

## Socialism and Bureaucracy

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### Rezime

#### SOCIJALIZAM I BIROKRATIJA

U uslovima u kojima je revolucionarna partija osvojila vlast formirala se birokratija i njena samovolja srazmjerno nepostojanju socijalnog otpora koji bi joj se suprotstavljao.

Došavši brojnošću i veličinom eksploatacije do krajnje tačke razvoja birokratija je i fizički i duhovno onemogućena da se ponaša na stari način. Gradeći socijalizam fiktivno, a sopstvene privilegije realno, birokratija je preko reformi koje je neprestano uvodila i sprovodila sve više išla ka kapitalizmu. Ali, na tom putu je, iako konzervativnija od buržoazije, i preko državnog kapitalizma stvorila ono što i buržoazija preko privatnog-realne preduslove za socijalizam-brojnost proletarijata i razvijene proizvodne snage.

Takozvani socijalistički i kapitalistički sistemi su se kretali konvergentno, stvarajući svjetske preduslove za državni kapitalizam i socijalizam. Razrješenje te dileme zavisi od odnosa snaga i njihove sposobnosti da otvoreno formulišu, postave i ostvare svoje zadatke.

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The former "party of professional revolutionaries", "people of a special school", "workmen's state" and "revolutionary dictatorship of proleteriat", promoters of socialism and new communist society have become the principal initiators of reforms and "perestroikas", whose aim is the shift from socialism and its theoretical basis - marxism towards private ownership and capitalist society.

But, in order to avoid being misled by these terms which may easily conceal the relevant essence of the existing currents, it is necessary to take into consideration what has been hidden and is still hiding behind that party and state, behind the socialism and the marxism they have been building.

Socialist - democratic and, later, communist parties leading the Revolution, were holding to a modified and adapted - to - concrete - conditions Kautskyianism, which, at the time, represented a form of revised marxism. This is particularly valid for Leninism, which is, also, referred to as Kautskyianism or Marxism, thus receiving a special term "Marxism of the epoch of imperialism and socialist revolutions". This fact led to its eo ipso negative interpretations of (pre-imperial) original Marxism. This aspect is evident in false interpretations, in the absence of certain publications and in denial of theoretical and scientific values of those Marxist attitudes and works which did not follow in the line of Leninism.

All social - democratic or communist parties, which have carried out the revolution, were illegal, consisting of a small number of members. The members of these parties were mainly intellectuals, organized upon the principles of democratic centralism, in which centralism and bureaucratic hierarchy, always were ahead of democratism.

The hierarchic party structure was, during and after the revolution, transferred to the military and state structure. That is why from the very beginning, the members of the Central Committee emerge simultaneously as theoreticians and ideologists, military, state and economic leaders. The supreme head of the party is also the head of the state, the supreme commander and the main ideologist, and his party associates are ministers, republic and district officials etc. Since those people were, before overtaking the power, the leading members of the communist party, they created the illusion that the power they were holding was a party power, and, consequently, a working one, although in reality, in order to protect their own privileges, they submitted the party to the state and transformed it into its ideological weapon.

Minor revolutionary party, entirely consisting of peasantry (speaking in social terms), striving to fight against major landownership, city capital and tzarist or royal (depending on a country) administrative - military bureaucratic dictatorship, out of all socio-economic systems, was only able to conduct the capitalistic one. In the regions where the working class represents less than ten percents of the population, we cannot speak about proletarian revolution or proletarian democracy. In such conditions, socialism simply lacks its social basis. That is why, before as well as after conquering the political power, Lenin emphasized that the Marxist line should not be strictly followed, from working class towards political power and socialism. The "inversed" path is to be followed - from the communist party and the state towards the creation of working class and socialism. To this aim should serve the transformation of private into state capital, the so-called "primary socialist accumulation of capital", which originally represents an important enemy of socialism. But this did not prevent Lenin from seeing, although through the prism of the "inversed Marxist", socialism as acting in "Soviet Government and electrification" or in state capitalism and industrialisation.

If the state power, due to the state capital, develops industrialisation and creates the working class, than it does the act identical to that of the bourgeoisie in capitalism. Both contribute to the appearance of their own gravedigger - the development of the productive force and the proletariat. "We know very well", spoke Mr. Bucharin at the seventeenth Congress of SKP in 1934, "that our rows - are the rows of fighters for socialism, and because of that they are also the rows of fighters for technology, science, culture, for the well-being of people! We are the only country which incarnates progressive forces of history, and our party, and comrade Stalin personally, are powerful heralds not only of economic, but also of technological and cultural progress on our planet!" These words should be remembered as depicting a picture of shameless, cheap and immoderate bureaucratic boastfulness, fawning and over-emphasis of the party, the state and the leader as historical subjects. It should not be neglected either that, at that time, Bucharin was the editor of "Pravda" and the main ideologist of bureaucracy.

This groundless boastfulness was made possible only in culturally and economically undeveloped conditions, where every criticism was smothered away, and where all means and the whole power are greedily grabbed by the state and party oligarchy. After the Revolution, illiteracy overwhelmingly reigned in the USSR, including three quarters of the population. The state and party bureaucracy consisted mainly of "lumpenproletariat", eighty percents of communists could barely read and write, more than half secretaries of district, province and republic committees did not have secondary school education, the majority of intelligentsia fled abroad, no strong social middle layer existed, and therefore, it seemed natural that they should have rely upon a generous and an omni-potent leader, who would do the thinking for them and solve all their problems. Such thinking arose partly from credulous beliefs, and partly from fawning bureaucratic mentality, and its contaminated higher social levels, who themselves were prone to the "supreme - leader idolatry".

Such idolatry entailed simultaneous appearance of criticism of the existing bureaucratic system and appearance of a strong bureaucratic resistance against it. Criticism acted both from inside and outside. Bureaucracy protected itself successfully, although what it protected was not the truth, but rather bureaucratic privileges and lies by means of which it concealed its privileges.

Comparing two kinds of bureaucracies - Stalinist to the Tzarist one - Trotsky wrote about Stalinism that it "created the basis for the most insulting kind of privileges, made inequalities look challenging, smothered independence of the masses by means of police absolutism, turned management into the monopoly of Kremlin oligarchy and raised the fetishism of the power to such heights as the absolutist monarchy could not and did not dare imagine.

Trotsky, similarly, thinks that "bureaucracy could reach such a degree of independence of the ruling class" only in the Soviet system. That is, in the state capitalist system, since ... "the very fact of its possession of the country's power, where the most important means of production are owned by the state, leads to creating a new, previously non-existent, relationship between bureaucracy and the wealth of a nation. The means of production belong to the state. But the state somehow 'belongs' to bureaucracy". This view is, also, confirmed by Djilas who writes that "the so-called socialist property is the camouflage of the real property of bureaucracy". As a result, socialism and all meanings implied by this term, turn out to be an illusion, but omnipotence, oppression and exploitation performed by bureaucracy are - the real essence. It seems, therefore, natural that, today, people should not long for either the illusion or the real content, or to use Djilas's expression "so-called socialism".

Similar conclusions were reached by a former legal marxist Nicolai Berdjaiev in his "Sources and Meaning of the Russian Communism". Seeing that Russia is not ruled by the dictatorship of proleteriat, but rather by the "dictatorship of the communist party", Berdjaiev described this kind of dictatorship as a "stronger and more despotic state power than could be found in any other country". Such power was, even during Lenin's time, compared to "vozdism", since "Leninism" (which means, not Marxism or socialism - B.K.) brings the leader of the masses to the point of exaltation, who is given the dictatorial power", which serves as a basis and a model for the "vozdism" of Stalin, Mussolini and Hitler. "Stalin represents the complete type of the leader-dictator. Leninism, naturally, could not be said to resemble fascism, but Stalinism is much closer to fascism. It has all characteristics of fascism: totalitarian state, state capitalism, nationalism, vzdism and, as its basis, militarized youth". This inspiring thought reminds us of Stalin's coherent anti-Marxist theory on so-called socialist state, the victory of socialism in a country and on the issue of nationalism.

Although he makes a clear distinction between Leninism and Stalinism, Berdjaiev reveals the roots of the latter on the basis of the former, because Lenin "could not predict that the class oppression would assume a totally new shape, not at all similar to the capitalist one. The dictatorship of the proleteriat, by strengthening the state power, develops colossal bureaucracy which like a spider's web, envelops the entire country and submits everything to itself. That new Soviet bureaucracy, stronger than the Tzarist one, is a new privileged class, which could ruthlessly exploit national masses".

It is not possible to calculate accurately the degree of bureaucratic exploitation in socialist countries. Unlike the bourgeoisie which accumulates its wealth openly and publically, bureaucracy, as if it were a rule, does it in a concealed and secret manner. As a result, all data relating to the production and the distribution in so-called socialist countries are a far cry from reality. However, privileges of bureaucracy are obvious in spite of the absence of facts. The proof of this lies in the phenomenon of people's constant switching from all kinds of productive branches into state departments and social and political organisations. While, say, in the USSR in 1913, the ratio was one clerk to fifteen workers, since the October Revolution until 1920, this number of clerks was twice as big compared to the number of workers. This fact leads us to believe that people were leaving their normal work more for the reason of greater profitability and feeling of comfort found in state and party works, and not because of fortified complexity of state and party works. This view is corroborated by the experience of New Economic politics. Since its inauguration until January 1, 1924 seven hundred and fifty thousand out of one million of dismissed workers were office clerks. It is needless to mention that the dismissals did not represent any detriment to state and party works.

Examining the socio-economic position of Hungarian bureaucracy, in his book "Stratification and Life Conditions in Hungary", T. Carlosi showed that bureaucracy had many privileges: locations in quiet, sunny and forested regions, comfortable appartments, cultural status, great needs and unlimited possibilities for their

satisfaction, special summer resorts, special conditions for physical recreation and health service, protection of their children's development and life, their ability to regard only their own interests etc. Bureaucracy has similar characteristics, also, in other socialist countries. Thus, A. Zaitchenko in his work "The Inequality of Property", published in 1989, stresses the fact that, if personal non-capitalized property is taken into account, the inequality in the Soviet society is greater than in Western capitalist countries, since less than 0,25% (400000) of the USSR citizens have a higher living standard than the rest of the population. This small percentage of people who have access to power, also have access to special privileges of high-quality goods and services. For the sake of a clearer comparison, they correspond to 1 500 000 millionaires, or 0,6% of the USA citizens. That is why bureaucratic work became attractive, estimated, valued and respected by all those who were eager to exploit the work of others and vice-versa - detested by all those who saw in it an exploiting and conservative lifeless branch on the tree of human progress.

The validity of this last sentence, totally opposite to Bucharin's opinion on the progressive role of bureaucracy and its leader, arises directly from its socio-economic position of bureaucracy, which is very different from, although paradoxically similar to the bourgeois position.

What bureaucracy and bourgeoisie have in common is their tendency towards becoming rich, which they do by exploiting the work of others. They differ, however, in their way of becoming rich.

Bourgeois people are immediate owners of the means of production. The degree and the scope of exploitation by the bourgeois depend on the value of his ownership and his competitive ability, where the latter depends on the productivity of work, conditioned by the application of modern science and constant advancement of the technological process of production. For this reason, it is necessary for the bourgeois to possess real knowledge and culture, to stimulate the development of science, and to be constantly surrounded by scientists and entrepreneurs, in order to be able to develop and improve the production.

Bureaucracy is neither the individual nor the immediate owner of the means of production, but it becomes that through bureaucratic collective "state", which runs the production and the distribution of the entire social wealth. Although the involvement of bureaucracy in the distribution of social wealth depends on the value of that wealth, the participation of each bureaucrat is conditioned essentially by his place in the bureaucratic hierarchic ladder. Every bureaucrat pays less attention to the increase of social wealth, than to his position in the hierarchy. Such kind of work requires qualities different from those which are characteristic for a bourgeois, that is - formal knowledge, obedience, fawning, conspirative spirit etc. To this could be, also, added corruption, favouritism, inefficient and slow work.

All bureaucratic tasks, duties and relations are regulated by well-defined rules, which by their nature, do not allow for any self-initiative and innovative spirit, unless they originate from "above", from the top. Otherwise, any wish for a change could be interpreted as disobedience and rebellion. That is why they contradict science and progress, to which they relate in a formal way and support them verbally, whereas in fact, knowledge and morals are suppressed by cruel and senseless obstinacy. Consequently, all socialist countries are characterized by a small number of technological inventions and discoveries, but also by their inapplicability in practice, in spite of the constant increase in the number of scientific and research workers.

Socialist countries, however, do not lack scientific staff on the field of social studies. But bureaucracy was very little interested in enabling the connection of their workers with analogous personnel from capitalist countries, their cooperation, progress in their knowledge, or enabling research work of the factors which could influence, in a positive or a negative way, on the degree of social development. Since bureaucracy is becoming rich secretly and not publically, science is un-

able to make clear examination and assessment of the scope and significance of its privileges. This process is made impossible by the prohibition of such investigation as well as by concealing of relevant facts.

Bureaucratic features, such as social immaturity, petty middle-class mentality, self-centered arrogance and contempt for the people it represents, are determined by its education, culture and behavior. However, bureaucracy does make an effort to look decent in the light of public. It uses for that purpose informative and legislative system. Having created the legal system, which, in theory, by its ideas of freedom of thought, democracy and humanity, exceeded all other systems in the world, praising this system to the skies in its propaganda, bureaucracy concealed, at the same time, the existing anarchy, crime and immorality, which made people feel anxious and frightened.

The principal issue of the functioning of so-called socialist systems - from Kautsky, Lenin and Stalin etc. up to our Kardelj - is the issue of the motivation of workers on the process of production. But, the workers were difficult to persuade to work for their employers. Because of that, instead of offering them real salaries, bureaucracy lulled them, through its propaganda and ideology, with the idea of the society as "the most beautiful of all possible worlds" on the one hand, and with the administrative and police force, on the other. Bureaucracy hid its privileges from people, was continually forced to invent different enemies, and to live in the conditions of extreme crises and reforms. The examination of such phenomena would reveal the real depth and scope of social contradictions in socialist countries, as well as conditions and directions of bureaucratic development.

The most striking fact in the development of the so-called socialism is the struggle of bureaucracy against itself. Lenin and Trotsky considered bureaucracy the enemy of socialism, and for Stalin - the advocate of the idea of continual strengthening of socialist state bureaucracy represented a danger for his own power. Others saw in bureaucracy a hindrance for certain reforms, self-management, democracy etc. As a result, there were different forms of struggle against bureaucracy, acting from inside or outside: dismissals from jobs, decrease in the number of administrative workers, arrests, exiles, "tchistka" ("cleanings") and cruel pursuits. This entire struggle had both formal and campaign-like character. Although initiated from the outside, out of social conflicts on a large scale, this struggle was, actually, sneaking out of immediate interior bureaucratic contradictions, which existed at all its levels - if we accept the fact that, similarly to the levels of bourgeoisie - there was low, middle and high bureaucracy. It should not be astonishing, therefore, that there never existed a complete, purposeful regulation or plan, intended for a successful struggle against bureaucracy. Since bureaucracy is immanent to capitalism in general, especially to the state capitalism, which was defined as socialism, the struggle against bureaucracy equals struggle against a capitalist wish to become rich.

Lenin's "inversed" path to socialism was possible only in words. In reality, it was a road to state capitalism, on which the power of state has already reached its maximum, having exhausted all possibilities of its survival and further development. Such situation led Lenin to envisage two possible exits - one backwards to barbarianism or one forward to socialism. Stalin was a greater optimist, believing that such conditions led to the abolition of the state and towards communism. The existing real situation does not offer either Lenin's alternative or Stalin's unilateral denouement.

Higher bureaucratic levels should be forced by the existing crisis to revolt against state capitalism (so-called socialism), its corresponding ideology (so-called Marxism) and the one-party system. They, instead, strive for the transformation of the state ownership into the private one, for the introduction of the market economy and free competition, increased exploitation of workers, creation of "reserved army of work", decreased state and party bureaucracy, inauguration of the legal state and multi-party electoral system. In all this they see a possibility of capitalization of acquired wealth and usurpation of a large part of the ownership of the transformed

property. They are, also, supported by technocracy and foreign capital. To achieve this aim, they use power, state, foreign and their own wealth, connections and their enormous political and managerial experience. With such measures, they force the society to make another "inversion" from "primary socialist accumulation of capital" or state monopoly to "primary capitalist accumulation of capital" of "free competition". But the more should such a perspective depend on foreign capital, the faster would it move towards the world monopoly and a new world regime. In this manner, national, state monopolistic and private economic rationalisation would be substituted by the worldwide one, so that the existing reforms should be leading towards the world state monopoly and the rule of world bureaucracy.

During this process which involves the ruin of the state bureaucratic machine, the introduction of the legal state and of the multi-party system, higher bureaucratic-technocratic levels would be supported by all social levels, except by a large part of middle and low bureaucracy. But to this plan of privatisation, sharper exploitation and dismissals from jobs, strongly opposed would be the workers. Intensity of their resistance would depend on the depth of the crisis, as well as on the gap separating them from the owners of the means of production (state and private capitalists), and their skills and competence to organize a successful resistance to the existing crisis and ability to find a possible way out.

If we take into account the fact that the existing crisis in so-called socialist countries is the crisis of rent, and that the crisis cannot be reduced to one or more particular countries (but rather that it takes a mondial character), then we are led to believe that the success of workers depends very much on the question whether they would be capable of their mutual cooperation in order to respond to the connection between bureaucracy and bourgeoisie on the international basis. This would further influence the following: whether, when and how private and state capitalism will be transformed not into a so-called but real socialism, not "inversely", but immediately, and not in one but in several countries.

These two perspectives are more likely to happen than the one which should lead us to barbarianism.

**Translated by Maja Bogojević**

### **Summary**

#### **SOCIALISM AND BUREAUCRACY**

The conditions in which revolutionary party came to power were suitable for the appearance of bureaucracy, whose privileges were increasing in proportion to the weakening force of any resistance.

Having exhausted all the means of its ruthless exploitation bureaucracy was physically and spiritually debilitated and could no longer impose as strong influence as it could previously.

In such circumstances where bureaucracy had built socialism only fictiously and, in reality, took advantage of the privileges, it followed through its reforms the path of capitalism. During that process, although in a more conservative manner, bureaucracy, similarly to bourgeoisie (which achieved its goal through private capitalism), created, through the state capitalism, real pre-conditions for socialism, strong proletariat and well developed productive forces.

The so-called socialism and capitalism were moving convergently thus creating worldwide conditions for state capitalism or socialism. The denouement of such dilemma will depend on the relationship between their respective forces and their being able to define clearly and fulfill successfully their tasks.