

# VIII. CONCLUSION — THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EMERGENCE OF SOVIET SOCIAL-IMPERIALISM

We have shown throughout the course of this book that the Soviet Union has been transformed from the first socialist state into an imperialist power contending with the United States as chief exploiters of the peoples of the world. The question remains, what significance does this fact have for revolutionaries in the U.S. and other countries?

The starting point for developing the strategy for revolution in any one country must be based on a correct assessment of the world situation and the general strategy for advancing proletarian revolution on a world scale. Without such a correct view, inevitably we will make errors in analyzing the particular contradictions existing in any one country, fail to fully understand the present general crisis of imperialism, and not be able to correctly prepare the working class and the masses of people for the struggles looming ahead of us.

The transformation of the Soviet Union from the leading country in (what was then) the socialist bloc to an imperialist superpower has profoundly affected the alignment of class forces on a world scale, and hence the world-wide strategy and tactics for making revolution. An example of how a wrong view of the Soviet Union leads to a wrong appraisal of world events was shown in 1971, when during the Indian invasion of East Pakistan, some progressive people were hoodwinked into believing that the "Bangla Desh Affair" was actually a national liberation movement! Likewise, it is utterly impossible to understand the complex picture of the Middle East without understanding the role of the Soviet Union as an imperialist superpower.

After World War 2, Marxist-Leninists held for some time that of the major contradictions in the world, the principal one, or the one that determined the movement and development of all the major contradictions, has been the contradiction between the oppressed nations and imperialism. As a result of the events leading up to World War 2 and the war itself, the main arena of revolutionary struggle shifted from the West to the East. The revolutionary struggles for national liberation, especially in Asia and Africa, became the main battle ground in the world-wide struggle against imperialism. Most Marxist-Leninists, and indeed non-Marxist progressive forces, came

to recognize this. The heroic struggle of the Vietnamese people against U.S. imperialism developed in the 1960s into the leading struggle of the world's peoples against imperialism and became a rallying point for revolutionaries everywhere, especially in the U.S.

While Marxist-Leninists have held the principal contradiction in the world to have been between the oppressed nations and imperialism, the revisionists throughout the world, led by the "Communist" Party of the Soviet Union, have claimed that the principal contradiction is between "imperialism and the socialist camp", (which, of course, they mean to include the Soviet Union and other revisionist capitalist countries). The revisionists have spread this false view of the world situation in order to sabotage the struggle for national liberation, confuse revolutionaries, and provide a cover for their own attempts to challenge U.S. imperialism for hegemony in the world. While the CPUSA has tried to parrot this line in the U.S., fortunately it never received much support in this country (though it has become increasingly important to expose this line as the contention and collusion of the two superpowers steps up).

A far more common view has been to see the contradiction between the oppressed nations and imperialism as the *only* contradiction of any consequence in the world, now and forever. This view is generally coupled with a denial of or underestimation of the growing contradiction between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. People who hold this view, as seen in the writings of the editors of *Monthly Review*, and until recently in the *Guardian*, admit that the Soviet Union has "departed from Marxism-Leninism" or is "deformed", but fail to apply the method of class analysis to the Soviet Union and fail to see the USSR as a capitalist-imperialist power. This viewpoint is quite dangerous since it hides the true nature of social-imperialism and leads to the conclusion that the Soviet Union can be an "ally" of the national liberation struggles, and in that sense dovetails with the line pushed by the revisionists throughout the world.

The present world situation is marked by the rapid intensification of the world-wide general crisis of capitalism, which deepens and intensifies all major contradictions in the world. The struggle

of the workers in the U.S. and the other capitalist countries, including the Soviet Union, is increasing daily as the imperialists attempt to shift more of the burden of the crisis onto the backs of the working class. The national liberation movements are winning greater and greater victories, as can be seen by the defeat of Portuguese colonialism in Africa. The contradictions between the developing countries and the two superpowers have intensified markedly in recent years, as can be seen by the Arab oil boycott. The contradictions between imperialism and the socialist countries have also intensified, especially the preparations of the social-imperialists for war against China. And of extreme importance are the growing contradictions among the imperialist powers, most crucially between the U.S. and the USSR, but also between the lesser imperialist powers like Japan and France on the one hand and the two superpowers on the other.

The important thing for Marxist-Leninists is to see the development and movement of all the major contradictions, their interrelation with one another, and to grasp that the principal contradiction can change and the direction of our struggle shift, as Lenin wrote, in "twenty-four hours." If we see only one or two contradictions in the world, or fail to understand that with the further intensification of the world-wide crisis of capitalism the world situation will change, sometimes suddenly and dramatically, we will be disarmed and unprepared for the revolutionary struggles ahead of us.

## 1. Danger of World War

One of the most serious deficiencies of U.S. revolutionaries is a poor understanding of the relationship between the U.S. and the USSR in general, and a *serious underestimation of the growing danger of world war between the two superpowers* (though the opposite tendency to see world war as right around the corner, also exists in some quarters). One of the most fundamental contributions of Lenin to the science of revolution is his analysis of imperialism, of how the imperialist powers constantly strive for a new division of the world and his conclusion that "imperialism means war."

The history of the 20th century completely bears out Lenin's analysis. Both of the two world wars were caused by the struggle between different imperialist powers for monopolies of raw materials, markets, and most importantly, for colonies and dependent countries to which capital could be exported to extract superprofits.

The Marxist law of the "uneven development of capitalism" holds that different capitalist countries will develop at uneven rates, some spurting ahead while others are developing more slowly or stagnating and falling behind. This uneven development means that division of the world into "spheres of influence" (i.e., markets for the export of capital, sources of raw materials, etc.) will

constantly be upset as the division no longer reflects the real relative strengths of the various imperialist powers. Driven by the internal contradictions of the capitalist system, and the resistance of the people, the imperialists are unable to peacefully re-divide the world. Hence, the outbreak of wars, aimed at settling the question of division of the world by armed force, is inevitable as long as imperialism exists.

In the world today, the division of markets, sources of raw materials, etc. no longer reflects the real relationship of power—economic and military—among the imperialist powers—especially the two superpowers. As we pointed out earlier, the U.S., as a legacy of its near monopoly of the capitalist world following World War 2, has a disproportionate share of control in the world. Of course, other imperialist powers, especially the USSR, cannot stand for this—the laws of imperialism, the need to export capital, seize raw materials, etc., force the USSR and other imperialist powers to challenge the present division of the world, as the crisis-ridden and greatly weakened U.S. imperialism tries desperately to maintain the "status quo."

It is a well-known fact that in addition to the contention between the two superpowers for world hegemony, there also exists collusion and collaboration between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. When it comes to the revolutionary struggle of the people, the imperialists, both old and new, find common cause in opposing it. Both superpowers, for example, find it advantageous to force a "no war, no peace" situation on the Palestinian and Arab peoples. Both superpowers have supported the Lon Nol traitor clique in Cambodia. Even in those genuine national liberation struggles where, due to their need to contend with U.S. imperialism, the Soviet social-imperialists offer military "aid", they inevitably try to use their "assistance" to subvert the struggle for true independence and socialism, hoping to ride in on the backs of the people.

It is also true that the U.S. imperialists and social-imperialists have periodic conferences and summit meetings, always accompanied by much publicity and great ballyhoo, where they speak piously of "peace in the world", "U.S.-Soviet cooperation" and "detente." Unfortunately, some revolutionaries see only the collaboration between the U.S. and the USSR and are deceived by the talk of "detente." They see only the surface phenomena and fail to grasp the essence of the relationship between the superpowers. They think the U.S. and the Soviet imperialists can sit down in a room and come to an agreement on how to oppose the people and stage manage world events.

But try as they might, the superpowers are never able to come to any lasting or significant agreement. Those who see only the collusion and common interests of the U.S. and the USSR essentially fall into the "theory of even development or the theory of equilibrium" that Mao refutes in *On Contradiction*.

Mao quotes Lenin as writing,

*"The unity (coincidence, identity, equal action) of opposites is conditional, temporary, transitory, relative. The struggle of mutually exclusive opposites is absolute, just as development and motion are absolute."*

Mao goes on to write,

*"Such unity, solidarity, combination, harmony, balance, stalemate, deadlock, rest, constancy, equilibrium, solidity and attraction, etc., as we see in daily life, are all the appearances of things in the state of quantitative change. On the other hand, the dissolution of unity, that is, the destruction of this solidarity, combination, . . . solidity and attraction, and the change of each into its opposite are all the appearance of things in the state of qualitative change, the transformation of one process into another. . . . That is why we say that the unity of opposites is conditional, temporary and relative, while the struggle of mutually exclusive opposites is absolute."*

It is mainly this opposition and contention between the two superpowers that is pushing developments toward a new world war. But, in opposition to this, in turn, are the struggles of the countries, nations and peoples of the world for independence, liberation and socialism, which present a great obstacle in the path of the superpowers in their struggle for world domination and make it more difficult for them to unleash such a world war.

The aim of the world's peoples must be to prevent world war through revolutionary struggle, or, if such a war does break out, to continue waging revolutionary struggle under these conditions in order to hasten the complete downfall of imperialism. This is why Mao has said that "With regard to the question of world war, there are but two possibilities: One is that the war will give rise to revolution and the other is that revolution will prevent the war."

The Soviet propagandists, along with their U.S. imperialist counterparts, also speak of the danger of world war. But they do so to oppose revolutionary struggle, to preserve imperialism and promote their own imperialist interests. The Soviets say that world war is "unthinkable" and would "lead to the destruction of the human race." Of course, while they are speaking of peace they are arming themselves to the teeth in their effort to achieve military superiority over the U.S.

According to the spokesmen for social-imperialism, the only hope for "preserving peace" is for the people of the world to stop waging revolutionary struggle and place their hopes on Soviet-U.S. "detente", while supporting the Soviet Union in its contention with U.S. imperialism. The social-imperialists claim that armed revolution and wars of national liberation threaten world peace. On the contrary, the *only* way to prevent war between the two

superpowers, in the final analysis, is to overthrow them, and the only way to postpone and delay the outbreak of war is to continue to wage revolutionary struggle, in all forms, that weakens the imperialists. Clearly, the heroic armed struggle waged by the Vietnamese and Indochinese peoples has not only not led to world war but has greatly weakened U.S. imperialism and its ability to wage world war.

As the Chinese frequently point out, "The present international situation is characterized by great disorder." This disorder is reflected in the rapid disintegration of both the U.S. and Soviet imperialist blocs. Such turmoil and disorder, within the capitalist and imperialist countries is extremely favorable to the people, for it weakens imperialism and makes it more difficult for them to forge a bloc to go to war.

The main arena of contention between the two superpowers is Europe, which has been the focal point of battle in both previous world wars. Presently the Soviet Union is working feverishly to destroy NATO and conclude agreements with various West European imperialist powers. As pointed out in an earlier chapter, the struggle for control of the Middle East is very much a struggle for control of Europe, since Europe is heavily dependent on the Middle East for oil supplies—and further control of oil supplies is crucial to the imperialists in waging war.

In addition, the social-imperialists are attempting to strengthen their stranglehold on the East European revisionist countries. For its part, U.S. imperialism is trying desperately to keep the Western European imperialists in line, while at the same time making overtures to the revisionist countries of Eastern Europe hoping to woo them out from under the Soviet Union.

Under today's circumstances, the second-rate imperialist powers like Japan, France, etc. are incapable of forming a bloc that could stand up to either superpower in a military confrontation—unless it allied with one superpower against the other. Therefore, the rivalry between the superpowers for hegemony over the other imperialist and capitalist countries is growing stronger every day. The social-imperialists are following a policy of "making a feint to the East while attacking in the West", that is, while they continue their massive troop buildup along the border with China, and continue their provocations against China, their major goal is control of all of Europe and wresting hegemony from the U.S. imperialists. Still, in any future war involving the superpowers, the probability of attacks on China by one or another of the superpowers would be very great.

Since the time of Lenin, communists have always made an important part of their programme the fight against imperialist war. Lenin accurately predicted the outbreak of World War 1 and called on the workers of the warring imperialist powers to use the occasion of the war to rise up against their own bourgeoisie and turn

the imperialist war into a civil war.

It was during the course of World War 1 that the consistent proletarian internationalist stand of Lenin and the Bolshevik Party led to the establishment of socialism in tsarist Russia. During the crisis years of the 1930s, the Communist International and the Communist Parties throughout the world conducted vigorous agitation and propaganda among the masses of all countries about the danger of the outbreak of a second world war. And when, as a result of the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union, the overall character of the war changed from principally an inter-imperialist war to a world-wide united front against fascism, the Communist Parties and the Soviet Union led the world's peoples in defeating the fascist powers. On the heels of World War 2, the peoples of many countries throughout the world, in Eastern Europe, Korea, Vietnam and China, were able to cast off the yoke of oppression and establish socialism.

Revolutionaries today, especially those living in the U.S. and USSR, have a tremendous responsibility to conduct propaganda and wage struggles against the possibility of a third world war. But if such a war breaks out, it will not mean an end to humanity as the imperialists claim and although it will lead to untold suffering, it will bring closer the day when the imperialist system will be buried once and for all.

## 2. United Front Against the Two Superpowers

On the basis of a thorough analysis of the contradictions in the world today and the development of the revolutionary struggles throughout the world, Marxist-Leninists have formulated the strategy of the "united front against the two superpowers" as the general strategy for advancing struggle for proletarian revolution on a world scale. This united front is being forged with the People's Republic of China at its head.

The strategy of united front against the two superpowers has several aspects. It correctly identifies the present main enemies of the peoples of the world as U.S. imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism and enables the proletariat to build the broadest alliance with all possible forces against these main enemies. The staunchest allies of the proletariat in this struggle are the hundreds of millions of peasants, and urban petty bourgeoisie in Asia, Africa and Latin America who, together with the working class, are the backbone of the national liberation struggles in these areas, which are directed primarily at the two superpowers.

But beyond that, the contention and collusion of the two superpowers, the weakening of U.S. imperialism and its increasing challenge from Soviet social-imperialism, create a situation in which not only the progressive national bourgeoisie, in and out of power in these countries, but even certain governments in the Third World which enforce reactionary rule over their

own peoples, are struggling for more independence from one or other or both of the two superpowers. This provides broader—if less stable—allies for the proletariat in the struggle against the two superpowers.

Finally, the fact that the two superpowers seek to dominate even the lesser imperialist powers makes it possible for the proletariat to take advantage of the splits within the imperialist camp to hinder the formation and consolidation of imperialist blocs and to unite with the lesser capitalist and imperialist powers in resisting superpower domination. The tremendous success of the People's Republic of China on the diplomatic front in recent years, combined with its firm support for all genuine revolutionary struggles, is the result of the correct strategy of the united front against the two superpowers.

The strategy of united front against the two superpowers is the general strategy of communists throughout the world and must be the starting point for revolutionaries in formulating the strategy and tactics for making revolution in their respective countries. However, a general strategy for advancing revolution on a world scale is not enough. It is up to the genuine Communist Parties and Marxist-Leninist organizations in the different countries to make a painstaking analysis of the particular contradictions that exist in their country, and on the basis of applying Marxism-Leninism to the particular conditions and proceeding from the overall strategy of united front against the two superpowers, develop the strategy and programme for making revolution.

It is entirely correct for revolutionaries, especially in the Third World countries, to take advantage of inter-imperialist rivalry, including that between the two superpowers. However, in doing so the danger must be combatted to lose sight of the fact that, strategically speaking, the people of the world face both U.S. imperialism and social-imperialism as main enemies.

Similarly, there are cases where there appears to be a conflict between the general strategy of united front against the two superpowers, particularly as embodied in the foreign policy of China, the leader of the world revolutionary movement, and the interests of the masses of people in one or another country. However, in reality there is no such conflict. China has come to certain agreements, for example, with the Shah of Iran, whose main characteristic is a tyrant brutally oppressing the Iranian people and a puppet of U.S. imperialism. China's policy toward Iran is entirely correct and takes advantage of the Shah's contradiction with social-imperialism and even his contradiction with U.S. imperialism (although the main aspect, once again, is not one of opposing U.S. imperialism). This correct policy of China in no way means that the Iranian people should not wage revolutionary struggle aimed at overthrowing the reactionary regime of the Shah, or that the revolutionaries throughout the world should not support that just struggle.

Likewise, there is no conflict between the attempts China is making to improve relations with the U.S. and the general strategy of building a united front against the superpowers or the strategy within this country of united front against U.S. imperialism. Such a policy has greatly aided the revolutionary struggle in the U.S. by helping to eliminate the anti-China, anti-communist hysteria the U.S. imperialists tried to foster during the 50s and 60s, and creating a favorable climate to educate the American people about the true nature of socialism and China and the need for solidarity between our two peoples.

Such a policy also skillfully makes use of the contradictions between the superpowers to break the policy of "encirclement of China" that the U.S. imperialists and Soviet social-imperialists tried to forge in the 1960s. While seeking to improve relations with the U.S., on the basis of the five principles of co-existence, the Chinese Communist Party and the People's Republic of China continue to give full support to the revolutionary struggle of the American people, and continue to expose the true nature of U.S. imperialism in their publications, at the United Nations and elsewhere.

Actually, as far back as 1946, in describing a situation in many ways similar to today, Mao Tsetung laid out the principles which should guide revolutionaries in all countries in today's situation. He pointed out that there might be at that time certain compromises between the Soviet Union—then a socialist state—and certain reactionary forces, specifically the U.S., Britain and France, especially in the areas of diplomatic relations and trade. But, Mao stressed, "Such compromise does not require the people in the countries of the capitalist world to follow suit and make compromises at home. The people in those countries will continue to wage different struggles in accordance with their different conditions." (See "Some Points in Appraisal of the Present International Situation", Vol. IV, pp. 87-88)

### 3. How to View the Revisionist Parties

Today in most countries of the world, there exist, legally or illegally, parties which were founded prior to the emergence of modern revisionism on a world scale in 1956. Some of these parties have remained genuine Communist Parties loyal to Marxism-Leninism and the working class—for example, the Communist Party of China and the Party of Labor of Albania. Unfortunately, however, most of the former Communist Parties have abandoned Marxism-Leninism and betrayed the cause of the working class.

In those countries where modern revisionism has destroyed the old vanguard party of the working class, genuine communists have come forward, both from the ranks of the old revisionist parties and out of the mass struggles raging throughout the world, to build genuine Com-

munist Parties (or Marxist-Leninist organizations laying the basis for new parties), capable of leading the working class forward to revolution and socialism.

The existence of a large number of revisionist traitor parties plays an important role in the global strategy of social-imperialism in challenging the U.S. imperialists for world hegemony. Generally speaking, the revisionist parties have two aspects. On the one hand, they hinder the revolutionary movement of the working class by preaching such revisionist trash as the "peaceful road to socialism", the "Marxist-Catholic dialogue", etc. In some countries such as Italy, they have replaced the old Social-Democratic parties as the main social prop of the bourgeoisie in maintaining its dictatorship over the working class. The other aspect of the revisionist parties is their role as tools of Soviet social-imperialism for the purpose of expanding Soviet influence and control.

In particular, the revisionist parties of the Third World, often existing illegally, are called upon to serve the interests of Moscow. Whether such a party dissolves itself (Egypt), launches a coup (Sudan), or preaches "peaceful transition" (Chile) has very much to do with the strategy of social-imperialism toward a particular country.

For example, the revisionist Tudeh Party in Iran until recently promoted the line that the Shah was progressive, that there was no need for armed struggle in Iran, etc. But when that policy no longer served the needs of their social-imperialist masters, the leaders of the Tudeh party started calling for the overthrow of the Shah. This makes it all the clearer that the revolutionary people and the genuine Communist Parties and organizations in the Third World have to guard against infiltration by the revisionists and social-imperialist agents, who hope to turn their countries into Soviet neo-colonies.

In various West European countries, the revisionist parties are still fairly strong, trying to take advantage of the genuine desire of the workers for socialism and the high prestige the Soviet Union and the Communist Parties earned in the depression years (for the capitalist countries) of the 30s and the war against fascism. The revisionist parties of Western Europe are torn between loyalty to their "own" bourgeoisie and loyalty to the social-imperialists. This is the root cause of the differences between certain European revisionist parties and why, on occasion, certain revisionists accuse others of departing from "Marxism-Leninism" and hoot and holler about a "return to Leninism."

The revisionist "Communist" Party of Italy (ICA) has long ago concluded peace with the Italian monopoly capitalists. Hence, when the Italian bourgeoisie disapproved of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, its servants in the ICP were quick to follow suit. In France, on the other hand, the revisionist party is extremely subservient to social-imperialism.

The CPUSA also suffers this problem of dual

loyalties, as can be seen by their performance during the Watergate crisis. One might think that it should have been the CPUSA's chance to go to town, since they would have had an opportunity to push their hogwash about a "progressive" and a "reactionary" wing of the U.S. imperialist bourgeoisie; and, after all, they had been screaming that "impeaching Nixon" would solve all of the American people's problems as far back as 1969. But lo and behold, while the CPUSA did, to a certain extent, continue to push their "Nixon is the problem" line, they never showed much real enthusiasm for pursuing their long dream of "impeaching Nixon." Why? Because it turned out that Brezhnev and the social-imperialist ruling clique rather obviously preferred to see Nixon stay in office!

The development of the Soviet Union into social-imperialism makes the task of exposing and fighting the revisionist parties throughout the world that much more important. Not only do the revisionists, like the old Social-Democratic parties before them, try to deceive the working class with nonsense about "peaceful road", etc., and collaborate with their own bourgeoisie to oppose the revolution, they also serve, to a greater or lesser extent, as a social-imperialist fifth column. On the other hand, the conflict these revisionist parties face between loyalty to Soviet social-imperialism and loyalty to their own ruling class adds to the turmoil within the imperialist camp, and to this degree is a good thing.

In concluding, we feel it is important to stress the following points:

1. The restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union, home of the first successful proletarian revolution, is a most significant event in contemporary history. It is crucial that revolutionaries

have a correct summation and draw the correct conclusions from the events in the Soviet Union so as to learn from negative experience and grasp and apply more correctly the science of Marxism-Leninism—especially the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the transition from capitalism to communism. Only by doing so can a successful fight be waged against the restoration of capitalism in other socialist countries, and against revisionist lines and tendencies within all Communist Parties and organizations. And only in this way can the arguments of the bourgeoisie, who claim that the experience of the Soviet Union shows that socialism cannot succeed, be defeated.

2. The emergence of Soviet social-imperialism as a superpower colluding, but most of all contending, with its superpower rival, U.S. imperialism, profoundly affects the whole world situation and the course of the world revolutionary movement. It increases the danger of a third world war in which millions of people would perish as a result of the imperialist drive for greater and greater plunder. It means that the people of the world face two main enemies, the two superpowers, and must forge a united front against the two superpowers under the leadership of the revolutionary proletariat.

But as Lenin concluded, "Imperialism is the eve of the social revolution of the proletariat." The emergence of a new imperialist power—Soviet social-imperialism—can in no way change this truth. The day is not far off when the people of the entire world will rise up and bury Soviet social-imperialism, U.S. imperialism and all reactionaries and open a bright new page in human history.

