviet Union and between 1949-1976 in China:

* Neither the party programme of Communist Party of Soviet Unions nor Chinese Communist Party had a political stance or a task to be accomplished regarding the environmental problem. In this sense, the environmental issues did not exist for them!

The issue did not exist even though Marx and Engels produced very short but important evaluations on this matter.

* There are not any statements on the issue in the political documents and congress reports of both Communist Party of Soviet Unions and Chinese Communist Party. The environmental issue was not addressed as an important aspect of socialist economy in the central party documents.

* The environmental issue was not even handled in the documents of Soviet Union and Chinese governments. However, Chinese government made a statement long after the report of the Club of Rome when bourgeoisie of imperialist countries tackled the problem.

In addition, we argue that:

There were not any particular positions or policy at all concerning the environmental issue in joint programmatic documents of global communist movement, which was the 1928 programme of Communist International, 1957 and 1960 joint declarations issued by global communist movement and revisionists and 1963 documents of Great Polemics by Chinese Communist Party!

Every communist should come to this conclusion: communist parties did not take a leading part in the environmental problem. When petty bourgeois and bourgeois environmental movement appeared in some imperialist countries communists showed little and it was too late.

We, all the global communist movement, each communist party, the countries of socialism and people's democracy could not see the importance of the environmental problem in the struggle against imperialism. This is a **huge mistake** that we have to state in a **self-critical manner**.

There are of course some reasons for this mistake:

-Destruction of the natural resources was not easy to detect in that period.
-Both Soviet Union and people's democracies had very different problems and priorities. As the only dictatorship of the proletariat, Soviet Union had to protect itself and survive imperialist attacks. It was vital for Soviet Union to develop a strong economy as soon as possible. Big projects that can create conditions for industrialization were of great importance. A new start after the world war was a necessary step. All countries were ruined and devastated. The most urgent task in China and Albania was to struggle against hunger crisis. All these explanations do not remove our mistakes, but we must see relative importance of the problems. We need to accept that these are all our mistakes, yet we need to bear in mind the conditions of the historical context in which these mistakes were made. This is the right way to approach the problems.

The mistakes made by Marxist-Leninists during 1960s-1970s-1980s emerged out of their contempt for the issue at a time when the results of the destruction of the nature was first realized and when the bourgeoisie in the imperialist countries had to deal with it. These mistakes are heavier than the mistakes made between 1917-1956 in the Communist Party of Soviet Union and 1949-1976 in Chinese Communist Party.

Why did Global Communist Movement and we make these mistakes? And why did we leave the leading role to bourgeoisie? Simply because of this: people's war was about to achieve a victory at the global level. The oppressed people in Asia-Africa-Latin America were on the way to the victory through revolutions. Socialism was moving towards a global victory and imperialism was declining. We were living not in the age of imperialism but in a new age.

In his book called *"Long Live the Victory of People's War"*, Lin Biao who was considered as the closest comrade and successor of Comrade Mao Zedong in the **guideline of Chinese Communist Party** issued in the 9.th Congress of Communist Party remarks over this issue:

"Ours is the epoch in which world capitalism and imperialism are heading for their doom and socialism and communism are marching to victory. Comrade Mao Tse-tung's theory of people's war is not only a product of the Chinese revolution, but has also the characteristics of our epoch"...

He goes on:

"At present, the main battlefield of the fierce struggle between the people of the world on one side and U.S. imperialism and its lackeys on the other is the vast area of Asia, Africa and Latin America. In the world as a whole, this is the area where the people suffer worst from imperialist oppression and where imperialist rule is most vulnerable. Since World War II, revolutionary storms have been rising in this area, and today they have become the most important force directly pounding U.S. imperialism. The contradiction between the revolutionary peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America and the imperialists headed by the United States is the principal contradiction in the contemporary world. The development of this contradiction is promoting the struggle

of the people of the whole world against U.S. imperialism and its lackeys".⁵¹

In the foreword to the second edition of The Red Book, which was the most important book for us for a period, Lin Biao argued:

"Comrade Mao Tse-tung is the greatest Marxist-Leninist of our era. He has inherited, defended and developed Marxism-Leninism with genius, creatively and comprehensively and has brought it to a higher and completely new stage.

*Mao Tse-tung's thought is Marxism-Leninism of the era in which **imperialism is heading for total collapse and socialism is advancing to world-wide victory**".*⁵²

These were the theses that we defended through a newly emerged global Marxist-Leninist movement against Khrushchev revisionists. The revolution was marching forward everywhere and imperialism, which was reduced to the U.S.A, was heading for total collapse. We did not have time to deal with irrelevant issues. When the first report of the Club of Rome was revealed, and environmental movement began to flourish we thought that this was introduced by imperialists to prevent us from class struggles and revolutions.

Anybody who read the documents of Marxist-Leninist parties and organizations published in late 1960s and early 1970s can find out this: The environmental issue was not considered as one of the most important issues of a global proletarian revolution. Part of the reason why we ignored this issue is that we followed the line of thought of Mao Zedong.

So, what do Stefan Engel and MLPD say in "Catastrophe Alert!" about this issue. Let's take it in its context.

* "A **fundamental standard for socialism** as society in transition to communism is whether the consistent guideline is to overcome the **estrangement of man from labour and from nature** and to improve the unity of humanity and nature".⁵³

Comment: All true!

* "The two most important socialist countries in the history of humankind so far were the socialist Soviet Union from 1917 until 1956 and the People's Republic of China from 1949 until 1976. Bourgeois historiography and petty-bourgeois critics of socialism meanwhile acknowledge to a large extent – though reluctantly – the indisputably tremendous achievements in building the economy of both countries".⁵⁴

Comment: This is partly true. It is wrong to say that People's Republic of China was socialist in 1949. Even Mao Zedong did not consider this until 1956!

* "As far as the handling of the environmental issue is concerned, however, mainly the socialist Soviet Union is blamed for crass ignorance and incompetence, and in the worst cases even is made chiefly responsible for the threatening global environmental

51 Lin Biao, "Long Live the Victory of People's War", Foreign Language Press, 1965

52 "Quotations of Chairman Mao Tse-Tung", 2.th Edit., 1965, emphasis is ours.

53 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 268

54 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 268

*catastrophe. **Passed off as ecology-minded**, the falsification of history has become a major domain of modern anti-Communist propaganda”⁵⁵*

Comment: Falsification of history is true in the sense that

a) All the blame was put on Soviet Union and people’s democratic states and damages done to the nature by imperialists is more dangerous

b) Imperialists’ pretension that they carried out a better environmental policy

** “In connection with the displacing of the environmental issue on the theoretical level in the international Marxist-Leninist and working-class movement, to a large extent there has been a failure to this day to recognize that in many fields the **socialist Soviet Union** often **pioneered a ground-breaking environmental policy**”⁵⁶*

Comment: The claim that in many fields the socialist Soviet Union often ‘pioneered a ground-breaking environmental policy’ is wrong. This claim disseminates the idea that Soviet Union carried out a well-organized environmental policy. This is totally wrong, and represents an example of the falsification of history. Even Marxist-Leninist movement that was reshaped in 1960s-1970s could not develop any policy regarding the environmental issue.

** “Lenin’s remark gained fame the world over: Communism is Soviet power plus the electrification of the whole country. (“Our Foreign and Domestic Positions and the Tasks of the Party,” in: Lenin, **Collected Works**, Vol. 31, p. 419)”⁵⁷*

Comment: Does Lenin’s remark really have something to do with **a ground-breaking environmental policy**? Lenin is just informing us on the concrete situation after three years in power and on the tasks of the party and the proletarian state. What matters here is survival of a single proletarian party that was surrounded by the entire world. What matters here is to prevent people from starvation. Lenin was here focusing on the forthcoming Congress of Soviets whose main topic was “the issue of economical construction”. In the speech on the electrification of the country that was prepared for this congress, he remarks that: “Communism is Soviet power plus the electrification of the whole country, since industry cannot be developed without electrification”. (Ibid)

Electrification is not the only issue here, industry must be immediately developed in the most efficient manner in order to create economic conditions of the socialist construction. Lenin’s remarks are related to these issues! In this period, the environmental problems did not play any role at all. In fact, this would be an unrealistic expectation.

** “It is especially noteworthy that the electrification of this huge country was **largely based on waterpower, that is to say renewable energy**. Electrification thus brought multiple benefits: It served the construction of power plants, irrigation and*

55 Engel, “Catastrophe”, p. 268

56 Engel, “Catastrophe”, p. 269

57 Engel, “Catastrophe”, p. 269

the development of previously barren areas for agricultural use. It enabled shipping and furthered strategic measures for national defence, which proved extremely beneficial later in the Great Patriotic War. Last but not least it was connected with developing local recreation areas for the masses. This demonstrated in practice how **under socialist conditions, with strict adherence to socialist principles, economy and ecology can constitute an inseparable unity**.⁵⁸

Comment: What Engel does here is just to absorb a future, conscious environmental policy into an economic policy that was developed, justified and applied based on inevitable economic point of views of the period. The fact that the electrification was based on waterpower, that is to say renewable energy has nothing to do with a conscious environmental policy.

For the early Soviet power, it was quite natural to establish hydroelectric power plants in order to immediately achieve electrification in the most efficient manner, which was necessary to develop heavy industry, because the country provided ample opportunities to build huge hydroelectric power plants. Using rivers as a power resource was **economically cheaper and more productive**. Nothing can be seen in Lenin's and Stalin's writings or in CPSU's documents to justify the use of waterpower as more ecological and environment-friendly and thus better than other resources to provide energy.

By endorsing Soviet Union's "*ground-breaking environmental policy*" "*Catastrophe Alert!*" credits a conscious environmental policy to the Soviet Union which unfortunately did not exist. However, we should come to terms with the factual conditions and say that another policy was neither possible nor necessary at that time. This was the only way to establish socialism in a country under those conditions of the Soviet Union. "*Catastrophe Alert!*" just overrates this policy.

Immediately after an evidence is introduced by MLPD based on an American scientist:

* "*In 2010, Stephen Brain, a US scholar from Mississippi State University, published a remarkable article under the title "Stalin's Environmentalism." He described how the Soviet leadership saved enormous forest areas from destruction in the struggle against petty-bourgeois bureaucrats*".⁵⁹

"*In view of such facts, Stephen Brain explicitly contradicts the "consensus" among bourgeois scholars until now "which holds that Stalin's government was implacably hostile to environmentalist initiatives. Instead, his research came to the conclusion:*

"*Environmentalism survived - and even thrived - in Stalin's Soviet Union, establishing levels of protection unparalleled anywhere in the world, although for only one component of the Soviet environment: the immense forests of the Russian heartland (ibid. p. 93, MLPD's translation)*".⁶⁰

Comment: since this position complies with the thesis -at least part of the thesis-

58 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 271

59 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 271

60 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 273

of "ground-breaking environmental policy" attributed to the Soviet Union, Brain's argument is taken for granted without questioning. Under Stalin administration, *enormous forest areas of the Russian central soils* were saved! Question: How was this saving justified? What arguments were introduced? If forestry plays a significant role in a country and saving forests is more effective and productive for economy in long term without destroying all the trees of this forest, then the reason of non-protection of these forests is economic rather than ecological. If we claim that Stalin's environmental policy provides an example for a socialist environmental policy, how can we then name forest policies of Canada or Norway? Is this also an environmental policy?

Mr Brain's evidence ends up with a "ground-breaking forest policy" for MLPD. (In the meantime, Mr Brain deliberately speaks about an environmental policy which is restricted to the forests of the Russian central soils. Does MLPD agree with that?)

* *"This groundbreaking **forestry policy** was no isolated case, however - contrary to what Brain thought. The socialist Soviet Union realized a remarkable, many-sided policy of environmental protection, carried out in huge projects as well as by individual measures:*

***Shelterbelts** were created all over the country that protected fields and meadows from sandstorms."*⁶¹

Comment: Struggle against soil erosion is a necessity in every economy. It is not a conscious environmental policy. Bourgeois governments struggle against soil erosion as well.

* *"Extensive irrigation systems supported agriculture and enabled the greening of arid areas." (P. 273)*

Comment: Is this one a conscious environmental policy? Then all the developed countries carried out a socialist environmental policy.

* *"Nationwide, the 'travopolnaya' system (**grassland farming system**) supported farming without artificial fertilizers, insecticides and pesticides."*⁶²

Comment: It was a rare practice not to use artificial fertilizer insecticides and pesticides in the USSR. The aim was **to get maximum product out of each hectare**. One cannot get this without using these materials. In the Textbook on Political Economy, environmental issue and ecology play no role in the chapters related to socialist economy and the second chapter!

The book called "40 Years of Soviet Power: In Facts and Figures" shows "success story" regarding "mineral fertilizer in agriculture". Under Czardom in 1913 use of artificial fertilizer was approximately 1000 ton. During the dictatorship of the

61 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 273

62 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 273

proletariat it rose from 234 000 ton in 1928 to 9 426 000 ton in 1956.

* *"With the Metro underground, a groundbreaking **transportation system** beneficial to the environment was set up in the major cities Moscow and Leningrad; the stops were simultaneously cultural sites for the masses."*⁶³

Comment: Paris subway and Berlin underground railway were established in early 20th century! Was the Moscow subway constructed by observing ecological point of views? For us, subways in Moscow and Petrograd have nothing to do with environmental protection.

* *"Water management **legislation** ensured access to the banks and shores of all natural bodies of water for everybody"*⁶⁴

Comment: If there was no such legislation in a country that defines itself as socialist then it would be funny. Moreover, this has nothing to do with a conscious environmental policy.

* *"A remarkable law from the time of Stalin was helpful even in the 1990s to **save the Amur tiger** in Siberia. Environmentalists of the WWF were able to make use of the forgotten, but still valid law for their rescue measures, which had become necessary again."*⁶⁵

Comment: This is what remains from a pioneering model in the history of environmental policies: a law that was introduced in Stalin's period and reclaimed by environmentalists from WWF who saved the Amur tiger through this law!

* *"The **Vavilov Institute** established in 1926 in Leningrad contains seeds of more than 330,000 species of crop and wild plants. This collection is unique worldwide and has become still more important today for preserving biodiversity."*⁶⁶

Comment: Vavilov Institute is really a 'pioneering work' in the world historical sense. Established by prof. Vavilov, the institute was the first gene-bank for domestic plants and wild plants. Nevertheless, when we speak about Stalin's successful environmental policy and when we give Vavilov Institute as a positive example we also have to add that Vavilov's doctrine of genetical heredity of plants' features was accused of being a bourgeois science by his pupil, Trofim D. Lyssenko. He was arrested because of Lyssenko's charges and received death penalty. Yet his penalty was replaced with 20 years prison sentence. He died in 1943 in prison. It is a shameful story.

According to the author of "Catastrophe Alert!" these were all pioneering works in the world history.

63 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 273

64 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 273

65 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 273-274

66 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 274

The book "Catastrophe Alert!" goes on to say:

*"However, new ground that is stony or even mined is never captured without stumbling. There were also considerable problems and **misdirected developments in the environmental policy** of the socialist Soviet Union. They resulted mainly from the tremendous pressure to which socialist construction was subjected, but also from a lack of historical experience and knowledge of the more remote ecological effects that far-reaching transformations of nature will have. In the socialist Soviet Union it was, after all, the first time ever that the formerly oppressed workers and peasants undertook to build their own society.*

*Mistakes were facilitated moreover by the influence of **petty-bourgeois bureaucrats** in the leadership of party, state and economy, who tended to disregard the principles of socialist construction. Lenin already waged a bitter struggle against them.*

*Not always did the Soviet Union pay enough attention to this class struggle in socialism - an effect of the **displacement of the environmental issue** from the ideology and politics of the revolutionary working-class movement.*

*As a result **bureaucratic-centralistic tendencies** could manifest themselves in the form of a one-sided focus on centralistic large-scale projects. In many places, industrial and residential areas were built up overnight and later faced enormous environmental problems. As a tendency, the accelerated industrial construction disregarded environmental consequences.*

Ideological disputes over socialist environmental policies

*After Lenin's death in 1924, **theoretical work on the broad guidelines of the socialist planned economy** also tended to ignore the problem of the fundamental unity of humanity and nature. The Political Economy, A Textbook of 1954 states:*

"Socialist planning is built on strictly scientific foundations. Managing the national economy in a planned way means to anticipate. Scientific foresight is based on knowledge of objective economic laws and starts from the needs of development in the material life of society, which have matured. The principal prerequisite for the correct planning of socialist economy is that the law of planned development of the national economy must be mastered and skillfully put to use. ("The Law of Planned [Proportional] Development of the National Economy," p. 477; author's translation from German)

This position ignores the necessity to consciously realize the guiding principle of the unity of humanity and nature. It cherishes the illusion as though infinite growth processes could be organized in a socialist planned economy by subjugating humans and nature to the plans of the state.

How this position influenced the theoretical views in the socialist Soviet Union becomes evident in the opinion which Gleb Maximilianovich Krzhizhanovsky, head of the Soviet State Planning Commission, expressed to scientists in 1932:

*The tremendous object lesson provided today by Soviet power through its economic and political construction reveals new secrets through which a development of the world economy without crisis is secured under the conditions of a magnificent **advancement towards ever greater material abundance, of an increasingly***

stronger subjugation of the elemental forces, things and people to the scientifically well-thought-out socialist plan. ("The Foundations of the Technical and Economic Reconstruction Plan of the Soviet Union," www.politische-oekonomie.org, download 10 July 2013, p. 2; author's emphasis; translation from German)

While Marx and Engels spoke of "mastering" the laws of nature, Krzhizhanovsky demanded the "subjugation of the elemental forces ... and people" to the goals of economic development. However, socialism/communism means on the contrary to overcome the powerless relationship of the worker to production and the products, inherited from capitalism. Only in socialism can the working class master the laws of nature and of society increasingly better and so achieve "oneness with nature" again ("Dialectics of Nature," in: Marx/Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 461). Socialist planning serves humankind and its ever-higher unity with nature - and not the other way around.

Contrary to the idealist view of subjugating nature to the plan and labour of humans, Marx emphasized the materialist position. Natural factors allow humans the scope to change nature, for instance to shape natural materials into new forms.

This is why at the end of the 1930s an important critical and self-critical **debate about megalomania** started in the CPSU(B). At the Eighteenth Party Congress in 1939, V. M. Molotov, then Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, therefore head of the government of the USSR, pointed out during the discussion of the Third Five-Year-Plan: "The plan requires the firm discouragement of **megalomania** in construction, which has become a positive obsession with a number of our executives; it requires the steady transition to the building of medium and small industrial units in all branches of the national economy, starting with electric power stations. This is necessary for the purpose of speeding up our rates of construction, so that new plants can be put into operation at the earliest possible date, and distributed over the principal economic districts of the country. Small and medium-sized electric power stations must come into vogue." (*The Land of Socialism Today and Tomorrow. Reports and Speeches at the Eighteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks)*, March 10-21, 1939, p. 136; author's emphasis)

The theoretical foundation of megalomania was an influence of the petty-bourgeois idealist world outlook. **Trotsky** was one of the forefathers of the theories of "improvements" in nature and of the **limitless ability to transform the laws of nature**: mankind... will become accustomed to look at the world as submissive clay for sculpting the most perfect forms of life.... Man will occupy himself with re-registering mountains and rivers, and will earnestly and repeatedly make improvements in nature. (Leon Trotsky, **Literature and Revolution**, Chapter 8: Revolutionary and Socialist Art, www.marxists.org)

The debate about megalomania was interrupted out of necessity. All forces had to be concentrated to prepare the country for the battle against Hitlerite fascism. Socialism could be defended only if power generation and industrial production were significantly increased. This required drastic measures and a gigantic exertion of all

forces, which the Soviet workers and peasants achieved to defeat the fascists."⁶⁷

Comment: The above statements and the partial criticism lead to this: Ecology played no important role at all in all the debates. The main concern was economy. When they saw it economically necessary they started to protect nature. This is all what had happened. Environmental policies after the Second World War are debated in this way in "Catastrophe Alert!":

*"Even in this highly tense situation, socialist construction continued to follow the established **environmental basic policy lines.***

[Actually, there were not such basic policy lines. There was not any particular decision regarding the environmental issue. BP] *Decisions of the USSR Council of Ministers of October 1948 called for the planting of extensive shelterbelts to protect the fields, the introduction of travopolnaya crop rotation nationwide for farming without pesticides, and the building of ponds and reservoirs in the steppes and forest-steppes of the European USSR. Just two years later it could be reported the at the large-scale plans were over-accomplished:*

In the arid regions of the European USSR 1.3 million hectares of new forests already have been planted.... It is well known that, according to this state plan, forest belts for the protection of fields were planted with a total length of 5,320 km and the at forests were also planted on fields of collective and state farms on a total area of 5,709,000 hectares. (Press release of ADN, 25 October 1950, Soviet People Master the Forces of Nature, Dietz Verlag, Berlin 1951, p. 19)"⁶⁸

Comment: All true. Soviet peoples' relation with nature was a relation of "mastery"! It is wrong to defend this relation with nature as a justified "basic policy" and it also contradicts with the half-reluctant criticism towards the mistakes made.

"During those years, at the same time a gigantic shortage of energy developed in connection with the reconstruction of towns and industries, the construction of new towns and industries, the mechanization of agriculture and the over fulfilment of the plans for economic construction. Between 1946 and 1950 alone, the demand for electricity in the Soviet Union doubled to 65.2 billion kilowatt-hours.

A growing number of economic leaders then called for reducing the share of hydropower and increasingly relying on coal, oil and natural gas (later also on nuclear power). However, the Soviet leadership decided instead to even increase the share of hydropower to 30 percent. This was a conscious response also to growing environmental problems like massive air pollution in big cities."⁶⁹

Comment: We are not familiar with any document whatsoever that relates hydropower with growing environmental problems! It would be interesting to know how MLPD came to this conclusion.

67 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 274-279

68 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 281

69 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 282

"In the year 1950, the USSR Council of Ministers chaired by Stalin adopted decisions on the so-called large-scale construction projects of the Stalin era. They encompassed mainly the construction of the Kuybyshev, Stalingrad and Kakhovka hydroelectric power plants as well as the construction of the Turkmen main canal and the Volga-Don shipping canal.

*This meant, on the one hand, that against vehement resistance the course followed since Lenin was confirmed to produce as much electricity as possible from waterpower. On the other hand, projects were planned and partly realized on a scale, which before the war had been justly criticized as megalomania. Later on, they brought about enormous ecological damage. For instance, the 1,445 kilometres long Turkmen main canal, built between 1954 and 1982, was the cause of 40 percent of the water loss of the Aral Sea; this canal draws approximately 13 billion cubic meters of water annually from the Amu Darya River. The drying up of the Aral Sea began in the 1960s. The bureaucratic-capitalist rulers expanded the irrigated areas in the region around the Aral Sea more and more. The almost complete desiccation of this sea has become one of the most severe regional environmental disasters in the history of the Soviet Union, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan - connected with salinization, massive extinction of species, decline of agricultural production and mass diseases in the entire region. In the China of Mao Zedong these negative experiences were criticized, and oversized large-scale projects for energy supply and industrial production consciously were avoided."*⁷⁰

Comment: In the China of Mao Zedong in 1956 were there enough material resources to introduce large-scale project? Is it argued that even though China had material resources, it did not start large project just because they were sensitive to the environmental issues? In fact, China was not strong enough in that time in order to fund large projects.

*"Another instance of a course with far-reaching negative consequences was **the extensive "peaceful use of nuclear power."** Already at the end of the 1940s the Soviet Union created the conditions for building the first atomic bomb. After the atomic bombs were dropped over Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 and the Cold War began, it was absolutely right that the Soviet Union resisted nuclear blackmail by the USA and developed its own atomic bomb."*⁷¹

Comment: Here MLPD criticizes Soviet Union's "extensive peaceful use of nuclear power" and at the same time it finds the production of its own atomic bomb **absolutely right**. This is totally strange! Nuclear Reactors are needed to produce atomic bombs. This is that simple. If one finds production of atomic bombs "absolutely right" then one cannot disagree with nuclear reactors and peaceful use of it.

*"On June 27, 1954, in Obninsk near Moscow, **the first nuclear power station of the***

world connected to the grid. The Soviet Union increasingly relied on nuclear power for energy production. As early as November 10, 1949, the Soviet Foreign Minister, Audrey Vyshinsky, had declared at a meeting of the Political Committee of the UN General Assembly:

We have set atomic energy to perform great tasks of peaceful construction, we want to put atomic energy to use in watering deserts and laying new life lines in places where the foot of man has rarely stepped. This is what we, the masters of our land, are doing under our plan. [Problems of International Law and International Politics], p. 615; author's translation from German)

*This was, objectively, a **crazy plan. An uncontrollable technology that endangers the existence of humans and nature** was supposed to penetrate into more and more economic fields. The "peaceful use" of nuclear power in the Soviet Union went so far that on large construction sites huge masses of earth were moved through nuclear explosions. The result was permanent radioactive contamination of entire regions".⁷²*

Comment: MLPD finds it right to develop atomic bombs through uranium enrichment in atomic reactors. In this way, MLPD considers nuclear technology to be dominated. So, is not the criticism against the peaceful use of atomic energy and considering the use of this energy as a crazy plan a grave dilemma? MLPD is not aware that it contradicts with itself.

Our position with regard to the use of nuclear energy and atomic bombs is this:

Nuclear energy has not been controlled yet and the humanity and nature are in peril because of it. Under these circumstances we totally reject to build atomic reactors and to use nuclear energy. We favour to close down all the existing nuclear power stations.

Atomic technology was less developed after the Second World War. It was less developed than today's conditions. In this sense, it was wrong to defend the construction of atomic reactors even though some argued that it was in favour of socialism.

Those who decided to establish nuclear power station did not have the needed knowledge we have today. They believed it was possible for socialist states to use atomic bombs in a limited war. Based on our current knowledge we deny this in principle. A socialist state is not supposed to produce atomic bombs under any circumstances. This is something that destroys natural basis of the humanity.

"Socialist China took a different road also in regard to this issue: in politics and science the recognition prevailed that nuclear power could not yet be controlled, and for this reason nuclear power plants deliberately were not built in China".⁷³

Comment: It is a pure fabrication to say that China did not build atomic reactors on purpose because they knew that nuclear power couldn't be controlled. China

72 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 283-284

73 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 284

did not have any resources or technology to build them. The fact that Chinese Communist Party tested atomic bombs in 1964 in order to celebrate victories of red China proves that China did not rule out the use of it.

"We must, however, take into account the general international underestimation of the dangers of nuclear power in those days and the lack of knowledge about its uncontrollable character. Dirk van Laak writes: ↓ Naivety regarding the problems of waste disposal was certainly no Soviet specialty. Even Werner Heisenberg still believed in 1954 it would be sufficient to bury nuclear waste three meters deep in the ground to get rid of it. ↑ (Weifie Elefanten, pp. 121 f.)

*Soviet "naivety" also had ideological reasons. After all these successes in building the country and utilizing the forces of nature, a tendency arose to **treat the ability to control nature as absolute.**"⁷⁴*

*"This was an important theoretical clarification on the basis of Marxism-Leninism. In practice, however, already at that time an **environmental policy change** had been initiated. In the leadership of party, economy and state a **petty-bourgeois bureaucracy** of people like the above-mentioned professor Bogoslovskii was forming up and gaining influence.*

*Stalin underestimated this danger and spoke in this difficult situation not about the class struggle in socialism, but about the **withering away of the classes and the transition to communism** being ushered in in the Soviet Union. He also put up the wrong thesis that the ground for the antithesis between town and country, between industry and agriculture, has already been eliminated by our present socialist system, (ibid., p. 285).*

*Regarding this issue, **Stalin distanced himself explicitly from Frederick Engels**, who predicted for the transition to communism that of necessity 'the great towns will perish' ("Anti-Dühring," in: Marx/Engels, Collected Works, Vol. 25, p. 283).*

Stalin disagreed: 'This, of course, does not mean that the effect of the abolition of the antithesis between town and country will be that "the great towns will perish" [see Engels' "Anti-Dühring"]. Not only will the great towns not perish, but new great towns will appear.... (Stalin, op. cit., p. 26) Engels' statement was not, however, concrete and relevant only to a particular period in time; rather he explicitly cited as fundamental reason the threatening destruction of the unity of humanity and nature in huge towns: The present poisoning of the air, water and land can be put an end to only by the fusion of town and country; and only such fusion will change the situation of the masses now languishing in the towns, and enable their excrement to be used for the production of plants instead of for the production of disease....It is true that in the huge towns civilisation has bequeathed us a heritage which it will take much time and trouble to get rid of. But it must and will be got rid of, however protracted a process it may be. ("Anti-Dühring," op. cit., pp. 282 and 283)

Mao Zedong supported Frederick Engels' position. In his "Reading Notes on the Textbook Political Economy" in 1960 he wrote:

Since they want to eliminate the difference between urban and rural..., why does the text make a point of saying that it is not "to reduce the functions of the big cities"? The cities of the future need not be so large. Residents of large cities should be dispersed into the rural areas and many small cities should be built. (Mao Tse-tung, "Das machen wir anders als Moskau, [We Do It Differently than Moscow], p. 74; author's translation from German)"⁷⁵

We keep citing from somewhere else in the book:

*"Socialism has freed not only the labouring people and the means of production from the old society, but also the vast realm of nature which could not be made use of in the old society. (Mao Zedong, quoted in: New China's First Quarter-Century p. 176)."*⁷⁶

Comment: Here the author confuses some correct criticism against Stalin's some positions with wrong petty-bourgeois criticism. The criticism against the thesis of transition to communism is correct. In that period, it was totally wrong and early to speak about transition to communism.

However, Stalin was right when he said that great towns would perish. Mao's criticism against Stalin is irrelevant and petty bourgeois. It is a petty-bourgeois utopia to disperse town's population into rural areas. (By the way, this is what Khmer Rouge did in Cambodia through social-fascist terror that they called "red". The result was a disaster.)

The future is more likely to be way Stalin explained in his "Economic Problems of Socialism in USSR" (Stefan Engel did not cite this in its totality):

"Not only will the great towns not perish, but new great towns will appear as centres of the maximum development of culture, and as centres not only of large-scale industry, but also of the processing of agricultural produce and of powerful development of all branches of the food industry. This will facilitate the cultural progress of the nation and will tend to even up conditions of life in town and country".⁷⁷

Mao's criticism of Stalin is based on China in 1959's and draws a picture of future in which town-dwellers move to villages.

"The Communist Party of China under the leadership of Mao Zedong condemned the betrayal of socialism in the Soviet Union. This is reflected also in the environmental policy of the People's Republic of China. While the Soviet revisionists denied the emergence of an environmental crisis, socialist China attacked the environmental destruction of the capitalist countries and pursued a different course. At the First UN Conference on the Human Environment in 1972 in Stockholm, the head of the delegation of the People's Republic of China declared:

Running after high profits, imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism and their monopoly capitalist groups in disregard of the life or death of the people, frantically plunder and exploit the people of other countries, damage their resources, discharge

75 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 285-286

76 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 290

77 Stalin, "Economic Problems of Socialism in USSR", Foreign Language Press, 1972, Peking, p. 26

harmful substances at will and pollute and contaminate the environment of their own countries as well as that of other countries. They do not hesitate to spend huge sums of money each year on arms race, but are unwilling to spare the minimum funds for the conservation and improvement of the environment in their own countries or compensate for the loss of other sovereign states subjected to their pollution and damage.... To conserve and improve the human environment, to fight pollution, has become an urgent and vital issue in ensuring the healthy development of the human race. (Peking Review, June 16, 1972, pp. 6 and 5".⁷⁸

Comment: First: Chinese Communist Party under the leadership of Mao Zedong did not mention an "environmental crisis". **Second:** Environmental problem did not play a central role in the struggle of Chinese Communist Party. **Third:** Revisionists and Marxist-Leninists were not far away from each other in this matter. Revisionist parties also revealed the crimes/sins of the imperialists! **Fourth:** Position of Chinese Government released in Peking Review in 1972 was the first official attitude of China regarding environmental issues. Apart from calling new colonialists and monopole investment groups as responsible in the concluding reports in U.N Environmental Conference represented by 113 countries, this position was not far reaching.

The concluding remarks in the Conference held in Stockholm in 1972 that protection and improvement of the environment are the most urgent task of all the states were the only things upon which participants agreed!

*"Especially in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution exemplary environmental measures were taken in socialist China. The proletarian revolutionaries recognized that the **environmental issue is a component of the class struggle in socialism** and criticized the irresponsible destruction of the natural foundations of life as a policy of the "capitalist roaders in power." A fundamental article of Peking Review from the year 1974 stated:*

It is the social system and the line taken that determine whether or not economic development will pollute the environment and become a public hazard....Developing industrial production and protecting the environment are a unity of opposites. Though the two are mutually contradictory, they promote each other. If correctly handled, pollutants under certain conditions can be turned into assets benefiting the people. The crux of the matter lies in correctly recognizing and handling this problem dialectically. (Kuo Huan, "Accent on Environmental Protection," in: Peking Review, November 8, 1974, p. 9)

*Various writings like Critique of the Gotha Programme by Karl Marx and Dialectics of Nature by Frederick Engels were made available for the first time through Chinese publications to the entire international Marxist-Leninist and working-class movement. There were **three essential sources for the groundbreaking environmental protection in the People's Republic of China under the leadership of Mao Zedong.***

Firstly, socialist political economy was creatively developed further: rejection of one-sided reliance on increased production, of excessive centralization of production and of increasing material incentives. Already in 1958, Mao Zedong propagated the use of marsh gas (methane from decay processes) as a simple method of a closed-loop economy. However, the petty bourgeois bureaucracy in the leadership of party, state and economy sabotaged this measure for years. It was only during the Cultural Revolution that the use of marsh gas became an object of mass criticism of the revisionist line of powerful party officials around Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping:

Reports about utilizing marsh gas in China show that on-going work in this field was mainly blocked by views that such "primitive things" from such "primitive people" like workers and peasants most certainly could not transform China into a modern industrial country. ...In the name of this theory, experiments involving the masses were impeded in all spheres. (Rudolf G. Wagner, "Die Nutzung von Sumpfgas in der Volksrepublik China" [Utilization of Marsh Gas in the People's Republic of China], pp. 70 f.)

A nationwide campaign to utilize marsh gas originated from the critique of the revisionist line. It pursued several goals: producing electricity in rural areas, advancing the standard of living and the cultural and political activities of the rural population, producing organic fertilizer, improving hygienic conditions, reducing deforestation and advancing decentralization in order to secure an independent national energy supply. In his article, "Technik von Biogasanlagen" (The Technology of Biogas Plants), Dr. Kurt Frunzke reports that six to seven million small plants for the production of biogas built during the Cultural Revolution still exist today in the People's Republic of China.

The Chinese leadership called on the Chinese people to observe the principle to "walk on two legs" when building up the socialist economy. As regards water engineering, preference was to be given to local facilities, while the government concentrated on the most important central projects. Local projects made it easier for the masses to plan and implement such activities themselves.

Many people from the international environmental movement appreciated the policies of socialist China. For example, the book, GAIA - (GAIA – Eco-Atlas of Our Earth), published by Norman Myers in 1985 and recommended by the German Friends of the Earth, states:

China is moreover a model of "ecological agriculture" which makes a point of ensuring that nothing is wasted. Its closed-loop resource systems practice extensive recycling.... The world's most comprehensive irrigation system enables the Chinese to grow more than a third of the world's rice. (pp. 62f)⁷⁹

Comment: Praising over China's achievements misses the truth that China had limited resources and its achievements were related to its material conditions. Extensive recycling can be found in every small village that are less developed! Because limited resources force people not to waste and to recycle everything! Is this a conscious environmental policy? Decentralization of economy and walking on two legs... Are these ever justified by Mao or Chinese Communist Party to

79 Engel, "Catastrophe", p. 292-293

be related to environmental problems? Why is an objective economic necessity interpreted as a conscious environmental policy?

*“Secondly, the **dialectical method was consciously applied** to develop the unity of humanity and nature higher. Campaigns to study and apply dialectics were carried out under the slogan “One divides into two” especially during the Cultural Revolution. The Chinese revolutionaries struggled against any separation of theory from practice and consciously applied the dialectical method in the class struggle, in the struggle for production and in scientific experiments.*

*As a result, it was understood that there could be no **waste in an absolute sense**. Therefore, production facilities were systematically built in such a way that residual materials from one factory could be used as basic materials for production by adjoining factories. Holger Strohm wrote in his book **Umweltschutz in der VR China** [Environmental Protection in the People’s Republic of China]:*

The great importance placed on recycling raw materials from solid waste, wastewater and exhaust gases can be attributed to economic as well as environmental reasons. The Chinese regard multipurpose utilization as their most important task. In the meantime, the previously rather primitive recycling technologies have been highly developed, (p. 88)

The working people in the People’s Republic of China did pioneering work for realizing a comprehensive closed-loop economy - to an extent not even remotely achieved to this day by any other country worldwide.” (“Catastrophe Alert!”, p. 293-294)

Comment: This is an interpretation of Western Maoists who dream an ecological future out of the underdevelopment of China. Here “extensive circulation economy” is considered as a conscious environmental policy. We advise them to go to a village in Afghanistan. Over there they can find perfect examples of “multiple use” and “extensive circulation economy”. Without socialism!

“Thirdly, the masses were mobilized to build socialism based on the unity of humanity and nature. It is one of the great achievements of the People’s Republic of China that the forces of nature were controlled by the working people in the interest of working people. Socialist China under Mao Zedong’s leadership developed large afforestation projects against soil erosion. “Cover the country with forests” - under this slogan the entire people was mobilized. In north-western China forest workers and many volunteers planted a large green shelterbelt against spreading deserts. This was also widely acclaimed internationally by forestry scientists and environmentalists”⁸⁰

Comment: Again economic necessity is linked to environmental policy.

*“Socialist China also took a sustainable position regarding **population policy**. It was a difficult situation: areas for agricultural use in China were limited; the inherited problems of economic backwardness had to be overcome systematically; women’s*

health had to be protected and simultaneously their participation in social production made possible. Persuasion work for a policy of birth control was necessary. The introduction of material support for the elderly took the pressure off families to secure their livelihood in old age only by having many children”⁸¹

Comment: Economical necessities influenced population policy. Birth control was maintained through economic, social pressures and prohibitions as well as persuading people. We need to renounce idealizing policies of Chinese and Soviet communist parties.

“Revisionist betrayal after Mao Zedong’s death in 1976 put a stop also to the great achievements of the People’s Republic of China in environmental protection. With reckless urbanization and industrialization and tremendous pollution of soil, air and water, China today beats many other capitalist countries in regard to the ruthless destruction of the environment.

While the ruling powers all over the world wilfully continue on the path towards the environmental catastrophe and even make profit from it, they hypocritically express their strong outrage about the alleged “destruction of the environment in socialism.” Let us tell them:

*The great, hard-won achievements of socialist environmental policy were an expression of the **development from socialism to communism**. The fact that one-sidedness, weaknesses and mistakes occurred reflected remnants of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois modes of thinking and production, which continued to be effective in the socialist social system. They finally resulted also in the betrayal of socialism. Not the socialist mode of thinking and production was the cause of horrendous crimes against humans and nature, but the bourgeois mode of thinking and production of the revisionist new bourgeoisie!”⁸²*

Comment: From all of this we come to the conclusion that:

Stefan Engels and MLPD believe that the mistakes of Soviet Union concerning environmental policies were fixed by China. Under the leadership of Mao Zedong, China is a good example for all the communists in environmental policies!

In “Catastrophe Alert!” there is no single criticism on Chinese communist party under the leadership of Mao Zedong about the environmental problem! Everything was perfect! If there were not perfect things, it was petty-bourgeois revisionists who are responsible for them.

This position is totally wrong and not self-critical. This position only aims at ignoring its own mistakes.

9. Foolish criticism against socialism - paradigm shifts?

“Catastrophe Alert!” goes on to argue:

“Capitalist production and consumption have led to drastically misguided

81 Engel, “Catastrophe”, p. 294

82 Engel, “Catastrophe”, p. 294-295

developments in the relation between humans and nature, to a deformed mode of production and way of life, which after the victory of the international socialist revolution must be corrected and reoriented over a lengthier period.

Influenced by imperialist culture, most people, when they think about the improvement of the conditions of life, follow the **ideal of a petty-bourgeois way of life**. This has left deep marks not only among petty bourgeois, but also among workers and the broad masses everywhere in the world. Through an overpowering media world, the bourgeois educational system and bourgeois mass culture, people's aims in life, their wishes and dreams have been manipulatively geared to the **individual satisfaction of constantly expanding needs**. However, it is clear: were they to be realized in a wasteful way and for all of humanity, this would necessarily make the planet uninhabitable within a foreseeable period.

The **struggle for the guiding principle of a proletarian mode of production and way of life**, which alone can ensure the sustainable unity of humanity and nature, acquires prime importance for the whole of socialist society.

In his major work, of *Socialism in the U.S.S.R.*, in 1952 Stalin formulated the basic economic law of socialism:

Securing of the maximum satisfaction of the constantly rising material and cultural requirements of the whole of society through the continuous expansion and perfection of socialist production on the basis of higher techniques, (pp. 40 f.)

This conception took as starting point the constant growth of the material and cultural needs of people in socialism. In an economically backward country with impoverished and hungry masses, such as Russia after the First World War, this was certainly necessary at first.

After the successful reconstruction, through which the Soviet Union became the second biggest economic power after the USA, the orientation to "continuous expansion" was no longer justifiable. However, at no time was it acceptable to disregard the interaction between society and nature in the definition of the basic economic law of socialism.

Permanent advancement of the unity of humankind and nature must become an essential element of the basic economic law of socialism. Without this unity, socialist society, its mode of production and way of life cannot develop in a sustainable way. Since the natural resources are limited and human needs cannot increase endlessly, **constant growth is neither possible nor desirable**.

Today an indispensable element of the **basic economic law of socialism** must be to repair environmental damage, to put an end to the inequality and neo-colonial exploitation of countries, and to overcome destructive production and consumption patterns worldwide. Essential aspects of the **basic economic law of socialism** comprise:

- The **dialectical unity of humanity and nature** is the foundation of socialist society in world outlook and manifests itself in the unity of socialist ecology and economy.
- Eliminating of the exploitation of humans and nature through **abolition of commodity production**, on the basis of social ownership of the means of production.

- Securing of the **satisfaction of the constantly changing material and cultural requirements of people** and realizing of a “profitability” in society as a whole.
- Transforming of the **relations of production and conditions of life** as social task, and abolishing of the economic dependence of women.
- An **international and voluntary division of labour on a basis of equality between socialist nations** for mutual benefit, while consciously overcoming the deformation caused by neo-colonialism.
- Achieving of growing **labour productivity** in unity with the development of science and technology through socialist emulation and development of socialist consciousness. Struggle to further **eliminate the separation of manual and mental labour** in order to consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat and abolish the classes.
- **Overcoming of the separation of town and country** and merging of both through planned renaturation of the cities and urbanization of the countryside to create optimum living and working conditions in a healthy environment.
- **Freeing** of scientific-technological and cultural progress **from the fetters placed on them by the profit interests of capital.**
- Introduction of the **socialist principle of distribution, “each according to his ability, to each according to his work”;** overcoming of social poverty and misery, of hunger and idleness by society.
- **Distribution of the total social product** and planned use of society’s resources over a long period such that a substantial part is used to prevent the global environmental catastrophe and to **restore the partially destroyed natural foundations of life and maintain them.**
- Securing and enriching of the foundations of life of present and future generations through a **global socialist closed loop economy** based on renewable energies and recycled raw materials.
- Comprehensive education, training and mobilization of the broad masses, especially the working class, women and youth, to actively take part in shaping socialist society in the spirit for the unity of humanity and nature through **conscious application of the dialectical-materialist method.**

Realizing the various aspects of the basic economic law in an all-around way involves a protracted process. Relics of the bourgeois social order counteract this in various ways. In socialism, at first there still exist different forms of ownership and thus relics of commodity production. The separation of mental and manual labour is not overcome yet; town and country develop differently. But above all, **traditions and habits** from the old society continue to have an effect. For Karl Marx, socialism meant a general revolutionary transformation:

This Socialism is the **declaration of the permanence of the revolution, the class dictatorship** of the proletariat as the necessary transit point to the **abolition of class distinctions generally,** to the abolition of all the relations of production on which they rest, to the abolition of all the social relations that correspond to these relations of production, to the revolutionising of all the ideas that result from these social

relations. ("The Class Struggles in France, 1848 to 1850," in: Marx and Engels, **Selected Works** in three volumes, Vol. 1, p. 282)

During the entire period of socialism, both in the economic base and in the superstructure, it is necessary to adhere firmly to the all-around exercise of the **dictatorship of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie**. With the threat of destruction facing the whole of humankind in the environmental catastrophe, international finance capital must not be given any scope for restoring its power and again giving free rein to the destructive forces of capitalism. For the masses, on the other hand, the broadest democracy will unfold to the point where the class distinctions, and the breeding ground that gives rise to them, completely disappear, so that the unity of humanity and nature can develop higher and higher. In this process, the state and the dictatorship of the proletariat will lose their historically necessary function and finally wither away.

In view of the negative experience with the capitalist mode of production and consumption, the new socialist society needs a **paradigm change in society as a whole** under the general line of the unity of humanity and nature. Marx once wrote about human needs and their satisfaction in a socialist society:

We have seen what significance, given socialism, the **wealth** of human needs acquires, and what significance, therefore, both a **new mode of production** and a new **object** of production obtain: a new manifestation of the forces of **human nature** and a new enrichment of **human nature**. ("Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844," in: Marx/Engels, **Collected Works**, Vol. 3, p. 306)

The paradigm change in the production relations must be based on a critical and self-critical investigation to determine which products and which production and logistical processes really make sense, and which have to be abandoned or radically changed.

The paradigm change in the relations of consumption aims at distribution with **respect for the existential needs of the whole of humanity** and in harmony with nature. If a socialist society is to be organized throughout the world, no part of humanity can be allowed to live at the expense of another and of nature.

The paradigm change in the way of life is based on a **critique of the ideal of petty-bourgeois life circumstances**. The striving to rise up into the bourgeoisie or the longing for a return to the old conditions of exploitation then can be overcome.

A socialist way of life is a **cultured, healthy way of life** which secures and further develops all elementary needs and in which the dialectical unity of individual and collective, humans and nature, young and old is always borne in mind.

The paradigm change in the mode of thinking has as prerequisite **the unceasing promotion of socialist / communist consciousness**. The proletarian mode of thinking then will prevail in the struggle against the petty-bourgeois mode of thinking. This struggle must be a fundamental part of the **life school of the proletarian mode of thinking** which socialist society organizes **for the youth**.

This general societal paradigm change will be a **central element of the class struggle in socialism** and the basis for overcoming all the birthmarks of the old society.

All the experience of socialist construction proves that **sweeping processes of transformation in the whole of society** are necessary. In the year 2000, the book *New Perspectives for the Liberation of Women* critically examined the idea that a change in the societal relations automatically will follow the revolutionization of the production relations:

Rather, this involves a more or less protracted revolutionary process of transforming the entire production relations and conditions of life in society. This process goes on in interaction with the changes in the forms of consciousness and the political structures in which the dictatorship of the proletariat finds specific expression at each stage. In this general social transformation process, the **ideological and political aspect must always be the leading factor**, (p. 199)

Especially the tendency to **spontaneous reproduction of the old capitalist-influenced** aspirations in life and **ways of life** will be effective all the way into the phase of the transition to communism. The book, *State-Monopoly Capitalism in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG)*, emphatically points this out:

The tradition of bourgeois ideology, which has dominated the intellectual life of men for centuries, is so strong that bourgeois ideas and **habits spontaneously renew themselves** over and over. (p. 540; author's emphasis)

The international industrial proletariat of today, with its cultural level and experience in using the modern forces of production, is a creative force the likes of which has never been seen in history. It is capable of creating a new type of socialist order in alliance with the progressive intelligentsia and the peasants and farmers.

Under the leadership of this international industrial proletariat the new society can accomplish this universal paradigm change and realize a new system of production and reproduction, of the mode of thinking and of the way of life in the unity of humankind with nature.

The good experiences of the socialist countries as well as the experience of the restoration of capitalism in all these countries underline the crucial importance of the mode of thinking for socialist construction. The socialist society must be marked by the **conscious application of the dialectical-materialist method**, must apply it to all problems of nature, society and human thinking, and constantly develop it to higher levels. The comprehensive self-transformation indispensable for the new -type socialist mode of production and way of life only can be successful if socialist men and women adopt this mode of thinking and style of working.

Asserting the proletarian mode of thinking in socialist society, and continuously consolidating it, call for the struggle against selfishness, individualism, consumerism and throwaway mentality - for a responsible behaviour towards humans and nature. With great vision, Frederick Engels characterized the importance of consciousness for the transition to communist society:

With the seizing of the means of production by society, production of commodities is done away with, and, simultaneously, the mastery of the product over the producer. Anarchy in social production is replaced by systematic, definite organisation. The struggle for individual existence disappears. Then for the first time man, in a certain

sense, is finally marked off from the rest of the animal kingdom, and emerges from mere animal conditions of existence into really human ones. The whole sphere of the conditions of life which environ man, and which have hitherto ruled man, now comes under the dominion and control of man, who for the first time becomes the real, conscious lord of Nature, because he has now become master of his own social organisation. The laws of his own social action, hitherto standing face to face with man as laws of Nature foreign to, and dominating him, will then be used with full understanding, and so mastered by him....

Only from that time will man himself, more and more consciously, make his own history - only from that time will the social causes set in movement by him have, in the main and in a constantly growing measure, the results intended by him. It is the ascent of man from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom. (*"Socialism: Utopian and Scientific,"* in: Marx and Engels, *Selected Works in three volumes*, Vol. 3, pp. 149 f.)

The process of uplifting humanity from the animal kingdom will only come to an end in classless communist society. The elimination of all estrangement of humans from nature is possible only in unity with the elimination of humans' estrangement from their labour and its products and with the elimination of humans' estrangement from humans themselves. That, as Frederick Engels put it, would be the true "reconciliation of mankind with nature and with itself." (*"Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy,"* in: Marx/Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 424).⁸³

Apart from quotations from Marx-Engels, theory of paradigm shifts represents MLPD's idealist, petty-bourgeois stance.

What matters is that Engel and MLPD do not understand that existence determines consciousness. Moreover, ruling ideas are always the ideas of the ruling class or consciousness.

When it comes to the consciousness of the millions of workers, the masses can only be conscious fighters of socialism through a permanent revolutionary process. Petty bourgeois thinking will be defeated if the economical basis of these ideas is removed in a long process of socialist construction under the dictatorship of the proletariat. Even if the economical basis is abandoned, reactionary ideas will remain for a long time. However, since these ideas will lose their economical basis, they are doomed to failure. Struggle against the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideology should be accompanied by a struggle against private property over the means of production.

To assert that is a pure idealism:

"Rather, this involves a more or less protracted revolutionary process of transforming the entire production relations and conditions of life in society. This process goes on in interaction with the changes in the forms of consciousness and the political structures in which the dictatorship of the proletariat finds specific expression at each stage.

*In this general social transformation process, the **ideological and political aspect must always be the leading factor***”⁸⁴

This argument reduces socialism to a matter of education and learning. It is suggested that the more we disseminate our proletarian way of thinking the more socialist people will become. In reality, things do not work that way. We have to create economic conditions in which people will grasp that human existence is different in capitalism once the dictatorship of the proletariat is established, that it is imperative to consider it as a task and that producers will be better through the socialization of the means of production. Naturally, this has to be carried out with an ideological struggle against the wrong ideas through right methods. Nevertheless, in the beginning economical aspect will always be the leading aspect.

The main mistake in socialist and people-democratic countries is not that they did not pursue a struggle against the wrong ideas. Rather, they overrated small steps that were important but not socialist yet in their dealing with the transformation of the property relations and they mislabel it as socialism. A social order that was not considered to be better than capitalism by the masses was identified with socialism!

Eventually, it was the petty-bourgeois economical basis that gave the political power to a new bourgeois class. Petty-bourgeois ideas had a strong economical basis in the society that we believe was socialist and where we circulated socialist ideas. Marxist-Leninists in these countries underestimated the power of the petty-bourgeois economic relations as well as the power of habits and ideas. Group property was regarded as socialist property. Non-socialist quality of group property was not assessed with much attention. Because of the wrong policies on behalf of the right socialist principle of sharing that says “to each according to his contribution”, differences between the members of society grew more and more. By saying “you do not have to fear”, they allowed direct private property over the means of production.

Huge privileges in party and state apparatuses, in sovkhoz, in kolkhoz, in industrial state enterprises increased permanently. “Socialist construction” failed in terms of economy.

It was quite normal for ordinary workers to think their own interests. And evil intentions of the revisionists had nothing to do with that! Marxist-Leninists overrated the achievements to build socialism. Stalin calls this sickness “Euphoria of Victory”. It was too late when the danger was noticed. In fact, the revisionists captured the political power before Stalin died.

It was only through Cultural Revolution that the attempts at building the dictatorship of the proletariat in China were made possible. However, in this country petty-bourgeois economical basis was so strong that these attempts failed and had to fail. Male and female communists in this country helped

84 Engel, “Catastrophe”, p. 307

consolidation of revisionists because of their own mistakes. This is the story of how the first attempts at building socialism were realized.

The criticism that the ecological problem was absent in the economical laws of socialism formulated by Stalin and that this problem should be resolved within the confines of the economical laws of socialism is totally relevant. This is a mistake. The paradigm shift that MLPD is looking for should be introduced in this field. Nevertheless, we have to admit that our level of knowledge concerning environmental disasters such as Chernobyl, Fukushima, climate change and pollution of air and seas, was more limited than today. Despite all, mistakes are mistakes. We have to admit that these are mistakes.

Nevertheless, Stefan Engel's criticism against the Stalin's definition that in socialism material and cultural needs of the people are constantly growing is totally wrong and petty bourgeois.

According to Stefan Engel, it is wrong to suggest that in socialism material and cultural needs of the people are constantly growing. This is how he justifies it:

"Since the natural resources are limited and human needs cannot increase endlessly, **constant growth is neither possible nor desirable**"⁸⁵

First. Engel cannot see the fact that constant growth does not only refer to material needs but also refers to cultural needs and limited natural resources do not restrict growth of cultural needs.

Second. Engel does not understand that a constant growth of the needs does not imply an unlimitedness. Objective conditions everywhere and every time set bounds to needs.

Third. He does not see that the resources we use today are based on our current level of knowledge. For example, there are so many natural resources that are not used yet such as wave energy to provide energy. So, there can be many other resources that we are not aware of yet.

Forth. Economical law of socialism is based on a society where bourgeoisie is totally disposed, and wealth is produced according to the needs of society, everybody gets his share according to his contribution and all the means of production belong to the society. In this society, both material and cultural needs grow constantly, and the task of a socialist economy is to be organized in such a way that these constantly growing needs can be satisfied. A worker says this only after this task is completed: This is my society! A socialist society is not a society where the poorness is equally shared but rather a society where the growing wealth is shared between its members according to their contribution. Constant growth of material and cultural needs is possible and worth to achieve. The more material needs are satisfied, the more cultural needs come to the forefront.

"All the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly -- only then then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be crossed in its entirety and society inscribe

*on its banners: From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!"*⁸⁶

We can define the economical law of socialism as follows:

Maximum satisfaction of the constantly growing material and cultural needs of society, securing permanent growth and socialist production through a perpetual perfection based on the most developed technology. These must be in conformity with a permanent protection of the natural life conditions.

If we want to formulate the basic economical law, we do not need to say more.

What MLPD formulates as basic economical law is not a basic economical law that subsumes the most relevant ones but rather a short programme that aspires to socialist construction and transition to communism! Yet, there are so many mistakes in it.

November 2014

86 Karl Marx, Critique of Gotha Programme, Marx/Engels Selected Works, Volume Three, p. 13-30, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1970)

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