

New Opportunities for the International Communist Movement in Major Changes Unseen in A Century

The Development Report of the International Communist Movement from 2019 to 2020

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Abstract

In 2019, the communist parties in various countries commemorated the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist International in various ways and discussed the possibility of an international alliance in the new era. Among socialist countries, China solemnly celebrated the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the May Fourth Movement and the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. Socialist countries such as Vietnam, Cuba, Laos, and North Korea continued to promote reforms and lay out new developments through the revision of constitutions and the establishment of legislations. Most of the non-ruling communist parties tried to change their struggle strategies. Meanwhile, socialist ideas also rose in Europe and America. However, in the context of the rise of the "New Cold War" mentality, the developments of most western communist parties are still on a downward path. In 2020, with the spread of COVID-19, the superiority of the socialist system was further manifested, and the concept of building a community with a shared future for mankind is becoming more popular.

Keywords: *the Communist International, 70 years of PRC, the relationship between the two systems, the left-wing unity, the community with a shared future for mankind*

In the context of major changes unseen in a century, many new characteristics have emerged in the international communist movement. Year 2019 is a year of great commemorative significance in the history of this movement, which comprises the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist International, the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the May Fourth Movement and the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. Communist parties around the world have held a variety of commemorative activities to summarize the historical experience and lessons of the Communist International and to explore the possibility of international alliances in the new era. China solemnly commemorated the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of

the May Fourth Movement and the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. It reviewed the historical progression and achievements of the Communist Party of China on its way to glory, encouraging the Chinese nation to continue to work hard to realize the Chinese dream of great rejuvenation. Socialist countries such as Vietnam, Cuba, Laos, and North Korea continued to summarize innovative practices and develop new blueprints. Meanwhile, the non-ruling communist parties are actively exploring and seeking new opportunities, and their results are mixed. In 2020, given the spread of the COVID-19, China's concept of building a community with a shared future for mankind is becoming even more significant.

1. THE COMMUNIST PARTIES OF ALL COUNTRIES DRAW THE HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE AND LESSONS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL AND EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF AN INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE IN THE NEW ERA

On March 2nd 1919, the Communist International (i.e., the Third International) was established in Moscow, and it was dissolved on May 25th 1943. In 2019, commemorating the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist International has become an important theme of the international communist movement. Communism organizations around the world hold various commemorative activities and conferences to review the historical significance and influence of the Communist International. From February 16th to 17th 2019, the European communist party and the workers' party "initiated" a conference entitled *Fighting for Communism: A Century of Political Legacy* in Turkey. From June 1st to 2nd, 30 communist parties held a conference on *Science and Practice in Commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the Communist International* in Moscow. The meeting generally affirmed the positive role of the Third International established under Lenin's leadership and its contribution to the development and strengthening of the world communist labor movement. The declaration of the conference pointed out:

Our positive estimate does not mean at all, that there were no mistakes in the experience of the Communist International and that it should not be treated critically. [1]

Although we are not capable of a new Comintern, it is still necessary to further study the historical experience of the Third International and apply it to the actual struggle of the international communist movement in the future. From October 18th to 20th, 137 representatives from 74 political parties from 58 countries participated in the 21st World Communist Party and Workers' Party Conference in Turkey entitled *100th Anniversary of the Founding of the*

Communist International, Continue to fight for peace and socialism! The meeting attendants analyzed and judged the ongoing crisis of the current capitalist system, international tensions and intensified war threats, urged for maintaining world peace and security, called for the strengthening of the international alliance of the proletariat. The French Communist Party's *Fête de l'Humanité* and the Portuguese Communist Party's *Avante! Festival* also took the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist International as their main activities. The Centennial of the Communist International coincides with the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of the United States. The American Communist Party began to hold regional celebrations in Chicago, New York, and Los Angeles in September to celebrate these two historic centenary days. The British Communist Party and others have also carried out a variety of commemorative activities, taking the opportunity to heighten the atmosphere and expand their influence, but their scale is relatively small. The parties of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe actively participated in international conferences commemorating major historical events in the International Communist Movement, reviewed and reflected on the history of socialism, jointly issued statements and opinions on the current situation, which demonstrated the strength of the unity world communist workers' parties and also tempered the small parties. This conference has strengthened the confidence of the Communist Party and the people. In China, academic institutions including the Chinese Society for the History of International Communist Movements, Beijing Society for the History of International Communist Movements, and the Academy of Marxism of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences held academic seminars on the theme of commemorating the Communist International to discuss its historical significance and summarize its impact on the Chinese revolution.

Regarding the historical significance of the Communist International, the communist parties from different countries generally believe that the Communist International promoted the establishment, development and growth of proletarian parties around the world during its short existence, which contributed to the victory of socialism in some countries after World War II, including the founding of the Communist Party of China. When the Communist International was founded, there were only 13 parties in the world named "Communist Party", but when the Communist International was dissolved, it had grown to 68 Communist Parties and more than 3 million party members. [2] The Communist International woke the oppressed nations in the colonies and dependent countries, and contributed to the development and independence of the national liberation movement in Asia, Africa and Latin America; the Communist International actively promoted the world's anti-fascist struggle and established an anti-fascist united front. A commemorative article published in the party newspaper by the leader of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation Zyuganov pointed out that "the historical significance of the Communist International lies in integrating Marxism-Leninism with the mass labor movement worldwide, promoting the founding of proletarian political parties and mobilizing the working people to

defend their interests in the struggle against imperialism and fascism, strengthened the international unity of workers, and brought the national liberation movement in colonies and dependent countries to a new level. The work carried out by the Communist International laid the foundation for subsequent achievements, including the victory of the Communist Party in many countries and the formation of a world socialist system.”[3]

Regarding the historical lessons of the Communist International, the parties have varied views. The main points are as follows: Firstly, the highly centralized organizational system of the Communist International ignored the enthusiasm and creativity of the Communist Parties. Secondly, the policy towards the social democratic parties failed to unite all forces that could be united. Thirdly, the misjudgment of historical conditions of the revolutionary situation and of capitalism resulted in “left-leaning errors”. Regarding the merits and demerits of the Communist International in the Chinese revolution, Prime Minister Zhou Enlai quoted that Chairman Mao Zedong

once commented that the Communist International functioned well during the first and third periods, but not very well during the second. By that, he did not mean that everything was good during the first and third periods and nothing was good during the second [4].

From the perspective of the development history of the Chinese revolution, this is also a more pertinent evaluation of the role of the Communist International. Some scholars summed up that the historical merits and demerits of the Communist International could be further summarized as that “Great achievements are made, which will shine through the history; the mistakes are though serious and alerting for the future practices. [5]

When summing up the experience and lessons of the Communist International, people thought about the necessity and ways of international union in the current world socialist movement. The so-called “orthodox” ones represented by the Communist Party of Greece believes that the international communist movement has deviated from Marxism-Leninism since the 1950s, and the situation of today’s international communist movement is similar to that of the time when the Second International collapsed, and opportunism engulfed the Socialist left-wing movement. The Communist Party of Greece criticized “dozens of countries have joined the imperialist system and formed a capitalist monopoly.” When summing up the lessons of the Communist International, Joe Sims, the co-chairman of the U.S. Communist Party, pointed out:

“the Comintern failed not so much due to the CPSU’s dominance but because the variety and diversity of the working-class movement in each country rendered central direction and decision-making impossible [...] Working-class internationalism and solidarity are clearly necessary in a world of ongoing imperialist

intervention [...] But this must be done carefully with complete respect for the autonomy and independence of the parties concerned. [6]

Many communist parties believe that 100 years after the founding of the Communist International, there should be a new starting point for the reconstruction of the international labor movement and the communist movement.

The Communist Party of Moldova argued that under the impetus of global competition, scientific and technological progress is advancing by leaps and bounds. The development of technology involves the creation of artificial intelligence with higher potential than human beings. The opportunity for a world revolution that is taking shape today is a sign of a new Communist International.

The Latvian Communist League believes that the current weapon of communists is still proletarian internationalism, united struggle, and the unity of classes and comrades. This is a necessary condition for opposing national isolation and opposing imperialism. The unity of Communists is an inevitable choice for the future.

First Secretary of the Penza Regional KPRF Committee, George Kamnev, said that the Communist International existed for 24 years – from 1919 to 1943. It has gone through different stages in its history. It is very important that the spirit of the International is still alive today, that the communist movement is developing. Thirty years after the drastic changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe the International of Capital is cracking again: Trump's trade wars, U.S.-EU contradictions, contradictions within the EU, etc. Under these conditions, it is important to develop a unified strategy and tactics of the communists of different countries to use the split in the imperialist camp for the triumph of socialism[7].

The communist parties of various countries put forward different views on how to achieve international union. The “orthodox” represented by the Communist Party of Greece believes that the communist forces that adhere to Marxism-Leninism today must first integrate ideology and revolutionary strategy. The integration of ideology and revolutionary strategy means that the contemporary views on the imperialism, fascism, capitalism and other issues should be consistent.

Some communist parties represented by the Turkish Communist Party believe that the realization of international alliances by the communist party mainly reflects inter-party unity and exchange of experience, and cannot allow any authority to be established in a country that is above the will of the party and its members.

The leader of the League of Communists of Latvia believes that the communist party should strengthen cooperation within the European Parliament and fight against parties that defend the existing system. Only in this way, the slogan of “Proletarians of all countries, Unite!” could be realized.

In summary, on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of the Communist International, the

Communist parties of all countries recognized the necessity and urgency of achieving international union and explored ways to strengthen it. However, due to the different evaluations of the Communist International's history by the various communist parties, as well as the strategies and paths for international alliances, we can see that the parties currently have differences on some basic theoretical issues and acting strategies. These differences mainly involve how to view, uphold and develop Marxism, socialist reforms and other issues. This has become the main obstacle to the unity and international unity of the Communist parties in the world.

II

SOCIALIST COUNTRIES SUMMARIZE PRACTICE, SEEK BREAKTHROUGHS AND LAY OUT A NEW DEVELOPMENT BLUEPRINT

1. China commemorates the May Fourth Movement and celebrates the glorious achievements of People's Republic of China in 70 years, leading the world socialist movement on a new journey

The May Fourth Movement, which broke out in China on May 4th, 1919, was an ideological enlightenment and new culture movement that led mainly by the youth, which started China's new democratic revolution. In an important speech at the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the May Fourth Movement, Xi Jinping, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China pointed out that the May Fourth Movement promoted the spread of Marxism in China and promoted the integration of Marxism with the Chinese workers' movement. It has made ideological preparations for cadres and nurtured new revolutionary in terms of forces and culture. [8] It can be seen that the May Fourth Movement is of great significance in the history of China's socialist development.

On October 1st 1949, the People's Republic of China was founded. Over the past 70 years, under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, the Chinese people have created a miracle of rapid economic growth and long-term stability of society. At present, China is the world's second largest economy, the largest manufacturing country, the largest trader and the second largest consumer of goods, and the second largest country in foreign capital inflows. Its foreign exchange reserves have ranked first in the world for many years. China has contributed to more than 30% of the world economic growth. Over the past 70 years, China has continuously explored and established a socialist political system with Chinese characteristics. China has reached the world's top level in certain high-tech areas, leading the development of industry technology. Over

the past 70 years, Chinese people's livelihood construction has achieved remarkable results, and the people's living standards have been continuously improving. In 2020, China will eliminate poverty throughout the country and build a moderately prosperous society in all aspects. In addition, the achievements of PRC in the fields of military and diplomacy are also recognized worldwide. Zyuganov, chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, believes that China has become an important engine for global economic growth, and has achieved progress in the high-tech field, showing the world a unique development path." [9] China's success is an outstanding example for the world. China has made great contributions to world socialism and the international communist movement in the course of 70 years. At present, China holds high the banner of continuing to promote economic globalization towards a fair and reasonable direction, indicating an important turning-point for the development of world socialism. [10]

2. The Communist Party of Vietnam seeks a layout to develop a new blueprint for the 13th National Congress of the Party

Under the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam, Vietnam's economy grew rapidly in 2019. The annual GDP grew by 7.02%, and the inflation rate remained at a low level: the annual growth rate was 2.79%, a three-year low. The annual total merchandise trade reached US\$ 517 billion, of which exports amounted to US\$ 264,189 billion, achieving a surplus of US\$ 11,118. US\$ 38 billion of foreign capital investment, the highest level in 10 years, is record-setting in history. Political life is rich and vibrant. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam convened the 10th and 11th Plenary Session of the 12th Central Committee. The 11th Plenary Session of the Central Committee furthered the implementation of the tasks of the 12th National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam. The government formulated a medium to long-term economic and social development plan in accordance with the spirit of the Party, the National Assembly held two meetings to discuss relevant legal documents and major social economy issues in Vietnam, and passed a number of legal documents and draft resolutions.

Substantial to the preparation for the 13th National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam, the work of the Communist Party of Vietnam in 2019 focused on the following aspects: setting up a leading group for the preparation of the conference, advancing the preparation of conference documents, formulating economic and social development plans, organizing the construction of a contingent of cadres with high quality and other personnel arrangements, deepening the anti-corruption work, strengthening the social management and preventing the "peaceful evolution" of hostile forces, etc. Among them, it is worth noting that on February 19th 2019, the Prime Minister of Vietnam Nguyen Xuan Phuc proposed the "two centenaries" vision

for economic and social development when inspecting the Ministry of Planning and Investment. The first step is that by the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Party in 2030, Vietnam will enter the ranks of high-level middle-income countries and become an “innovative, fair, and democratic and civilized society”, meeting five indicators:

- (1) Per capita GDP reaches 18,000 US dollars above (purchasing power parity in 2011);
- (2) Most of the country’s population (more than 50%) become urban residents;
- (3) Industry and service industries account for more than 90% of GDP and provide more than 70% of employment;
- (4) The private economy accounts for more than 80% of GDP;
- (5) The United Nations Human Development Index is above 0.7.

The second step is to establish Vietnam as a “prosperous developed country” by the 100th anniversary of the founding of the country in 2045. The specific indicators are:

- (1) Step into the ranks of the happiest high-income countries in the world and become a prosperous country;
- (2) Become the world’s top 20 in terms of global competitiveness index and business environment index, explore a knowledge-based economy with high income and diversified sources of it. The industry is progressing toward the direction of modernization. The proportion of agriculture has dropped below 10% and is no longer a purely agricultural country;
- (3) It has become one of the countries with the highest quality of education in the Asia-Pacific region.

3. Cuba solemnly commemorates the 60th anniversary of the victory of the revolution, amending the constitution and reforming the national leadership system

2019 marks the 60th anniversary of the victory of the Cuban Revolution, and the Cuban government held a grand commemorative event. The leaders of China and other socialist countries sent congratulatory messages affirming that the victory of the Cuban revolution has not only ushered a new history of Cuba’s independence and development, but also greatly inspired the national liberation movement, non-aligned movement and society in developing countries since the 1960s.

In 2019, Cuba passed a new constitution through a referendum. The new constitution stipulates that the State Council is a permanent body of the National People’s Congress. The head of state and government will no longer be held concurrently by the chairman of the State Council but replaced by the newly established president and prime minister. The President of the State is elected by the National People’s Congress and must be 35 years of age or older, and must not exceed 60 years of age when elected for the first time. The term of office is 5 years and can be renewed for one more term. The Prime Minister is nominated by the president of the country,

elected by the National People's Congress, responsible for the daily work of the government and leading the ministerial meeting. In October 2019, according to the new constitution and the new "election law", Diaz-Canel was elected as the first President of Cuba, and Salvador Valdes was elected as the Vice President of the country, Esteban Lazo Hernández was elected chairman of the National People's Congress and chairman of the Council of State, and Manuel Marrero Cruz was the prime minister of the government. The meeting also elected the 21-member State Council. Raul Castro will serve as the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba until 2021. The new constitution points out that national ownership is the main form of ownership in Cuba, and the Cuban economic system is based on both planning and market factors.

4. North Korea amended its constitution, played down its "Songun Policy" characteristics, and achieved new breakthroughs in economic growth and diplomacy

In April and August 2019, the 14th Supreme People's Assembly of North Korea convened two meetings to discuss the issue of constitutional amendment. The amendments are: deleting many "Sonjun Thoughts" several times, merging the nominal supreme leader with the actual supreme leader, and implementing a socialist corporate responsibility management system. There are three main reasons for the amendment. The first one is that because "Songun politics" has been included in "Kim Il Sung-Kim Jong Il Doctrine", it is no longer emphasized separately, and it has played down the "Songun Policy", which conforming to its strategic shift centered on economic construction. Secondly, the new constitution stipulates that "the representative of the country" is chairman of the State Council instead of the standing chairman of the Supreme People's Assembly, which established a national political system centered on the State Council, so that the chairman of the State Council not only possesses the actual supreme leadership of the country, but also represents the country in law, thus smoothed the legislative relationship in the system. Thirdly, "Chongsanri spirit" and "Tae'an work system" were replaced with "revolutionary work methods that highly exert the spiritual power and creative ability of the masses" and "implement a socialist corporate responsibility management system" for the reason that the old expression has the imprints of the regional characteristics of the 1960s, the new expressions are more in line with the broader strategic development requirements of North Korea in the new era.

However, it is necessary to clarify that although North Korea has adjusted the focus of its development strategy, the fundamental content of the constitution has not changed. For example, Article 34 of the Constitution that stipulates that "the national economy of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a planned economy" has not been revised, and the new Constitution puts more emphasis on the role of the people and insists on the people's first principle. Kim Jong-un emphasized that taking the people as the priority is the fundamental principle of

all-parties affairs, which shows that the amendment to North Korea's constitution is to change some outdated expressions, straighten out the administrative system and economic management methods, and ensure that it can develop smoothly in accordance with the Korean-style socialist road in the new era.

In 2019, North Korea's diplomacy achieved important outcomes. On January 7th-10th, Kim Jong-un visited China again; on February 26th, Kim Jong-un arrived in Hanoi to hold the second North Korea-US summit with U.S. President Trump, and officially visited Vietnam. This was the first time for a supreme leader after in 55 years. On April 24th, Kim Jong-un and Putin met in Vladivostok. On June 30th, Kim Jong-un and Trump held a historic meeting at the border between North Korea and South Korea, known as the 38th Parallel. During the historic meeting on the 38th Parallel, Trump crossed the 38th Parallel to the North Korean side and shook hands with Kim Jong-un, becoming the first incumbent US president to set foot on North Korean territory in history, which is of iconic significance. From June 20th to 21st, General Secretary of the CPC Central Committee and President Xi Jinping paid a state visit to North Korea, ushering a new chapter in the friendship between China and North Korea.

5. Laos strengthens the cadre teambuilding and the ideological and theoretical construction to prepare for the new party congress

In 2019, the Lao People's Revolutionary Party has overcome many adverse influences at home and abroad and continued to promote socialist innovation. The development of all aspects of economy and society maintained a good momentum. Among them, the annual economic growth was 6.4%, and the per capita GDP reached US\$2,620; positive results were achieved in poverty reduction.

In 2019, the Lao People's Revolutionary Party convened the 8th and 9th Plenary Sessions of the 10th Central Committee to summarize the achievements and experience of socialist construction and party building in Laos at the current stage, and make arrangements for the 11th National Congress of the Party to be held in early 2021. Among them, the 8th Plenary Session of the Central Committee issued three relevant documents to strengthen the cadre team building. Before and after the two plenums, the Lao People's Revolutionary Party also issued a number of relevant resolution documents, emphasizing further improving the cadre team building. The Lao People's Revolutionary Party has also strengthened the party's ability to govern and maintain the advanced nature of the party members education, and has made great achievements in political thought, cadre management, anti-corruption and honesty, work style building, and discipline supervision. After the 8th Plenary Session of the 10th Central Committee of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party, a steady and orderly adjustment of cadres was carried out to prepare the personnel arrangements for the 11th National Congress of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party to be held in early 2021.

In 2019, the Lao People's Revolutionary Party also made new progress in theoretical innovation. Since the 10th National Congress of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party officially listed Kaysone Phomvihane Thoughts and Marxism-Leninism as the party's guiding ideology, the party's political bureau has promulgated it on December 13th, 2018 and March 27th, 2019. Documents such as the *Resolution on the Study of Kaysone Phomvihane Thoughts* and *The Resolution on the Establishment of Kaysone Phomvihane Thoughts Research Committee* meant the establishment of the The Kaysone Phomvihane Thoughts Research Committee, which is composed of representatives from the Lao National Academy of Social Sciences, the National Academy of Administration, the National Institute of Social Science Kaysone Phomvihane College, the People's Security College, and the Kaysone Phomvihane Museum. On May 5th, 2019, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party also promulgated the *Resolution on the Establishment of the Party Central Theoretical Research Institute*, and the party's theoretical research and propaganda work has gradually strengthened.

III.

THE COMMUNIST PARTIES OF NON-SOCIALIST COUNTRIES ACTIVELY EXPLORE FOR DEVELOPMENT, AND THE RESULTS ARE MIXED

1. The performances of the communist parties in the developing countries and the countries of the former Soviet Union and Eastern regions are mixed

The communist movement in Nepal in South Asia has been active for the past two years. On February 15, 2018, the Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist-Leninist) and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Center) formed a left-wing coalition, came to power, and announced their merger to form the Communist Party of Nepal on May 17, 2018. Over the past year, Nepal has made great achievements in the political, economic, social, and diplomatic fields. It has been the most stable period in the past 30 years. In 2019, the Communist Party of Nepal integrated and improved the basic theories of the former Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist-Leninist) and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Center). Among them, the issue of how to deal with the People's War has not yet formed a unified opinion. In 2020, the Communist Party of Nepal will convene the first party congress after the merger. The congress will determine a new theoretical program and plan a blueprint for a new period.

At the same time, the performance of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), the largest Communist Party organization in South Asia, is worrying. In the 17th People's Chamber of India election held in May 2019, the number of seats won by the Communist Party of India (Marxist)

was reduced from 6 to 3, which fell to the lowest point in history, and the number of seats for the Communist Party of India increased from 1 to 2. The Bharatiya Janata Party achieved an overwhelming victory. India's political right turn has been further consolidated, and the left-wing political space has been further compressed.

In the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the European Parliament again passed an anti-communist resolution in 2019. The communist parties in some countries were banned from activities and the communist parties were in a difficult situation. On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist International and the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the communist workers' parties of Eastern European countries actively participated in activities and international conferences commemorating the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist International, reviewed and summarized the history of the drastic changes in Eastern Europe and the history of the communist movement. Experience and lessons have promoted the development of the international communist movement in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. In terms of political participation, the support rate of some communist parties in national and local assembly elections has increased, which has brought new vitality into the development of regional socialist movements.

Among them, in the Russian regional and local elections held in September 2019, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation made significant progress. In 10 of the total 12 regions, the support rate of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation has increased, and the total number of seats in the city council has also been an increase, especially in the Moscow City Council elections with 13 seats, an increase of 8 seats from the previous one.

In the November election for the National Assembly of Belarus, the number of seats of the Communist Party of Belarus increased from 8 in 2016 to 11 seats. As the largest party in the parliament, it maintains a certain influence in the domestic political arena. [11]

At the same time, in the national elections held on February 24th 2019, the Moldovan Communist Party collapsed across the board, losing all 21 parliamentary seats and becoming a party outside the parliament. This was another major setback after losing its ruling position in 2019.

2. Most western communist parties have taken the path of parliamentary struggle through the left-wing unity. There are bright spots but overall it is a downturn.

Year 2019 was an election year for the European Parliament. The political parties and organizations of the 27 EU countries were fully engaged in the election campaign. The communist parties of various countries actively participated in the parliamentary elections. Some communist parties jointly promoted candidates by joining other leftists. However, due to the fact that the campaign advocates focused on the left-wing coalition, the standings of the parties were vague,

the characteristics were not clear, and they failed to catch the needs and concerns of their inherent voters. In addition, they were hindered by populist and far-right parties. The result is thus not optimistic. Among the more than 700 seats in the European Parliament, the European Union Left-Nordic Green Party, which is composed of the French Communist Party, the Italian Communist Refoundation Party, the Spanish Communist Party, and multiple left-wing parties in Europe, only won 39 seats, a decrease of 13 seats in comparison to the previous batch. Among the participating communist parties, the Belgian Workers' Party won one seat, breaking a record in their history, the Greek Communist Party kept its two seats unchanged, the Portuguese Communist Party reduced to two seats, and the other communist worker's parties did not win seats.

In the 2019 parliamentary elections, the Belgian Workers' Party (PTB/PVDA) became a "dark horse" that suddenly emerged from the development plight of the radical left-wing parties in Europe. The Belgian Workers Party's support rate in the European Parliament elections held in May 2019 increased to 8.7% and won one seat, thus achieving a historic breakthrough. Moreover, in the country's regional parliament elections, the Workers' Party received 6.6%, 12%, and 13.5% approval rates in Flemish, Brussels, and Wallonia, and 4, 11 and 10 seats respectively. In the Belgian national parliament elections, the Workers' Party won 12 seats in the Federal Parliament and 4 seats in the Senate. In addition to 1 seat in the European Parliament, the number of seats in the Belgian Workers' Party has increased from 8 seats in 2014. It quickly rose to 42 seats, ranking fifth among the 12 political parties with elected representatives across the country. Under the circumstance that the communist movement in the West has generally fallen into a low ebb or even turned, the Belgian Workers' Party successfully staged a perfect "counterattack", known as an "important bright red breakthrough" and a "phenomenal social movement". The reason is that the Belgian Workers' Party has adjusted its action strategy and ideological theory and proposed that the ultimate goal is to build a classless society, that is, a truly collective society or a communist society. This conforms to the ideals of the majority of the people under the current situation and prompts people to join the party. As a result, the number of party members rose from 2,800 in 2007 to 19,000 at the end of 2019. The fruitful political practice of the Belgian Workers' Party is an important reference and inspiration to other western communist parties.

In Asia, the Communist Party of Japan, which originally occupied a large proportion in the traditional territory of the communist party of western developed countries, has declined in recent years. In the 25th Senate election held in 2019, the Japanese Communist Party won 13 out of 245 seats, one less than the previous term, and the gap with the Komeito Party and the Liberal Democratic Party in terms of local seats is expanding. To seek development, the Japanese Communist Party changed its struggle strategy. Firstly, it is committed to increasing the possibility of forming a united front with the opposition parties to establish a coalition government. Secondly, the Japanese Communist Party is turning to inter-party diplomacy, attaching great importance to Europe. At the 28th Party Congress held from January 14th to 18th

2020, the Japanese Communist Party revised the party program and deleted the statement that China, Vietnam, Cuba and other countries are “new exploration with the goal of socialism” and no longer took the 21st century as an era in which two systems coexist. These adjustments of the Japanese Communist Party actually reflect some characteristics of the current western communist parties in common, and its trend is worthy of attention.

In the Americas, Year 2019 was the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of America. The Communist Party of America held its 31st National Congress from June 15th to 16th, achieving the replacement of leaders, including Rossana Cambron and Joe Sims became chairman of the United States Communist Party. [12] The Congress conducted a detailed analysis of current capitalism, proposed specific strategies for the Communist Party of the United States to carry out struggles in the new era, formulated the struggle stages and steps that the United States must go through to achieve socialism and communism, and to achieve the goals of the Green New Deal through a powerful working class movement to promote American socialism. In the 2020 U.S. presidential election, the U.S. Communist Party supports the Democratic Congressman Sanders, who had been labeled as socialist. The US Communist Party hopes to expand its influence by uniting with the left to participate in political activities.

In Australia, the communist movement became active, but internal divisions remained serious. Twenty-five years after the dissolution of the Communist Party of New Zealand, established in 1921, a group of young people, mainly students at school, established the “New Communist Party of Aotearoa” (NCPA). The founding meeting and the first Central Committee meeting was held in Wellington on November 21st 2019. At the meeting, the party constitution and party program were passed, clearly taking Marxism-Leninism as the party’s guiding ideology, and it declared that it is a proletarian party. Also at the inaugural meeting, the slogan “One class, Two unions” was put forward. “One class” means that the New Zealand Communist Party is a proletarian-oriented party. “Two Unions” includes the Workers’ Union (namely trade unions and community unions) which indicates that the party implements a policy of action focusing on trade union and community movements.

In recent years, the Communist Party of Australia (CPA) has seen serious divergence in ideological concepts and organizational principles. Former Central Committee General Secretary Bob Briton announced the establishment of Australian Communist Party (ACP) in June 2019. Bob Briton believes that the party is a firm Marxist-Leninist party, advocating thorough theoretical struggles, strengthening Marxist theoretical study and organizational construction, and opposing the reformist method of relying on trade unions and left-wing alliances to participate in the parliament. He believes that it is difficult to integrate market economy and socialist goals. These views are exactly where he differs from other members of the Communist Party of Australia (CPA), and are actually the common cause of internal divisions in some western communist parties.

IV

IN 2020, THE SUPERIORITY OF THE SOCIALIST SYSTEM WILL BE MORE PROMINENT IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19

Year 2020 is the 200th anniversary of the birth of Engels and the 150th anniversary of Lenin's birth. The communist parties and socialist countries will hold commemorative activities and academic seminars focusing on related themes, and reinterpret the classic works of socialism from utopia to science, from theory to practice in light of the new situation, from one country to multiple countries, from direct transition to indirect transition and other related theoretical viewpoints, re-evaluate the great personality of revolutionary mentors, and promote the new development of world socialism construction and the international communist movement in the new era. However, in early 2020, COVID-19 swept across the world. Under the influence of the epidemic, the scale of the commemoration of Engels and Lenin by the communist parties of various countries was restricted. Therefore, the communist parties and scholars of various countries have expounded the realistic guiding significance of the classic writer's thought to the international communist movement through books and articles.

For example, Professor Yu Liangzao of Nanjing Normal University wrote an article on that the theory of scientific socialism was created by Marx and Engels to guide the proletariat to carry out revolutionary movements and build communism. It is an evolving theory. After the death of Marx, especially after the 1890s, Engels adhered to the theory of scientific socialism in the practice of guiding the international communist movement, and enriched the theory of scientific socialism based on new practices. [13]

Researcher Jin Mingqing from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences believes that the Communist League created by Marx and Engels through the reorganization of the Justice League is the first proletarian party in human history established on the basis of scientific socialism, opening up a new era in the communist movement. [14]

Professor Nguyen Xuan Thang, secretary of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam, director of the Central Theoretical Committee, and president of the Party School of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam, wrote an article in the Communist Journal of the Communist Party of Vietnam on April 22nd, arguing that Lenin upheld and developed Marxist theory on the new historical stage, that is, imperialism and proletarian revolution, successfully led the Russian October Revolution of 1917, established the world's first political power of workers and peasants, ushered a new era that transition from capitalism to socialism, socialism evolved from theory to reality through his outstanding theory and practical activities. Lenin's life and his revolutionary cause were extremely great, and so were his contributions to the working class and the oppressed working people in the world. It is of

epoch-making significance. In commemorating the 150th anniversary of Lenin's birth, we must firmly adhere to and creatively apply Marxism-Leninism, adhere to the goals of national independence and socialism, and unswervingly overcome challenges, persist in innovation, and create a miracle in Vietnam.[15]

The international communist movement in 2020 will continue to develop under the influence of COVID-19. This epidemic will not only affect people's health, but will also have a major and far-reaching impact on the world's production methods, technological development, international structure, and the balance of power between socialism and capitalism.

On the one hand, China, as the country that suffered from the pandemic first, successfully controlled the spread of the epidemic swiftly, fully demonstrating the advanced nature of the Communist Party of China and the superiority of the socialist system with Chinese characteristics. At the same time, other socialist countries such as Vietnam, Laos, Cuba, and North Korea also performed well in the management and control of the epidemic. As of April 30, with the exception of Cuba, the other three countries have not reported a single death from COVID-19. Among them, North Korea has no cases reported, Laos has only 19 cases and no new epidemics have appeared since mid-April. Vietnam, as a country with a population of close to 100 million, has only reported 320 cases and all have been cured. Although Cuba has confirmed 1,467 cases and 58 deaths, compared with most countries in the world, especially the large-scale spread of the epidemic in neighboring Brazil, Cuba's prevention and control of the epidemic is excellent. It clearly shows that the socialist countries have used practical actions to prove the superiority of the socialist system in the management and control of major disasters and the medical system.

In addition, China has given full play to the spirit of internationalism and the responsibility of a major country, providing a large number of epidemic prevention materials, treatment experience and medical teams to many countries, and made every effort to help other countries to beat the epidemic, and won the global recognition and appreciation of all countries in the world. On April 2nd, 2020, the Communist Party of China and more than 230 political parties in more than 100 countries issued a joint appeal on strengthening international cooperation against the epidemic. [16] The political parties that participated in the joint appeal came from five continents, including the ruling parties, participating parties, important opposition parties and international political parties in major countries, covering political parties with different ideologies from the left, the middle and the right. The appeal also received support and praise from the Communist Party of Cuba, the Communist Party of Nepal, the Progressive Party of the Working People of Cyprus, the Communist Party of the United States, the Communist Party of Brazil, the Communist Party of Chile, the Communist Party of Argentina, the Communist Party of Britain, the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist), the Spanish Communist Party, the Australian Communist Party, and the Communist Party of Bangladesh (Marxist-Leninist) in various ways. [17] The pandemic highlights that all human beings share weal and woe in face of disasters, and no one can survive

alone. Therefore, China's concept of building a community with a shared future for mankind is easier to be appreciated and welcomed.

On the other hand, some western countries ignore China's achievements in fighting against COVID-19 and make groundless accusations and attacks on China, but their policies are slow and ineffective in dealing with the epidemic in their own countries, leading to the spread of the epidemic. It not only exposes the double standards that capitalist politicians are implementing under the guise of freedom and democracy, but also exposes the shortcomings of the western medical system, social management, capitalism's goal of maximizing profits and the hypocrisy of the human rights that the West is advocating. Under the spread of the epidemic, working people and people at the bottom of society in western countries are even less insured, living standards cannot be guaranteed and the gap between the rich and the poor has further widened, which may cause more serious social problems and even political turmoil.

Therefore, under the epidemic, socialism, as an ideology and system replacing capitalism, has received increasing attention and trust in the world. However, because the difference between the two forces is sharp, the defenders of the Western bourgeoisie and the capitalist system will not stop. They will inevitably intensify their resistance to and crack down on the socialist movement, and the situation of the communist parties of all countries will be even more difficult. Although the struggle between the two systems is conducive to the socialism, the long-term coexistence of the two systems is difficult to change. Therefore, we should actively advocate the concept of building a community with a shared future for mankind, which is a rational solution for win-win cooperation between countries and different systems in the world under the current historical conditions.

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