

ing the working class and its vanguard parties of democratic liberties. Overt and covert attacks on communism were launched. There were the prevailing petit bourgeois illusions concerning what is termed «the unity of the working people», «social harmony» and different modes of «national and local socialism».

In contrast, the revolutionary experience in Democratic Yemen represents a different model, which shows the possibility of petit bourgeois, revolutionary democratic forces leading the national democratic revolution towards the socialist perspective. This is because this experience occurred in distinct economic, social and political conditions related to the specific balance of class forces in South Yemen.

Besides British colonial domination, the economic situation in South Yemen was characterized by the domination of feudal and semi-feudal relations of production, manifest in the sultanate system. Capitalist relations of production were insufficiently developed, and the bourgeoisie had not crystallized as a class. Meanwhile, the other exploiting strata, such as merchants, comprador and the agents of foreign companies, were subordinate to international monopoly capital; their economic and political interests were intertwined with international monopoly capitalism. They were thus a class force hostile to the dynamic classes and strata in the national democratic revolution.

The Yemeni working class, however, had achieved a certain level of growth and acquired class and national experience while fighting the capitalist exploitation in the British installations. The class alignment in South Yemen before the victory of the national democratic revolution had a unique character, not present in many countries prone to national democratic liberation: The emergence of a working class possessing class and national experience, while its class opponent, «the Yemeni bourgeoisie», was not definitively constituted. This created one of the objectives for the accumulating role of the Yemeni working class, and its immense influence on the subsequent development of the revolution in a progressive direction. This enabled the achievement of the tasks of the national democratic revolution and created economic, social and ideological prerequisites for developing the revolution towards its socialist perspective.

There is another characteristic which distinguishes the development in Democratic Yemen from the other Arab countries where the national democratic revolution was led by the petit and middle bourgeoisie: The revolutionary democratic elements that led the revolution were from the toiling social strata, more closely connected with the masses. They were removed from the influence of bourgeois ideology, which was and remains to be the prevailing ideology in Arab societies. For the leadership of the revolution, this simplified the gradual transition, without great obstacles, towards Marxist-Leninist thought and the relatively rapid break with bourgeois ideology.

The victory of the national revolution, and the declaration of independence on November 30, 1967, put the southern part

of Yemen at a crossroads between capitalism and socialism; between limiting the revolution to the bourgeois domain, or unleashing its consequent development. Achieving political independence and directing a blow against feudalism is nothing other than the beginning of the achievement of the tasks of the national democratic revolution. The question was now posed how to develop it. This question led to a hard struggle between the revolutionary and the conservative forces, and between the most revolutionary elements and the reformist leadership. The revolutionary democratic leadership was able to decide this question in favor of the revolution and the toiling masses in the Corrective Move of June 1969. This set the country on the path of achieving the tasks of the national democratic revolution with a socialist perspective.

Instead of slackness, letting the revolution develop spontaneously, the leadership of the revolution and the state aimed at laying an overall plan for developing the country, overstepping capitalism and creating the economic, social and ideological prerequisites for moving towards socialist development. An organic part of this plan was restricting the growth of the emerging national bourgeoisie, i.e. securing the required conditions for preventing capitalist elements from becoming a class, and their institutions from becoming economically independent structures. Thus, the revolution neither allowed the automatic growth of the capitalist elements, nor made concessions to them.

Through the first three-year and five-year plans for development, the revolutionary government created progressive economic models in the different sectors of production. After a radical agrarian reform to the benefit of the toiling peasants, state and cooperative sectors emerged alongside the private and mixed sectors, all operating under the supervision of the state. Moreover, blows were dealt to the comprador and big land owners; foreign enterprises were nationalized, in particular the oil refinery. The revolution aimed to follow the principle of scientific economic planning, which played a big role in resolving many economic, social and cultural tasks.

The following measures were enacted: a comprehensive program for the development of national industry and for rebuilding agriculture, free of the exploitative relations of feudalism and capitalism; spreading cooperative production in the rural areas; the state's establishment of a national system of trade and finance in order to provide funding for investment in the productive sectors; the advancement of national culture and educational programs.

These measures dealt a gigantic blow to the economic and political influence of the exploiting classes and strata. They thus created conditions conducive to the formation and growth of new social forces with deep interests in furthering the revolution: the national working class, agricultural laborers and peasants of the cooperatives, side by side with a broad strata of revolutionary intellectuals. Together, they form the base for the transition to socialism.