

... What is happening in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union and China? Most people are confused and the confusion is even more confounded by political commentators who do not know what they are writing about except that they cannot hide their glee at what is happening.

Some commentators even invent new theories (they call it new(?) thinking) to blame the whole thing on socialism. But what they do not do is to explore whether socialism still prevails in these countries or whether capitalism has been restored and state power removed from the hands of the working class. So great is people's faith in socialism that many people find it difficult to believe that capitalism could have been restored and state power removed from the hands of the working class....

Marx and Engels pointed out in the *Communist Manifesto*: "The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the state." Engels said in *Anti-Dühring* that the proletariat seizes political power and turns the means of production into state property.

Of course a centralised economy and collectives suffer from distortions of bureaucratic inefficiency and bungling. But one does not throw the baby out with the dirty bath water.

Shortcomings and the inefficiency of the state bureaucracy are now being used to discredit central planning and restore individual ownership.

Private ownership has a history of several centuries. All the same, let us remember that originally, in the world, there was no private ownership. Everything was owned in common. But today man has an inherited feeling for private property. It is this that is being used by the reactionary forces to lure the people of the former socialist countries to capitalism. Nobody defends inefficiency. It is found under both capitalism and socialism.

But to say that socialism is not creative is to fly in the face of facts. Both socialist Russia and China, before their descent into revision-

Socialism with a Human Face or Capitalism with a New Face?

(Excerpt)

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ism, were responsible for some of the best creations in art, music and technology. One doesn't easily forget the Sputnik or the artistry of the Bolshoi Ballet troupes or the revolutionary Chinese opera. Can you think of anything more creative than the defence of Stalingrad, where Soviet soldiers died with the name of Stalin on their lips, but never retreated and then turned difficulty into victory.

Even in the cultural field, the restoration of capitalism has led to the degeneration of moral values and all that is worst in Western culture. Mannequin parades and beauty queen competitions where lascivious men drool at semi-nude females are common. Prostitution has re-emerged in all these countries — a sure sign of capitalism....

Some commentators seem to suggest that Lenin's New Economic Policy (NEP) was the basis for the building of socialism in the Soviet Union. Lenin proposed NEP only as a temporary retreat from socialism. It lasted only one year. To see any similarity between Lenin's NEP and present Soviet policy is meaningless except that both are retreats from socialism. The earlier one was a temporary retreat. Now it is a permanent one. All that Gorbachev is doing is bringing about changes in the political superstructure of the state so that they will conform to the economic changes that have already taken place due to the restoration of capitalism. Thus the point that is being made in this article is not to deny the sorry state of affairs in the once-socialist countries, but to point out that this sorry state of affairs is due to these countries abandoning the revolutionary socialist path and restoring capitalism under revisionist leadership. Why does the Pope bless Lech Walesa? Why do the imperialist banks jump over one

another to offer loans to Poland and Hungary? Why does West Germany put such effort into luring East Germans across the border? Why is the West so frightened that Gorbachev could fall and why do they want to give him a hand? Even the UNP¹ President Premadasa

is an admirer of Gorbachev's perestroika. Why?

Could such praise, encouragement and help have been forthcoming if these former socialist countries were building better or more socialism?

Then there is the question of state power. All these countries have abandoned the dictatorship of the proletariat. In his time, Khrushchev abandoned it and transformed it into the dictatorship of the entire people which was another name for the dictatorship of the new bourgeois ruling class.

Lenin said, "The transition from capitalism to communism certainly cannot but yield a tremendous advance and variety of political forms, but the essence will be the same: the dictatorship of the proletariat."

The dictatorship of the proletariat, as Lenin explained it, is democracy for the people, and suppression by force, ie, exclusion from democracy, of the exploiters and oppressors of the people.

Today there is again talk of pluralist democracy which is nothing but bourgeois democracy or the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Democracy always has a class base. It is because proletarian state power was overthrown in the former socialist countries and the dictatorship of the proletariat abandoned that it became possible for the bourgeois forces to raise their heads and restore capitalism.

Some of these former socialist countries have committed aggression against their neighbours. The Soviet Union carried out aggression against Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan. Vietnam occupied Cambodia. China attacked Vietnam. These are actions which no socialist country could have been guilty of — another proof that they are not socialist. □

Footnote

1. The reactionary ruling party in Sri Lanka.