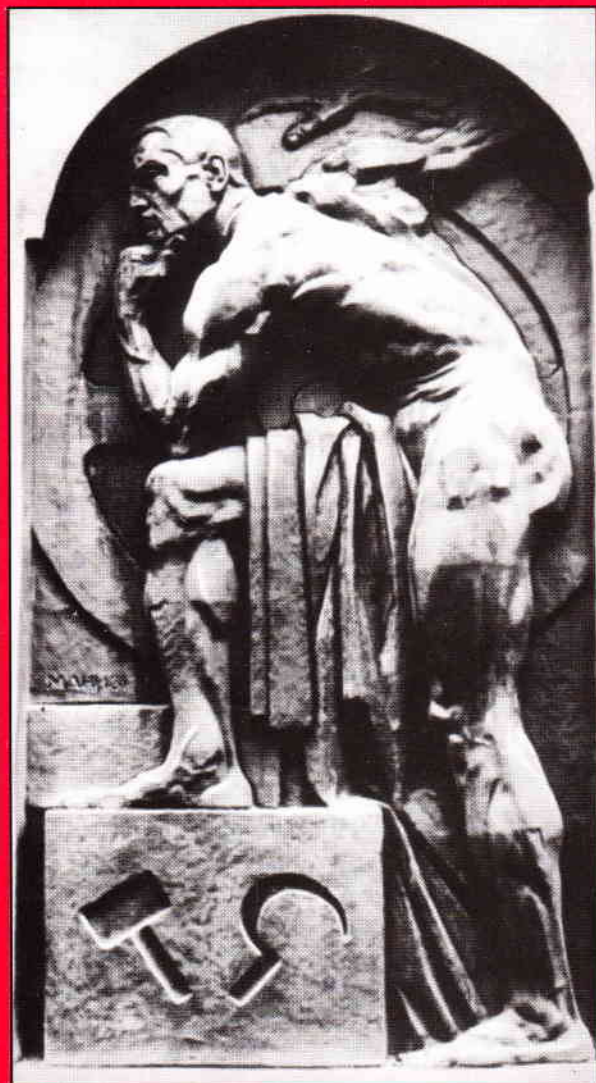


Dayitvabodh Reprint Series-2



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Socialism,  
Capitalist  
Restoration  
and the  
Great  
Proletarian  
Cultural  
Revolution

Shashi Prakash

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**Problems of Socialism,  
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**Rahul Foundation**  
Lucknow

*Translated from Hindi*  
**Rahul Foundation**

**ISBN 978-81-906235-9-9**

**Price:** Rs. 25.00

**First Edition:** January, 2008

Published by: **Rahul Foundation**  
69, Baba ka Purwa, Paper Mill Road, Nishatgunj,  
Lucknow-226006

Cover Design: **Rambabu**

Typesetting: Computer Division, Rahul Foundation

Printed by: Creative Printers, 628/S-28, Shaktinagar, Lucknow

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## **Publisher's Note**

The present essay was published in the Hindi journal 'Dayitvabodh' in its November-December 1993 issue under the Mao Tse-tung Birth Centenary Series but it was written in 1990. It was first presented as the base paper at the five-day All-India seminar at Gorakhpur organised by the Long-live Marxism Forum (6-10 June, 1990). The topic of the seminar was "Problems of Socialism, Capitalist Restoration and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution."

The essay presents a class-analysis of the events in the erstwhile Soviet Union and East European countries at that time (1990) and underlines the epochal contributions of Mao Tse-tung while thoroughly analysing the causes of capitalist restoration and the problems of socialism. The author wrote a supplement to clarify his position and include some new points after the discussions during the five-day seminar, and it has also been included in this booklet.

We are publishing two other booklets in the Dayitvabodh reprint series with this booklet, they are: 'Immortal are the Flames of Proletarian Struggles' and 'Why Maoism?'

It was reprinted as a booklet in Hindi in 1996 and several editions have been brought out since then. We have felt the need for an English edition since a long time but it has taken a long time to come out. We believe that this will be important and thought-provoking material for proletarian revolutionaries and left intellectuals as well as all those who have an interest in reading about the development of Marxist science.

— *Rahul Foundation*

25.1.08

## Preface

This essay and its supplement which is being published here in form of a booklet was written five years ago when the events taking place in contemporary Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe were being perceived as the 'defeat of Socialism', 'downfall of Communist rule', and 'disintegration of Socialist formation'; and the western intellectuals and the hacks of the Third World, who survive on their left-overs were celebrating the 'triumph of (Western) Democracy' with much festivity and merriment.

Once again in the entire world there was then quite a mayhem about the 'end of history', 'end of ideology' etc. In the period of Gorbachov and Yeltsin many Marxist 'free thinkers' became first the disciples of 'openness' and then the spokesperson for Post-Modernism, Post-Marxism etc. But Alas! All their philosophical discourses could not show the capitalist world the road to emancipation from its irremediable problems. Though the spirits of **Nietchze**, **Spengler**, **Toyanbee**, **Daniel Bell** arose, however, in a way that filled the entire capitalist world with the wails of despair and pessimism. The 'deranged jubilation' (How ironical that this phrase was coined by the messiah of Post-Modernism himself, **Jacques Derrida**!) at the "downfall of Socialism" soon was lost into the funereal dirge and frightened cries.

Five years have elapsed. Meanwhile, the global vessel of the sins of Capitalism has got filled a bit more. When the much publicised dream of the paradise of free market was realised in Russia the constituent countries of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the people there found out that this was the same centuries-old **classical capitalist hell** of plunder, inflation, unemployment, the ever-increasing gulf between the rich and the poor, killings-rapes-prostitution, brigandage, moral degeneration and mental diseases which is all pervasive from the countries of nether-world (Third World) to the Western summit of grandeur and prosperity.

The present diseases of world capitalism are well-familiar, however, today their nature is incurable in a more clear way and their form more

formidable than ever before.

In these conditions, from the past five years the people of Russia and countries of Eastern Europe are marching in processions holding the posters of Lenin and Stalin in their hands which is a clear indication of the fact that the toiling masses in the countries where Socialist experiments had once been carried out cannot tolerate the capitalist plunder-repression-crimes and deception for long. The second round of the world historical epical war of Proletarian revolution has begun.

And just at this juncture, the Proletarian forces on a worldwide scale are once again confronted with the fundamental ideological questions. The fundamental guarantee of the progress and success of the new proletarian revolutions in the phase of economic neo-colonialism—of the new editions of the October Revolution depends on the resolution of these questions that : 1 why and when the restoration of capitalism took place in the countries like Soviet Union, countries of Eastern Europe and China etc. 1 What were the historical achievements, failures, mistakes and objective limitations of Socialist experiments 1 What is the nature and form of the Socialist society 1 If Socialism is a long transition period between the class society and the classless society and during this period classes (and obviously class struggle too) exist, then which are these classes and what is the nature of class relations 1 What is the nature of the state in this transitional class society, which class has control over it, that is to say in what way is the question of the state and the revolution present in a Socialist society and how is it resolved 1 What are the views of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao on the dictatorship of the Proletariat, how did this concept gradually evolve and what do the historical experiences of its practice tell us 1 What is the nature of the production relations in the field of agriculture and industry and in totality, what is the status of market and bourgeois rights in them, in what forms the economy of commodity production is present in them, what is the nature and dynamics of political-cultural superstructure in the Socialist society and how does it influence the constantly changing economic base and in what forms is influenced by it...etc.

The key link amongst all these questions is that here too we **should not forget the class-analysis**. If the Socialist society is not a classless society then one has to understand its class nature so that the revolutionary vanguards of the Proletariat can ably lead the toiling masses in the class struggle during the protracted period of Socialist transition.

Today amongst the revisionist parties and Marxist academicians and

even amongst various factions of Communist revolutionaries thousand and one empirical criticisms-interpretations of capitalist restoration in Russia and Eastern Europe are being presented. In these interpretations, everything except materialist dialectical methodology of class-analysis and the Marxist perspective and approach on the fundamental question of the State and the Revolution is present. The dense cloud of academic, “original” thinking and formulations has been overspread. The situation is such that whereas on one hand, CPI (ML) led by **Vinod Mishra** appeals in the name of ‘Great Debate’ initiated by **Mao Tse-tung** and the Chinese party under his leadership against the Khrushchevite Revisionism and on the other taking a complete turn from its erstwhile position and completely adopting the Khrushchevite standards, it even starts acknowledging the Soviet Union as the Socialist society and the Soviet Party to be a correct Communist Party. Alongwith this it considers parties like CPI and CPM to be the correct leftists within the country and even appeals in the name of broad left unity. Like the bourgeois thinkers and revisionists across the world, it accepts the restoration of capitalism in Russia from 1990. Then the question arises that after all what are the fundamental identification signs or characteristic features of the Socialist society and Socialist production relations? Eventually what is the real meaning, identity or criterion of the word revisionism used by from **Lenin to Mao**? Today the situation is such that the parties like CPM, which adopted an indifferent stance during the ‘Great Debate’ and CPI, which took the side of Khrushchevite Revisionism (and which did not consider China Socialist upto the period of Mao), to them the “**Market Socialism**” of Chinese Khrushchev, **Deng Xiao-ping** is appearing to be the true Socialism since Yeltsin has destroyed Socialism in Russia! In his new incarnation as a self-proclaimed “Marxist theorist” the literary critic **Ram Vilas Sharma** though on one hand praises **Stalin** endlessly and deems Khrushchev wrong, on the other hand he accepts Pre-Yeltsin Soviet Society as Socialist! What is interesting is that he even gets two steps ahead of Khrushchev and chimes in with Euro-Communists and Neo-Leftists in declaring the conception of the dictatorship of the Proletariat itself to be the root of all evils and appeals in the name of concept of democracy. Then he does not state that how Stalin, who remained resolute on the conception of the dictatorship of the Proletariat was right and how Khrushchev who made claims about the ‘state of entire people’ and ‘party of all people’ was wrong? He even does not state that his formulation is not new but almost a century-old. Marx in the debate against Lassalle and Lenin in the debate against Kautsky had

shred to pieces the incorrect concepts of 'free state' and 'democracy beyond class' with adequate logics. Marx and Lenin had clarified that the science of the proletarian revolution considers the acceptance of the dictatorship of the Proletariat along with class struggle as a fundamental element. Without undertaking the analysis of production relations and class relations in a Socialist society, Ram Vilas Sharma considers only the infiltration of the imperialist financial capital as the essential reason behind the failure of Socialism.

In a nutshell, the Marxist method of analysis has got lost amidst the indiscriminate jostling of vulgar materialist and empiricist analyses and variegated kinds of "free thinking streams". The intellectuals like Ram Vilas Sharma, new revisionists of Vinod Mishra brand and revisionists of old Khrushchevite brand have not only covered with a crust of soot and ash the basic teachings of Mao and Stalin but also that of Marx to Lenin on the state and the revolution, on the dictatorship of the Proletariat, on the nature of Socialist transition. While putting forth their 'original propositions' on capitalist restoration, all the thinkers of Neo-Marxist brand never discuss the fact that as to what Lenin and Mao (and even Marx himself) have written on the class nature of the Socialist society, the form of class struggle in the Socialist society, the presence of the various forms of bourgeois production relations and superstructures in the Socialist society and the problems of Socialism born thereof and which are the sources and possibilities of the restoration of capitalism that they have discussed?

It is the outcome of such parochial thinking that all brands of Neo-Left are celebrating the victory gained by the so-called Communists-erstwhile Communists in the elections in Russia and various countries of Eastern Europe as a consequence of the immense hatred of the common masses against western capitalism and once again are creating illusion amongst the masses.

The fundamental and paramount guarantee of the future success of the proletarian revolutions and the proletariat is—the complete understanding of basic reasons of the failures of the past. The present essay is as much relevant today as it had been five years ago in the view of opening the doors to the elaborate field of serious study-thinking in this direction. **We once again invite an open debate on this question as had been done in 1990 during the five-day All India seminar.** We appeal to the readers that they definitely read the analyses of all the variegated "Marxists" academicians on the Socialist experiments, the analysis of the

reasons of their defeat and the dictatorship of the proletariat etc; however, before that it is also essential to study what the great teachers and leaders of the international proletariat—Marx- Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao have said and written on all these fundamental questions and the sum up that the experienced revolutionary parties and their leaders who are themselves involved in revolutionary practice have done of the experiences of the past revolutionary experiments. Those who believe that '**Marxism is the guiding principle of actions**' should follow only this methodology.

In this essay, through a detailed analysis and elaborate references of Marx, Lenin and Stalin this establishment has been presented that Socialism is a long transitional period between a class society and a classless society. During this period too, classes, capitalist production relations, exploitation and bourgeois and other class superstructures are in existence in society. During this protracted period of the Socialist transition, for a very long time the possibilities of the capitalist restoration are inevitably present from the side of the old exploiting classes, new bourgeois class born within the Socialist social formation and the imperialism which is ever ready to provide assistance to them. In the human history, the proletarian revolutions are the first such revolutions whose objective is to create a classless-exploitation-free society—that is to say to ultimately put an end to the class and the state itself through the process of withering away. It is not difficult to understand from this view that the class struggle continuing under Socialism will be more complex, fierce, indomitable and protracted than ever before and as Lenin and Mao have repeatedly pointed out, during this the ultimate victory can only be decided after many defeats-triumphs and ups and downs.

In the essay, while cleaning up the various kinds of new-old Social Democratic trash, it has been proved that even today 'the basic foundations of Marxism on the state and the revolution are correct. **The question of the state power is the paramount question of the revolution,** this fact is true for Socialism too since during that period too, the bourgeoisie is in existence and we know that it is only through the means of statepower that one class rules over the other class. The state power is a class superstructure, it can never be beyond class. The bourgeois democracy is, in reality, the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the Socialist Democracy is the dictatorship of the proletariat. Only by the use of force over bourgeoisie through its own state power can the proletariat take Socialism continuously forward in the direction of Communism. That is to say, under Socialism, **the fundamental question is to continue the**

**revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat.** Thus, under Socialism too, the class struggle is the keylink to the development of the society.

In the article, the implementation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the positive-negative experiences of the Soviet and Chinese experiments of Socialist transformation have been discussed in detail, based on the experience of capitalist restoration in the Soviet Union and the experience of the class struggle continuing in China, the epoch-making experiment by Mao—the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution has been discussed, and it has been enunciated that while further evolving the Marxist teachings on the state and the revolution, what explanation Mao offered of the reasons behind the dangers of the capitalist restoration and what course he suggested for struggle against them. Despite the first experiment of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, this article also points out towards the changes in the class power balance and the objective and subjective reasons that led to the restoration of capitalism in China too and sparked off an unprecedented phase of the world historical reversal.

The new editions of the proletarian revolution can be created on the basis of this understanding and preparations can be made in advance to prevent various possibilities of the capitalist restoration.

Based on the basic foundations of Marxism, it has been clarified in the beginning of the article itself that the capitalism had been restored in the Soviet Union since the period of Khrushchev itself who having renounced the principles of class struggle and the dictatorship of the proletariat, expounded the thesis of 'peaceful transition' and while denying the presence classes and class struggle in Socialism, established the capitalist dictatorship in the name of the 'state of the entire people'. From the period of Khrushchev to that of Brezhnev the sham flag of Socialism kept flying since the form of the newly established capitalism was that of the state monopoly capitalism in which the external form of the private ownership, the new bourgeoisie and the contradiction between the capital and labour was not entirely clear. The new bourgeoisie ruled in the name of Socialism and the Communist Party and their crimes, corruption and then the neo-Fascist activities and corruption disgraced communism before the eyes of the people.

Besides the ruling revisionist bureaucratic new Bourgeoisie, the new bourgeois elements at various levels were also gradually born from the womb of this state monopoly capitalism wearing the Socialist garb. Ultimately as the logical culmination of the intensifying contradictions of

the state monopoly capitalism, its transformation into the open private or classical capitalism was bound to happen and which was brought to a conclusion in the Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in 1989-90. In other words, so as to cure the stagnation inherent in the state monopoly capitalist structure and the socio-political crises born thereof, the base and the superstructure were **reorganised on the Neo Classical Capitalist Pattern** between 1985 and 1990. The supporter of the open capitalism and Pro-West new bourgeoisie that replaced all new types of bureaucratic monopolist bourgeoisie of the revisionist elitist power came to the power. Obviously, the imperialist finance capital and its entire material strength too performed a significant role in this process.

Nowadays, in Eastern Europe and Russia the so-called Communists or the former Communists that are coming to power by winning elections are not the representatives of the proletariat (as it is, the bourgeoisie and their patron imperialists can never transfer the power to the true Communists by the peaceful process of elections). These Communists were the representatives of the same old bureaucratic bourgeoisie that remained in power from the period of Khrushchev to the Gorbachovite transitional period. That class (like every ruling-class) though had been deposed, was however, still in existence in form of a dominant economic-social-political force in Russian-Eastern European society. Now capitalising on the hatred and rebellion of the common toiling masses against the open capitalism, it once again wants a share in the power and infact wants to prove to the imperialism and the indigenous new capitalists that in the changed conditions of the present times it too is committed to the market economy, is a useful component of this system and their servant.

And in a way, from its viewpoint this thinking is but appropriate. The influential role of the Social Democracy, revisionism and motley crew of "lefts" as the 'safety valve' to reduce the pressure of mass discontent, as the second-third line of defense of the bourgeois political system has not yet come to an end. In the present phase of privatisation-liberalisation too, the role of Social Democracy as a balancing power in the field of economics and politics and as a force that blunts the revolutionisation of the consciousness of the people by providing them with illusory relief still continues to be in existence. The return of the so-called Communists in Russia and Eastern Europe and the "success" and crises of the "Market socialism" of Chinese Khrushchev, Deng Xiao-ping, which is much eulogised by the West can be understood in a correct manner in this very

context.

However, this circle of the intensifying irremediable crises of the world capitalism is so vicious that the Social Democracy cannot offer it anything more than the momentary relief. All Keynesian formulae have been rendered useless. No veil can shroud the blatant contradiction between labour and capital. The continuing of struggle under the leadership of Maoist Party in Peru despite terrible repression, the Chiapas (Mexico) Peasants' revolt, the new uprising of Guerilla struggle in Philippines, the indications of the beginning of a new phase of Guerilla struggle in the entire Latin America and the eruption of mass movements even in the prosperous countries of the West inform that the people once again are bracing themselves against the world capitalism. In such times, it is the responsibility of the vanguards of the proletarian revolution that they internalise the correct true ideology of the proletarian revolution—Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Ideology, give a befitting reply to every attempt of its distortion and corruption, undertake its extensive propaganda and arouse, mobilise and organise the masses on its basis.

Besides, counterfeit, electoral Communists, today the revolutionary Communist forces too are evolving and getting organised with much greater pace in Russia, Ukraine, various countries of Eastern Europe and even in Germany. There in China, all the colour-complexion of "Market Socialism" has started fading and the revolts of peasants-workers are erupting hither-tither.

We will have to comprehend the meaning of these signs with watchful eyes and acquaint the ranks of revolution with the revolutionary content of Marxism with much perseverance and industry. If this small booklet proves meaningful in taking forward this process we will consider our enterprise to be successful.

February 14, 1996

Shashi Prakash

Of late, Glasnost-Perestroika and its implications and the events of power-transformation in the countries of Eastern Europe have been and still remain the focus of all political discussions. These developments have left no room for any doubt about the fact that a Socialist system no longer exists in these countries. And yet, for Communists it is necessary today to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the content and form of these societies through a thorough analysis of the entire historical process of capitalist restoration and the implications that they have for world proletarian revolution. This is a must for deciding the tasks ahead.

Besides, Communists are faced with another responsibility. The international bourgeoisie, capitalising on the temporary setback to the Socialist experiments has launched an all-round attack on the proletarian ideology and a desperate campaign of false, slanderous propaganda. That calls for an effective retaliation, which necessarily means that we emphatically outline the basic tenets of Marxism-Leninism oft-proven by the Socialist experiments and the experiments of history, the teachings and the essence of the great revolutions that were carried out under their guidance.

## The present situation in Russia, Eastern Europe and China

It is not now that Socialism is being replaced by capitalism in Soviet Russia and the countries of Eastern Europe. This process had, in fact, begun in these countries soon after the death of Stalin.

After Stalin passed away, Khrushchev, on capturing power, abandoned Socialist policies and principles and made way for the implementation of revisionist policies and principles. After establishing his decisive control over the party and the state by 1956, Khrushchev resorted to the policies of capitalist restoration in a clear-cut manner and this process went on at a fast pace. Rejecting the fundamentals of Marxism, he systematically proceeded to propound the principles of modern revisionism and then put them into practice. The period of Khrushchev was the initial period of State Monopoly Capitalism and the autocratic



Dictatorship of the new type of bourgeoisie—the Revisionist Bourgeoisie. In Brezhnev's period the process of formation of the structure of State Monopoly Capitalism and its superstructure edifice was consolidated, bourgeois relations became well entrenched in the society, the Soviet Union entered the race for world domination as a Social Imperialist superpower and the grip of the Social Fascist dictatorship of the revisionist bourgeoisie became more and more autocratic.

Today what is happening in the Soviet Union is that open capitalism of the Western type is taking the place of revisionist capitalism. The place of dictatorship of revisionist bourgeoisie over the people through the domination of the revisionist party over state-power is being taken by the dictatorship of a bourgeoisie of the likes of Western capitalism with an outer facade of bourgeois democracy. The place of a Social Fascist state is being taken by a bourgeois state based on a multi-party parliamentary system. **Gorbachov's** policies are the inevitable necessity of the today's Soviet capitalist society and the logical culmination of the development until date. During the last 35 years of capitalist restoration, the contradiction within the bourgeois framework between the base and the superstructure had steadily sharpened in the Soviet Union and had become irresolvable. In order to find a release from the stagnant economy and the consequent socio-political crises, the restructuring of the base and the entire superstructure edifice had become imperative. The relative lack of competition, in the bourgeois sense, inherent in the state monopoly capitalist structure was a fetter in the growth of productive forces, and to seek a release from this crisis there was no way out other than resorting to privatisation and liberalisation or in other words, reinstating capitalism in its classical form. The Brezhnevite regime represented the revisionist bourgeoisie, whose interests were and still are inherent in the revisionist bourgeois aristocracy, the state monopoly structure of the Soviet economy and their monopolistic rule over the Social Fascist state. The privileged minority bourgeois aristocracy comprised of the party and state bureaucracy, managers of factories, and collective farms, and the upper strata of experts and intellectuals. Those opposing Gorbachov's reforms in the Soviet party today—the supposedly conservative lobby represents this very revisionist capitalist class. The new bourgeoisie which is the supporter of the reforms of Gorbachov, the policies of liberalisation and privatisation, has emerged over the last 35 years as an inevitable logical culmination of the capitalist path of social development and which champions open capitalism. The present balance of class forces in the

Soviet Union has tilted very much in favour of this new bourgeoisie and despite various obstacles and pressures the orientation of transition to open capitalism continues to be guaranteed.

Owing to definite historically-determined factors this same process has unfolded itself in a different form in the East European countries. Its form has been more blatant and pace much faster than in the Soviet Russia and the results too have appeared sooner. In those countries the regimes that have been blown away like sand dunes were regimes of the revisionist aristocracy, which have now been replaced by the new capitalist class. There are certain historical reasons for the faster pace and more blatant form of this entire process in the Eastern Europe. Undoubtedly, the Communist Parties had played an influential role in the class struggle and a leading role in the struggle against Fascism in those countries; all the same, the revolutions had not occurred as a result of independent internal motion but the establishment of people's democracies was a historical outcome of the anti-Fascist victory campaign of the Soviet Red Army. Merely ten years or so of Socialist construction were granted to those countries and the roots of Socialism on the economic-political plane had not even consolidated when the process of capitalist restoration began there. In reality, even in the short span of Socialism, the bourgeois forces were relatively stronger there, and in fact, the powerful aid and support that the Socialist Soviet Union lent them was a major factor behind the sustenance of the rule of the proletariat in those countries. Not surprisingly, therefore, with the onset of capitalist restoration in Russia, those countries, without any delay, adopted the capitalist path. In Russia the period of Socialist experimentation under the dictatorship of the proletariat was the longest of all. The pace of capitalist restoration here even after 1956 was therefore not that straight and rapid as in the Eastern Europe. Here the proletariat and the working people could not accept the changes that easily, and that is why the revisionists had to adopt various fraudulent means, pose-make believe appearances and only after traversing several stages could the advanced Socialist social institutions and relations be wiped off from the society. In comparison with the revisionist capitalism of the Eastern Europe the Russian Revisionism standing on a firmer economic foundation obtained from a Socialist legacy was relatively much more firm, and from the quarters of the social forces supporting the old base and old superstructure Gorbachov still has to face strong opposition.

In China too the Fascist rule of **Deng Xiao-ping** and his followers represents the bourgeois classes which comprise the revisionist

aristocracy—the state monopoly capitalism. In the restoration of capitalism, Deng's rule too has had to face staunch opposition from the people and the Communist rank and file and is facing stiff opposition even today. In the country which underwent Mao's great Socialist experiments this course could understandably not have been smooth. On the other hand, owing to the backward productive forces, the social Fascist rule of the Chinese revisionist capitalism with its weak economic base is incapable of putting the breaks on the evils that are fast emerging in the society as well as of withstanding the pressure of privatisation and the rapid inflow of foreign capital. Ultimately, just as in the Eastern Europe blatant capitalism is bound to dislodge the present set-up here as well. It is certain that the future of Chinese revisionist capitalism too will be a system of open capitalism having limited political freedom, dependent on imperialism and a country which would find its place amidst the ranks of the capitalist countries of the Third World. Here too, demands for bourgeois democracy, reforms and open capitalism are being raised by the bourgeois social forces that have prevailed in the society since the Socialist period, and have thrived and grown since the resurgence of capitalism. At the same time, the people of China too are waging a struggle against the social Fascist rule and against the corruption and nepotism of the handful of revisionist elites. In the agitation of May last both these currents were present. One was the current of the bourgeoisie demanding bourgeois reforms and Western capitalism and the second, the revolutionary current of the people that sought to fight against the Fascist rule of revisionist capitalism and for the reinstatement of democratic rights and the achievements of Socialism.

But for slight variations, in context of the fundamental nature of socio-economic formation, today's model of the Eastern Europe is also the model for Russia and the same is the model for future China. With the establishment in power of a representative of the neoclassical capitalism in the form of Gorbachov and with the basis of Russian support and protection having slipped away, as well as with the direct encouragement to the new bourgeoisie that came forth from Gorbachov, the weak, revisionist capitalist regimes of the Eastern Europe were bound to collapse in no time. In those countries there was widespread resentment against the corruption and degeneration of the revisionist aristocracy and the autocratic Fascist rule, on which the new bourgeois ruling class of all these countries did not fail to capitalise. The situation in Romania was different from the other East European countries. There open capitalism had quite

a weak support base and even today it remains weak. There Russia brought a coup' d'etat against Ceausescu and installed pro-Russia Generals in power. This conspiracy and coup had the support of the ruling classes of America and the entire Western world.

As a gist of a thorough and comprehensive socio-economic analysis, our conception is that two contradictions are operating at present in the Russian society. **First**, the contradiction between labour and capital and **second**, the contradiction between the old and the new capitalist classes, that is between revisionist capitalism and neo-classical capitalism. The present changes in Russian society are a consequence of the resolution of the second contradiction, though the first basic and antagonistic contradiction has all along been operating as the motive force behind the resolution of the second. In Chinese society too, these two contradictions are operating today. Of these, here too, the first antagonistic contradiction is basic, whose resolution is possible only through a new proletarian revolution. The objective conditions for the resolution of the second contradiction through the establishment of open capitalism have not yet matured, but such a possibility exists not too distant in the future. In the East European countries, three contradictions have been operating. **First**, the contradiction between labour and capital. **Second**, the contradiction between Russian imperialism and its puppet revisionist indigenous bourgeois regimes on the one hand, and the remaining bourgeois classes and all classes of the people on the other. And **third**, the contradiction between the new and the old bourgeoisie, between revisionist capitalism and open capitalism. After withdrawal of Russian support and direct encouragement to the new bourgeoisie by Gorbachov, the fall of the revisionist regimes in those countries was inevitable, and in this form appeared the resolution of the third contradiction.

The bourgeois democracy that is taking shape in the Soviet Union and the Eastern Europe is clearly a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The Marxist proposition that a bourgeois democracy is in essence a bourgeois dictatorship and Socialist democracy the dictatorship of the proletariat, is still cent-percent valid and sound. Neither an inch less, nor an inch more. As long as classes continue to exist this will be true. The bourgeoisie enforcing a bourgeois democracy on the pattern of the West in the Eastern Europe and Russia is as much an enemy of the proletariat, the toiling masses and the people as a whole as the revisionist bourgeoisie. In **Marx's** time a worker had cried aloud in an assembly of capitalists in a palatial auditorium in London, "If feudal lords take out our bones and sell them,

then you capitalists would procure them, grind them and sell them in the market as powder!" In the present context too this voice of a representative proletariat is truly relevant. If revisionist capitalists were to sell workers' bones on auction, then in grinding them to powder and then competing to sell it in the markets the new bourgeoisie of Russia and the Eastern Europe will not hesitate the least bit. In Russian and in the East European societies revisionist capitalism had created an irresolvable crisis of economic stagnation, corruption and a Fascist dictatorship. Open capitalism of the Western pattern will create naked, rapidly sharpening disparities, unemployment and increasing prices. The inevitable logical culmination will be the rapid thriving and growth of social evils. The capitalist game of greed and use of brute force will now come into full play here. In all these countries, just as the exhilarating din following the fall of the old, corrupt regimes has begun to subside, the people are beginning to see the inconsistencies of the new system. The fact is that the people of these countries have already begun to raise their voices of protest.

**In effect**, these changes are, objectively speaking, positive. These are the forward strides of history. Very often history in its natural forward motion kicks off from its path the stones that have once been hurdles. Revisionist capitalism was one such hurdle. The nature of class struggle would now become more blatant and the bourgeoisie and the proletariat would once again come face to face with each other. The face of revisionism that has been maligning the image of Socialism now stands exposed and the fog of confusion that has prevailed amongst the Communist ranks and the proletariat of the whole world has now almost cleared.

## **The nature of Socialist Society and the problems of the transition period**

After 1953 in Russia and Eastern Europe and after 1976 in China the beginning of capitalist restoration was a defeat of Socialism, but this was not an inexplicable or unforeseen event. It had some definite objective and subjective causes and a definite historical background. In order to understand the defeat of Socialism and to understand how the ultimate victory of Socialism over capitalism is certain, it is necessary that we acquaint ourselves well enough with the entire historical background, with the long, protracted and complex nature of the struggle for Socialism.

Without a thorough understanding of this we cannot but hold an idealist conception and idea about Socialism. It was through a struggle of four hundred long years after several phases of defeat and obstruction that capitalism attained a decisive victory over feudalism. The struggle of Communism against capitalism is an even more complex and long struggle, because it is a struggle to put an end to all classes and every type of exploitation—such a struggle after whose victory the hitherto written history of mankind would become history of the "prehistoric period". We must very well realise the fact that human beings do make their history themselves; they make it not in circumstances of their own choice but in circumstances handed down by history itself. The subjective efforts to create history are always influenced, limited and governed by objective factors. Besides, the realisation of an ideology in the form of social experiments has its own inevitable limitations and problems and even after an ideology is established on the philosophical-ideological plane, only after summing up a great many attempts, experiences, successes and failures do concrete forms and means of practice come into existence.

Therefore, in order to develop a clear and comprehensive understanding of the process of capitalist restoration and its causes it is first of all necessary to understand the Socialist society formed after a proletarian revolution—what is the nature, content and form of the society, what are its basic characteristics, what is the type of socio-economic formation in this phase and what are the laws of its development?

First and foremost, it is necessary to take cognisance of the fact that Socialism is not a stable and integrated socio-economic formation. It is a lengthy transition period between capitalism and classless society. In human history proletarian revolutions are the first such revolutions to have the goal of creating a classless, exploitation-free society, wherein class and the state have to be made to disappear through a process of withering away. Therefore, the struggle of the proletariat is not only against the bourgeoisie and bourgeois culture, but against all exploiting classes, all class tendencies and the class-culture, class habits, class-evils that have been entrenched in society over thousands of years. Keeping this in mind, in the long period of Socialism, the protracted nature of class struggle, the inevitability of perpetual revolutions and the possibilities of many ups and downs of victory and defeat can easily be appreciated.

**Marx and Engels** had time and again explained about this lengthy historical period. **Lenin**, while mentioning in more clear terms of its nature, laws of development and problems, had often discussed the ever impeding

dangers of capitalist restoration. On the basis of the sum-up of the experiences of the Socialist experiments of Russia, and experiences of class struggle in the phase of Socialism in his own country, Mao, while making the most detailed micro and macro analysis of the base and the superstructure of Socialist society, their interrelations and the nature of class struggle therein, for the first time, clearly illumined the laws and the path of class struggle in Socialist society and propounded the theory of perpetual revolution as the only effective means to prevent capitalist restoration. Today as a result of revisionist propaganda most Communists are either unaware or possess a superficial understanding of these scientific teachings of Marxism on Socialism, because of which they usually subscribe to an idealist and metaphysical idea about Socialism and thus fail to understand the present resurgence of capitalism in the Eastern Europe, Russia or China, its causes, its objective basis and its historical background.

Only after traversing a prolonged historical phase of Socialist transition can human society reach that advanced stage of development where objects lose their exchange value and only their use values and effect value remain. In this stage of overproduction objects will no longer exist in the form of commodities, the rule of money will disappear and people will work according to their capacity and get according to their needs. Only on reaching that stage can classes, all social class-institutions including the state, class-ideologies and class struggle be eliminated.

Throughout the period of Socialist transition upto the stage of Communism the market value of objects remains, the commodity economy continues to exist, the laws of market and of value continue to operate, and for a long period until Communism is at close reach, the principle of 'each according to his work' remains in force, that is, the existence of labour as a commodity continues. Accordingly, in this entire phase classes do exist and class struggle also continues. In this entire phase of Socialism, the class currents and tendencies that exist on the superstructural plane persist for a long time as an active material force to turn backwards the wheels of the forward advance towards Communism.

The founders of Socialism and the leaders of the proletariat have talked of these problems of Socialism ever since the initial phase of the inception of Marxism, and with its development and enrichment through the experiences of experiments their conception became more and more concrete, deep and extensive. Marx and Engel always described Socialism as a transit point "necessary for the abolition of class distinctions" and

not as an ultimate objective. Way back in 1850 in his classical work, "The Class Struggle in France, 1848-1850", Marx had most significantly underlined the essential characteristic features of Socialism, "This Socialism is the declaration of the permanence of the revolution, the class dictatorship of the proletariat as a necessary stage towards the abolition of all class differences, the abolition of the whole system of production on which they rest, the abolition of all the social conditions which correspond to these production relations, the destruction of all the ideas which arise out of these social conditions." In 1857 in the Critique of the Gotha Programme Marx had said in clear words, "Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. Corresponding to this is also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat." The establishment of dictatorship of the proletariat by no means implies that the exploiting classes would cease to exist. Lenin has time and again underlined this fact. He said, "The dictatorship of the proletariat is not the end of class struggle but its continuation in new forms. The dictatorship of the proletariat is class struggle waged by a proletariat that is victorious and has taken political power into its hands against a bourgeoisie that has been defeated but not destroyed, a bourgeoisie that has not vanished, not ceased to offer resistance, but that has intensified its resistance. (Foreword to the published speech, Deception of the people with slogans of Freedom and Equality). On this point he explains elsewhere, "The transition from capitalism to Communism represents an entire historical epoch. Until this epoch has terminated, the exploiters inevitably cherish the hope of restoration, and this hope is converted into attempts at restoration". Further he adds, "The abolition of classes calls for a long, difficult and dogged class struggle, which does not come to an end after the overthrow of the rule of capital, the destruction of the bourgeois state and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat (as the vulgar representatives of old Socialism and old Social Democracy would imagine); it only changes its forms and in many respects becomes even more bitter." Lenin emphatically pointed out that the period of transition from Capitalism to Communism "inevitably is a period of an unprecedentedly violent class struggles in unprecedentedly acute forms" (The State and Revolution)

On the basis of a sum-up of the positive and negative experiences of the Socialist experiments of Russia and the experiments and struggles in

China following the revolution, in 1962 Mao explained in clear terms the persistence of class struggle in Socialist society and the dangers of capitalist restoration, “**Socialist Society covers a considerably long historical period. In the historical period of Socialism, there are still classes, class contradictions and class struggle, there is the struggle between the Socialist road and the capitalist road, and there is the danger of capitalist restoration. We must recognise the protracted and complex nature of this struggle. We must heighten our vigilance. We must correctly understand and handle class contradictions and class struggle, distinguish the contradictions between ourselves and the enemy from those among the people and handle them correctly. Otherwise a Socialist country like ours will turn into its opposite and degenerate, and capitalist restoration will take place. From now on we must remind ourselves of this every year, every month and every day so that we can retain a rather sober understanding of this problem and have a Marxist-Leninist line.**”

Now, let us attempt to visualize how in the basic economic structure and within the inter-linkages of the superstructure such elements are present which give rise to the protracted nature of class struggle in this phase and due to which the possibility of capitalist restoration persists over quite a long period of time.

After traversing the initial stages of development in Socialist society, the system of public ownership replaces the system of private ownership and after establishing control over the Socialist economy the working people become the owners of the society. The teachings and the implementation of Marxism gradually frees the old society of its material and spiritual bondage and propels the entire masses towards Communism. In this sense Socialist society is the initial stage of Communist society, but **“not as it has developed on its own foundations, but on the contrary, just as it emerges from capitalist society; which is thus in every respect, economically, morally and ideologically, still stamped with the birth marks of the old society from whose womb it emerges.”** (*Marx: Critique of the Gotha Programme*). On the various aspects and facets of Socialist society, on its politics, economy and ideology, their influence still remains, despite the power having been usurped from the bourgeoisie and all the exploiting classes. This is to the extent that for a long time the material presence of those classes also continue to exist and the process of their continual emergence and re-emergence also come to an end only at a very slow pace and after a prolonged time span. Therefore, the entire historical stage of Socialism “is a period of struggle between dying capitalism and

nascent Communism.” (Lenin: “Economics and Politics in the Era of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat”).

In the phase of Socialism there exist till a definite period non-Socialist production relations. Take, for instance, the system of ownership. Private ownership is not completely eliminated with the seizure of power by the proletariat. Along with a Socialist system based on public ownership, petty forms of bourgeois private ownership and exploitation continue to exist over a long period, small scale ownership persists in industry and agriculture, co-operative farms also are bourgeois in essence and even after the abolition of well-defined bourgeois interests, remnants of individual economy do persist in the cities and the villages. At the level of interpersonal relationships contradiction remains for a long time between the classes representing bourgeois production relations and the working people. With regard to the distribution of individual consumer goods, capitalist and bourgeois experts still get higher salaries. All these non-Socialist production relations not only restrict the growth of productive forces, but also remain in contradiction with Socialist production relations. That is why Lenin repeatedly pointed out that the threat of restoration of capitalism exists not only from the old exploiting classes who make efforts to regain their lost “paradise”, from the international relations of the bourgeoisie and from the stranglehold of international capital, but also from those bourgeois elements and that capitalism which is engendered by small scale capitalist production continuously, daily, hourly and spontaneously. (*Lenin: Left-wing Communism—An infantile disorder; The immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government; Economics and Politics in the Era of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*). On the basis of experience gained from experiments, Mao also underlined this truth many a times. Within a Socialist system various types of socio-economic formations co-exist for a long time. In 1921 Lenin had mentioned about the presence of five different socio-economic formations at the same time under the dictatorship of the proletariat.

During the Socialist transition more than the presence of the old exploiting classes, the importance of the problem lies in the fact that even after the Socialist production relations and a Socialist public ownership system is decisively established, a commodity economy continues to exist, bourgeois rights still exist, the ground for the birth of new bourgeois elements is still present, the laws of value still operate, the class struggle still continues and, in this way, the objective basis of capitalist restoration remains. Although it is true that the establishment of Socialist public

ownership is a negation of bourgeois private ownership, yet that does not in the least mean that the question of ownership is resolved for ever. Even before Mao, Marx and Lenin had often emphasised this point and history has proven that mere changes in the juridical forms of ownership is not sufficient to do away with the circumstances for the existence of classes and class struggle. These circumstances are in fact not related to the juridical forms of ownership but to the relations of production, to the form of the social process of appropriation and to those conditions which this process creates for the agents of production. For the elimination of bourgeois production relations and of the antagonistic juxtaposition of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat it is not enough to just bring about state ownership and collectivisation. Even after this the bourgeoisie can be present in different forms and especially can arise as a state capitalist class. The historic role of the dictatorship of the proletariat is not to merely bring about a change in the forms of property. Its **real mission** is to smash old production relations and establish new production relations through the complex and protracted transformation of the social process of appropriation, and thus ensure the transition from the capitalist mode of production to the Communist mode of production.

Even Socialist production relations themselves go through a process of continuous development and advance in the direction of a state of purity and completion. Throughout the phase of the development and consolidation of Socialist state ownership and Socialist collective ownership a struggle is waged between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie for the economic leadership. The essential condition for the continuation of Socialist transition is that small scale Socialist collective ownership of the toiling masses develops continuously in the direction of being transformed into large scale Socialist collective ownership and thereafter into Socialist state ownership. Economic units of collective ownership (such as collective farms) are not the property of the whole people and they exchange commodities, whereas the state-owned economic units are the property of the whole people and they exchange articles or objects. Thus, though controlled and limited, the existence of commodities continues over a long period during the phase of Socialism.

Here itself, the juridical illusion that bringing all property under state ownership and the socialisation of property are one and the same phenomenon or socio-economic process, ought to be clarified. Often in order not to reveal their ideology and the true nature of capitalist restoration the revisionists make use of this juridical illusion. This has

however been exposed by the leaders of the proletariat time and again. The property of the entire state is, beyond doubt, a negation of private ownership, but not a complete negation of the entire system of ownership. Even after the completion of the process of state ownership, disparities and bourgeois rights remain as far as the interpersonal relationships are concerned, commodity production though extremely controlled and limited, still persists and in connection with the distribution of articles of consumption the role of the state remains. Socialisation is one step ahead where the state ceases to play a role in the regulation of the system of production and the system of distribution of consumer goods. In the process of state ownership the main role is that of the conscious effort of the proletarian state power, whereas socialisation is an objective condition independent of the will of class and the state, that requires a certain level of development of the productive forces that would guarantee production and distribution in the interests of the entire society. For the development of the productive forces, an important factor and an indivisible aspect is the advancement of the culture and society.

As Socialism makes transition to advanced stages and as property gets increasingly socialised the existence of commodities becomes increasingly restricted and controlled, and thus progress takes place in the direction of their withering away. But as long as commodities exist, the laws of market and of value do operate in the society in some form or the other. As far as interpersonal relationships in Socialist production are concerned, disparities prevail over a long period between peasants and workers, between the cities and villages and between mental and manual labour and these disparities reflect themselves in the prevalence of the bourgeois legal rights of the old society. On this, **Lenin's** teachings are crystal clear, **"in order to abolish classes completely, it is not enough to overthrow the exploiters, the landowners and capitalists, not enough to abolish their rights of ownership; it is necessary also to abolish all private ownership of the means of production, it is necessary to abolish the distinction between town and country, as well as the distinction between manual workers and intellectual workers. This requires a very long period of time."** (*Lenin: 'A Great Beginning', 1919*) The distribution of consumer goods according to work is itself a bourgeois right in Socialist society, that prevails as long as the development of productive forces up to the stage of overproduction and of the Socialist production relations to an extremely advanced level does not take place. In the true and complete sense, bourgeois rights can be abolished completely only when everyone



does work according to capacity and gets according to needs.

From the very beginning Marx and Engels had analysed with excessive importance the overbearing influence of the persistence of bourgeois rights in a Socialist society. In *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, Marx has, while presenting a detailed analysis, described the bourgeois rights as a right to disparity. In *Anti-Düring* Engels has analysed this in detail and in *The State and Revolution* Lenin has pointed out that the existence of bourgeois right in the context of the distribution of the articles of consumption in the Socialist society implies the existence of a bourgeois state without the bourgeoisie. Mao, while discussing China in the phase of Socialism, has mentioned this quotation of Lenin and said, **“Even now China practices an eight-grade wage system, distribution according to work and exchange through money, and in all this differs very little from the old society.”** The bourgeois rights are an important basis for the emergence of a new bourgeoisie.

Now let us take up the question of the Socialist superstructure. In order to understand the total content of Socialist society it is necessary to appreciate how its superstructure is in conformity with the economic base and in what way stands in a state of contradiction with it. In Socialist society, on various planes right from politics to culture the bourgeois ideology exists, bourgeois culture and value, beliefs, institutions exist, the habits and tendencies of the old class society exist among the people, the representatives of the bourgeoisie exist in the state organisation and various forms of bureaucratic work styles exist. The prevalence of classes, class contradictions and class struggle in the society incessantly influences the party of the proletariat, and within the party as well as, bourgeois elements, bourgeois ideology and bourgeois lines exist always, and from time to time this creates a situation of decisive struggle, bourgeois headquarters form inside the party and if an ideological class struggle is not waged against these then a strong possibility exists of the party of the proletariat changing itself into a party of the bourgeoisie. In totality, besides aiding the old ruling classes who attempt to regain their lost “paradise”, these bourgeois components present in the superstructural edifice in the phase of Socialism always prepare the basis and the environment for the emergence of a new bourgeois class from among the working class, the party cadres and the state employees provide impetus to the bourgeois mode of production prevalent through out the phase of Socialist transition and always remain as effective barriers along the path of transition towards Communism. That is why Marx had

described the revolutionisation of all ideas that conform to bourgeois social relations as a characteristic feature of Socialism. Lenin too had spoken of a continuous struggle against all ideas and old habits that corrupt the working classes and the people. And, it was for the same reason that Mao had found it most essential to practice perpetual revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat within the sphere of superstructure as well.

Basing his conceptions on an all encompassing analysis of the base and the superstructure in Socialist society and a sum-up of the experiences and experiments of history, Mao spelt out clearly that **despite the difference in nature and form in bourgeois society, in Socialist society too the basic contradictions are the contradiction between the productive forces and the production relations and the contradiction between the base and the superstructure, and these contradictions express themselves as contradiction and struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.** The dictatorship of the proletariat continuously controls and limits the bourgeois class, the bourgeois right and the bourgeois production relations and wages a continuous struggle against the bourgeois ideas-culture-values-beliefs, and destroying these, with the development of the productive forces gradually ensures the transition towards Communism. From the constant prevalence of class struggle in the Socialist society springs the strong possibility of capitalist restoration over a long period of time and series of perpetual revolutions under the dictatorship of the proletariat is the only guarantee of transition to Communism.

### **On the Dictatorship of the proletariat**

After the above discussion on the complex and protracted process of the entire Socialist transition and the nature of the unprecedented, fierce and difficult class struggle at the level of base and superstructure during this period it needs no mention that the transition from capitalism to Communism is not a spontaneous socio-economic process that happens by itself. It is a continuous struggle that the proletariat conducts all along against the bourgeoisie, and a state of transition through the gradual abolition of classes, class exploitation, class-contradictions and class rule that it imposes upon the bourgeoisie per force and against its will. Just as the hitherto history of class struggle shows, in this struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeois class it is political power that is the first, basic and the most important weapon. **The question of state power is the most paramount question—this basic proposition of Marxism applies even**

**to the phase of Socialist revolution.** It is through the state power alone that one class rules over another class. Until classes exist in society the existence of state power will continue and it will necessarily have a definite class character. A class can dominate another class only when it overthrows its state power. This is the basic teaching of Marxism on state and revolution.

The proletariat cannot attain its goal without enforcing a violent and forced dictatorship on the bourgeoisie and this dictatorship will continue as long as the existence of classes continues. The state power can never be devoid of a class character and when classes cease to exist, state power also will wither away. Through sabotage, infiltration, and coup, by any possible means, the bourgeoisie primarily constantly strives to convert the dictatorship of the proletariat into a bourgeois dictatorship. Therefore, **the first guarantee of Socialist transition is that dictatorship of the proletariat must prevail and incessantly consolidate itself. The question of dictatorship of the proletariat is the fundamental content of the proletarian revolution. In fact the Socialist state system is nothing but dictatorship of the proletariat. That is the class content of the Socialist state.** This is the primary condition for the continuation of revolution in the phase of Socialism, or it can be said, that this is the second name for the continuity of revolution. Throughout the phase of Socialism this is the necessary condition and the primary guarantee for carrying out Socialist revolution, preventing capitalist restoration and transition to Communism. Very correctly, the founders of Socialism and all the great teachers of the proletariat have strongly emphasised this aspect most of all, from the very beginning. They have described this as the essence of Marxism and have said that this is the first criterion to distinguish between Marxism and Utopian Socialism, between Marxism and Vulgar Socialism, between Marxism and Social Democracy, between Marxism and Revisionism. Therefore they have always unflinchingly opposed every revisionist ploy to distort and abandon it. The Socialist experiments of the whole world and the experiences of capitalist restoration have once again established this historical truth. **Should dictatorship of the proletariat remain firmly in place, then, despite various errors and mistakes during experiments and various objective hurdles and limitations, it would always be possible to keep open the path to Socialism, setting right the mistakes, and breaking the stagnation and advancing forward.**

From the very genesis of Marxism, the leaders of the proletariat have

always laid the greatest stress on the dictatorship of the proletariat and with the positive and negative experiences of revolutions, the understanding and realisation of its nature, form and its constituent parts and of its tasks has widened and deepened.

After an analysis of the history of the entire class-society and the fundamental contradictions of bourgeois society, **Marx**, in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century itself, when Marxist science was only just taking shape, gave the slogan of the overthrow of the bourgeois dictatorship and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Way back in 1850 itself, in his classical work *'The Class Struggle in France, 1848-1850'*, he described **"the class dictatorship of the proletariat"** as **"the necessary transit point to the abolition of class distinctions, to the abolition of all the relations of production on which they rest, to the abolition of all the social relations that correspond to these relations of production, to the revolutionisation of all the ideas that result from these social relations"** and in an essential manner underlined its fundamental characteristics and tasks. In 1852 in a letter to Weydemeyer, calling the dictatorship of the proletariat as the main criterion to distinguish Scientific Socialism from the bourgeois principles, Marx had written, "Long before me bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this class struggle and bourgeois economists the economic anatomy of the classes. What I did that was new was to prove: (1) That the existence of classes is only bound up with particular historical phases in the development of production, (2) That the class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat, (3) That this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society."

The revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat and the counter-revolutionary dictatorship of the bourgeoisie are by their very nature mutually antagonistic but the proletariat has actually learnt this lesson from the bourgeoisie and it has learnt this lesson at the cost of its own blood. The Paris Commune was the first great historical attempt to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat, from whose experience Marx and Engels grasped the essence and in 1872 made this amendment in the Communist Manifesto, **"The working class cannot simply lay hold of the readymade state machinery and wield it for its own purpose"**. In his work, *The Civil War in France*, Marx presented a thorough analysis on this. The Paris Commune, throwing light on the nature of the dictatorship of the proletariat, gave the lesson that the proletariat will have to organise armed squads of workers as the main constituent part of its state and smash the whole



machinery consisting of the old army, police, the old bureaucracy etc. Immediately after the defeat of the Commune in September 1871, Marx, in a speech delivered on the seventh anniversary of the International pointed out that the dictatorship of the proletariat was necessary for the end of class exploitation and class rule, and that its first premise is the army of the proletariat. Summing up the experience of the Commune, Marx pointed out that after establishing their revolutionary dictatorship in place of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, in order to smash the resistance of the bourgeoisie the workers build a revolutionary and transitory state (Marx, as quoted by Lenin in *The Proletarian Revolution and Renegade Kautsky*). In his article entitled, **On Authority** Engels, while summing up the Commune wrote. “... **And the victorious party must maintain its rule by means of the terror which its arms inspire in the reactionaries. Would the Paris Commune have lasted more than a day if it had not used the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie? Cannot we, on the contrary, blame it for having made too little use of that authority?**” For the failure of the Paris Commune Marx and Engels ascribed the main mistake that it had shown “Liberalism” towards its class enemy and did not exhibit the full strength of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as a result of which the bourgeoisie got the opportunity to organise its forces, launch a counter-attack and to drown Paris in the blood of proletariat and strangulate the revolution. This invaluable lesson of the Paris Commune will remain relevant as long as the existence of the bourgeoisie remains. This is the reason that whenever the revisionists built up a smoke screen of “the state of a free people”, “pure democracy” or “the state of the whole people” to negate the dictatorship of the proletariat, the leaders of the proletariat never wasted time in lambasting it.

When Lasalle and his followers came forth with their revisionist line through the Gotha Programme soon after the Paris Commune, then Marx, while criticising it, proved that its essence was a negation of dictatorship of the proletariat and thus a negation of the proletarian revolution. Shedding light on the counterrevolutionary nature of Lasalle’s “Free state”, Marx explained that throughout the phase of Socialist transition the nature of the state can only be a revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat. Marx and Engels have explained many a times that the principle of the dictatorship of the proletariat clearly distinguishes Scientific Socialism from Utopian Socialism and sham Socialism.

After the death of Marx and Engels, Lenin, who waged a struggle against all the alien ideas within the working class movement consistently

stressed on the prime importance of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The struggle that Lenin conducted against the attack of the revisionists of the Second International led by Kautsky was in fact centered on the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat. He said, “**Only he is a Marxist who extends the recognition of the class struggle to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat.**” (*Lenin: The State And Revolution*). When Kautsky attempted to separate the class struggle from the dictatorship of the proletariat and to counterpose one in opposition to the other and thus to confine Marxism to the bourgeois theory of class struggle, then Lenin in his booklet *The Proletarian Revolution And Renegade Kautsky* described this as a “petty-bourgeois distortion” and stressed that the proletarian revolution is impossible without the forcible destruction of the bourgeois state machinery and the substitution for it of a new one which, in the words of Engels, is ‘no longer a state in the proper sense of the word’ (ibid). He explained that “**The dictatorship of the proletariat is rule won and maintained by the proletariat by the use of violence against the bourgeoisie, rule that is unrestricted by any laws**” (ibid). Rejecting Kautsky’s incorrect proposition, Lenin pointed out that the dictatorship of the proletariat is not a form of government but a form or type of state. Proving the “pure democracy” proposed by Kautsky to be sham he stated that there simply cannot exist a class free democracy. The nature of democracy can either be bourgeois or proletarian. Bourgeois democracy “is restricted, truncated, false and hypocritical, a democracy for the rich” and its essence is nothing but bourgeois dictatorship; it needs to constantly conceal its real nature and motive because it is the dictatorship of the minority over the majority, of the exploiters over the exploited. On the contrary, Socialist democracy is in essence a dictatorship of the proletariat. It is maximum democracy for the majority of the people and imposes dictatorship over the exploiting classes. Exposing the revisionist and the bourgeois treachery, Lenin explained at length that freedom of the press and assembly and “universal equality before the law” were terms that are only fake manipulations of bourgeois democracy. The talk of freedom for all is nonsense. The equality of the exploiters and the exploited and equal freedom is impossible in class society. At the same time, citing the example of the Soviet rule, he said that “**proletarian democracy...has brought a development and expansion of democracy that is unprecedented in the world**” and it is “**a million times more democratic than any bourgeois democracy**”. The downgrade nonsense of democracy, freedom and equality etc. in a non-class sense that the revisionists and

the hired hacks of the bourgeoisie speak of till today is nothing new, and this deceptive terminology was already largely exposed by Lenin in *The Proletarian Revolution and Renegade Kautsky* and many other articles and pamphlets.

Soon after the October Revolution, while leading the first proletarian state of the world—the Soviet power, Lenin began developing, on the basis of concrete experiences the proposition of Marx-Engels regarding the dictatorship of the proletariat. He continuously and repeatedly underlined the various forms of opposition to the Soviet power adopted by the bourgeoisie and all those dangers of capitalist restoration that arose from all directions (as has been discussed earlier) and gave the greatest stress on the dire need for the “iron hand” of the dictatorship of the proletariat to fight against all these. (*Lenin: 'The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government'*, (March-April 1918); *'A Report presented at the joint Session of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee', The Moscow Soviet of Workers and Peasants, Representatives of the Red Army and Trade Unions*, (June 1918); *'Economics and Politics in the Era of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat'*, (October 1919); *'Speech at the Seventh All-Russian Congress of Soviets'*, (December, 1919); *At the Eighth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)*, (March 1919); *'A Report to the Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)*, (March 1921); *'A Report to the Second All Russia Trade Union Congress'*, (January 1919); *'A Great Beginning'*, (June 1919); *'Left-Wing Communism, An Infantile Disorder'*, (April-May 1920); *'A Report to the Second Congress of the Communist International,'* (July-August 1920); *'The State'*, (July 1919) and others.

On the basis of the concrete experiences of the Socialist experiments of the Soviet Russia, Lenin, developed an extensive understanding of the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat and its tasks and gave his teachings to the world Communist movement. He fought all those economist trends and tendencies within the Bolshevik Party and the International Communist Movement, that, in one way or the other, led to the error of viewing the political class struggle and the political power of the proletariat with reduced importance. Besides, he corrected and denounced the then prevailing idealist-puritan concepts of the dictatorship of the proletariat and explained those objective limitations which determine the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat in that particular phase. He clarified that the Socialist production relations are the objective basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat and their

development is dialectically interrelated with the consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat. He also mentioned those unavoidable compromises that the proletariat may have to make with the propertied classes in the initial phase of Socialism, especially in backward countries.

After 1921, and particularly in the period of the New Economic Policy, Lenin showed on the basis of Soviet Russia's experiences that despite the influential presence of capitalist and various other pre-Socialist production relations even to the extent of their domination, and despite the unavoidable compulsions of dealing with them liberally, if the dictatorship of the proletariat is maintained, if the control of the proletariat through the Communist Party on the state power is maintained, then the future of Socialist revolution is ascertained. He clearly stated that despite the effective presence of state capitalism, private capitalism, cooperative farming, collective and state ownership etc. in a variety of forms simultaneously, if Soviet power is maintained, if the centre of political power is securely placed in the hands of the proletariat, then, by maintaining control over the capitalist production relations and bourgeois forces as the base of Socialist production relations and the development of the productive forces is expanded, in the course of time, the proletariat, mustering up the strength to launch an all-round continuous attack on the bourgeois production relations and the bourgeois elements, can provide forward motion to the society. In this way Lenin pointed out in a concrete manner for the first time that the first guarantee for Socialism to prevail is the dictatorship of the proletariat and on this lies its prime responsibility.

The Socialist phase of the **Stalin period** proved this formulation of Lenin. In the period of the historical achievements and the glorious victories of Socialist construction, the source of the main and the most serious mistake of the great leader of the proletariat, Stalin, was philosophical-ideological in nature, and the mistake was that in 1936 from the abolition of the forms of private ownership he drew the conclusion that exploiting classes and class struggle had ceased to exist in the country, and the main necessity of the dictatorship of the proletariat was now to save Socialism from external pressures and attacks. Yet, despite making such a formulation, not only on the international level but also on the practical level and in an empirical manner did Stalin employ the dictatorship of the proletariat against the bourgeois elements within the country and continue the class struggle in a limited sense and maintain the proletarian character of the party and the state. Thus, although under

the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Stalin period a perpetual revolution could not be conducted, new bourgeois elements continued to emerge in the society and their base continued to expand, yet the restoration of capitalism did not take place and because the state power remained in the hands of the proletariat, the possibility remained of correcting the serious mistake and advancing the Socialist revolution. The restoration of capitalism could occur only when Khrushchev gave up the dictatorship of the proletariat and established a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

**Mao Tse-tung**, making an overall sum-up of the positive and negative experiences of the Socialist experiments and of capitalist restoration in Russia and drawing conclusions from the class struggle waged during Socialist construction in China, presented the most comprehensive understanding of the nature of the dictatorship of the proletariat and its indispensability, and its tasks, especially in the period from the '**Great Debate**' to the '**Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution**', and thus took Marxism to new heights. Taking credence from the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat developed from Marx to Lenin he not only presented it in a concrete form, but also developed it further.

As early as March 1949, in his report to the Second General Congress of the Seventh Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, Mao spelt out in clear terms that even after establishing the authority of the proletariat all over the country, the principal internal contradiction remains the "contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie" and the struggle was still centered around the question of state power. In 1957 Mao's writing, *On the Correct Handling of Contradiction among the Masses* was published which enriched and developed the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In the history of Marxist theory and practice he explained in concrete terms for the first time that even after the task of Socialist transformation of the ownership of the means of production is primarily accomplished, classes, class contradictions and class struggle still persist and the proletariat will necessarily have to keep the revolution continuing not only on the economic front but also on the political and ideological fronts. Analysing the fundamental contradictions of Socialism, for the first time, Mao presented the objective laws of the class struggle continued under the dictatorship of the proletariat and determined the basic line of the party for the entire historical phase of Socialism. During the '**Great Debate**' dissecting all the aspects of the Khrushchevite revisionism, Mao exposed the bourgeois content of 'the state of the whole people' and 'party of the entire people' and defended the Marxist principle

of dictatorship of the proletariat.

The most developed form of the theory and practice of the dictatorship of the proletariat came forth during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution when Mao propounded the theory of carrying out a perpetual revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, determined its tasks and its policies in the most concrete form and established them in practice. On the basis of the most concrete understanding of the problem of capitalist restoration, Mao presented a programme to establish **all round** dictatorship over the bourgeoisie in an absolutely concrete form and pointed to the indispensable importance of practicing the dictatorship of the proletariat in all the spheres of the superstructure, including culture.

In the final analysis, from the period right from the origin of Marxism till now, theory and practice together have all along and in an increasingly more concrete form proven the fundamental importance of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In this respect, even the experiences of capitalist restoration have proven right the statement of Mao that 'Like food and clothing this power is something a victorious people cannot do without even for a moment.'

Keeping in mind this fundamental importance of the dictatorship of the proletariat it is not difficult to understand why humming the same tune as Lasalle, Kautsky and Khrushchev, Gorbachov, in his bourgeois hypocritical language, is making the dictatorship of the proletariat the target of this attack, and why after the recent events of Russia and the Eastern Europe, the international bourgeoisie, its propaganda machinery and its intellectuals have launched an all round attack on Marxism through slander, falsities and rumour, and in that they too are making the dictatorship of the proletariat the main target of their attack.

## **The Socialist experiment in the Soviet Russia— Sum-up of the positive and negative experiences of history**

After a discussion on the nature and form of a Socialist society and the all-encompassing class struggles continuing in it and the unquestioned inevitability of the dictatorship of the proletariat, we must go through a theoretical sum-up of the historical experiences of the Socialist experiments carried out till now.

After the experiences of the Paris Commune the dictatorship of the

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proletariat was established for the first time in Russia following the October Revolution and this became the first laboratory in history for Socialist experiments. The Chinese Revolution of 1949 enriched by the experiences of all the aspects of these very experiments advanced further in the direction of Socialism, and after traversing various phases developed the theory and practice of Marxism to new heights. To make mention of the positive and negative teachings derived from the history of these revolutions, to obtain a balanced understanding of the objective limitations and problems and subjective errors and mistakes of the Socialist period and to recognise the foundation inherent in the history for capitalist restoration we are presenting here the essence of the great Socialist experiments of Russia and China. Here our intention is not to present a narration of the sequence of events or a description of the miraculous achievements of Socialism, though this itself is indeed an epic creation of world history. But due to lack of space and keeping in view the limitation of our main subject matter we must ward off this temptation. The historical materialist method of analysis demands that we study an actually performed social experiment not by comparing it with some ideal "model". That would be an idealist approach and a non-dialectical method. Every attempt to create history is made not in circumstances of our will but in the circumstances handed down by and through the past. Even when the most developed scientific theory is put into practice, circumstances throw up certain obstacles and limitations, and besides, during the experiments even the most extraordinary and talented scientists or revolutionaries are likely to commit some mistakes. However, it is also true that it is during these experiments that these theories have their relative gaps filled, their concrete forms developed, and are improved upon. Scientists are not fortune-tellers and no theory provides a horoscope of society. The Russian Socialist experiment by virtue of being the first experiment was bound to be a difficult task, and besides, the complex nature of class struggle in the Socialist phase was bound to have its inherent problems. Further we will also see how many limitations and problems were caused for revolution by the backwardness of Russia and by the hunger, starvation and devastation following the First World War. But, all said and done, we certainly cannot charge Lenin, the Bolsheviks and the proletariat for being guilty of having chosen a country like Russia and the time immediately after the First World War for the revolution!

Further we shall also see how right from 1917 to 1953 Lenin and Stalin were faced with one serious immediate problem after another for the solution of which there was always the compulsion of taking immediate

decisions and action, and there was always a lack of time to think and contemplate on long-term policies and programmes. Though it is also true that in the short span of the initial phase, despite heavy preoccupations, Lenin had begun to think more deeply on the problems of Socialism, and that this process could not continue in the same manner during the Stalin period. However, in the last phase of his lifetime Stalin too had begun thinking in this direction. Moreover, it must also be taken into consideration that after the consolidation of the proletarian rule, it was in Stalin's time that the task of Socialist transformation of the society began on a full scale and such concrete forms and aspects of certain problems confronted Stalin which were only in their embryonic form during Lenin's life-time. Further ahead, we shall even see that despite not noticing certain fundamental problems and providing at times partial and at times wrong solutions and despite some serious theoretical errors and some secondary practical mistakes, throughout Stalin's period the dictatorship of the proletariat continued to be maintained, Socialism took long strides in the forward direction and besides meeting successfully the difficult challenge of defeating Fascism, Soviet Russia played an important role in propelling forward the current of revolution in the whole world. Throughout this phase of Socialism despite the lack of a clear understanding of all the laws of Socialism the task of controlling bourgeois rights and the bourgeois elements that continued to persist, the system of Socialist public ownership was established successfully, the task of construction continued and the initiative and enthusiasm of workers and the toiling masses was always maintained. The revolutionary transformation of the production relations continuously developed the productive forces.

The October Revolution occurred at such a time when due to entanglement in the first imperialist war the Russian economy had been devastated and the multitude of peasants and workers was forced to live in conditions of tremendous shortages and misery. Right since the February Revolution an atmosphere of anarchy prevailed all over the country and the on-going intense class struggle was preparing the ground for the October Revolution. In just such a challenging period, the Russian state power came into the hands of the Bolsheviks. Lenin himself had divided the initial period of the Russian revolution into three phases (*Lenin: Report to the Seventh Moscow-Gubernia Conference of the Russian Communist Party on the New Economic Policy, Collected Works, Volume 33*). In the **first phase** from October 1917 to the spring of 1918 the main political tasks of revolution were to firmly consolidate the dictatorship

of the proletariat, to confiscate the property of the landlords, to withdraw Russia from the imperialist war and to nationalise the Chief means of production, transport and exchange. These were the most urgent and pressing political tasks of the revolution.

From the very beginning of 1918 the counter-revolutionary forces within the country got organised and launched an all-round attack on the newborn proletarian revolution and for the next three years the whole country got involved in a bloody civil war. Fourteen imperialist powers got together to leave no stone unturned in order to throttle the Soviet power. According to the division of phases as presented by Lenin, the **second phase** continued from the spring of 1918 to the spring of 1921, which was called the period of "War Communism". In this period the main tasks were economic and military. The phase that began from the spring of 1921, the **third phase** was the period of the "New Economic Policy" in Lenin's own words, **the period of "development of state capitalism on a new pattern"**. The policies of "War Communism" were pressing and urgent, which were necessary to save the newborn Soviet State from armed counter-revolution organised at the international level. Under these, the nationalisation of industries on a large scale, compulsory recovery of the agricultural produce and centralisation of trade in the hands of the state were included. As Lenin clearly pointed out in the Tenth Party Congress and as he later mentioned in his pamphlet entitled, *The Tax in Kind* (*Collected Works, Volume 32*), generally speaking, the policies of "War Communism" were not in conformity with the economic tasks of the proletariat in the initial phase of the Socialist revolution, and in their implementation mistakes and errors did occur, but war and devastation compelled the Bolsheviks to adopt them and there was no other alternative. Thus the unfavourable impact that the urgent compulsions of "War Communism" and the mistakes on the part of the leaders of the first newborn Socialist state during their implementation were independent of the will of the Bolsheviks and there was no way of avoiding them.

When the phase of "War Communism" was over a crisis of a relatively long-term nature arose. Even with the end of the Civil War and the pushing back of the immediate external attacks, the time had not come for the commencement of the construction of Socialism under normal circumstances. The seven stormy years of World War, revolution and counterrevolution had completely crippled the Russian national economy. The devastation during the war that had compelled capitalists to abandon industries and the situation of sabotage and destruction and the

compulsion of transferring all the resources for the defence of the Soviet power put the economic life into a state of shambles, from which it had become impossible to arise by adopting some impromptu measures. At just such a time the Bolsheviks chose the alternative of retreating in a planned manner until it became possible to advance again in the direction of Socialism. This was the phase of the New Economic Policy which Lenin described as a "phase of retreat to the policy of state capitalism" (Lenin: pamphlet, 'The Tax in Kind', *Collected Works, Volume 32*). This was retreat organised and directed by the proletarian state in order that an attack may be launched later on the bourgeois fortress and **"the economic foundation may be laid to consolidate the political gains of the Soviet State"** (Lenin: *Collected Works, Volume 33, page 73*). The beginning of the end of this process of retreat began only after a year, though the final end of the phase of the New Economic Policy came only with the beginning of the First Five-Year Plan. In the Eleventh Congress Lenin had said, "We have been retreating for one year, now we must stop this."

And the New Economic Policy was not just this much. This was also the first Socialist example of alliance between workers and peasants. Before the revolution the Bolsheviks had a very limited base among the peasants and till 1921 the Soviet party and state had not had enough time to think in this direction. By 1921 Lenin had come to the conclusion that to involve the entire Russian society on the path of Socialist revolution the broad peasant masses ought to be taken within the mainstream of change. That is why apart from the temporary concessions given to capitalists, foreign capital and managers and experts and to kulaks in the field of agriculture which Lenin said were based on bourgeois relations (the only difference was that this was under the control of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the main reason for Soviet Russia being Socialist was that the political power was in the hands of the proletariat), in order to forge unity on a long-term basis with peasants upto the middle sections and to make them partners in the Socialist transformation without applying pressure, a policy of aid and cooperation was adopted. Therefore, in the Eleventh Party Congress when Lenin talked of stopping the retreat, he was at the same time a strong supporter of continuing the New Economic Policy to **"give leadership to the peasant masses on the road to Socialism"** and to continue the worker-peasant alliance to develop the productive forces. In January 1923 he made the role of the agrarian sector in Socialist development even more clear when he said, **"If the entire peasant population gets organised in co-operative units then we will solidly stand**

on both feet on the ground of Socialism". Even so, it is worth noting that for the development of Socialism in Soviet Russia, Lenin's main emphasis was on big industries and in fact in the Tenth Party Congress (May 1921) he called it "the only real basis for the construction of the Socialist society". We shall discuss this aspect of Lenin's thought later in the context of the policy of industrialisation adopted by Stalin.

The New Economic Policy was the immediate and long-term need of the Russian Socialist revolution as well as a temporary compulsion. Under this the tentative restoration of small and medium private industries and private internal trade was done; foreign capital was given special concession in some particular fields; the nationalised big industries were run with one-member management, high salaries to experts and other bourgeois norms; much power of decision and management went into the hands of the privileged bourgeois experts whom Lenin called "cultured capitalist", state enterprises were run on the basis of profit; and the replacement of compulsory agricultural recovery by the system of light taxation and other steps gave relief not only to the common peasant populace but also granted many concessions to the kulaks. This development of bourgeois production relations as an essential condition for the existence of Socialism did have ramifications in the form of the emergence of new bourgeois elements and dangers of capitalist restoration, but they were independent of the wishes of the proletarian leadership. At that time all that could be done was to maintain vigilance against them, to maintain strictly the political control of the proletarian rule and with the elimination of the material basis for the compulsion of adopting this policy in future to commence struggle against them and strictly implement the Socialist economic policies. This was exactly Lenin's line of thought and many a time he stated it clearly.

For the Bolsheviks, the phase of the New Economic Policy was a phase of complex struggle for Socialism and which served as a training school for the economic policy. Even amidst the pressures of immediate preoccupations and urgent tasks, Lenin drew certain conclusions of historical importance on the nature of the class struggle continued in the entire phase of Socialist society, on the nature and the indispensability of the dictatorship of the proletariat, on the sources of capitalist restoration, on the worker-peasant alliance, on the perpetual revolutionisation of the superstructure, and underlined the main questions about continuing the class struggle in the Socialist society and began thinking on these lines. We have already discussed Lenin's views and propositions on these

aspects. Here it is necessary to understand that even the epoch-making leadership such as that of Lenin was confronted with a great many unavoidable objective obstacles-problems-limitations during Socialist experiments, and in the initial experiments it was only natural that some mistakes would occur and the policies adopted under these influences would cause some such unfavourable effects that would create hindrances for the proletariat and for Socialism. But, truly speaking, that is the natural motion of history. If time and the size of the article would have permitted us to discuss the tough battle against alien tendencies-trends-lines that Lenin had to wage while implementing each and every policy and decision in this entire phase, then it would have been easier to understand concretely the problems of Socialist experiments. But that is not possible here.

The phase of New Economic Policy continued after Lenin's death, in the main, till the First Five-Year Plan (1928-32), but as the economic situation relatively strengthened the "retreat" was stopped and in the mid-1920s the process began of limiting and destroying the various aspects of capitalist production relations including bourgeois evils, bourgeois elements and the capitalist ownership and rights—all of which had grown during the "retreat". The state started doing away with private traders and private enterprises and by 1932 without obstructing the dynamics of the development in production, brought them to an end. The autonomy of the managements of the state enterprises was gradually limited and every sector was brought under Socialist planning. However, in this phase some important mistakes were committed too. Transferring foreign capital into private hands, despite Lenin's objections, was one such mistake.

The NEP created the base on which the work of centralised Socialist planning could begin. So as to prepare one single economic plan for the entire country the **National Planning Commission (GOSPLAN)** was established in 1921 itself but its functioning started in 1928 with the First Five-Year Plan. The First Five-Year plan was the **first attempt in history** at centralised economic planning. In concrete form, this was the first Socialist step towards economic construction wherein the priorities of the plan were according to the interests of the proletariat and the broad toiling masses and were determined not in terms of immediate material gains but in terms of the construction of a Socialist society and for the construction of the required material base. Thinking along the same lines as **Lenin, Stalin** too considered the establishment of big industries—basic and infrastructural industries essential for Socialism and gave the topmost



priority to rapid industrialisation during the first plan. Now the greatest problem was initial capital accumulation for the industrial development. Capitalism in its early stage had fulfilled this need by the appropriation of surplus from the agriculture. Besides it could get a major chunk of the required initial capital for the industrial revolution from the heavy plunder of colonies. In an expanded time-frame, Socialism did have an option for fulfilling this need by developing the productive forces by – increasing their productivity, increasing the initiative of the masses, developing the consciousness with an advanced Socialist culture to work on moral incentives, and gradually starting collectivisation and Socialist progress in agriculture as well as small industries and advancing steadily. But the world's first Socialist state certainly did not have that much time. All along there was the encirclement by the international Imperialism and the crisis of existence always persisted. At the time when China laid stress on the growth of agriculture and small industries and adopted the Socialist path of development by standing on both legs (agriculture and industry) there was a powerful Socialist camp to aid it and to build basic and infrastructural industry there was the assistance from Soviet Russia, imperialism was declining towards its defeat because of inter-imperialist rivalry, the devastation of the Second World War and the onset of the victories of the wars of liberation and in Korea and Vietnam its defeat was clearly in sight. Even after the onset of revisionism in Russia, the presence of the Third World, the competition between the superpowers and grave economic crisis of imperialism saved China from the grip of anything like the crisis of existence despite the international encirclement. But Russia did not enjoy such circumstances. Socialism had to stand on its own feet whatever be the nature of the limitations, and tentatively it had to pay the price by way of various economic and social inconsistencies. For the Soviet Union of that period it was a fact that without the growth of basic and infrastructural industries—electricity, iron and steel and engineering industries—neither could Socialism have stood up, nor could it have met the challenge of the united economic-military might of world capital. We would also have to remember the fact that the threat of Fascism had surfaced right in the beginning of the 1930s. Soviet Russia had to be prepared against any potential attack from capitalist countries and for a lone Socialist country with backward productive forces this was not an easy task. Its only strength was the strength of Socialism and in reality it was only on this basis that it prepared itself for any serious eventuality. For Stalin and for the Soviet rule, in these circumstances, there was only

one way out and that was to utilise the surplus appropriation from the agricultural sector, the surplus produce of agriculture for the purpose of industrialisation, by temporarily paying the price of retarded agricultural development and the price for the interpersonal disparity between the villages and cities. Stalin did this believing that this temporary loss to agriculture will have to be compensated later and that as industrialisation advances, agriculture will benefit more from mechanisation, provided the Socialist transformation of the ownership in villages is completed by that time. Today those who hold Stalin's policies of giving emphasis on big industries responsible for the increasing gap between the villages and cities as one basis for capitalist restoration and for the relative tentative poverty of the peasants do not specify what should have been the alternative way in Stalin's time? How else could one lone Socialist country have stood up with its backward productive forces in the capitalist world, and without the accelerated growth of big industries how could it have met the Fascist challenge in the Second World War? Lenin too had talked about the gap between the villages and the cities and had talked of uniting with the peasants for Socialist construction, but he too had called big industries as the basic condition for Socialism. The question is, as a condition for the existence of Socialism for the time being at that time which of these should have been given priority and at what cost? If Lenin himself had to begin the task of Socialist planning in 1928 what would have been the alternative before him? Without taking into account such questions it is not wise to pass judgment about the wrongness or correctness of the adopted path!

The policy of dekulakisation and the use of force to an extent during the collectivisation of agriculture must be viewed in this light. Till the end of the 1920s bourgeois relations were, in the main, prevalent in the agriculture of Soviet Russia and the Kulaks dominated in power in the rural economy. They openly refused to co-operate with the Soviet rule and even refused to pay taxes or even sell grain. During the NEP their base had expanded to a great extent and their economic and social strength also had increased. Even the bourgeois critics of collectivisation and dekulakisation accept that in the Russian villages the living conditions of poor peasants (Bednyaks) and agricultural workers (Batraks) were infernal and they felt a deep hatred towards the kulaks. In order to give support to the cooperative efforts of peasants and thus begin the Socialist transformation of agriculture, to ensure the recovery from agriculture and to speed up the Soviet economy it was imperative to abolish the economic

strength of the Kulaks and begin collectivisation. The problem was that despite constantly having felt the need to work amongst the peasants and to strengthen the worker-peasant alliance, the Bolsheviks did not get the time to do so, due to the constant involvement in the tasks of finding immediate solutions to the pressing problems, as a result of which even the middle peasants (Serednyaks) put up an opposition to the efforts of collectivisation. In such a situation, when the poor peasants and the party members conducted the collectivisation campaign they used force to an extent, but this was not the party's policy. Stalin, not only cautioned against saboteurs but also criticised such mistakes that occurred during the collectivisation (*History of the C.P.S.U.-B., A Short Course, p. 308*) and emphatically underlined the necessity of winning over the middle peasants. In this process the rural party membership swelled from four lakhs to eight lakhs. The rapid collectivisation during 1930-34 was a part and parcel of the overall policy of Soviet Socialist construction and an immediate necessity in the implementation of which some mistakes did occur, and in the initial phase, opposition of the Kulaks and middle peasants affected production. But in the second phase between 1933 and 1937 the gross agricultural produce rose by 33 percent. Till the middle of the 1930s the Soviet government had reached a situation wherein it had done away with the rationing of bread and other items and the restriction on the sale of food materials was removed. In this period major changes occurred in the social formation of the villages as well, and the class basis of Socialism expanded. From this brief outline of facts, the compulsions of the rapid process of collectivisation and the nature of the mistakes therein can easily be understood.

The First Five-Year Plan finished ahead of time, within four years and three months. In this period industrial output doubled, and even though there were hardly any technicians available, starting from absolutely nothing an entire structure of industries manufacturing tractors, automobiles, machine tools, engineering and war materials etc sprang up and production of iron, electricity, oil etc. increased greatly. The wages of workers doubled and their living standards were improved, and when the West was in the throes of the Great Depression, in the Soviet Union, unemployment was completely eliminated. The Second Five-Year Plan (1933-37) also was complete ahead of schedule, in four years and three months. By the end of this Plan industrial output doubled once more in comparison with 1932 and the Soviet Union became the second largest industrial nation of the world. The rate of its industrial growth was the

highest in the world and was much higher than ever before in history, even higher than that during the bourgeois industrial revolutions. Moreover, the unprecedented, miraculous development in the entire society as regards social justice, education, public health, emancipation of women and other affairs were accepted even by the most bitter critics of Socialism. When these figures are lumped together, for a moment, it appears unbelievable. During the Third Five-Year Plan (1938-42), which was hindered in 1941 because of the war, too, the work of Socialist construction continued at the same rate, but due to the impending Fascist attack, defence was its top priority. It was the consequence of the Socialist progress during the three Five-Year Plans that despite having lost an average of more than half of its industrial output during the German attack the Soviet economy stood firm and, fighting 200 of Hitler's 254 divisions, the Fascists were defeated by the Red Army. In the war the Soviet Union sacrificed two crores of its people before achieving victory and with the liberation of the countries of the Eastern Europe a powerful Socialist camp came into existence.

The sole strength of these historic economic-political achievements of the Soviet Union was inherent in the strength of the Socialism that the Soviet people had built under the leadership of Stalin and the Soviet Communist Party. In the light of the results of the Second World War also, it is a wonder how great a challenge it was for the construction of Socialism for a country with backward productive forces, standing alone amidst the imperialist encirclement; what was the immediate need and the compulsions of the rapid pace of collectivisation and the development of big industries at the cost of agriculture; and which immediate crises generated continuous pressure on Stalin because of which he never could get the opportunity to ponder over the basic and long-term problems of Socialism.

If at all Stalin did commit any basic theoretical mistake which made a considerable adverse impact on Socialism and the proletarian movement in Soviet Russia and the whole world, it was only one mistake. That mistake was that even while continuously conducting the class struggle on the empirical and practical plane, Stalin failed to understand the nature of the class struggle in a Socialist society and its basic laws, and the most developed form in which this mistake manifested itself was that in November 1936 in his report presented on the draft of the Constitution of the Soviet Union in the Seventh Congress of Soviets he gave a formulation that during 1924-36 with the abolition of the juridical private ownership of the means of production and of exchange and after the establishment



of Socialist ownership now the economic and political contradictions between classes **“are lessening or are coming to an end”** and now the main contradiction of Soviet society has become the contradiction between advanced Socialist production relations and backward productive forces.

While analysing this erroneous concept, earlier we have said that a change in merely the juridical forms of ownership does not put an end to the conditions for the existence of classes and class struggle, and these conditions are related to the production relations—the forms of the social process of appropriation. Stalin believed that the need of the dictatorship of the proletariat was now primarily only against the imperialist encirclement, sabotage and agents of imperialism. However, it is also true that even after 1936 Stalin used the dictatorship of the proletariat not only against the external threats but continuously also against the internal forces opposing Socialism, that is, he continued the class struggle on the practical and empirical plane. However, due to the lack of a logical understanding of the nature and laws of the Socialist transition, he failed to understand the bourgeois character of those elements who opposed Socialism and that these had been created from within the economic base of that period of Socialism, and considered them to be mainly imperialist agents or a remnant of the past. Due to this reason his empirical-practical class struggle could not become an all-encompassing class struggle guided by an appropriate understanding and he could not grasp that without perpetual revolutions such bourgeois elements will continually emerge from within Socialism and that their repression or elimination can be only a temporary action, not a permanent solution. It is obvious that because of this wrong formulation of his, Stalin failed to take cognisance of the dangers of capitalist restoration inherent in the superstructure, besides base, and of the indispensability of the revolution in the superstructure. Possibly, it was the logical outcome of laying greater stress on the development of productive forces and believing it to be the principal motive force of Socialism that Stalin's stress on technique was more than was necessary and less on the human being. Besides, essentially because of this same reason, Stalin could not see the struggle between two lines that continues within the party as a form and an extension of the class struggle that continues in the society; could not identify the bourgeois elements ensconced in the party and the state; failed to maintain the living contact of the party with the people so as to maintain the proletarian character of the party and to develop the appropriate forms for the party to learn from the masses and failed to find clear-cut methods to ensure

the gradual increase in the participation of the working class and the toiling masses in the tasks of management and the state apparatus along with the advancement in the Socialist consciousness. In this way this serious theoretical mistake of Stalin left an adverse impact at the level of methodology, the process and the consequence on Socialist revolution and he could not achieve success in abolishing capitalism and in giving forward motion to the qualitative development of Socialism through an all-encompassing and perpetual revolution. All said and done, we would do justice with history and draw the proper conclusions only after viewing even this main theoretical mistake of Stalin in the perspective of the objective limitations and problems of his time. Otherwise, we might fall prey to the disastrous irresponsible and infantile approach of free thinkers and then it would become difficult for us to avoid being influenced by the false, slanderous bourgeois propaganda.

In spite of this serious theoretical mistake Stalin's contribution to the world proletariat are great. He was a sharp and staunch proletarian revolutionary who never abandoned the dictatorship of the proletariat. Although he failed to take Socialism beyond a stage, yet the task of eliminating the juridical forms of private ownership and centralised Socialist planning that he accomplished were perfectly correct and they were an essential condition for the advance of Socialism. As a consequence of these measures and accordingly the social, cultural and political policies, the material basis of the rule of the proletariat strengthened and expanded. Because till the end of his life, the political rule remained firmly in the hands of the proletariat and the Socialist transformation of ownership and Socialist planning had consolidated, the chance of correcting mistakes and taking Socialism forward through a perpetual revolution was always open, though the bourgeoisie too had organised its strength to quite an extent so as to restore capitalism. In this context, the important fact must not be forgotten that after the Second World War, just as Soviet Russia made the necessary repairs in its economy at an extremely rapid pace and settled down to the task of Socialist construction and despite various national-international problems, Stalin, in a relatively consolidated situation, got the opportunity to ponder over the long-term policies of Socialism and sum-up the past. He immediately started thinking in the direction of improving his above theoretical mistake. In his book *‘Economic Problems of the U.S.S.R.’* written in 1952 he clearly mentioned that in the Soviet Society the system of commodity production exists and accordingly the laws of value are operating. In an indirect manner this

was an acceptance of the prevalence of bourgeois elements in the Soviet society which was a negation of his erroneous formulation of 1936 and the beginning of fresh thinking on the problem of class struggle in the Socialist society. Moreover, it is worth mentioning another fact that in his last days Stalin was once again at work preparing to remove bourgeois elements from within the party.

In spite of his afore-mentioned mistake, **Stalin** in a true Communist spirit and a staunch proletarian fighting spirit, continuously conducted struggle against bourgeois-middle class elements within the party and by organising various kinds of movements from below insured and consolidated the rule of the proletariat. In crushing saboteurs and anti-Socialist elements he did not leave any stone unturned and due to this he could ensure the victory of Socialism over imperialism and Fascism. For the same reason the bourgeoisie today in its slander campaign against Socialism makes Stalin the main target. The evaluation that in the process of crushing the enemies of Socialism the limits of repression were stretched further than was necessary is correct, but in the process of revolution such mistakes can be and should be pardoned a thousand times. When the theory of correct identification of the anti-Socialist bourgeois elements and the theory of the struggle against them was not present and they could not be developed, these mistakes were bound to occur, but should Stalin not have adopted this policy of crushing the enemies, and in the struggle against Fascism had the party and the working class not been absolutely united, then in the anti-Fascist struggle the victory of Socialism could not have been ascertained—and, even bourgeois historians accept this fact.

And, that is why in his entire life time the enthusiasm of the masses for labour, their creative initiative and their cohesion with the proletarian state persisted throughout and was expressed in many ways. The first such expression had come forth in the form of the 'subbotniks' during the Civil War itself. The same spirit was seen in the form of the 'voskrenik' (voluntary overtime during industrialisation) during the First Five-Year Plan and in the form of the shock work teams movement and again in 1935 in the form of the 'Stakhonovite' movement and the 'public tug boat' phenomenon. In changing this orientation of social development and in beginning the process of capitalist restoration the bourgeoisie could be successful only after the death of Stalin.

It was after a thorough study, analysis and sum-up of these positive and negative experiences, these successes and failures of history's first

Socialist experiments in Soviet Russia and, in this perspective, after drawing conclusions from the struggles in the period of Socialist transition in China, that **Mao** successfully discovered the solution to the class contradictions in the Socialist society and the laws and methods of conducting the class struggle in the correct way under the dictatorship of the proletariat. It was on the basis of these very experiences that he clearly identified for the first time the capitalist roaders present within the party right from the lowest unit to the Polit Bureau, and the bourgeois elements present and thriving in the state, in the smallest economic unit of the country and in the field of education and culture, created an all-encompassing **Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution** against them and acquainted the proletariat with a philosophy to attain continuous victory over the capitalists and thus ensure the transition in the direction of Communism.

### **Mao Tse-tung's Socialist experiments, his thinking on the nature of Socialism and its problems, and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution**

Mao achieved the understanding of the complete nature of the class struggle in Socialist society, the inherent dangers of capitalist restoration and the effective measures of its prevention, but not without going through a lengthy period of time. Summing up from concrete experiences obtained in his own country and drawing conclusions in the same perspective from the experiments of the Soviet Union, by 1966—till the beginning of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution he arrived at his conclusions. But this process was continuing in some form of the other before 1949 and in 1949 immediately after power came into the hands of the proletariat, it had concretely begun. The then prevailing world situation also to an extent provided Mao with the opportunity, about which we have discussed earlier. And, above all, the experience of the first Socialist experiments of the Soviet Union was also present before him.

Way back in March 1949 when the Chinese revolution was about to enter the stage of Socialist revolution from the stage of new democratic revolution, Mao stated in the Second General Congress of the Seventh Central Committee of the Party that even after the proletariat had taken over the reigns of power all over the country, the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie remains the principal contradiction and

the struggle is still centered around the question of the state power. In spite of this, until the early-1950s, China considered the path of revolution and Socialist construction adopted in the Soviet Union to be, in the main, its own model. On the nature of the class struggle in Socialist society, the problem of initial Socialist accumulation of capital at the cost of the peasantry, the problem of the widening gap between the villages and the cities, the problem of bourgeois rights, the mistake of giving excessive stress on the development of productive forces etc. there was not a very clear understanding in the beginning. In the beginning in China too big industries were made the basis for Socialism, the policy of one-member management was put into practice and an extremely centralised planning machinery was established. But since about the middle of the 1950s Mao began thinking about these problems in a new perspective and studying the Russian Experiments and the differing circumstances in a critical manner. And, on the problems of Socialist revolution, he began thinking in a wider and farsighted perspective. Instead of the one-member management of factories, more emphasis began to be given on increasing the role of the Party and the participation of workers. Talk began of making small industries and agriculture the basis for Socialism and criticism began on the trend of the blind imitation of the Soviet model. It began to be felt that for the consolidation of proletarian rule it was necessary to give priority to the Socialist transformation of agriculture in a country like China with its backward productive forces and the large majority of a peasant populace. Meanwhile, Mao laid particular stress on the worker-peasant alliance, described as harmful for Socialism the increasing gap between villages and cities and called the conception of **'technical development first and Socialist transformation later'** erroneous. He pointed out that the widening gap between villages and cities is giving rise to a tendency of considering manual labour as derogatory and to a bureaucratic and elitist style of leadership. During the **'Great Leap Forward'** an attempt was made to practice this developed understanding. In 1955 Mao emphasised the point that the Socialist development of the urban and rural areas is interrelated. "At no cost can we ever conceive of industry and agriculture, Socialist industrialisation and Socialist transformation of agriculture as two different and distinct things and in no way can we ever give more stress on one and neglect the other" (*On the question of Agricultural Cooperatives*), said Mao. Putting together all these questions, by 1956 Mao began underlining the problems of Socialism and presenting their solution as a development strategy for Socialism.

By 1956 the task of Socialist transformation of the ownership of the means of production in the fields of agriculture, artisanship, big industry and commerce was, in the main complete. At this juncture the concrete task of taking ahead the Socialist revolution was calling attention. It was at this point that Mao began to present a balanced sum-up of the policies of Socialist construction in Russia and an alternative strategy for Socialist revolution in China. The new point of departure took concrete form in the article entitled *'On the Ten Major Relationships'* wherein Mao rejected the strategy of giving priority to big industries and development in different stages (material progress first and transformation of the social relations and the ideology later), laid stress on the Socialist transformation of the social, political and economic fields simultaneously, described the strategy of developing industries at the cost of the peasantry and by extracting surplus from them as a policy opposed to Socialism that sharpens the contradiction between various fields and various social classes, and as an alternative, presented a strategy of increasing the productivity of labour power of the agricultural and industrial sectors and thus tackling at once the problem of Socialist industrialisation and Socialist transformation of agriculture.

In 1956 Mao reached the conclusion that in the phase of Socialist construction even after private ownership is transformed, in the main, into Socialist ownership, the prevalence of bourgeois rights in society and the prevalence of interpersonal disparities between villages and cities, between workers and peasants, between manual and mental labour are indicators of the prevalence of class contradictions in the society. He had concretely understood the error of the conception of considering only the contradiction between backward productive forces and advanced production relations in Socialist society as principal, and on the practical plane had reached the conclusion that the change in ownership is not synonymous to change in the production relations. At that time the revisionist clique of Liu Shao-Chi present inside the party was presenting the theory of the development of the productive forces, in a well-developed form, in negation of the class struggle. After the emergence of Khrushchev in the International Communist Movement a wave of revisionism was sweeping the world at that time which gave support to this revisionist line which was being opposed in the two line struggle intensifying in the Chinese Party. At such a moment, in his writing, *'On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the Masses'*, Mao, for the first time, pointed out clearly from the standpoint of theory and practice

that even after the task of Socialist transformation of the ownership was, in the main, completed, the classes and class struggle persisted and that the proletariat must carry on the task of revolution. He emphasised the point that **“the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, the class struggle between various political forces and the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the ideological sphere will continue for a long time, will be full of twists and turns and from time to time, will even become extremely serious”**. Disproving the misconception forwarded by Liu Shao Chi, he explained that the question of which will win between Socialism and Capitalism is not yet decided. For the first time Mao laid special stress on the continuous mass struggle against the bourgeois ideology and bureaucratic work style in Socialist society and pointed out that the development of the economic base independently and of its own accord cannot create the organisational structure that are essential to take revolution forward. In his work entitled, ‘On Contradiction’ Mao had much earlier talked of the decisive role that the superstructure can assume at times. Now he indicated that in the Socialist society the class struggle on the ideological plane was essential for the Socialist transformation of the production relations and he progressively increased his stress on this aspect. During the sum-up of the ‘Great Leap Forward’, Mao began giving more and more stress on the interrelationships of the Party and the masses and on the role of the masses in the ideological-political struggle. Mao saw the masses as the true creators of history and said that only through the people’s creativity and initiative and increased participation in the decision-making process can Socialism be taken forward, and that the Communist Party must learn from the masses. Thus he presented a more clarified understanding of the form of democratic centralism of the Socialist society and besides, also said that in the Socialist class society the Communist Party cannot be integrated and homogeneous. From the experience of the two-line struggle going on in the Party at that time, he drew the conclusion that only inner-party criticism-self criticism, rectification campaigns and ideological commitment are not sufficient to maintain the revolutionary role of the party. The contradictions within the Party are closely interlinked with the contradictions in the society and only by becoming one with the masses and by learning from their criticisms can it continue to improve itself. This too Mao saw as a necessary form of the class struggle in the sphere of the superstructure.

Thus we see that by the mid-1950s, the concept of the Cultural

Revolution, and the composite parts of its policy and its programme had begun to assume definite shape in Mao’s thought-process. On the nature of the class struggle in Socialist society; the presence of bourgeois elements in the form of the spokespersons of the bourgeois line within the party; the decisive importance of the superstructure in the Socialist transformation; the inevitability of controlling and limiting the interpersonal disparities and the bourgeois rights, and the inequalities prevailing on every level of the society; the necessity of the participation of the extensive masses in the class struggle continuing in the Socialist society and its forms—Mao seriously began thinking on all these aspects and started drawing conclusions at this time. At the same time under Khrushchev’s influence a wave of modern revisionism was spreading all over the world. And Mao’s experiences of fighting it right from 1956 to the decisive struggle of the ‘Great Debate’ enriched his thinking on conducting a class struggle against the revisionist bourgeois elements and also provided him with necessary concrete and practical teachings on capitalist restoration. Within the country too the struggle was being waged against the revisionists who were placed in a strong position within the Party, against whom, struggling for the cause of the complete orientation of the Socialist revolution, for every policy and every decision, Mao, grasping with increasing clarity the importance and the form of class struggle and the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Socialist society, was preparing step-by-step the theoretical and practical background of the Proletarian Cultural Revolution. On the international level the preparation of the struggle against Khrushchevite revisionism and its gradual beginning also was decisively playing an important role in this process. In the process of developing his understanding of the economic-political formation, the nature of class struggle, the orientation of the development and the prior bases inherent in the past of the Russia where capitalism had been restored after Khrushchev’s abandonment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, Mao Tse-tung acquired a concrete understanding of the dangers of capitalist restoration underlined several times by Marx, Engels, Lenin, and thinking about the means and methods of preventing the same, advanced towards formulating the concept of perpetual revolution in Socialist society. Right from the struggle waged against the bourgeois rightists in 1957 to the struggle against Peng Tehuai anti-party clique at the Lushan meeting of 1959, the main focal point of the two-line struggle has always been whether to advance the Socialist revolution through class struggle or to advance on the path of capitalism.

This two-line struggle became loud and clear after the struggle against Khrushchevite revisionism and after the Great Debate in the open struggle against capitalist restoration and thereafter till the beginning of the Socialist Education Movement in 1964 when the struggle became more and more acute.

In January 1962 in the executive meeting of the Central Committee, Mao laid particular stress on the vigilance against the threat of revisionism and the same year in August, in the executive meeting of the Central Committee at Petaiho, and in September in the Tenth General Congress of the Eight Central Committee of the Party, for the first time making elaborate mention of the basic characteristics of the entire historical period of Socialism, he gave the basic line of action for the Party during this entire period. While discussing the protracted nature of the class struggle continuing throughout Socialist transition, the form of contradictions and the constant dangers of capitalist restoration, he gave special emphasis on the Socialist Education Movement and thus underlined the importance of the superstructure. In the '10 Point Decision' prepared under Mao's guidance in May 1963, the Party's line, principles and policies regarding the Socialist Education Movement were spelled out. Mao clearly stated that **if we forget the class struggle and the dictatorship of the proletariat "then it would not take long, perhaps only several years or a decade, or several decades at most, before a counterrevolutionary restoration on a national scale inevitably occurred, the Marxist-Leninist Party would undoubtedly become a revisionist party or a Fascist party, and the whole of China would change its colour"**. Once again in 1963 during the Great Debate in the historical document on the General Line, Mao wrote about the indispensability of the class struggle in Socialist society to prevent capitalist restoration.

The Great Socialist Education Movement launched in 1964 was the preface to the Proletarian Cultural Revolution. In this period for the first time Mao stated concretely that **"the main targets of attack in the present movement are those people in power in the Party who are adopting the capitalist road"**.

In this way for the first time he made clear which people represent the bourgeois forces present in the Socialist society and what would be the political nature of class struggle in the future. Exactly in this period along with education, in the fields of literature, art, culture too, intense struggle had begun against bourgeois trends and tendencies.

**The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution** was the first attempt to

provide a thorough and all-encompassing solution to the fundamental problems of Socialism that were constantly pinpointed since the time of Marx. This was a great all-round political revolution. For the first time Mao acquainted the proletariat with the path of conducting class struggle in the sphere of superstructure—the path of conducting a well-planned revolution and provided it with the key to ensure the transition towards Communism, by resolving all the contradictions of Socialism as discussed above, through perpetual revolution. In February 1967 while discussing its historical importance Mao said during a conversation: "In the past we have conducted struggle in the villages, in factories and also organised the Socialist Education Movement. But all these have not proved successful in solving the problem, because we have not been able to evolve such means, such a method to arouse the broad masses to expose our dark aspect in an absolutely open and all-round manner and right from below". Despite the dictatorship of the proletariat having been established under the leadership of the Communist Party, the capitalist roaders entrenched in the Party who were blocking the progress of Socialism were identified clearly for the first time and thus arousing the vast millions of the masses they were called upon to bombard the bourgeois headquarters.

The first clarion of this great revolution was sounded by the Circular of May 16, 1966 which was prepared under the direct guidance of Mao Tse-tung through which the theory, line, principles, policies and the programme of the Cultural Revolution were outlined. Under the guidance of Mao's proletarian line the broad revolutionary masses came out like a tide of revolution. Cultural Revolution Groups were organised under the leadership of the Central Committee; beginning with Peking University there came out a flood of big-character posters criticising the reactionary-bourgeois ideas and their advocates all over the country; and playing the role of heroic path-breakers as Red Guards, millions of the nation's revolutionary youth got organised. In the following period Revolutionary Committees were formed to conduct the struggle in a smooth manner. Led by Liu Shao-chi, the capitalist roaders seated firmly in the state power and in the party did not spare any means to suppress this movement and a bitter struggle ensued. In August 1966 the Eighth Central Committee passed the famous programmatic document The 'Sixteen Point Circular' and with the well-known slogan, "Bombard the Bourgeois Headquarters" the Cultural Revolution entered a new phase of a life-and-death struggle. The culmination of this phase of the struggle came when Liu Shao-chi was deposed from power. From May 1966 till the beginning of 1969 the



first tide of the Cultural Revolution traversed through several periods of ups and downs and a path full of twists and turns. Many a time the capitalist roaders made retaliatory attacks and were successful in blowing an adverse wind but ultimately they had to taste defeat. The thorough sum-up of this first experiment of the Proletarian Cultural Revolution was presented in the report of the Ninth Congress of the Party in April 1969 which was prepared under the direct guidance of Mao Tse-tung.

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution is the most recent forward stride in the development of the proletarian ideology and in the journey towards Communist society it is the highest peak conquered by the international proletariat.

Through this, Scientific Socialism developed to the state of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung thought. Behind this was the total sum of the essence of the entire historical experience of the proletariat. On reaching this stage, Mao had discovered the material basis of capitalist restoration and the social basis of revisionism in a comprehensive manner. He presented a clear understanding of the presence of the bourgeois rights, the laws of value, the commodity economy, the interpersonal disparities between country and town, peasants and workers and manual and mental labour, and of the presence of the classes as their fundamental source, and of the newer and newer forms of bourgeois social relations, institutions, ideas, values, beliefs and culture, that were born out of this situation. Thus he pointed out that the only means of preventing capitalist restoration was to continue the class struggle under the dictatorship of the proletariat, to progressively limit and control the bourgeois rights, to gradually eliminate the disparity in bourgeois incentives and consumption, and, continuously waging the struggle against the bourgeois tendencies in the fields of art-literature-culture, to develop a new proletarian culture. In this process the bourgeois elements present in the Party and the state would always create obstacles and, arousing the broad masses against these, a political struggle would necessarily have to be conducted. This struggle would be a perpetual revolution which would have to be continued continuously on the plane of the base and the superstructure and after an interval of every few years it would assume the form of an open and sharp struggle—as an open political revolution. During the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution Mao enriched and developed the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat and pointed out that it was essential to implement all-round dictatorship on the bourgeoisie in every sphere of life including the superstructural framework. **The theory of continuing the**

**revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat and its practice through the Proletarian Cultural Revolution is the greatest contribution of Mao Tse-tung to Marxism.** During the Cultural Revolution, Mao presented a brilliant analysis of the dialectical relationship between the base and the superstructure.

Mao underlined the supreme role that the people play in changing the world, with a new realisation and showed that while participating in this great effort of changing the world the people change themselves too. He also pointed out that, in the ultimate analysis, the Cultural Revolution is the crucible which changes man. Therefore, during the Cultural Revolution he gave to the Communists, to the proletariat and to the entire people the slogan of fighting against the 'self' and of building a new man. The Cultural Revolution gave simultaneous stress on the leading role of the Party and on learning from the masses and calling both these aspects as mutually complementary, presented the most developed and concrete conception of the dialectical interrelationship of the Party and the people. The Cultural Revolution unbounded the people's revolutionary energy, enthusiasm, initiative and creativity on an unprecedented scale, as a consequence of which, various new experiments could be made. Class struggle, the struggle for production and scientific experimentation—these three movements produced a huge outburst of creativity and zeal. Many new experiments took place and production increased tremendously. The production relations underwent revolutionary transformation and the management by experts and bureaucrats through one-member committees was replaced by revolutionary committees of the workers. An entirely new type of model of Socialist productive activities—Taching in the industrial sector and Tachai in the agricultural sector were built. Attacking the bourgeois philosophy that knowledge was an individual property, he told the masses that knowledge is a social property and that the monopoly of a few people over it is a strong material basis for the rule of the bourgeoisie. Dialectics and other philosophical subjects that were until then considered incomprehensible for the common people and outside their reach, came to be widely popularised during the Cultural Revolution, and the ordinary working people grasped them and established miraculous examples of practicing them in day-to-day life.

Even after presenting the sum-up of the first storm of the G.P.C.R. in the Ninth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, just as Mao had time and again pointed out, the class struggle continued in new forms and Mao continued to lead the proletariat, battling in the difficult phase of this

intense struggle, even on his deathbed. Soon after the Ninth Congress, Lin Piao began negating the teaching of Mao by saying that the Cultural Revolution was completed successfully and the victory of Socialism in China had been ascertained. In this way by preempting the process of perpetual revolution he intended to establish the influence of his new bourgeois clique in the Party and the state. Instead of the masses he wanted to make the role of the Army decisive and wanted to transform the Red Army into a bourgeois Army. He was an advocate of the bourgeois theory of knowledge and, in the ultimate analysis, through his ultra left slogan mongering intended to make the development of the productive forces the key link of Socialism instead of class struggle. Within the Party, since the Ninth Congress itself the struggle had begun against him. After the exposure of his conspiracy of counterrevolutionary coup a widespread campaign was launched in China to uncover the bourgeois character of his views. However, the struggle had still to go through many difficult phases. For the fact that the balance of class forces was still not decisively in favour of the proletariat, the greatest evidence is Deng Xiao-ping's return to posts in the Party and the state in April 1973. In the Party at the level of policies of the state and on the plane of art-literature-culture this was a new phase of sharp class struggle. From October 1975 to April 1976 during the counterrevolutionary demonstrations in the Tien-An-Men square, the rightist forces continuously made the line of the Cultural Revolution the target of their attacks and this process continued, despite the nationwide struggles against Deng and for his expulsion, until the last days of Mao. In 1976 Mao said to Party workers, **“you are making Socialist revolution and yet do not know where the bourgeoisie is. It is within the Communist Party—those who are in power are themselves adopting the capitalist road. The capitalist roaders are still on the capitalist road.”** Till the end he cautioned again and again that in China it is still not decided whether victory will be with Socialism or with capitalism. He appealed to the workers and the toiling masses of China and the whole world that if the restoration of capitalism takes place in China as well, then they should, without delay, begin struggle against it.

After Mao's death the revisionists captured the leadership of the Party and the state in China, but as Mao predicted, despite having occupied the seat of power and mercilessly suppressing the voices of revolution, they have not been able to even breathe comfortably for a moment.

Often the question arises from some quarters or the other how it

became possible for capitalism to be restored in China despite the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution? As Mao had specified, the decisive elimination of this danger demands not one or two but several Cultural Revolutions, and a protracted struggle continued till several generations. In a country with backward productive forces like China a strong ground for capitalist restoration prevailed in the Socialist phase and the internal motion of the continuous expansion of this basis existed in a more forceful form. Secondly, to arrive at the stage of establishing the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in theory and in practice it took Mao about 17 long years, during which though the dictatorship of the proletariat and the class struggle did continue, yet bourgeois forces continuously expanded their base and increased their strength in society, in the Party and the State. Not only that, if the Proletarian Cultural Revolution had begun in Lenin's or Stalin's time even then, considering the national-international balance of class forces, the victory of Socialism could not have been said to be certain and ultimate. Yes, that possibility could have been relatively greater, or could have come closer by. In the victory of revolution and its continuity the role of the subjective forces is no doubt important, but the objective conditions—the limitations of the stage of history cannot be denied. That would be a non-dialectical and idealist approach. It is necessary to remember that considering the nature and tasks of proletarian revolutions, the phase from the October Revolution upto now can only be referred to as the stage of primary experiments. Besides, it must also be remembered that in the capitalist world, revolutions in one or two countries and especially in backward countries have their inevitable limitations and problems, which many times can change the balance of class forces in the favour of world capitalism. The struggle for Socialism is a worldwide epic war and till the main fortresses of capital are destroyed the struggle of the proletariat will remain excessively difficult.

The road to Socialism is still very long and the struggle would still have to go through several difficulties, but, on the other hand it is also true that the crisis of imperialism is already showing signs of a new series of revolutions. The crisis is in the East and also in the West. It is worldwide. In the countries of the Eastern Europe and in Russia, unrest is already simmering against the newly established orders of the type of Western capitalism, and protests are being heard for the reinstatement of the rights and privileges granted to them by Socialism. The social Fascist regime of China is having to face the opposition of the people continuously. All the events are indicators that in the days to come, Socialist revolutions will

burst forth in the countries of the Third World and in the Western World, and in Russia, Eastern Europe and China the second editions of the October Revolution are in the making and this process is accelerating fast.

It is not at the will of the bourgeoisie to remain in power or not. The pace of historical development is not governed by its will. The proletarian revolutions cannot wait because of its will or because of its subjective efforts, since the objective conditions are preparing the ground for them again. And nothing different from this can happen. The forthcoming days will once again be the days of the ceaseless development-process of continuous Socialist revolutions. The path of proletarian revolutions is difficult and full of ups and downs, but their victory is inevitable. The immortal flame of the Proletarian Cultural Revolution will continue to illumine the path of the struggle of the proletariat.

**The account of the future presented by Mao Tse-tung in 1962 is historically important, correct and relevant even today. Mao had said "The era from now on until the next fifty to hundred years will be one such great era when the social system of the world will undergo fundamental change, it will be such an earthshaking era which cannot be compared with any era of the past history. Living in such an era, we must be prepared to fight in those great struggles which in many respects will be different in character from the various struggles of the past."**

May, 1990

## Supplement

In our essay presented in the Gorakhpur-Seminar (June 6-June 10, 1990), in the light of the entire debate that ran during the seminar and its sum and substance, we feel the need to add something more to it and enrich it further. This supplement is being presented with this very objective.

In the essay, we have discussed in detail the objective reasons of the defeat of Socialism—the objective limitations of the stage of history. Besides objective reasons, we have also mentioned the subjective limitations-problems, the need for acquiring a balanced understanding of the lapses-mistakes of the leadership, however, owing to the limits of the essay, apart from a significant theoretical error on part of Stalin, the complete exposition of the subjective factors and their dialectical interrelations with the objective factors could not be undertaken. Though our viewpoint and approach is clear, however, we want to present our position in brief on this issue so that no room is left for arriving at deterministic conclusions on the question of capitalist restoration.

During the entire past phase of Socialist transition, such objective limitations and problems were continuously in existence as a ground for capitalist restoration which were independent of the will of the proletariat, its party and leadership. And for a very long time in future, this situation will remain so. Besides, during the revolutionary social experiments of the Socialist transition period, the subjective limitations and the lapses-mistakes of the leadership performed a significant role in the restoration of capitalism. The objective and subjective reasons of the defeat of Socialism are dialectically interrelated and these two factors continuously influence one another through the process of action-reaction-interaction. In the absence of a balanced understanding of these two factors and their interrelations, neither a scientific realistic viewpoint can be adopted towards the problems of Socialism nor can the clear identification of the subjective lapses-mistakes of the past, their correct summing up and their eradication during the experiment be done.

During the Socialist transition, for a very long time, owing to the

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historically created objective limitations the possibility of the capitalist restoration will remain but this is only a possibility, not an inevitability. Owing to the objective reasons the reversal of the process of Socialist transition is never inevitable. If the leadership has a relatively more complete balanced understanding of the objective conditions and if it can avoid serious lapses and mistakes then despite objective impediments, the possibility of capitalist restoration can be minimised and even can be prevented, however, owing to the objective limitations as mentioned in detail in the essay, even it cannot be called certain. Then this too will be determinism of a sort.

Till the time the proletarian revolution was limited to a single country, the possibility of capitalist restoration was undoubtedly strong; however, particularly after coming into existence of an entire Socialist camp, had a logical understanding of the objective problems of Socialism and the measures for their eradication been present and had some of the serious mistakes not been committed, then the possibility of preventing the restoration would have been much brighter. The analysis and the summing up of the positive and negative experiences of the experiments carried out during the Socialist transition period in Russia and China and the errors and mistakes of Stalin and Mao should be done in this very perspective.

While undertaking the summing up of the experiences of the Socialist construction in the Soviet Union, Mao Tse-tung along with the merits and achievements of Stalin presented a balanced and complete analysis of his errors and mistakes too; in the light of the important conclusions and teachings deduced from them, took forward the experiments of Socialist revolution to the stage of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and for the first time propounded concrete principles for the effective prevention of capitalist restoration and also commenced the experiment for their verification in practice. In the light of the assessment of Stalin presented by Mao and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, the Communist revolutionaries across the world understand and analyse the subjective limitations of the Socialist experiments in the Soviet society.

Objective and subjective factors are incessantly involved in interaction with one another and influence each other. Mao Tse-tung presented a detailed analysis of various aspects such as how the lapses and mistakes of the leadership during the period of Stalin influenced the changes taking place in the society, consequently how they objectively provided assistance in the expansion on the base of bourgeois socio-economic relations and the new bourgeois elements, how these changes

going on in the social organisation gradually strengthened the revisionist ideology, line and the status of the capitalist roaders within the party and then broadened their base and how these capitalist roaders taking advantage of every mistake committed by the leadership prepared the prior basis and conditions for the capitalist restoration. In this way through a continuous action and reaction with the objective conditions, the subjective limitations, failures and lapses of the party leadership, provided assistance in consolidating such a condition, owing to which the position of bourgeois elements strengthened in the society and in the party and the state in a process of historical development and in the course of time, their representative came forward in form of Khrushchev who while taking advantages of the favorable conditions began the capitalist restoration after conspiracy and reactionary power-transformation. Therefore, the limitations, failures and mistakes of Stalin played an important role in shifting the balance of class forces in favour of the bourgeoisie.

As far as the question of the lapses and mistakes of Mao Tse-tung and Chinese Party is concerned, today the absence of a mature international leadership makes the task of their correct and balanced assessment extremely difficult and infact the task of their thorough and complete estimation-assessment-summing up can only be undertaken when a Socialist experiment of that level is either being carried out in a particular country or else has been carried out and the necessity and prior basis for the social experiment of a more advanced level are present. Only then learning from the errors and failings of the great Socialist experiments under the guidance and leadership of Mao Tse-tung the new principles can be developed and they can be verified and proved through social experiment. Only this viewpoint and approach can be correct in the assessment of history and leaders of the international Communist movement and the analysis of the subjective factors responsible for the successes-failures of the great revolutions.

Nevertheless, there are some significant mistakes of the Communist Party of China which today require discussion and earnest contemplation and deliberation. Amongst these many lapses and mistakes are those whose sum up Mao Tse-tung himself had presented at regular intervals. Many mistakes can today be understood in the light of the teachings from Marx to Mao on the class struggle and ideological struggle continuing in a Socialist society and the lessons of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. There are such questions too regarding which one cannot arrive at any conclusion, however, the Communist revolutionaries will have

to make patient efforts in a controlled-balanced manner. Here we will discuss some such serious lapses and mistakes during the great social experiments under the leadership of Mao Tse-tung which played an important role in shifting the class-power balance in the favour of the bourgeoisie and in providing impetus to the current of reversal. These subjective factors while interacting with the objective conditions prepared a new objective base for the flourishing of new bourgeois elements, bourgeois relations of production and bourgeois superstructure or lent support to it. Again this objective condition in its interaction with the subjective force influenced the organisation and character of the proletarian party and the state and provided favorable opportunity for the thriving of the bourgeois elements within the party. These capitalist roaders inside the party took advantage of every lapse of the revolutionary leadership and furthered their own policies, gradually expanded their base in the society and after the death of Mao, as soon as the most favorable condition originated, in no time accomplished the reactionary coup.

During the Great Debate, Mao led the Communist revolutionaries across the globe and safeguarded the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism, however, due to the delay of around more than seven years in the commencement of the open struggle against the modern revisionism of Khrushchev, the International Communist Movement had to pay a heavy price. For a long time Mao wished the unity of the International Communist Movement to remain intact. For this, not only the beginning of an open ideological struggle against the Khrushchevite revisionism was deferred, but for some time a compromise was made too. The declaration and statement issued after the Moscow Meetings of November 1957 and November 1960 were the documents of compromise. Although both the revolutionary and revisionist lines were present in both these documents, however, in history, it is always the reactionaries who take advantage of every such compromise made in principles and the same happened with the compromises of '57 and '60. Standing in the condition of indecision and vacillation, the ideologically weak parties can be expected to stand with the correct line only after drawing a clear dividing line between the right and the wrong. If the correct revolutionary line itself is standing in the position of compromise, then the revolutionary forces cannot be mobilised in an effective manner around it. Owing to the compromise and delay in the struggle against the Khrushchevite revisionism the same happened. Despite conspiracy, slandering and sabotage by the Khrushchevite clique and despite his revisionist line becoming blatantly

visible the compromise made by the Chinese Party, not making public the controversy and waiting for a period of more than seven years in mobilising the Marxist-Leninists of the world in the struggle against the revisionism by openly calling upon them was a serious mistake, which objectivity provided assistance to the revisionists and capitalist roaders in Russia, in the entire world and within China too. Because of this, the World Communist Movement suffered a great loss. The party of China later accepted the mistake of compromise and delay in this historic ideological struggle.

This is our firm opinion that had the open and uncompromising struggle been launched and had the polarisation of the International Communist fraternity begun, then the conditions would have been more favourable to the Communist revolutionaries. The serious mistake of the party of China not only provided impetus to the revisionist line and capitalist roaders on a worldwide scale but within China too. It is worth mentioning that precisely at this moment, the two-line struggle was continuing fiercely within the Chinese Party and in the Eight Congress of 1956, the revisionist line was predominant. Even after that, this struggle continued in a fiercer form ceaselessly whose ultimate culmination was the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. The Capitalist roader clique of Liu Shao-chi continuously got support from the Khrushchevite Revisionism at every level. The long phase of compromise with the revisionism at world-level created delusion in the Communist ranks in China too, lent support to the process of thriving of revisionism amongst them and blurred the dividing line between the revolutionary and revisionist lines, whose utmost advantage Liu Shao-chi – Deng Xiao-ping clique took.

The approach and methodology adopted by Marx and Lenin in ideological struggles differed from this. In his time, as soon as the alien currents-trends-tendencies became visible in the workers movement, Marx in less than no time launched an open, uncompromising and radical struggle against them. He never attempted to maintain the organisational unity by paying the price of ideological compromises. He neither showed any hesitation nor ever deferred the breaking up of any unity or the dissolution of any organisation so as to safeguard the ideology. The same was the approach and methodology of Lenin too. Even risking the fear of being alienated in the struggle against revisionism, Lenin always adopted the stance of fierce uncompromising struggle. He showed no hesitation in immediately initiating the struggle against the founder and established

leader of Marxism in Russia, Plekhanov. Even risking the danger of being isolated at the international level, he showed no dilemma in spearheading a campaign against the revisionism of Kautsky without any delay. He safeguarded the ideology by paying the price of the disintegration of the Second International. History has proved correct the supremacy of ideology and inevitability of uncompromising ideological struggle through results. While offering the gist of the mistake of deferring the initiation of the Great Debate, Mao too advised the Communist revolutionaries across the world that they should without a moment's delay launch the struggle against revisionists and capitalist roaders. This is the teaching of the Proletarian Cultural Revolution too.

In the latter half of the 1950s, another significant policy related mistake of Mao Tse-tung performed an important role in shifting the balance of class forces in the favour of bourgeois classes and the capitalist roaders present within the party and the state. In his classical exposition named 'On the Correct Handling of the Contradictions amongst the Masses' where Mao Tse-tung presented an incisive analysis of the presence of class struggle in a Socialist society and the problems of the transitional period, he presented this incorrect strategic foundation that in the stage of the Socialist revolution in China, the contradiction between the National Bourgeoisie and the working class still comes under the category of the contradiction amongst the masses and that its resolution can be arrived at through peaceful means. He stated that our policy towards the national bourgeois should be that of establishing unity, criticising and educating it. In this way, here the emphasis of Mao Tse-tung is more on the subjective will of the class rather than the concrete objective condition. The principal contradiction of Socialism can only be between the labour and the capital and a peaceful resolution of this antagonistic contradiction can only be a subjective desire, however, the objective laws of the development of society show that it is impossible. During the phase of Socialist transition, no section of bourgeoisie can be the strategic ally of the toiling class and a part of the masses because no exploiting class can accept the annihilation of its existence voluntarily. This is the teaching from the Marx to Mao himself on the class struggle and Socialism. It is remarkable to note that this formulation of Mao presented in 1957 is contradictory to his own establishment presented in 1952 and later too, particularly during the Proletarian Cultural Revolution, while waging a struggle of life and death against the bourgeoisie the establishment that he presented by emphasising more than once on the

class alliances of Socialism and the nature of class struggle during that period, that too presents the negation of his incorrect formulation of 1957. While critically commenting on the blue print of a document presented by the Joint Front Task Department of the Central Committee of Chinese Communist Party on June 6, 1952, Mao wrote: "*After uprooting the power of the landowning class and bureaucratic bourgeoisie, the contradiction between the working class and the National bourgeoisie has now become the principal contradiction of China; therefore now the national bourgeoisie should not be defined in form of an intermediary class.*" (Mao Tse-tung; Collected Works (English Edition) Volume 5, Page 77). Before 1957, he had stated more than once that in the struggle of the Socialist transition, the people have to wage struggle against the entire bourgeoisie. Before the beginning of and during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, this fact was presented in a completely clear and concrete form in various writings and documents. In this way, contrary to the prior and later establishments of Mao Tse-tung himself, the formulation of 1957 presents an incorrect understanding of the class alliance of the Socialist revolution and viewpoint of compromise towards the bourgeoisie. It creates a kind of complacency and sluggishness in the Communist ranks and the proletariat during the class struggle continuing in Socialist transition and weakens the ruthlessness towards the enemy of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the revolutionary vigilance and caution of the proletariat and Communists. During the class struggle, one has to essentially pay every inch the price of every such compromise and the same happened in China. Particularly, Mao reached this compromise during that period when the Khrushchevite Revisionism after having consolidated itself on the world-wide scale had assumed an aggressive attitude and the revisionist line within the party of China was leaving no stone unturned in establishing its domination over the party. During the Eight Congress held in 1956, in fact the revisionist line was predominant in the party. In such a scenario, the policy of establishing unity with the National Bourgeoisie, persuading and educating them, obviously provided the capitalist roaders with an opportunity of making use of this incorrect policy to oppose the correct policies of Socialist transition, to safeguard the bourgeoisie and provide impetus to it. In this way, this serious lapse on the part of Mao objectively provided assistance in shifting the balance of class forces in the favour of the bourgeoisie and strengthened the base of the line of capitalist restoration.

Today it is not possible to analyse all the lapses-mistakes committed

by the Communist Party of China during the experiments and arrive at final conclusion regarding them, however, there are certainly some more such mistakes in our understanding that assisted in preparing the conditions for capitalist restoration. A detailed analysis of the sources and consequences of all these mistakes is a subject for a separate essay. Besides, today one cannot arrive at a final conclusion regarding them since neither the detailed facts of the conditions of that period are available nor is it possible to speculate about them without having traversed the experiences of the Socialist experiments of an advanced level. Nevertheless, there are some questions on which the Communist revolutionaries across the world will have to deliberate upon seriously. Here we will only make a mention of them and will roughly give our views on them in brief.

We consider the methodology of the assessment of the persons without the discussion and analysis of the entire process of development of the Chinese Party to be incorrect. The dialectical methodology demands that the assessment of any event, phenomenon or an individual must be presented with its entire historical process of development. Lenin used to present the assessment of Plekhanov or Kautsky in this manner itself. However, we find the absence of this approach in the methodology of assessment of Liu Shao-chi or Lin Piao or the other assessments presented by the Chinese Party.

We consider the decision of declaring Lin Piao as the able successor of Mao in the Constitution of the party passed in the Ninth Congress to be incorrect. Declaring any individual as successor is not in agreement with the principles of Marxism-Leninism.

The Party of China has been mentioned more than once as “the great glorious and correct Chinese Communist Party” in the party documents and articles. Calling it great and glorious is one thing, however, declaring any party to be correct is a non-dialectical approach and illustrative of idealist viewpoint.

During a specific phase, despite being always correct in its struggle against the Soviet Socialist Imperialism, owing to the incorrect exposition of the principal contradiction in the struggles continuing in various countries its exaggerated estimation of the aggression of the Soviet Imperialism too, the Chinese leadership committed some errors. Among these, particularly, the error of treating US Imperialism with leniency during that period can be underlined.

While making an estimation of the international conditions, the

exposition of the post-Second World War period as the “era of total collapse of Imperialism and Proletarian Revolution” is also considered incorrect by us. The subsequent development of the world conditions has also proved this estimation wrong. This is our conception that despite some extremely significant fundamental changes in the post-Second World War period, some important defeats of Imperialism and the beginning of a new phase of the serious internal crisis, we are still living in the era of Imperialism and proletarian Revolutions as had been expounded by Lenin. Essentially after the end of the phase of colonialism and neo-colonialism, the world today is standing at the threshold of a new phase—it is standing on the threshold of the economic neo-colonialism, however, it is not correct to expound it as a new era of the total collapse of imperialism.

Here we want to present in brief another important issue for the discussion and deliberation amongst the Communist revolutionaries which, in fact, is an extremely necessary and serious question and demands a separate detailed discussion and analysis.

While presenting the model of the Paris Commune as the ideal of the proletarian state, Lenin continuously emphasised the fact that a centralised structure cannot be an ideal form of the proletarian state. In these very terms, it was always correct on the part of Engels to state that the dictatorship of the proletariat, in the strict literal sense, is not a State. Lenin too underlined the presence of the element of no-State in the proletarian State. Therefore, Lenin laid much emphasis on the fact that the participation of the broad cross-section of toiling masses in the process of decision-making and the other tasks of the State should be to the maximum possible extent and the role of the party should be limited at the most to that of a political guide and a political leading force. Along with the advancement of the consciousness of the extensive masses, by giving their initiative and creativity an institutionalised form through conscious efforts, the broad base of the proletarian power should be created. Only by doing this, the bourgeois distortions and bureaucratic deformities inherent in the dictatorship of the proletariat established at that time in the Soviet Russia could have been gradually uprooted. Keeping this objective in mind, Lenin saw the Soviets as a new edition of the Paris commune and he was in favour of giving them more and more power of decision and policy-making and casting them in form of the basic unit of the proletarian power where the people directly take the task of governance gradually to a greater extent in their hands. This approach of Lenin was not limited to the case of Soviets only. He even went on to say that after

the establishment of the power of the proletariat completely, except for some important aspects of defence and foreign affairs, all issues should be made public amongst the masses. The correct form of the total participation of the broad masses in the process of decision-making and the total democracy for the toiling masses inherent in the dictatorship of the proletariat could only then have been materialised.

It is a question worth consideration that as to why even after reaching the phase of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, the objective of the participation of the masses in the process of decision-making could not be realised in practice to this level in China? And except for some important aspects of the defense and foreign affairs, why did the party of China not make public the debate on all other issues and the process of decision-making amongst the entire masses and why did it not undertake the task of increasing their participation in it; this is a question which needs to be deliberated upon. However, it is certain that the outcome of not doing so, proved unfavourable to Socialism.

The way in which Lenin had carried out the historical analogy of the Soviets with the model of communes established during the Paris Commune, similarly, the revolutionary committees established during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution too were founded on the model of communes. During the Cultural Revolution, the model of the Paris Commune was propagated extensively and with greater emphasis as an ideal and this was completely correct, since the only effective measure to prevent capitalist restoration could have been the expansion of the support base of proletarian state by establishing the direct participation of the masses in the process of governance and decision-making as much as possible. In the initial phase of the Cultural Revolution the role of revolutionary committee was taking shape in this very form, however, later on, they were transformed into subordinate institution of the government by giving them legal recognition, which was a clear deviation from the original objective. Gradually the responsibilities of the government were to be transferred to the revolutionary committees and in this way as an important constituent of the proletarian statepower, they had to be established as the government-recognised bodies. However, after being transformed as the Government-recognised bodies, these committees instead of operating as policy-making bodies were merely reduced to be public relations forum. The capitalist roaders made the most out of it as soon as they got an opportunity. After the reactionary coup Deng Xiaoping declared these revolutionary committees illegal at the earliest

opportunity. Had these committees not been transformed into the subordinate institutions of Government then this task would have been difficult; owing to the broader base of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the class-power balance would not have been favourable to the bourgeois forces to this extent and attempting a reactionary coup would have been comparatively more difficult for the capitalist roaders, or it is possible that it could have been impossible. Though this subject demands a detailed and profound discussion, however, in a nutshell, we are of the opinion that the party of China had some limitations and failures in the experiment of directly transferring the power to the working classes, of handing over the task of governance straight into their hands, of increasing their participation in the process of policy-making and decision-making and in this way broadening the base of the dictatorship of the proletariat. If this had happened and the ideals of the Paris Commune had been effectively translated into practice, then the manipulation, conspiracy and then coup carried out by a handful of capitalist roaders in the other upper committees including the Central Committee and seated on the important posts of the State would not have been that easy.

We once again want to clarify that our effort to sum up the positive-negative teachings of the Socialist experiments in Russia and China and analyse their objective and subjective limitations and problems can for the time being only be called preliminary. On some of these we have a firm opinion, on others, either an understanding has been reached or else is in the process and still some other issues are at present confronting us in form of questions that need consideration. Learning continuously from our own efforts and from the Marxist-Leninist parties-organisations-individuals across the world, we will continue our endeavour to deepen our understanding on all these issues; however, owing to the aforementioned reasons, our limitations will, nevertheless remain.

Another thing that we want to clarify in this Supplement is that the class struggle continuing in Russia, China, the Eastern Europe or anywhere else in the world is definitely connected with the class struggle continuing at the global level and both of these so intimately influence one another that they cannot be seen separately. The capitalist restoration in the Socialist countries has occurred as a consequence of the class struggle and the changes in the internal class power balance in these countries, however, the worldwide class-struggle, the support, conspiracy and infiltration of the imperialist powers, the world capitalist system and the power of International finance capital have undoubtedly played a

significant part in the process of reversal. The struggle between the labour and the capital is protracted worldwide epical war and the revolutions being attempted in the different countries and their defeat are triumphs and defeats taking place at only a few fronts in the worldwide battle. The discussion on this subject is possible in detail in only in an independent essay. Here we have mentioned this only to clarify our position on this issue.

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ISBN 978-81-906415-4-8  
Price Rs 15 00