

IN REFUTATION OF MODERN REVISIONISM'S REACTIONARY THEORY OF THE STATE

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The *Renmin Ribao* editorial "Modern Revisionism Must Be Repudiated" pointed out that one of the fundamental points in modern revisionism, as typified by the programme put forward by the leading group in Yugoslavia, is its substitution of the reactionary theory of the state standing above classes for the Marxist-Leninist theory of the state.

The imperialists have always sought to cover up the nature of the state as a class dictatorship in order to wreck the revolutionary working-class movement. They describe the state under bourgeois dictatorship as "standing above classes," "belonging to the whole people" and "democratic," and slander the state under proletarian dictatorship as "totalitarian" and undermining democracy. Now that socialism and imperialism stand out in sharp contrast, with socialism in the ascendant like the sun rising and imperialism in murky decline, the working people under capitalist rule are turning towards socialism increasingly, the imperialists' lies are more than ever losing their power to deceive and the anti-communist nonsense of the Social Democrats is proving

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more and more incapable of helping the imperialists. It is at such a time that the Yugoslav revisionists, donning the cloak of Marxism-Leninism, have come forward to serve imperialism, particularly U. S. imperialism, by peddling the bourgeois theory of the state standing above classes, so as to repay U. S. imperialism for its reward of large sums of American dollars.

State power in an imperialist country is a means of serving the handful of monopoly capitalists and exercising dictatorship over the overwhelming majority of the people. Yet the Yugoslav revisionists are at great pains to conceal the dictatorship character of the imperialist state power. They say that in the capitalist world "the state increasingly controls the activities of capital" and "restricts the role of private capital," that "the role of the state as that of a regulator also grows" (Draft Programme of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia) and that "the state is no longer the apparatus of a certain class in capitalist society; it no longer reflects or upholds the special interests of that class" ("Has Capitalism Changed?" by R. I., October 1956 issue of the Yugoslav magazine *The Truth About Us*). Glorifying imperialist state power in such a fashion, are they not toeing the line of the imperialists?

The outstanding feature of our age is the transition from capitalism to socialism. Through revolution in one form or another, the working class must smash the bourgeois state apparatus, set up the proletarian state apparatus and replace bourgeois dictatorship by proletarian dictatorship. Marxist-Leninists, therefore, have always held that seizure of state power is the crucial question in the proletarian revolution. Using sophistry, the Yugoslav revisionists insist that state capitalism in the

capitalist countries is a "factor of socialism," that socialism is taking form within the capitalist system, and that the bourgeois state apparatus is also changing in this direction. Consequently, there is no need for the working class to carry out proletarian revolution, to smash the bourgeois state apparatus or to set up its own state apparatus. They claim that by "exercising incessant pressure" on the bourgeois state apparatus and working to "exert a decisive influence" in it, the working class will be able to "secure the development of socialism." They are spreading this nonsense about "peaceful evolution" from capitalism to socialism in order to create ideological confusion within the ranks of the revolutionary working-class movement, to paralyse, corrode and sap the revolutionary will-power of the working class and Communist Parties in the capitalist countries, and to prevent proletarian revolution. This being so, what trace of Marxism-Leninism do they show, what markings other than those of an accomplice of the imperialists?

Since the Great October Revolution, one-third of mankind has smashed the bourgeois state apparatus and established their own states of proletarian dictatorship. The proletarian dictatorship in these countries is fundamentally different in nature from dictatorship by all exploiting classes. It is the dictatorship of the exploited class, the dictatorship of the many over the few, dictatorship for the building of socialist society free from exploitation of man by man. It is the most progressive, and also the last, dictatorship in human history which is undertaking the greatest and most difficult historic task of eliminating classes, and it is forging ahead in conditions of most complex struggle, along the most tortuous

road ever known in human history. With a history of only forty years, it is impossible for the dictatorship of the proletariat to avoid making some partial mistake or another, in the course of its advance. Whatever the mistakes, since proletarian dictatorship is the system of the people themselves, it will learn from mistakes and correct them by itself. But the Yugoslav revisionists, following the imperialist reactionaries, venomously attack the proletarian dictatorship in the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. They call the state system of the socialist countries "bureaucracy and bureaucratic statism." They fiercely attack the Communist Parties in the socialist countries for holding the leading position and exercising the leading role in the life of the state and slander direct leadership and supervision by the Communist Parties in these countries over the work of the state as giving rise to "the growth of bureaucracy in the Party" and "statism." A mere glance shows that the weapons used by the Yugoslav revisionists against the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries come from the arsenals of the imperialists. It is just because they brandish these antiquated weapons in the name of "Communists," with the status of a "socialist country," and under the cloak of Marxism-Leninism, that they win special approval and plaudits from the U.S. imperialists.

All the classical writings of Marxism-Leninism show that socialist state power is the dictatorship of the proletariat, i.e. the proletariat organizing itself as the ruling class. After seizing power, the proletariat must exercise dictatorship through its own state apparatus over the vanquished exploiting classes, carry on the class struggle in the new conditions and solve the problem of whether the socialist road or the capitalist road will win out, so

as to eliminate classes. But the Yugoslav revisionists maintain that socialist state power should not be an instrument of force, should not exercise dictatorship over the class enemy and should not conduct struggle between the socialist and capitalist roads. At the same time, they make no little fuss about the so-called question of democracy, attacking the socialist countries under the pretext of promoting "democracy." Tito has manufactured the pretext that "we are always emphatically against regarding the proletarian dictatorship as mere force," as though there were only dictatorship and no democracy in the socialist countries. Since the class enemy still exists in the period of transition, and there are antagonistic contradictions between them and the proletariat, contradictions between the enemy and ourselves, dictatorship must be exercised if such contradictions are to be resolved. As to democracy, all democracy is merely a form of class rule. Democracy that is divorced from proletarian dictatorship can never be democracy under the socialist system. In essence, bourgeois democracy is dictatorship by the few over the great majority, the working people, while proletarian dictatorship means democracy for the great majority, the working people. Either the enemy wipes us out or vice versa; either bourgeois democracy or proletarian democracy. The dictatorship of the proletariat is a unity of dictatorship and democracy. Comrade Mao Tse-tung once said: "Democracy for the people and dictatorship over the reactionaries, when combined, constitute the people's democratic dictatorship" (*On People's Democratic Dictatorship*); "dictatorship does not apply in the ranks of the people. The people cannot possibly exercise dictatorship over themselves; nor should one section of them

oppress another section"; "under the people's democratic dictatorship, two different methods—dictatorial and democratic—should be used to resolve the two kinds of contradiction of different nature—those between ourselves and the enemy and those among the people." (*On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People*) By opposing democracy to dictatorship while chattering about abstract democracy, denying the necessity of dictatorship over the class enemy, the necessity of struggle between the socialist and the capitalist roads, the Yugoslav revisionists are simply trying to create confusion within the socialist countries in co-ordination with the subversive activities conducted against these countries by the imperialist countries.

Under the pretext that Stalin had made individual mistakes on the question of proletarian dictatorship, the Yugoslav revisionists exultantly exaggerated these mistakes to attack the proletarian dictatorship in the socialist countries. It never occurs to them that in doing so they are simply showing their revisionist colours. True, Stalin once made the appraisal that, as a rule, class struggle in the transitional period "grows increasingly acute," and this appraisal interpreted as continuous expansion of the class struggle, can bring detrimental results to the socialist cause. But this does not mean that to correct this mistake one must deny the class struggle in the transitional period, the struggle to decide whether socialism or capitalism will win. The facts show that the class struggle to decide which will win out continues not only throughout the initial stage of the proletarian dictatorship, when capitalist ownership is being eliminated and socialist ownership established, but also, on the political and ideological fronts, after the question of owner-

ship has been completely solved. In the struggle between the two roads of socialism and capitalism, there are contradictions between the enemy and ourselves and contradictions among the people. Sometimes, of course, the class struggle in the transitional period is tense and at other times relaxed, marked by ups and downs. At one stage, the situation may tend for a while to relaxation after the proletariat wins a round in battle and the class enemy is forced to retreat. But the class enemy is never resigned to extinction and will, in given conditions, launch fresh attacks on socialism. These ups and downs in the class struggle will repeat themselves many times over a period. Nevertheless, with the advance of the socialist revolution and socialist construction, the general trend is towards the gradual weakening of the class struggle till it dies out. The Yugoslav revisionists deny this objective law and spread the slander that the socialist countries aggravate the social contradictions by means of the power of the state. What interpretation can be placed on this other than that they are helping the imperialists and opposing proletarian dictatorship and the elimination of classes?

The Yugoslav revisionists particularly attack as the source of all evils, the democratic centralism practised in the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. They deceitfully drag in the experience of the "Paris Commune" and distort the lessons drawn from it by Karl Marx as being the elimination of centralism. This is an insult to Marx and to the French proletariat who raised the banner of the Paris Commune. As Lenin said, "there is no departure whatever from centralism" in Marx's summing up of the experience of the Paris Commune. (Lenin: *The State and Revolution*) In the socialist coun-

tries it is democracy, i.e. democratic centralism, not dictatorship, that is practised among the people. Among the people, democracy and centralism, decentralization and centralization of power — these are unities of opposites. Democracy means democracy under centralized guidance, not extreme democratization; centralism means centralism based on democracy, not absolute centralization. Decentralization means apportionment of power under unified leadership, not anarchy; centralization means concentration of power on the basis of bringing into play the activity and initiative of the lower organizations and the rank and file, not absolute centralization which restricts and hampers this activity and initiative. It is wrong to emphasize one aspect to the denial of the other. True, over-centralization or over-decentralization may occur in the course of socialist construction owing to lack of experience. But this is only a question of how democratic centralism is applied, not an inevitable result of proletarian dictatorship. In slandering centralism in the proletarian states, the Yugoslav revisionists merely reveal their ulterior motives in attacking the socialist countries. As to the so-called “social self-government,” which they assert to be an absolute boon, it is enough to quote what Engels said: “It is absurd to speak of the principle of authority as being absolutely evil, and of the principle of autonomy as being absolutely good.” (Engels: *On Authority*) And, as Engels pointed out, whoever sticks to this absurd concept is actually serving the reactionaries.

The Yugoslav revisionists are particularly energetic in attacking the management of economic affairs by the socialist state. According to them, if the proletarian state authority manages the national economy, the state be-

comes a means of hamstringing the development of socialism. This is extraordinary logic. Has there ever existed a state that does not manage economic affairs? So long as the state exists it must manage economic affairs in one way or another. The queerest part of the logic is this — when the Yugoslav revisionists talk about the tightening of economic control exercised by the state authority in the imperialist countries they see nothing wrong in this. On the contrary, they spare no words to eulogize and glorify this as a “factor of socialism.” Yet when they come to the economic control exercised by the state authority in the socialist countries, they roundly condemn it and smear it as “the source of bureaucracy and bureaucratic statism.” Is this not revealing as to the reactionary nature of the Yugoslav revisionists’ attack on state management of the economy in the socialist countries? In the classical works of Marxism-Leninism it is pointed out, time and again, that the proletarian state, as the representative of society, must organize the socialist economy. Why must the proletarian state manage the economy? The reasons are: 1 — to wage the struggle between the two roads to secure the triumph of the socialist road over the capitalist road; 2 — to carry through the class line and the class policies of the proletariat in all economic work; and 3 — taking the interests of the whole country and all the people into consideration, to ensure the planned, proportionate development of the socialist national economy in accordance with the objective laws of socialist economic development. Precisely as a result of planned state management of the national economy, the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries have made tremendous achievements in their economic construction. It goes without

saying that in the state management of the economy there should be a proper division of function and co-ordination between the central and local authorities. Unified control and planning by the central authorities must be correctly linked with the activity and initiative of the local authorities and the masses. But whatever the way in which the central and local authorities divide their work of economic management, and however the working people play their part in this management, this is a question of concrete forms of economic management. It is not a question of whether to abolish the proletarian state's function of economic management. What meaning can there be in the Yugoslav revisionists' talk about abolishing the economic function of the proletarian state? Apart from its trickery to mislead people, it simply means undermining and abolishing the economic foundations of the proletarian state, i.e. socialist ownership by the whole people; doing away with planned economy; throwing overboard the proletarian class line and class policy of socialist economic development; abolishing the unified leadership and supervision which the proletariat exercises over the socialist economy through the Communist Party and the state apparatus; restoring capitalist methods of administration and management; and preserving and restoring freedom for the bourgeoisie to facilitate its comeback.

In repudiating the Yugoslav revisionist theory of the state it is necessary to touch on the contradictions within socialist society. Some of our comrades at one time held that in socialist society there were no contradictions between the relations of production and productive forces, between the superstructure and the economic base; and so they denied the existence of contradictions among the

people in socialist society, or contradictions between the people's government as the apparatus of the state power and the masses. This was a metaphysical viewpoint. If this viewpoint guides national construction in the socialist countries, it is impossible to overcome these contradictions in good time, to make the socialist relations of production conform better to the growth of the productive forces and the socialist state structure conform better to the development of the economic base; and it becomes impossible to further develop the Marxist-Leninist theory of the state in the light of the rich experience gathered from practice. But the Yugoslav revisionists regard the contradictions within socialist society as primarily those between the state power and the working people; they then allege that these contradictions are antagonistic and maintain that the existence of the state is the source of these antagonistic contradictions. In fact, contrary to the Yugoslav revisionist nonsense, the antagonistic contradictions which exist in the socialist countries are those between the masses of the people led by the proletariat and their class enemies who oppose socialism. It is not that proletarian dictatorship breeds antagonistic contradictions, but that proletarian dictatorship is necessary to resolve them. To attack the socialist countries, the Yugoslav revisionists mix up contradictions among the people in the socialist countries with contradictions between ourselves and the enemy; they also mix up contradictions in the socialist system with those in the capitalist social system. Comrade Mao Tse-tung, in his essay *On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People*, creatively developed the Marxist-Leninist theory of the state. He pointed out that the internal contradictions in the socialist system of society are

fundamentally different from those in the capitalist system of society. In socialist society, contradictions between the relations of production and the productive forces, between the superstructure and the economic base, are non-antagonistic. The people's government representing the people's interests and the masses of the people are united as one. By contrast, irreconcilable and antagonistic class contradictions exist between a government of the exploiting class and the people. The contradictions between the people's government and the masses are those within the ranks of the people; underlying them is the basic identity of the interests of the people; and therefore they are non-antagonistic. They can be overcome and resolved by the socialist system itself. By magnifying them and labelling them antagonistic contradictions, the Yugoslav revisionists serve no purpose other than to besmirch proletarian dictatorship.

For the purpose of attacking the socialist countries, the Yugoslav revisionists, on grounds of their own fabrication, describe the socialist state system as the source of "bureaucracy" and maintain that as long as the socialist state system exists, bureaucracy will "continue to manifest itself as a tendency." Everyone knows that bureaucracy is a product of the state apparatus of exploiting class rule. The bureaucracy that exists in the Party and state organizations in a socialist country is a hang-over from the old society rather than a product of the socialist system or of the Communist Party. Such bureaucracy is totally incompatible with the political party of the working class and with the socialist state system. The history of proletarian dictatorship proves that only the socialist state system can effectively overcome bureaucracy; because only it can bring into full

play the initiative and activity of the masses, and only when this is done can there be elimination of bureaucracy, a product of the influence of the old society. In other words, the conquest of bureaucracy demands reliance on the masses and resolute struggle against the influence of bourgeois ideology. This struggle needs on the one hand leadership from above to help the government functionaries carry out continuous ideological remoulding, to correct their erroneous ways of thinking and doing things and to improve their methods of work; on the other hand, the struggle requires mobilization of the masses from the bottom up, the raising of their cultural level and political consciousness, the application of effective mass supervision over the state organs, and leading the masses to fight against bureaucracy. Our country's experience also gives proof of this point. In the nation-wide rectification campaign, we have found the method suited to the conditions of our country, during which we mobilize the masses fully to practise criticism and self-criticism, according to the "unity — criticism — unity" formula, by encouraging a full and frank airing of views, great debates and the posting of *tatsepao*.* As a result, the democratic life of our socialist society has achieved a mighty leap forward. Here we may well ask: Dare the Yugoslav revisionists practise democracy on so broad a scale?

The Yugoslav revisionists also attack the leading role of the Communist Parties in the socialist countries. They deny that the Communist Party is the highest form of organization of the working class and, on the pretext of opposing "a fusion of the organizations of Communists

* Opinions and criticisms written in bold Chinese characters on large sheets of paper, publicly posted for all to see. — Ed.

with the state apparatus," insist that it is not right for the Party to exercise direct leadership and supervision over the state. They maintain that the inevitable outcome of "an ever closer merging of the Party and state apparatus" is the "growth of bureaucracy" in the Party. Lenin's doctrine on Party building stresses that the Communist Party is the highest form of organization of the working class and only the political party of the working class, that is, the Communist Party, can give political leadership to the proletariat and, through the proletariat, unite all the working masses to carry out proletarian dictatorship; "without this the dictatorship of the proletariat is impossible." (Lenin: *Preliminary Draft of the Resolution of the Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party on the Syndicalist and Anarchist Deviation in Our Party*) This truth has been borne out by practice in the socialist states. The primary lesson taught by the history of proletarian dictatorship is that the proletarian cause of revolution and construction cannot advance a step without a Communist Party that takes Marxism-Leninism as its guide to action, builds itself on the principle of democratic centralism, establishes close ties with the masses, strives to become the very heart of the working people and educates its members and the masses of the people in Marxism-Leninism. In the course of socialist revolution and socialist construction, the Party must play the leading role, as regards both the general line and policy of building socialism and the line and policy for the socialist state; there must therefore be no separation between the Party and the government. It would be absolutely wrong to separate the Party from the government and thus leave the government outside the leadership of the Communist Party. Of course, the

Party and the government must do their work in different ways; the Party does not have to take on the routine work of the government organizations. But in all circumstances, the fundamental guarantee that the countries of our socialist camp will unite the people to vanquish the enemy is the strengthening of leadership by the Communist Party in the cause of socialism and over the organs of the state. The Yugoslav revisionists flagrantly reject Lenin's doctrine on Party building and do their utmost to attack the Communist Parties of the socialist countries; yet they still call themselves communists to parade before and deceive people. What impudence!

Externally, the leading group in Yugoslavia follows a foreign policy of praising the United States and slandering the Soviet Union which suits the needs of the imperialists; internally, it follows a policy of dispensing with the struggle between the socialist and capitalist roads, undermining the economic foundations of socialism and allowing capitalist relations and the American way of life to overrun the country freely. These are clear indications of the degeneration and betrayal on the part of the leading group in Yugoslavia. In this way, an irreconcilable contradiction arises between this leading group and the Yugoslav people. The leading group in Yugoslavia has neither the desire nor the courage to take down their signboard of "socialists" and "communists" altogether; for if they did, they would encounter strong opposition from the Yugoslav people, their usefulness as saboteurs of the socialist camp would come to an end and they would no longer receive rewards from the U.S. imperialists. This is why they go on, as the Chinese saying puts it, selling dog's meat under a sheep's head,

trying to get rewards from the imperialists while endeavouring to hoodwink the people at home and smooth away their discontent, and cover up their degeneration and betrayal. This is also why they have patched up many Marxist phrases into their hocus-pocus theory of the "withering away of the state."

This out-and-out revisionist theory of the withering away of the state argues that it is necessary for the role of the state under proletarian dictatorship to wither away in all fields of social life; but in actual fact, it aims to "wither away" the function of the socialist state in the exercise of dictatorship over the class enemy, the system of democratic centralism among the people, the role of the state in managing the socialist economy, and the leading role of the Communist Party in the state. In short, what they hope to wither away is socialism and communism. In their opinion, if the socialist countries fail to do this, it means "pragmatic revision" in the theory of the withering away of the state, and will give rise to "manifestations of bureaucratic-statist tendencies" and "fetter the development of social and economic factors." But, if the socialist countries really do as they suggest, it will simply facilitate the imperialist sabotage and subversive activities against the socialist countries, it will simply lead to a repetition of the counter-revolutionary uprising in Hungary and the restoration of capitalism. This indeed is the real motive behind the efforts by the modern revisionists of Yugoslavia to sell abroad the theory of the "withering away of the state."

It is reasonable to ask how this out-and-out anti-Marxist-Leninist theory of the "withering away of the state" is applied inside Yugoslavia. There, the main apparatus of the state — the police, the law courts, the

armed forces and the other punitive organs — so far from being weakened and withered away, are being greatly strengthened. As the Yugoslav leading group wants to maintain and consolidate its dictatorial rule, it is using the state apparatus to oppress those in opposition. Last year, more than thirty thousand Yugoslav workers (constituting 4.3 per cent of all the workers in the country) were victimized and expelled for criticizing the leadership. Reuter reported recently that mass arrests are being made in Yugoslavia of people opposed to the reactionary policies of the leading group. At the same time, the leading group is trying to deceive the people with such stuff as "social self-government" and "workers' self-government," falsely claiming that the state is in the course of "withering away." In fact, its perverted measures have driven the socialist cause of the Yugoslav people to the dangerous brink of "withering away." For home consumption, the modern revisionists' theory of the "withering away of the state" is nothing but a fig-leaf to cover up their degeneration and betrayal.

We Chinese Communists, like other Marxists throughout the world, genuinely advocate the theory of the withering away of the state. Basing himself on Marxist-Leninist theory, Comrade Mao Tse-tung has said that the conditions for the withering away of the state are, internally, the elimination of classes and class influence and, externally, the elimination of the imperialist system. As the internal class struggle grows gradually weaker until it finally dies out, the suppressive function of the state will naturally diminish and move in the direction of withering away. This is a long-term, natural course of development. At the same time, the external conditions should not be overlooked; moreover,

external and internal conditions act on each other. Lenin said: "The economic basis for the complete withering away of the state is such a high stage of development of communism that the antithesis between mental and physical labour disappears when there, consequently, disappears one of the principal sources of modern social inequality — a source, moreover, which cannot on any account be removed immediately by the mere conversion of the means of production into public property, by the mere expropriation of the capitalists." (Lenin: *The State and Revolution*) Therefore, the duration of the process during which the state withers away "depends upon the rapidity of development of the higher phase of communism." (*Ibid.*) There is nothing in common between the Marxist-Leninist theory of the withering away of the state and the reactionary fallacy of the Yugoslav revisionists concerning the withering away of the state.

While harping on their so-called theory of the "withering away of the state," the Yugoslav revisionists centre their attack on Stalin by means of every venomous invective at their disposal. They vilify Stalin for making a "pragmatic revision" in the Marxist-Leninist theory of the state and turning the Marxist-Leninist theory of the withering away of the state into the thesis that the state "does not wither away, but keeps strengthening in all fields of social life." The rich experience of the Soviet Union and the Soviet Communist Party in proletarian dictatorship and in building the socialist state is of world significance. Stalin was entirely correct in setting forth the functions of the state in regard to suppression, economic management and the education of the small producers, and also in saying that the withering

away of the state will begin with the natural and gradual withering away of the function of suppression, while the economic function will go on as a social function. As the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party has pointed out, he was mistaken on some particular aspects of the question of the state, yet Stalin was a great Marxist-Leninist, a staunch, indomitable fighter in the struggles against the enemy. The modern revisionists of Yugoslavia, who have become traitors to the working class, are utterly incapable of making a fair and just appraisal of Stalin. They make the calumny that a so-called "rule of one man" was practised in the Soviet Union. To this we may answer in Lenin's words: "To contrast, in general, dictatorship of the masses to dictatorship of the leaders is ridiculously absurd and stupid. What is particularly curious is that actually, new leaders are put forth (under cover of the slogan: 'Down with the leaders!') who talk unnatural stuff and nonsense." (Lenin: *"Left-Wing" Communism, An Infantile Disorder*) The new leader that the Yugoslav revisionists want to put forth is no other than a new Bernstein who has betrayed Marxism-Leninism and capitulated to U.S. imperialism.

From what has been said above, it is clear that the fallacies of the Yugoslav revisionists concerning the nature of the bourgeois state, the transition from capitalism to socialism, the nature and functions of the socialist state and the "withering away" of the state are out-and-out reactionary. We must resolutely smash this revisionism in order to defend the Marxist-Leninist theory of the state.