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## **APPENDIX:**

### **The Influence Of Rosa Luxemburg on the CPG**

The dominant theoretical influence on the Communist Party of Germany in its early years was that of Polish-born Rosa Luxemburg, who moved to Germany in 1897:

"Rosa Luxemburg has left behind deep traces in the German and Polish Communist movement. One can say without exaggeration that for a considerable number of years.. both parties grew up under the influence of her ideas and guidance".

(D. Manuilsky: "The Bolshevisation of the Parties;" in: "Communist International", No. 10; 1925; p. 59).

"All the -new leaders fully subscribed, (to) the guiding lines of policy laid down by Rosa Luxemburg in the foundation document of the, CPG and subsequent policy statements in 'Rote Fahe'. On nearly all subjects her word was law . . . . And even after the personal element of tribute had gradually died away,, her work was still the fount of all orthodoxy in Germany". (J.P. Nettl: "Rosa Luxemburg", Volume 2; London; 1966; P. 787-8).

In her work "The Accumulation of Capital", published in 1913, Rosa Luxemburg put forward the view that a capitalist society could solve the problem of capital accumulation only by expanding into pre-capitalist economies.. and that when these areas had been absorbed, capitalism would break down":

"The day-to-day history of capital becomes a string of political and social disasters and convulsions, and under these conditions, punctuated by persistent economic catastrophes or crisis, accumulation can go on no longer . . . . Capitalism . . . strives to become universal.. and, indeed,, on account of this, it must break down".

(R. Luxemburg: "The Accumulation of Capital"; London; 1951; p. 467).

Lenin's marginal notes to "The Accumulation of Capital", are full of comments such as "False!" and "Nonsense!", and he described her main thesis as a "fundamental error". (V.I. Lenin: Notes on R. Luxemburg's Book; "The Accumulation of Capital", in: "Leniniski Sbornik", Volume 22; Moscow; 1933; p.343-6).

In accordance with this thesis, Rosa Luxemburg saw no revolutionary potential in the peoples of the colonial-type countries and denied the possibility of genuine wars

of national liberation under imperialism. In her pamphlet "The Crisis of German Social Democracy", written in 1915 under the pseudonym of "Junius" and published in 1916, she declares:

"In the present imperialistic milieu there can be no wars of national self-defence".

(R. Luxemburg: "The Crisis of German Social-Democracy"; in: "Rosa Luxemburg Speaks"; New York; 1970; p. 305).

Commenting on her opposition to the Polish national-liberation movement, against the domination of tsarist Russia, Lenin said:

"In her anxiety not to 'assist' the nationalistic bourgeoisie of Poland, Rosa Luxemburg by her denial of the right of secession in the programme of the Russian Marxists, is, in fact assisting the Great Russian Black Hundreds (i.e., fascist-type organisations of the Russian landed aristocracy – Ed)".

(V.I. Lenin: "On the Right of Nations to Self-Determination"; in: "Selected Works", Volume 4; London; 1943; p. 266).

After the socialist revolution in Russia in November 1917 Rosa Luxemburg condemned the national policy of the Bolsheviks as "counter-revolutionary":

"The Bolsheviks are in part responsible for the fact that the military defeat was transformed into the collapse and a breakdown of Russia. Moreover, the Bolsheviks themselves have to a great extent, sharpened the objective difficulties of this situation by a slogan which they placed in the foreground of their policies: the so-called right of self-determination of peoples, or something which was really implicit in this slogan - the disintegration of Russia.

One after another, these 'nations' used the freshly-granted freedom to ally themselves with German imperialism against Revolution as its mortal enemy and, under German protection, to carry the banner of counter-revolution into Russia itself. . .

The Bolsheviks.. by their hollow nationalistic phraseology Concerning the 'right of self-determination to the point of separation' . . . . . did nothing but confuse the masses in all the border countries by their slogan and delivered them up to the demagogy of the bourgeois classes. By this nationalistic demand they brought on the disintegration of Russia itself, pressed into the enemy's hand the knife which it was to thrust into the heart of the Russian Revolution. .

The Bolsheviks provided the ideology which masked this campaign of counter-revolution; they strengthened the position of the bourgeoisie and weakened that of the proletariat".

(R. Luxemburg, "The Russian Revolution", in: Rosa Luxemburg Speaks"; New York; 1970; p. 378, 380, 382).

Similarly, Rosa Luxemburg failed to see, even in a country where the bourgeois-democratic revolution\_ had not been carried through, the revolutionary potential of the

peasantry, regarding it as, in the long run, a reactionary force -- a view which became a cornerstone of the Trotskyite theory of "permanent revolution":

"Rosa Luxemburg declared that Lenin . . . overlooked the . . . fact that it (i.e., the peasantry Ed.) would certainly, and probably very soon.. go over again, into the camp of reaction".

(P. Frohlich; "Rosa Luxemburg: Her Life and Work"; London; 1940; p. 113).

On the basis of this view, after the socialist revolution in Russia in November 1917 she condemned the Bolshevik policy of redistributing the land among the peasantry as "counter-revolutionary":

"The slogan launched by the Bolsheviks, immediate seizure and distribution of the land by the peasants. . . piles up insurmountable obstacles to the socialist transformation of agrarian relations . . . .

Now after the 'seizure' . . . . there is an enormous, newly developed and powerful mass of owning peasants who will defend their newly won property with tooth and nail against every socialist attack of the future socialisation of agrarian economy. . . . has now become a question of opposition and struggle between the urban proletariat and the mass of the peasantry. . . .

Now that the Russian peasant has seized the land with his own fist, he does not even dream of 'defending Russia and the revolution to which he owes the land. The Leninist agrarian reform has created a new and powerful layer of popular enemies of socialism in the countryside, enemies whose resistance will be much more dangerous and stubborn than that of the noble large landowners".

(R.Luxemburg: "The Russian Revolution in: "Rosa Luxemburg Speaks"; New York; 1970; p. 376, 377, 378).

Rosa Luxemburg saw the mass strike with economic aims as the decisive form of the revolutionary struggle of the working class:

"The mass strike is merely the form of the revolutionary struggle. . . . Strike action is the living pulse-beat of the revolution and at the same time its most powerful driving wheel. The mass strike. . . is . . . the method of motion of the proletarian mass, the phenomenal form of the proletarian struggle, in the revolution. . . . In this general picture the purely political demonstration strike plays quite a subordinate role. . . . The demonstration strikes which, in contradistinction to the fighting strikes, exhibit the greatest mass of party discipline, conscious direction and political thought, and therefore must appear as the highest and most mature form of the mass strike, play in reality the greatest part.. in. the beginnings of the movement. . . .

The pedantic representation in which the pure political mass strike is logically derived from the strike as the ripest and highest stage. . . is shown to be absolutely false . . . .

The movement on the whole does not proceed from the . . . economic to the political struggle. . . . Every great political mass action, after it has attained its

political highest point, breaks up into a mass of economic strikes. And that applies not only to each of the great mass strikes, but also to the revolution as a whole".

(R. Luxemburg: "The Mass Strike and the Trade Unions", in: "Rosa Luxemburg Speaks"; New York; 1970; p. 182, 183, 184, 185).

But the economic strike, which to Rosa Luxemburg, was the decisive form of the revolutionary struggle of the working class, is predominantly spontaneous in character:

"The mass strike cannot be called at will, even when the decision to do so may come from the highest committee of the strongest social-democratic party. . . . The element of spontaneity plays a great part in all Russian mass strikes without exception. .

The element of spontaneity plays such a predominant part because revolutions do not allow anyone to play the schoolmaster with them".

(R. Luxemburg: *ibid*, p. 187, 188).

On the basis of the view of the predominantly spontaneous character of "the decisive form of the revolutionary struggle of the working class, Rosa Luxemburg opposed as "dangerous" and "Blanquist" Lenin's concept of the necessity for a disciplined vanguard party based on firm democratic centralism. In her article "Organisational Questions of Social Democracy", first published in 1904 as a review of Lenin's "What Is to be Done?" she writes:

"Lenin's centralism . . . is a mechanical transposition of the organisational principles of Blanquism into the mass movement of the socialist working class . . . His conception of socialist organisation is quite mechanistic. . . . The tendency is for the directing organs of the socialist party to play a conservative role. . . . Granting, as.. Lenin wants, such, absolute powers of a negative character to the top organ of the party, we strengthen, to a dangerous extent, the conservatism inherent in such an organ. . . . The ultra-centralism asked by Lenin is full of the sterile spirit of the overseer. It is not a positive and creative spirit. Lenin's concern is not so much to make the activity of the party more fruitful as to control the party -- to narrow the movement rather than to develop it, to bind rather than to unify it. In the present situation such an experiment would be doubly dangerous to Russian social democracy. . . . We can conceive of no greater danger to the Russian party than, Lenin's plan of organisation. Nothing will more surely enslave a young labour movement to an intellectual elite hungry for power than this bureaucratic straitjacket, which will immobilise the movement and turn it into an automaton manipulated by a Central Committee".

(R. Luxemburg: "Organisational Questions of Social Democracy", in: Rosa Luxemburg Speaks-"; New York; 1970; p. 118, 119, 121, 122., 126-7).

Rosa Luxemburg shared with Leon Trotsky anti-Leninist views not only on the question of the role of the peasantry and on the question of the organisation of the party of the working class, but also on the question of the possibility of building socialism in a single country:

"Of course, even with the greatest heroism the proletariat of one single country cannot loosen this noose".

(R. Luxemburg: "The Old Mole", in: 'Selected Political Writings'; London; 1972; p. 227).

"The awkward position that the Bolsheviks are in today, however, is together with most of their mistakes, a consequence of the basic insolubility of the problem posed to them by the international, above all the German, proletariat. To carry out the dictatorship of the proletariat and the socialist revolution in a single country surrounded by reactionary imperialist rule and in the fury of the bloodiest world war in human history -- that is squaring the circle. Any socialist party would have to fail in this task and perish."

(R. Luxemburg: "The Russian Tragedy", in: Ibid.; p.241-2).

And like Trotsky, she strived during the years before the First World War to bring about a reunification of the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks i.e., to obliterate the dividing line between Marxism-Leninism and' revisionism:

"The other plan was proposed by Rosa Luxemburg. . . . according to that plan. . . a 'unity conference' (Einingungskonferenz) was proposed "in order to restore a united party". . . . This last plan . . . . was only an attempt on the part of Rosa Luxemburg to smuggle in the 'restoration' of the sadly notorious 'Tyszko circle' ('Tyszko' was the pseudonym of Leo Jogiches -- Ed.)

(V.I. Lenin: "A Good Resolution And a Bad Speech", in: "Selected Works", Volume 4; London'; 1943; p. 209).

Holding these views, Rosa Luxemburg could not but be hostile to the Soviet regime established in Russia under the leadership of the Bolsheviks in November 1917.

"Freedom of the press, the rights of association and assembly ... have been outlawed for all opponents of the Soviet regime. . . . Without a free and untrammelled press, without the unlimited right of association and assemblages the rule of the broad mass of the people is entirely unthinkable.... Freedom only for the supporters of the government . . . is no freedom at all. . . .

Lenin is completely mistaken in the means he employs. Decree, dictatorial force of the factory overseer, draconic penalties, rule by terror – all these things are but palliatives. It is rule by terror which demoralises. . . .

With the repression of political life in the land as a whole, life in the Soviets must also become more and more crippled. Without general elections, without

unrestricted freedom of press and assembly, without a free struggle of opinion, life dies out in every public institution, becomes a mere semblance of life, in which the bureaucracy remains as the active element. Public life gradually falls asleep, a few dozen party leaders of inexhaustible energy and boundless experience direct and rule . . . .

At bottom, then, a clique affair -- a dictatorship to be sure; not the dictatorship of the proletariat, however, but only the dictatorship of a handful of politicians. . . . Such conditions must inevitably cause a brutalisation of public life." (R. Luxemburg: "The Russian Revolution", in: "Rosa Luxemburg Speaks"; New York; 1970; p. 389, 391).

Following Stalin's statement that many of the serious political mistakes committed by the Communist Party of Germany were the result of Social-Democratic survivals which must be eliminated (September 1924), the "Theses on the Bolshevisation of the Parties of the Comintern", adopted by the Fifth Plenum of the ECCI March/April 1925, drew special attention to the harmfulness of Luxemburgism:

"The genuine assimilation of Leninism and its practical application in the construction of Communist parties throughout the world is impossible without taking into consideration the errors of very prominent Marxists who strove to apply Marxism to the conditions of a new epoch, without being wholly, successful in so doing.

Among these errors must be included those of Rose Luxemburg. The nearer these political leaders are to Leninism, the more dangerous are those of their views which, being erroneous, do not coincide with Leninism".

(Theses on the Bolshevisation of the Parties, of the Comintern, 5th. Plenum ECCI, in: "International Press Correspondence"; Volume 5, No. 47; June 4th., 1925; p.616).

The theses described the most important errors of Luxemburgism as follows:

- "a). The non-Bolshevik method of presenting the question of 'spontaneity', 'consciousness', 'organisation', and the 'mass' . . which frequently hampered the revolutionary development of the class struggle, prevented proper understanding of the role of the Party in the revolution;
- b) the under-estimation of the technical side of preparing for revolt hampered, and in some cases even now hamper, the proper presentation of the question of 'organising' revolution';
- c) the error in the question of the attitude towards the peasantry;
- d) equally serious were the errors committed by Rosa Luxemburg in the national question. The repudiation of the slogan of self-determination, (to support the formation of independent states) on the ground that under imperialism it is 'impossible' to solve the national question, led in fact to a sort of nihilism on the national question which extremely hampered Communist work in a number of countries;

e) The propagation of the party-political character of trade unions. . . was a great mistake which evidenced the failure to understand the role of the trade unions as organs embracing all the workers. This mistake seriously hampered, and still hampers, the proper approach of the vanguard to the working class as a whole;

f) while paying just tribute to the greatness of Rosa Luxemburg, one of the founders of the Communist International, the Comintern believes that it will be acting in the spirit of Rosa Luxemburg herself if it will now help the Parties of the Comintern to draw the lessons from the errors made by this great revolutionary.

Without overcoming the errors of Luxemburgism, genuine Bolshevism is impossible". (Ibid.; p.616).

In November 1931, Stalin's letter to the journal "Proletarian Revolution" was published, under the title of "Some Questions concerning the History of Bolshevism".

This reiterated in stronger terms the criticism made of the theory and practice of Luxemburgism:

"Organisational and ideological weakness was a characteristic feature of the Left Social-Democrats not only in the period prior to the war. As is well known, the Lefts retained this negative feature in the post-war period as well. Everyone knows the appraisal of the German Left Social-Democrats given by Lenin in his famous article 'On Junius's (i.e., Rosa Luxemburg's --Ed.) Pamphlet', written in October 1916, in which Lenin, criticising a number of very serious political mistakes committed by the Left Social-Democrats in Germany, speaks of 'the weakness of ALL German Lefts, who are entangled on all sides in the vile net of Kautskyan hypocrisy, pedantry, 'friendship' for the opportunists; in which he says that 'Junius has not yet freed herself completely from the 'environment' of the German, even Left Social-Democrats, who are afraid of a split, are afraid to express revolutionary slogans to the full'. . . The Lefts in Germany. . . time and again wavered between Bolshevism and Menshevism. . . .

In 1903 . . . . the Left Social-Democrats in Germany, Parvus and Rosa Luxemburg, came out against the Bolsheviks. They accused the Bolsheviks of ultra-centralist and Blanquist tendencies. Subsequently, these vulgar and philistine epithets were caught up by the Mensheviks and spread far and wide. In 1905. . . . Parvus and Rosa Luxemburg . . . invented the utopian and semi-Menshevik scheme of permanent revolution (a distorted representation of the Marxian scheme of revolution) which was permeated through and through with the Menshevik repudiation of the policy of alliance between the working class and the peasantry, and opposed this scheme to the Bolshevik scheme of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. Subsequently, this semi-Menshevik scheme of permanent revolution was

caught up by Trotsky and transformed into a weapon of struggle against Leninism. The Left Social-Democrats in the West developed the semi-Menshevik theory of imperialism, rejected the principle of self-determination of nations in its Marxian sense (including secession and formation of independent states), rejected the theses that the liberation movement in the colonies and oppressed was of great revolutionary importance, rejected the theses that a united front between the proletarian revolution and the movement for national emancipation was possible, and opposed this semi-Menshevik hodge-podge, which was nothing but an underestimation of the national and colonial question, to the Marxian scheme of the Bolsheviks. It is well known that this semi-Menshevik hodge-podge was subsequently caught up by Trotsky who used it as a weapon in the struggle against Leninism. Such were the universally known mistakes committed by the Left Social-Democrats in Germany.

I need not speak . . . . of the mistakes they committed in appraising the policy of the Bolsheviks in the period of the October Revolution. . . .

Of course. . . they also have great and important revolutionary deeds to their credit. . . .

But this does not cannot remove the fact that the Left Social-Democrats in Germany did commit a number of very serious political and theoretical mistakes; that they had not yet rid themselves of their Menshevik burden".

(J.V. Stalin: "Some Questions concerning the History of Bolshevism", in: "Leninism"; London; 1924; p. 390, 391-2, 393-4).

The letter was attacked immediately by the open revisionists, such as Leon Trotsky:

"There is included in it a vile and bare-faced calumny about Rosa Luxemburg.

This great revolutionist is 'enrolled by Stalin into the camp of centrism! . . .

Stalin should proceed with caution before expending his vicious mediocrity when the matter touches figures of such stature as Rosa Luxemburg".

(L. Trotsky: "Hands off Rosa Luxemburg", in: R. Luxemburg: "Rosa Luxemburg. Speaks", New York; 1970; p. 441, 446).

When the concealed revisionists threw off their mask in 1956, they too strongly denounced Stalin's Letter:

"Through it, sectarian views., especially on Social-Democracy and its left wing, were fostered in the CPG".

("Geschichte der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung: Chronik", Volume 2; Berlin; 1966; p. 278)

Trotsky, in the article mentioned above, was also indignant that in his letter Stalin had "credited" Rosa Luxemburg and Parvus (i.e., Alexander Helphand) with having invented the theory of "permanent revolution", and pointed out that in "On the Problems of Leninism", published in 1926, Stalin had "credited" Parvus and Trotsky with having first put the theory forward. Stalin clarified his position in January 1932:



"It was not Trotsky but Rosa Luxemburg and Parvus who invented the theory of 'permanent' revolution. It was not Rosa Luxemburg but Parvus and Trotsky who in 1905 advanced the theory of 'permanent' revolution and actively fought for it against Lenin. Subsequently Rosa Luxemburg, too, began to fight actively against the Leninist plan of revolution. But that was after 1905".

(J.V. Stalin: Reply to Olekhnovich and Aristov, in: "Works", Volume 13; Moscow; 1955; p.133, 134)

On January 8th., 1932, the organ of the Communist Party of Germany "Rote Fahne" carried an article endorsing Stalin's letter and declaring that the influence of Luxemburgism had been "the greatest obstacle" to the development of a Marxist-Leninist Party in Germany:

"The Communist Party of Germany welcomes Comrade Stalin's letter as a document which calls upon the German Communists to wage a fierce struggle against all social-democratic influences within the revolutionary movement, against the remnants of Centrism and Luxemburgism within the Party. . . . The failure on the part of the German Left Radicals in regard to the question of a complete break with opportunism and Centrism had an adverse effect upon the whole course of the Spartacus League during the war. Its after-effects were to be seen in the vacillations and the actions of the various liquidatory and oppositionist tendencies in the CP of Germany and rendered difficult a clear fulfilment of the role of the Party. Thus this failure of the German Lefts became the greatest obstacle to the development and victory of the revolutionary movement of the German proletariat".

("Comrade Stalin's Letter and the CP of Germany", in: "International Press Correspondence", Volume 12, No, 4; January 28th., 1932; p. 73).

An article written by Fritz Heckert and published later in January 1932 to commemorate the anniversary of Rosa Luxemburg's murder, followed the same lines:

"Under the ideological leadership of Rosa Luxemburg there arose the fundamentally false idea regarding the nature of imperialism, which led to the theory of the mechanical collapse of capitalism. From this again there followed the theory of the spontaneity of the masses, who would wrest themselves from the errors and crimes of the social-democratic leaders in order to rally round the revolutionary leadership. This also was the reason why no steps were taken to found an independent revolutionary party. It was not recognised that the party can be only the advance-guard of the proletariat, its most progressive, energetic and clearest part. These false ideas are connected with other errors of equally great importance.. such as the failure to recognise the role of revolutionary violence and the errors regarding the national and the peasant questions.

It is thanks to the after-effects of the social-democratic trends in the Communist Party of Germany that such big mistakes were committed in 1921 in the March action and in 1923 in the October movement,, and that the Party was long

prevented from developing into a real Bolshevist Party owing to the actions of a large number of renegades in its ranks. The eradication of all false ideas is indispensably necessary necessary for every Bolshevik Party. Only recently.. Comrade Stalin again urgently called attention to this . . . .

It would be a profanation of the two great Dead if we sought to vie with the renegades in conserving their errors".

(F. Heckert: "January 15, 1919", in: "International Press Correspondence", Volume 12, No. 2; January 14th., 1932; p. 29).

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