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Albania

Fourth International declaration

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In recent years, Albania was presented by the international institutions and imperialist propaganda as a country which served as an example to its neighbours, because of its economic growth, and its spectacular progress in the construction of a "market economy."

In just a few days, a powerful popular movement swept away this myth, exposing the perverse mechanisms, the savage exploitation, and the financial fraud by which these alleged results were obtained. And against which wide sections of the Albanian population had revolted. They also rose up against the political regime symbolised by President Sali Berisha. A regime which hid its profoundly anti-democratic, police-state nature behind the facade of largely fraudulent elections victories.

Spokesmen for the imperialist countries and the media at their service presented the protagonists of the Albanian mass movement as (at best) inspired by clan allegiance, or (at worst) criminal or mafia gangs.

In fact, the insurrection covered the whole country, thanks to massive, active popular participation. The criminal gangs, which exist in Albania like in all other countries, only exploited the conditions created by the rotting Berisha regime: consolidating their links with the mass of international traffickers, and shamelessly exploiting all those who saw a passage across the Adriatic sea to Italy as their (illusory) salvation. By crude mystification, these bandits have been falsely presented as the main actors of the Albanian drama.

In fact, the mass movement put forward completely legitimate demands: the restitution of the money stolen through "pyramid" financial operations authorised by the government, Berisha's resignation, the dissolution of the secret police, and fair elections. The democratic revolutionary character of this movement was expressed in the formation of popular committees, in open session, co-ordinated in a national public salvation committee.

These committees did not become organs of a real dual power, challenging the regime. They demanded Berisha's departure, but limited themselves to playing the role of pressure-group on the new Fino government. The committees also accepted the deployment of the "Alba" multinational armed force. This is largely due to their lack of experience, the widespread illusions in the existing political parties, and the absence of political kernels with a general overview of the situation.

The Fourth International expresses its militant solidarity with the insurrectional movement which has shaken Albania. It calls for mobilisations in support of the following demands, particularly in those countries which have launched the military intervention.

- Immediate and unconditional resignation of President Berisha.
- Dissolution of the secret police.
- Reimbursement of the money stolen in the financial scandals.
- Recognition of the popular committees.
- Withdrawal of the "Alba" multi-national force, the main goal of which is the reconstruction of a repressive, anti-democratic state structure, and the maintenance of Albania's "market economy".

Fourth International United Secretariat, 13 May 1997