

THE
TEACHINGS OF
LENIN and STALIN
on
*PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION
AND THE STATE*

BY
A. Y. VYSHINSKY
Member of the Academy of Science of the U.S.S.R.

*Translated from the Russian
by A. ROTHSTEIN*

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A. Y. VYSHINSKY

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I

PRELUDE TO THE GREAT OCTOBER

“The first revolution born of the imperialist world war has broken out. This first revolution will certainly not be the last.”

That was what Lenin wrote in his famous “Letters from Afar” on the subject of the February-March revolution of 1917 in Russia, his mind of genius penetrating into the future. The February-March revolution was prepared and called forth as the result of an entire range of circumstances which Lenin declared, were circumstances of world historical significance. The February-March revolution of 1917 was preceded by the three years 1905-1907—years of the greatest class battles and revolutionary effort of the Russian proletariat. Emphasising this fact,, Lenin pointed out that phis, the truly first revolution—the great revolution of 1905, dismissed by the Guchkovs and Milyukovs and their underlings as a “great rebellion”— led twelve years later to the revolution of 1917, on which the same Octobrist and Cadet politicians lavished their praise and enthusiasm, because they saw in the overthrow of the Tsarist autocracy and the transfer of power into their own hands the crowning of all, their efforts and the realisation of their political design.

In his “Letters from Afar” Lenin with characteristic genius demonstrated that the February-March revolution which had given power to the bourgeoisie could not come to a halt and, so to speak, be rounded off by such a result. The first imperialist war, which in Lenin’s apposite expression was an all-powerful “stage manager”, the mighty accelerator of the course of world history, was bound to speed up greatly and, as Lenin wrote, “unusually sharpen the class struggle of

the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, and transform itself into a civil war between hostile classes”.*

Three main political forces were then functioning on the arena of history in which the dramatic events of the February-March Revolution were unfolding. The first; force was the Tsarist monarchy, the head of the feudal landowners, of the old bureaucracy and higher military command. The second force was “Russia of the bourgeoisie and landowners represented by the Octobrists and Cadets, with the petty bourgeoisie dragging at their tail”. The third force was “the Soviet of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies, seeking as allies the whole proletariat and the whole mass of the poorest population”.†

The February-March revolution came to victory so; quickly because there existed, as Lenin wrote, “an extremely original historical situation”, when there, came together and came together in a remarkably “wholehearted” manner, “absolutely dissimilar currents, absolutely heterogeneous class interests, absolutely opposed political and social aspirations”.

Lenin wrote of this precisely and clearly. He said: “There was the conspiracy of the Anglo-French imperialists, who urged Milyukov, Guchkov and Co. to seize power, with the object of prolonging the imperialist war, with the object of conducting it still more savagely and stubbornly, with the object of slaughtering new millions of; Russian workers and peasants so that Constantinople might be obtained ... by the Guchkovs, Syria ... by French capitalists, Mesopotamia ... by English capitalists, etc. This on the one side. And on the other, there was a profound proletarian and popular mass movement (all the poorest popula-

* Lenin. *Collected Works* (English edition), XX, part 1, p. 29.

† *Ibid.*

tion of the towns and villages) a movement of a revolutionary character, for bread, for peace, for real liberty.

“The revolutionary workers and soldiers have destroyed the infamous. Tsarist monarchy to its very foundations, being neither elated nor worried by the fact that, at certain brief historic moments, exceptional in their combination of circumstances, they are aided by the struggle of Buchanan, Guchkov, Milyukov and Co., who only desire to replace one monarch by another. Thus, and only thus, did it occur.”*

The first government which replaced the Tsarist autocracy as a result of the February-March revolution was composed of representatives of the class of capitalist landowners and bourgeoisie—a class which had in fact long before 1917 governed Russia and now, in February-March 1917; had taken shape and legalised itself, if one may use a juridical expression, by an act of revolutionary initiative. This government had been pushed to power by the Anglo-French Allies, in order to use Russia to the maximum in the first world war, naturally in their own interests/That was why Lenin gave this government of the Guchkovs and Milyukovs the well-chosen title of a mere clerk of the multi-millionaire “firms”, England and France...

Lenin wrote that this was a government of war, a government of continuation of the imperialist slaughter, ‘a government of conquests, tied hand and foot to Anglo-French capital; and that Russian capital was only a branch of the world-wide “firm”, with a turnover of hundreds of milliards of roubles, bearing the title: “England and France”.

The task of that government was to continue the war until Victory, and as before to hold bloody funeral

* *Ibid.*, p. 31.

rites over the Russian workers and peasants. But the workers and peasants did not want war; they demanded peace, bread and liberty. This the Provisional Government of the Guchkovs and the Milyukovs could not give. It had to be taken by force, by the armed hand of the proletariat in alliance with the working peasant masses who already had their centre of leadership. Such a centre was the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, of which Lenin wrote in April, 1917 that, making its appearance side by side with the official Government, it was a new and unofficial, undeveloped, still comparatively weak workers government or, more exactly, the embryo of a workers' government, the representative of the interest of all the poorest masses of the population, i.e., nine-tenths of the people who were struggling for peace, bread and liberty.

Lenin ended his first "Letter from Afar" with the remark that "the only guarantee of liberty and 'of complete destruction of Tsarism is the arming of the proletariat, the strengthening, broadening and developing of the role, significance and power of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies".*

He demanded help in the arming of the workers, or that, at any rate, it should not be hindered. In that event,, wrote Lenin, "Russia will be invincible, the monarchy incapable of being restored, the Republic secure". In this letter Lenin demonstrated the peculiarity of the moment—one of transition from the first to the second stage of the revolution, in which the watchword should be: "Workers, you have displayed miracles of proletarian and popular heroism in the civil war against Tsarism; you; must display miracles of proletarian and nation-wide organisation in order

* *Ibid.*, p. 33.

to prepare your victory in the second stage of the revolution”.*

In his article on “The Tasks of the Proletariat in the. Present Revolution”, published in *Pravda* (No. 26, April 20, 1917) Lenin set forth his famous ten theses, in which; he pointed to this transition, to the second stage of the; revolution—a stage “which must place power in the hands of the proletariat and the poorest strata of the peasantry”. In these theses Lenin insisted on the necessity of explaining to the people that the Soviet of Workers’ Deputies was the only possible form of revolutionary government, and that the Bolsheviks, being in a minority in the Soviets, were carrying on in these conditions the work of criticising and exposing errors, “at the same time advocating the necessity of transferring the entire power of State to the Soviets of Workers’ Deputies, so that the masses may by experience overcome their mistakes”, i.e., of confidence in pseudo-Socialists and in the Menshevik-Cadet-S.R. Government, of a policy of compromise with the bourgeoisie and of a policy of support for a government of capitalists, those “worst enemies of peace and Socialism”.

The theses explain that what is involved is not the “introduction of Socialism” as an immediate task but only the transition to the control of social production and distribution of products by the Soviet of Workers’ Deputies. But the theses already raise in all its grandeur the question of the need to fight for a Republic of Soviets of workers’, agricultural labourers’ and peasants’ Deputies throughout the coup try, from top to bottom, underlining that to go “back from the Soviets to a parliamentary Republic would be a retrograde step. The theses demand the abolition of the police

* *ibid.*, p. 34.

and the bureaucracy, and the replacement of the standing army by the general armament of the people; that all officials be elected and subject to recall at any time, their salaries not to exceed the average wage of a good workman; the confiscation of all landlords' estates, and the nationalisation of all lands throughout the county, to be disposed of by the local Soviets; the organisation of Soviets of deputies of the poorest peasants, and the creation out of each large estate of model farms (from 100 to 300 dessyatinas in size, according to local and other conditions and at the discretion of the local authorities) to be controlled by the Agricultural Labourers' Deputies and for the public account; the amalgamation of all banks throughout the country into one national bank, to be controlled by the Soviet of Workers' Deputies.

That was how Lenin wrote in April, 1917., six months before the victory of the great October Revolution, which heralded the beginning of a new era, the new and greatest epoch "in the history of mankind.

* * *

The Great October Revolution decided the problem of power, the root problem of every revolution, as Lenin used to say. In that same April of 1917 Lenin wrote of the power of the workmen and peasants that it was a revolutionary dictatorship, i.e., a power based directly upon revolutionary conquest, upon the direct initiative of the masses of the people from below, and *not on a law* promulgated by a centralised State authority.

"*This authority*", wrote Lenin, "is one of *the same type* as the Paris Commune of 1871".

But it was only an embryo authority, as Lenin wrote: one which yet had to grow up, to run the course of its internal development and find a firm basis of

support in proletarian class-consciousness and organisation. This authority had to overcome the weaknesses of its Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary origin and of the Menshevik and S.R. compromise with the bourgeoisie, which made as skilful and easy a use in its class interests of the petty-bourgeois “heroes” and newly-baked “leaders” of the revolution as it made of their petty bourgeois illusions.

Lenin mercilessly exposed the treacherous policy of the Mensheviks and S.R.s. who played the part of flunkeys of the Provisional Government. That Government pursued its objectives steadily and without scruple. But it realised the impossibility of achieving its ends without support,) from the masses of the people; and that was just what was lacking. It was a real godsend for the Provisional Government that the Mensheviks and S.R.s. were at the head of the Soviets of Workers’, Soldiers’ and Peasants’ Deputies at that time. It was through them that the Provisional Government sought “to attach the Soviets to itself and domesticate them” (Lenin). The part played in this by the S.R.s. and Mensheviks—Kerensky, Peshekhonov and Chernov, Tseretelli, Skoblev and the other so-called Socialist ministers—can be judged from their activity in! the notorious “contact commission”, whose, sole existence] was designed to tame the Soviets, by means of such “contact”, and through the Soviets to tame those elements of the working class, peasantry and intellectuals who were at that time under the influence of the S.R.S. and Mensheviks, thereby facilitating the fulfilment of the programme of the Provisional Government.

What did the provisional Government consider at the time to be its main task? Lenin wrote on this subject as follows:

“The Government was concerned with only one

thing, namely, with surreptitiously renewing the predatory international treaties concluded by the Tsar with the capitalists of Great Britain and France, putting a brake on the revolution as cautiously and unostentatiously as possible, promising everything but fulfilling nothing”.*

What were the S.R.s. and Mensheviks doing at the time? Lenin wrote on this subject:

“The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks in the ‘contact commission’ played the part of simpletons who were fed on pompous phrases, promises and ‘tomorrows’. Like the crow in the fable the S.R.s. and Mensheviks succumbed to flattery, and listened with satisfaction to the assurances of the capitalists that they Valued the Soviets highly and would not take a single step without them”.†

What were the results of such a state of things? Lenin wrote on this subject:

“But, in reality, time passed and the Government of capitalists did absolutely nothing for the revolution. On the contrary, in detriment to the revolution it managed during this period to renew the secret predatory treaties! or rather to confirm them and ‘vitalise’ them by supplementary and no less secret negotiations with the diplomats of Anglo-French imperialism. In detriment to the revolution it managed during this period to lay the foundations of counter-revolutionary organisation of (or at least of closer relations among) the generals and officers of the army on active service. In detriment to the revolution, it managed to begin the organisation of the industrialists, manufacturers and mill-owners, who were obliged to make concession after concession under pressure from the work-

* Lenin, *Selected Works* (English edition), VI, p. 196.

† *Ibid.*

ers, but at the same time were beginning to sabotage production and to make preparations for bringing it to a standstill at a favourable moment”.*

But, wrote Lenin, “the revolution is enlightening all classes with a rapidity and thoroughness unknown in normal peaceful times”.† The revolution was giving the ¹ people “the richest and most valuable lessons”.

It was first and foremost the advanced sections of the working class, the peasantry and the intellectuals who learnt these lessons from the February-March Revolution and from all the subsequent course of its development, gradually grasping the substance of the policy of the Provisional Government and of the Menshevik—S.R. support of that Government. Before their very eyes counter-revolution was growing up, promoted and actively supported by the “Socialist” Ministers, and-with the way prepared for it by the offensive against the “internal foe”, i.e., the revolutionary workmen and peasants. At the same time bourgeois counter-revolution was making ready for the offensive at the front as well, being whipped up by the Allied capitalists who demanded “war to a victorious conclusion”, to the last ... Russian soldier. The influence of the S.R. and Menshevik leaders over the masses was declining more and more. This was confirmed by the demonstration of 18th June, 1917, which brought, in Lenin’s words, “a remarkably imposing victory for the slogans of the revolutionary proletariat, the slogans of the Bolsheviks, among the Petrograd masses”.‡ To the demonstration of June 18 Kerensky, doing the bidding of the Russian and no less the Anglo-French capitalists, replied by announcing an offensive at the front,

* *Ibid.*, pp. 196-197.

† *Ibid.*, p. 197.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

in order to paralyse the political significance of June 18.

In Lenin's vivid expression, 18 June tied the S.R.s. and Mensheviks to the triumphal chariot of the bourgeoisie, as servants of the capitalists.

The demonstration of 3 and 4 July was an outburst of indignation on the part of the masses; it was their reply to the introduction of counter-revolutionary troops into! Petrograd, to Kerensky's restoration of the death penalty at the front, to the disarmament by cadets and officers of the revolutionary workers and revolutionary soldiers, to the arrest of some of them and to the persecution and closing-down of Bolshevik newspapers.

It was a time when the military clique really ran riot, overwhelming the so-called "socialist" leaders of Mensheviks and S.R.s., conscientiously, working for their capitalist masters.

In Lenin's article, "Lessons of the Revolution", written at the end of July, the great leader of the Socialist revolution gave a remarkable analysis of this dizzy succession, of one phase of the revolution to another, a succession which provided a classical confirmation of the old Marxist truth concerning the instability of the position of the petty bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeois democrats, who always turn but to be plodding at the tail of the bourgeoisie, as its feeble appendage, an obedient tool in the hands of the kings of finance.

It was a remarkable conclusion which Lenin drew at the end of July, 1917, on the basis of an analysis of the experience of the Russian revolution, which had confirmed the experience undergone in its time by the petty, bourgeoisie in England and France:

"The lesson of the Russian revolution is that there is no escape for the masses from the iron grip of war,

famine* and enslavement to the landlords and capitalists unless they completely break with the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties, unless they clearly recognise the treacherous role of the latter, unless they renounce all compromise with the bourgeoisie and resolutely come over to the side of the revolutionary workers. Only the revolutionary workers, if they are supported by the poorest peasants, are able to break the resistance of the capitalists and lead the people to the conquest of the land without compensation, to complete liberty, to victory over famine, to victory over the war, to a just and lasting peace". *

That was what Lenin wrote during the prelude to the Great October Revolution, which brilliantly confirmed his faultless analysis of events in the period of development of the February—March revolution, described above.

* * *

The crisis of the revolution was deepening. The political atmosphere was becoming more and more heated, and class contradictions in the relations between the Cadet-Oktoberist camp and the Menshevik-S.R. circles, headed by their Ministers, which had completely gone over to it, were becoming more and more acute. In a number of most important statements of principle Lenin and Stalin posed, in all its magnitude the problem of the proletariat taking possession of State authority. In his article, "From a Publicist's Diary", Lenin exposed the petty bourgeois illusions of Sukhanov and the like, the characteristic feature of which was a middle-class trustfulness in good" will, as Lenin wrote, a trustfulness which found expression in the assertion that the Provisional Gov-

* *Ibid.*, pp. 203-204.

ernment may rest on the will of the Soviets, and that the Menshevik-S.R. majority in the Soviets was able without particular effort to change the policy of the Provisional Government. Lenin demonstrated that in all previous revolutions the will of the majority of the people, of the majority of workers and peasants, had been in favour of democracy, and yet the majority of revolutions had ended in the defeat of democracy. That was what had happened in the revolution of 1848. Lenin emphasised that that was the revolution which most resembled the revolution of 1917. He recalled how Marx had “mercilessly ridiculed the petty bourgeois, democrats who wished to gain victories by means of resolutions and references to the will of the majority of the people”,* and came to the conclusion that reference to the majority of the people decides nothing when it comes to concrete problems of the revolution.

Lenin emphasised that in a revolution it is necessary to defeat the hostile classes, to overthrow the State power which defends those classes, and that for this purpose “the will of the majority of the people” is not enough and *ford on the part of the revolutionary dossen* is essential. Lenin explained in this article that this must be the force of such revolutionary classes as have the will and capacity to fight; the force must be sufficiently powerful to crush the force of the enemy, *at the decisive moment* and in *the decisive place*.†

Lenin taught that questions of class struggle must be put in a concrete way; he showed that to substitute these concrete questions at moments of particular acute class struggle by ‘general ‘references to the. will

* Lenin. *Collected Works* (English edition), XXI, part 1, p. 141.

† *Ibid.*, p. 142.

of the people would be worthy only of the most thick-witted petty-bourgeois.

Lenin dwelt in detail on the views of Sukhanov, who was one of the outstanding leaders of Menshevism in Russia. Lenin did this because Sukhanovism was typical of thousands of similar philistine arguments—arguments of which Lenin wrote that they ignore the history of the parties concerned and even strike out that history altogether. Yet at the same time history shows that appeal to such concepts as “voluntary consent”, “goodwill” and so forth, is only a screen for further and further abandonment of principle. To the Menshevik and S.R. illusions, with their concomitant passion for conciliation, compromise and direct betrayal of the interests of the working masses in favour of the capitalists, Lenin and Stalin opposed the policy and tactics of organising all the forces of the proletariat and preparing them for a new Socialist revolution.

“If we look at things as a historian of politics in general and a Marxist in particular ought to look at them”, wrote Lenin in September, 1917, “that is, examining events in their interconnection, it becomes perfectly clear that a decisive turn now is not only not ‘easy’ but, on the contrary, absolutely impossible *without a new revolution.*”^{*} Lenin did not put the question of whether such a revolution was desirable or undesirable, of whether it would be or could be peaceful and legal. Lenin warned the reader that he was placing on record the historical impossibility of a drastic turn in the further course of events begun in February-March, 1917 without a new revolution. He attacked Mensheviks like Sukhanov who did not see this and could not understand it, or made believe not

^{*} Ibid., p. 146.

to understand it, and who, like a multitude of other petty-bourgeois democrats, were soothing the people with their “parlour games”, spreading their irresponsible, illiterate and quite?) criminal nonsense. (Lenin)

At this time the Bolshevik Party saw its principal task as the preparation of the minds and moods of the masses of the people, and particularly of their vanguard, the proletariat, for the inevitability of a sharp turn in the development of the revolution, a turn the success of which would depend entirely on the class consciousness of the workers and poorest peasants, their degree of organisation, their preparedness for revolutionary action. The problem was to mobilise proletarian forces willing and able, in Lenin’s words, to fight for the Socialist revolution against the counter-revolutionary generals and landlords. The latter were actively preparing to put a stop to the growth of the strength of the revolutionary workers and peasants by proclaiming a military dictatorship. The Kornilov rebellion revealed the plans of this counter-revolutionary conspiracy in full measure. The rebellion collapsed; but its failure did not stop the counter-revolutionary leadership which was making ready for a military dictatorship. Stalin wrote of this conspiracy against the revolution, in his article bearing that title, as the “collective dictatorship” of a directory, with the aim of crushing the revolution and establishing the dictatorship of the imperialist bourgeoisie. (Stalin.)

Analysis of the Kornilov-Kerensky conspiracy led to a number of conclusions of great practical and theoretical importance. Drawing these conclusions, Stalin set forth the characteristic features of dictatorship by the imperialist bourgeoisie. Stalin showed that such dictatorship is the domination of an aggressive and exploiting minority over the working majority which thirsts for peace; that it is a dictatorship behind

the scenes, secret, masked, calculated to deceive the masses; that it is a dictatorship which relies upon violence against the masses.

Stalin ended his analysis by the conclusion: “Democratic” deceit reinforced by violence, violence screened by “democratic” deceit—such are the alpha and omega of the dictatorship of the imperialist bourgeoisie.

Stalin’s second conclusion was that the conspiracy in question was a continuation of counter-revolution, which arose from the requirements of the imperialist war and the policy of offensive.

The third conclusion drawn by Stalin was that the revolution could not be protected against the conspiracy of counter-revolution without ending the imperialist war and winning a democratic peace, for which purpose it was necessary to “remove” the authority of the Provisional Government and put a new Government in power.

Stalin wrote: “For this it is necessary to transfer power into the hands of new revolutionary classes of the proletariat and the revolutionary peasantry. For this it is necessary to concentrate power within the mass revolutionary organisation, within the Soviets of Workers’, Soldiers’ and Peasants’ Deputies.

“These classes and these organisations, and only they, saved the revolution from the Kornilov plot. It is they who will ensure victory for the revolution.

“It is this that will constitute the sentence-passed on the imperialist bourgeoisie and its agents, the conspirators”.*

Lenin and Stalin in these days—it was the beginning of October—were calling on the workers to prepare for repelling action in order to crush the counter-

* Stalin. *Collected Works* (Russian edition), III, p. 355.

revolution at the roots.

In his speech at the meeting of the Central Committee of the Party on 16 October, 1917, Stalin urged that there should be no waiting for the counter-revolution to prepare and organise itself. At the end of his remarks; as can be seen from the brief minute, Stalin pointed out that “the Petrograd Soviet has already entered the path of insurrection by refusing to sanction the withdrawal of troops. The Fleet has already revolted, since it has gone against Kerensky.

Consequently we must take our stand firmly and irrevocably on the path of insurrection”.*

* * *

The Bolshevik Party on the eve of October devoted great attention to the problem of peasant reserves in the proletarian revolution. In September, 1917, Lenin addressing the peasants, “exposed the treachery of the S.R. party which, as Lenin wrote in his article “Peasants and Workers”, had betrayed the cottages and taken the side of the palaces, those palaces where the worst enemies of the revolution, and the peasant revolution in particular, had installed themselves in the same Government as the Chernovs, Peshekhonovs and Avxentyevs. Lenin recalled the writings of Engels on the peasant question (“The Peasant Question in France and Germany” of 1894), and particularly that passage in his famous work where he says that the Socialists do not even dream of expropriating the small peasants and that their objective in relation to the small, peasants, consists primarily in transforming their private! property and private production into co-operative production and co-operative property, not by force but by dint of example and the offer of public

* *Ibid.*, pp. 381-382.

assistance. Lenin pointed out that the war had in practice confronted Russia with a problem of precisely this kind.

Lenin pointed to the fact that not a single intelligent Socialist would quarrel with the poor peasantry because the peasants wanted to retain their petty economy. Lenin wrote:

“If the land is confiscated, this means that the rule of the banks has been undermined; if the stock is confiscated, it means that the rule of capital has been undermined, and, with the proletariat ruling in the centre, with the transfer of political power to the proletariat, the rest will come of itself, will come as a result of the ‘force of example’, it will be prompted by experience itself.

“The transfer of political power to the proletariat—there is the crux. After that, everything essential, basic, and fundamental in the programme of the 242 instructions* *will become realisable*. And life will show what modifications are needed in realising it. That is the last thing to worry about. We are not doctrinaires. Our teaching is not a dogma but a guide to action.”†

Here once again Lenin emphasised the very great importance of experience, and particularly of the experience of millions.

“We do not claim that Marx or the Marxists know the road to Socialism in every concrete detail”, Lenin wrote. “That is nonsense. We know the direction of this road, we know what class forces lead along it, but

* This refers to the 242 instructions given by peasant meetings to delegates of the 1st All-Russian Congress of Peasant Soviets in Petrograd, in 1917.

† Lenin, *Collected Works* (English edition), XXI, part 1, p. 133.

concretely and practically it will be learned only from *the experience of the millions* when they take up the task.”*

In a number of articles during these pre-October months, weeks and days Lenin unmasked the deception and provocative inventions of the enemies of the proletarian revolution, who presented a grossly distorted picture of someone wanting to “introduce” Socialism into Russia by a single edict, without reckoning either with the level of technique or with the abundance of small enterprises or with the habits and will of the majority. Traitors to the cause of Socialism “frightened” society by this scarecrow of Socialism, which the Bolsheviks, they alleged, were about to introduce by a single stroke-of the pen. Lenin and Stalin tirelessly exposed this lie, widely used by the Menshevik, S.R.s. and Cadets—”all those traitor-leaders” who “deceive their own conscience and deceive the people, by saying that Russia is ‘not yet ripe for the introduction of Socialism’.” (Lenin.)

Thus persistently and steadily did the Bolshevik Party, headed by Lenin and Stalin, instil into the consciousness of the mass of the people the great idea of the necessity for power passing into the hands of the workers and peasants, in order to save the people from the ruin which, day by day, the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie and their “Socialist” henchmen were preparing for it. These gentlemen dreamed of crushing the maturing proletarian revolution and averting the coming disaster to the capitalist regime. The crisis was coming more and more to a head, disaster was approaching nearer and nearer to the landlords and capitalists. Socialism was knocking at the doors of Russia. Contradictions were becoming

* *Ibid.*

more acute, the “middle way” was fast disappearing.

In these days Lenin wrote: “Here there is no middle, way. The objective course of development is such that from *monopolies* (and the war has multiplied their; numbers, role and importance ten-fold) it is impossible to go forward without moving towards Socialism”. Further on he wrote:

“It is impossible to stand still in history, in general, and in war time, particularly. One must go either forward or back. In twentieth-century Russia, which has won a republic and the democratic way of life by revolutionary means, it is *impossible* to go forward *without going* towards Socialism, without taking *steps* towards it (steps conditioned and determined by the level of technique and culture: large-scale machine economy cannot be ‘introduced’ into peasant agriculture, and cannot be abolished in the sugar industry).

“And if one is-afraid to go forward, that means going back—which is just what the Kerenskys are doing to the delight of the Milyukovs and Plekhanovs, and with the stupid assistance of the Tseretellis and Chernovs”.*

The war had brought humanity nearer to Socialism, Lenin wrote in these historic days. “The imperialist war is the eve of the Socialist revolution. And this not only because the war with its horrors is generating proletarian insurrection—no insurrection will create Socialism if Socialism has not matured economically—but because State monopoly capitalism is the most complete *material* preparation for Socialism, the *ante-chamber* to Socialism, that step on the historical stairway which is separated from the step called Socialism *by no intermediate steps*”.†

* *Ibid.*, pp. 211-212.

† *Ibid.*, p. 212.

In the article “The Threatening Catastrophe and How to Fight It”, Lenin gives an exhaustive analysis of the approaching collapse of capitalism in Russia and of the birth of new Socialist relations in society.

* *

By the end of September and the beginning of October Lenin was already demanding practical measures to prepare insurrection (“Marxism and Insurrection”).

Lenin sketched out a plan of insurrection, demanding that it should be approached in a Marxist way, as he wrote, i.e., as an art. In this plan he provided for such measures as the organisation of a staff for the insurgent detachments, the disposition of the armed forces, the occupation of the fortress of Peter and Paul, the investment of the Alexander Theatre, the arrest of the General Staff and the Government’, the occupation of the central telegraph and telephone offices, etc. Lenin demanded the organisation of such detachments of armed workers as were “ready to sacrifice themselves to the last man rather than allow the enemy to penetrate into the centre of the city”, ready for “the desperate final battle”....

Lenin proved to the Central Committee of the Party that it was essential for the Bolsheviki to take power immediately. The day of the insurrection could be settled with the masses; but it was necessary immediately to take practical steps to make *clear* to the whole Party the task facing it: “To put on the agenda the armed insurrection at Petrograd and Moscow, the conquest of power and the overthrow of the Government... History will not forgive us if we do not seize power now ... Seize power now simultaneously at Moscow and at Petrograd”. (Lenin added: “It does not matter which begins, perhaps Moscow can begin”).

“We shall conquer, *unquestionably and undoubtedly*”.*

Lenin and Stalin, leaders of the proletarian revolution, were confidently leading the proletariat forward to “the last decisive fight” in the name of Socialism. Inspired themselves by profound faith in success, Lenin and Stalin inspired the masses of workmen, soldiers and peasants, organising and carefully preparing for the armed insurrection. Lenin and Stalin energetically developed the necessary measures in this direction, taking steps to assure communications between Petrograd, Moscow and the other urban centres of the country, seeing to it that all the most important Party organisations should clearly understand the aims and objects of insurrection so as to be able to take part in it in full knowledge and understanding of this important act. Lenin’s remarkable letters to the Central Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (Bolsheviks)—“Marxism and Insurrection” and “The Bolsheviks Must Take Power”—excellently served that purpose. Stalin then and there proposed that these letters should be issued to the most important Party organisations. The traitor Kamenev objected, and tried to get this proposal rejected, but failed. Kamenev’s attempt to render yet one more service to the counter-revolutionary conspirators was unsuccessful.

The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries raised, the spectre of civil war. Lenin and Stalin exposed these fore-doomed attempts to terrify the revolutionary workmen and peasants, who under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party, headed by Lenin and Stalin, were confidently and energetically preparing for insurrection, for the seizure of power, for decisive

* Lenin. *Selected Works* (English edition), VI., pp. 216-217.

battle for the power of the Soviets.

In a letter to members of the Central Committee of the Party, written on 6 November (24 October, Old Style), 1917, Lenin appealed to the Central Committee with the words: "We must not wait! We may lose everything!" Lenin and Stalin pointed out that all forces must be mobilised and that "under no circumstances must power be left in the hands of Kerensky and Co. until November 7 (October 25), not under any circumstances, the matter must be decided unconditionally, this very evening or this very night.

"History will not forgive revolutionaries for procrastinating when they can be victorious to-day (and certainly will be victorious to-day), while they risk losing much to-morrow, in fact risk losing everything...

"The Government is wavering. It must be *finished off* at all costs. Delay in action is in the likeness of death".*

That same day, in *Rabochi Put* of 24 October, 1917, under the heading "What Do We Need?" Stalin was writing: "What we need is to replace the present government of landlords and capitalists by a new government of workers and peasants. The present self-appointed government, not elected by the people and not responsible to the people, must be replaced by a government recognised by the people, elected by representatives of the workers, soldiers and peasants and responsible to those representatives".†

Stalin pointed out that in this way, and only in this way, peace, bread, land and liberty could be won.

Stalin called on the workmen, soldiers, peasants, Cossacks and all working people to gather together all their strength, to rise up all as one man, to hold meet-

* Lenin. *Selected Works* (English edition), VI, p. 335.

† Stalin. *Collected Works* (Russian edition), III, pp. 388-389.

ings, elect delegations, express their demands through those delegations to the Congress of Soviets.

Stalin wrote: "Power must pass, into the hands of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. A new Government must be in power, elected by the Soviets, replaceable by the Soviets, responsible to the Soviets".*

The hour of Socialist revolution had struck!

* *

As we have seen, Lenin and Stalin were steadily preparing the Russian working class and the advanced masses of the peasantry for the organisation of Soviet power on a truly Socialist basis. What was involved was the transformation of the Soviets into genuinely revolutionary organs of the dictatorship of the proletariat, organs of the new State authority, capable of giving effect to the great programme of Socialist transformation of our country.

Lenin and Stalin ruthlessly exposed the vices and defects of the Menshevik and S.R. Soviets. But it is striking that, in spite of these vices and crying defects of Soviets where the Menshevik and S.R. were doing their black work of treachery to Socialism, Lenin and Stalin with, the genius of leaders of the proletarian revolution, saw in those Soviets the embryos of a genuinely new people's revolutionary authority.

"Humanity has not evolved, and we do not as yet know, a type of government superior to and better than the Soviets of Workers', Agricultural Labourers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies".†

To the Soviets belonged the future. The Soviets would take power, all power, into their own hands,

* *Ibid.*, p. 390.

† Lenin. *Collected Works* (English edition), XX, part 1, p. 117.

eliminating the condition of dual power represented by the existence of the Provisional Government on the one side and the Soviets of Workers' Deputies on the other. This would be the result of the struggle, and of the considerable effort which the class-conscious workers would have to put forth to win the-majority over to their side.

“We are not Blanquists, we, are not in favour of the seizure of-power by a minority”, wrote Lenin in his remarkable article “Dual Power”. “We are Marxists, we stand for a proletarian class struggle against petty-bourgeois poison, against jingoistic defencism, phrase-mongering, dependence on the bourgeoisie”.*

Like bright rays of light, Lenin's great ideas illuminated the road ahead for the forward movement of the proletariat, breaking down out-of-date and old-fashioned formulas and pointing out the new and powerful ideas “coming forward to replace them.

On the threshold of the October Revolution Lenin's genius foretold—scientifically foretold—the future, confidently directing the attention of the Bolshevik Party to new problems and new tasks, pointing out to the Party and to the working class new methods of solving them; new paths of victorious advance for the proletarian revolution which was gathering strength.

Lenin, whose genius led the revolution, was a bold innovator, a fearless fighter against every kind of stagnation and routine, a destroyer of mouldy “traditions” and “theories of yesterday”.

When “objectors” clamoured against Lenin's new ideas and formulas as contradictory to Bolshevik watchwords—as happened, for example, with Lenin's assertion that with the transfer of State power into the

* *Ibid.*

hands of the bourgeoisie, “the bourgeois or bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia is *over*”, Lenin fearlessly accepted battle and routed the “objectors”:

“The Bolshevik slogans and ideas”, Lenin replied to the objectors, “*in general* have been fully confirmed by history, but *actually* things have turned out *differently* than what could have been anticipated (by anyone)—more original, more peculiar, more colourful”.*

Already in April, 1917 Lenin had seen that the formula of “the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry”, brought to life in the shape of the Soviets of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies, was out of date.

“Real life has brought it”, wrote Lenin, “from the realm of formulas into the realm of reality, clothed it in flesh and blood, lent it concrete form, and thereby changed it”.

And Lenin showed how this had happened—how new, tasks were now on the agenda: “to effect a split *within* this dictatorship between the proletarian elements (anti-jingo, internationalist, ‘Communist’ elements, who stand for a transition to the commune) and the petty-proprietor or *petty-bourgeois* elements (Chkheidze, Tseretelli, Steklov, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and other revolutionary jingoes, opponents of the movement towards the commune, who favour ‘support’ of the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois government)”.†

Lenin taught what he called “the incontestable truth that a Marxist must take cognisance of living life, of the true facts of *reality*, and must not continue clinging to the theory of yesterday which, like every theory, at best

* Lenin, *Collected Works* (English edition), XX, part 1, p. 120.

† *Ibid.*

only indicates the main and the general, only approximately embraces the complexity of life”.

Lenin adds: “Theory, my friend, is grey, but green is the eternal tree of life”.*

Theory—the old theory, not yet tested by the practice of life—had taught the following: that after the rule of the bourgeoisie there could and must follow the rule of the proletariat and the peasantry, their dictatorship. But Lenin pointed out, in real life, things had turned out otherwise: “an extremely original, new, unprecedented *interweaving of the one with the other* has taken place side by side, together and simultaneously, there exist both the rule of the bourgeoisie (the government of Lvov and Guchkov) and the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, *voluntarily* ceding power to the bourgeoisie, voluntarily transforming itself into an appendage of the bourgeoisie”.†

Lenin pointed to such a fact as power in Petrograd being effectively in the hands of the workers and soldiers and the new bourgeois government being unable to use violence against them, since “there is no police, no army separate from the people, no almighty officialdom standing *over* the people. This is a fact. It is precisely the kind of fact which, is characteristic for a State of the type of the Paris Commune. This fact does not fit into the old schemes. One must know how to adopt schemes to life and not to repeat words which have become meaningless: about the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry *in general*”.‡

Lenin taught us to see facts, to see the concrete, and not “in general”; to see the real, not the conjec-

* *Ibid.*, p. 121.

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Ibid.*

tural; to start from the actual, not from the possible; not to fall into subjectivism, into the policy of a Louis Blanc, but, as becomes a Marxist, to be guided by cognisance of reality.

At this time Lenin persistently warned against any attempts to “leap over” an incomplete revolution of bourgeois-democratic character to a Socialist revolution, spurning the Trotskyist formula of “No Tsar; but a workers’ government” as a sign of subjectivism, as a formula of Blanquist adventurism. Lenin taught the necessity of working patiently to make certain of a majority in the Soviets, since only the rule of the majority, in Lenin’s view, and the activity of the masses would ensure the success of the proletarian revolution.

With what great and profound faith in the creative powers of the proletariat, the future ruler of the world, were-imbued Lenin’s simple and proud words:

“I am profoundly convinced that the Soviets of Workers’, Soldiers’, and Peasants’ Deputies will make the independent activity of the *masses* of the people a reality more quickly and effectively than will a parliamentary republic (more detailed comparison of the two types of State in another letter). They will decide better, more practically; more correctly how steps can be taken towards Socialism, and just what steps they can be. Control over a bank, amalgamation of all banks into one, is not *yet* Socialism, but it is a *step* towards Socialism. To-day such steps are being taken in Germany by the Junkers and the bourgeoisie against the people. To-morrow the Soviet of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies will be able to take these steps, to the greater advantage of the people, if all State power is in its hands”*

* Lenin. *Collected Works* (English edition), XX, part 1, p. 128.

Great and prophetic words! A great truth, unknown to the world before Lenin, discovered by Lenin: the programme of the struggle for Socialism!

Lenin foresaw the birth of a new State, a State of a *new type*.

The Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, wrote Lenin in his work "The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution" (April, 1917) "are reproducing that type of State which was being evolved by the Paris Commune, and which Marx called 'the political form, at last discovered, under which to work out the economic emancipation of labour'."*

This idea runs like a red thread through the numerous speeches and writings of Lenin, which brought a new conception into Marxist doctrine of the proletarian revolution and the Socialist State.

There were not a few "politicians" in those days who did not understand the significance of this conception although it contained within it an entire epoch.

Lenin wrote-on this subject in the article just quoted:

"The Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants' and other Deputies are not understood; not only in the sense that their class character, their role in the *Russian* revolution is not clear to the majority. They are not understood also in the sense that they constitute a new form, or rather a new *type of State*.

"The most perfect and advanced type of bourgeois State is that of a *parliamentary democratic republic*: power is vested in parliament; the State machine, the apparatus, the organ of administration are of the usual kind: a standing army, police, officialdom which in practice is unchangeable, privileged, standing *over*

* Lenin. *Collected Works* (English edition), XX, part 1, p. 140.

the people”.*

Later on, in his work “State and Revolution”, produced almost on the very eve of the great October Revolution (August-September, 1917), Lenin gave a classical characterisation of the State of a new type to which the proletarian revolution of the twentieth century was giving birth, and of its difference in principle from the parliamentary State produced by the bourgeois revolution of the nineteenth century.

Lenin wrote in “State and Revolution” of one striking measure of the Paris Commune: the abolition of all monetary privileges for officials and the reduction of the remuneration of *all* servants of the State to the level of “*workmen’s wages*”. In this measure of the Commune Lenin saw, as he wrote, “the turn from bourgeois democracy to proletarian democracy, from the democracy of the oppressors to the democracy of the oppressed classes, from the State as a ‘*special force*’ for the suppression of definite classes to the suppression of the oppressors by the *general force* of the majority of the people—the workers and the peasants”.[†]

In the experience of the Paris Commune Lenin saw the way to the organisation of a State of a new type, the forerunner of which were the Soviets of Workers’ and Peasants’ Deputies.

“We are not Utopians,” wrote Lenin, “we do not indulge in ‘dreams’ of dispensing at once with all administration, with all subordination; these anarchist dreams, based upon lack of understanding of the tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat, are totally alien to Marxism and, in practice, serve only to postpone the Socialist revolution until human nature has been

* Ibid., p. 139.

† Lenin. *State and Revolution* (English edition, 1942), p. 34.

changed. No, we want the Socialist revolution with people as they are now, people who cannot dispense with subordination, control, ‘overseers and bookkeepers’, but they must be subordinate to the armed vanguard of all the exploited, all the toilers—to the proletariat. Measures can and must be taken at once, overnight, to substitute for the specific methods of ‘administration’ by State officials the simple functions of ‘overseers and bookkeepers’, functions which are already fully within the capacity of the average city-dweller, and can well be performed for ‘workmen’s wages’.”*

Lenin spoke not only of the necessity, but also of the possibility of organising large-scale production,, starting from what capitalism had already created, relying on the workers’ experience, creating an iron discipline which would be supported by the State authority of the armed workmen.

The economic development of capitalist society works in this direction, preparing the economic conditions for the organisation of Socialist economy and Socialist society. The development of capitalism itself prepares “the mechanism of public housekeeping” (Lenin), Already a technically advanced and highly organised mechanism has been created, which however is in the grip of “parasites”—the class of exploiters. They can be replaced, by breaking “with the iron hand of the armed workmen the resistance of these exploiters” and after smashing “the bureaucratic machine of the modern State”—by workmen, by the working people, who will carry on affair in their own interests without capitalists, thus assuring the welfare of society.

In the remarkable chapter of “State and Revolu-

* Lenin. *State and Revolution* (English edition, 1942), p. 39.

tion” which deals with the abolition of parliamentarism Lenin set forth all the advantages of the State of a net type, the Socialist State, summing up at the end of the chapter as follows: “It is such a State, standing on such an economic foundation, that we need. This is what will bring about the abolition of parliamentarism and the preservation of representative institutions. This is what will rid the working classes of the prostitution of these institutions-by the bourgeoisie”.*

From the first days of the March revolution Lenin firmly and consistently led the working class and the advanced section of the peasantry of our country forward to struggle for the transformation of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a Socialist revolution. Side by side with Lenin, at the head of this movement, went Stalin.

At the sixth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. (26 July-3 August, 1917), Stalin reported on the political situation exposing the position taken up by the Russian liberal bourgeoisie and by Anglo-French capital which had established harmonious relations with it, and which, in Stalin apt words, wanted “to carry out in Russia a *little* revolution, like that of the Young Turks, in order to rouse the enthusiasm of the masses of the people and make use of them for a *big* war, leaving the rule of the capitalists and landlords in the main unshaken.

“A little revolution for a big war”.†

But this treacherous plan met with the resistance of the workers and peasants, who were seeking—to quote from Stalin’s report—“the radical break-up of the old order, what we call a great resolution; so as to be able to overthrow the landlords, put a curb on the

* *Ibid.*, p. 40.

† Stalin, *Collected Works* (Russian edition), III, p. 172.

imperialist bourgeoisie, end the war and ensure the cause of peace. A great revolution and peace!*

This was a most profound class contradiction. This contradiction, said Stalin, lay at the foundation of the development of our revolution, at the foundation of “each and every crisis of power”.

Hence, Stalin said, the conclusion was that the revolution had come fairly and squarely up against the necessity of Socialist transformations. And the second conclusion was: “The basic forces of the new movement will be the town proletariat and the poorest strata of the peasantry. It is they who will take power into their hands in the event of victory”.†

At the Sixth Congress Stalin, speaking of the watchword of the transfer of power to the Soviets, said: “The Soviets are the most appropriate form of organisation of the struggle of the working class for power, but the Soviets are not the only revolutionary organisation. They are a purely Russian form”. But, Stalin emphasised, “the question is not of form but of what class receives power; the decisive question is not one of form, but of whether the working class was ripe for dictatorship”.‡

On 13 October, 1917 (O.S.) i.e., barely a few days before the victory of the October Revolution, in an article “The Power of the Soviets”, Stalin yet again made an analysis of the watchword “All power to the Soviets!” He pointed out that this was not only a popular slogan, but also the sole true method of fighting for the victory of the revolution. The power of the Soviets, said Stalin, means the dictatorship of the proletariat and the revolutionary peasantry, and the dictatorship

* *Ibid.*, p. 172.

† *Ibid.*, p. 177.

‡ *ibid.*, p. 178-179.

of the proletariat and the peasantry means a dictatorship without violence against the masses, the dictatorship of the masses, a dictatorship to curb the will of the enemies of those masses.*

Lenin and Stalin at this time called on the Party to multiply its efforts to rally the masses, to explain to the people, i.e., to the workers, peasants and soldiers, the necessity of overthrowing the government of the Octobrists, Cadets, Mensheviks and S.R.s., and to explain to the people the urgency of “steps to Socialism which have practically matured” (from the resolution of the April 1917 Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.).

When Preobrazhensky, one of the prominent Trotsky “theoreticians”, tried at the Sixth Congress to get through a Trotskyist amendment to one of the clauses of the resolution, to the effect that the Russian proletariat could advance to Socialism only if there were a proletarian revolution in the West; Stalin spoke against this amendment, declaring: “The possibility is not excluded that it is just Russia, which will turn out to be the country building the road to Socialism”.†

Stalin said that in wartime conditions not a single country was enjoying the liberty which Russia possessed or was trying to give effect to workers’ control of production, that our whole revolution was, wider in its scope than in Western Europe, where the proletariat stood to face to face with the bourgeoisie in complete isolation, where in our country the workmen were supported by the poorest strata of the peasantry. Stalin pointed out that the machinery of State of the Russian bourgeoisie was weaker and less perfected. Stalin said:

* *Ibid.*, p. 370.

† *Ibid.*, p. 186.

“We must throw aside the out-of-date conception that only Europe can show us the way. There is dogmatic Marxism and creative Marxism. I take my stand on the second.”*

Stalin called on the workmen, peasants and soldiers to replace the government of Kishkin and Konovalov by a government of workmen’s, soldiers’ and peasants’ deputies. In his article “What Do We Need?” Stalin called for a united and resolute struggle, looking forward to inevitable victory. He wrote: “And the whole country will then march forward boldly and firmly to the conquest of peace for the people. The land to the peasants, bread and work for the hungry. Power must pass into the hands of the Soviets of Workers’, Soldiers’ and Peasants’ Deputies. A new government must be in power, elected by the Soviets, removable by the Soviets, responsible to the Soviets ...”†

That is how the Bolshevik Party taught and acted under the guidance of the great leaders of the working masses, Lenin and Stalin.

* *Ibid.*, p. 187.

† *Ibid.*, p. 390.

II

THE GREAT OCTOBER SOCIALIST REVOLUTION AND THE BUILDING OF SOCIALISM IN ONE COUNTRY

Thirty years ago, on 25 October (7 November), 1917, the workers and peasants of Russia, under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Stalin, overthrew the power of the landlords and capitalists and took power into their own hands. The great October Socialist Revolution was victorious. A new page in the history of our country had opened. The victory of the October revolution meant “a radical change in the history of mankind, a radical change in the historical destinies of world capitalism, a radical change in the liberation movement of the world proletariat, a radical change in the methods of struggle and the forms of organisation, in the life and traditions, the culture and ideology of the exploited masses throughout the world”.*

In his theory of proletarian revolution Lenin took his stand on the law of the unequal development of capitalism, which he had discovered. Lenin, in formulating this law, based himself entirely on the laws of capitalist development established by Marx and Engels, and in the first instance, on the Marxist thesis that “free competition gives rise to the concentration of production which, in turn, at a certain stage of its development leads to monopoly”.†

Lenin in his turn demonstrated that “the rise of monopolies as a result of the concentration of production is in any case a general and fundamental law of

* Stalin. *Leninism* (English edition), p. 197.

† Lenin. *Imperialism* (English edition), p. 16.

the present stage of development of capitalism”.*

Analysing numerous data of the bourgeois economists, Lenin showed to what extent banking ‘monopoly had developed, how “quantity had passed into quality”, in what precisely this was expressed, how the transition from developed capitalism to imperialism takes place.

Lenin showed—and this is of tremendous interest and of vast significance at the present time as well, i.e., 33 years after Lenin first wrote the words in his immortal work “Imperialism as the Highest Stage of Capitalism”—that “imperialism is the epoch of finance capital and of monopolies, which introduce everywhere the striving for domination, not for freedom”, and that the result of these tendencies is “reaction all along the line, whatever the political system, and an extreme ‘intensification of existing contradictions in this domain also”.†

Lenin quoted Hilferding, who cannot be suspected of radicalism, and who asserted that in the epoch of imperialism and under the influence of capital imported into newly opened-up countries, “the-old social relations become completely revolutionised. The age-long agrarian incrustation of ‘nations without a history’ is blasted away, and they are drawn into the capitalist whirlpool. Capitalism itself gradually procures for the vanquished the means and resources for their emancipation, and they set out to achieve the same goal which, once seemed highest to the European nations: the creation of a united national State as a means to economic and cultural freedom. This movement for national independence threatens European

* *Ibid.*

† Lenin. *Imperialism* (English edition), p. 106.

capital just in its most valuable and most promising fields of exploitation, and European-Capital can maintain its domination only by continually increasing its means of exerting violence”* Lenin added to what Hilferding had said that it was not only in newly opened-up countries, but also in the old, that imperialism was leading to annexation, to increased national oppression and consequently also to increasing resistance.

To what conclusion was this analysis bound to lead? That in conditions of imperialism forward development “is possible only towards *Socialist* society, towards the *Socialist revolution*.”† It was precisely to this conclusion that Lenin came; and it is a conclusion of exceptionally great importance. It speaks, first of all, of the fact that imperialism inevitably leads to a strengthening of reaction, which takes the shape of unceremonious intensification of pressure on countries which are weaker in the economic and military sense. The thirst for gain and domination reveals itself to the utmost. The veil of democracy which hitherto concealed naked imperialist greed now falls and the bared teeth of the beast appear before the whole world, frankly and openly,

It speaks, furthermore, of the fact ‘that there is an increased striving for annexations; i.e., as Lenin emphasised, for infringements of national independence. It speaks, finally, of the fact of the inevitably rising resistance to these tendencies, the revolutionising of old social relations, the deepening of tendencies among the oppressed nations to make a stand in defence of their independence.

The present stage of development of imperialism

* *Ibid.*

† Lenin. *Collected Works* (English edition), XIX, p. 210.

fully confirms this extremely profound analysis of Lenin and the conclusions which he drew therefrom. A proof of the impeccable accuracy of that conclusion, for example, is the position of the United States of America in regard to external affairs; today the U.S.A. is the -most characteristic example of a State where finance-capital dominates and where the course of foreign policy completely reflects the features pointed out above.

The U.S.A. grants “help” to Greece and Turkey. The U.S.A. is ready to give “help” to France—on the condition, however, that the French “democrats” and “Socialists” should agree to expel the Communists from the Government and not allow them back. The U.S.A. is ready to “help” Great Britain, if the Labour Government renounces its claims to the Ruhr and its plans of nationalisation. It is ready to grant “aid” to Italy, if de Gasperi and the Vatican are also able to drive the Communists out of the Government, and to create such a Government would be ready to worship the holy dollar.

The U.S.A. is preparing to “help” the Yemen, Iran, Iraq and in fact any country which is ready, in its turn, to lean on “American finance and the American atom bomb.

Thus before our eyes sacrifice is being offered on the altar of the American dollar, the sole lord of human fates in the world of imperialism. This sacrifice is being performed in accordance with the most up-to-date American procedure, operating according to all the rules of the American patent for democracy.

Thirty years ago, speaking of the world policy of the imperialist countries, Lenin wrote: “The intelligent leaders of imperialism say to themselves: we cannot of course attain our ends without throttling the small nations, but after all there are two ways of throttling.

There are cases when it is more reliable and more profitable to acquire sincere and conscientious ‘defenders of the fatherland’ in imperialist war by creating *politically* independent States whose *financial* dependence ‘we’, of course, will take care of!”*

It seems as though these lines have only just been written, so fresh are they, so accurately do they strike at the sorest spot of modern imperialism!

Analysing the development of contradictions in the system of imperialism, Lenin pointed out that: “Capitalism has grown into a world system of colonial oppression and of the financial strangulation of the overwhelming majority of the population of the world by a handful of ‘advanced’ countries,” and that “this ‘booty’ is being shared between two or three powerful world marauders armed to the teeth (America, Great Britain, Japan) who are involving the whole world in *their* war over the division of *their* booty”.†

Lenin pointed out that: “In consequence of the growth of contradictions within the world system of financial oppression, and of the inevitability of armed clashes, the world front of imperialism becomes easily vulnerable to revolution, and a breach in this front in individual countries becomes probable”.‡

From this Lenin: drew two conclusions of world-historical importance, which at the same time determined the tactics of the Russian Communists during the approach to October, 1917:

(a) The breach in the front of imperialism “is most likely to occur at those points and in those countries where the chain of the imperialist front is weakest, that is to say, where imperialism is least protected and

* Lenin. *Collected Works* (English edition), XIX, p. 428.

† Lenin. *Imperialism* (English edition), p. 7.

‡ Stalin. *Leninism* (English edition), p. 94.

where it is easiest for a revolution to expand”.

(b) “In view of this, the victory of Socialism in one country, even if this country is less developed in the capitalist sense, while capitalism is preserved in other countries, even if these countries are more highly developed in the capitalist sense, is quite possible and probable.”*

Such in a few words, said Stalin, are the foundations of Lenin’s theory of revolution. This theory of revolution has a world importance, since it was the result of a genuinely scientific analysis of imperialism, of the paths of its development and its destruction. Lenin’s theory of revolution is creative and formative, calling to action, organising and directing. In contradistinction to the theory of the opportunists, who wait for the proletarian revolution to mature in the most developed capitalist countries, Lenin’s theory speaks of proletarian revolution where the situation develops in the most revolutionary direction even though that country in a capitalist sense is less developed. This was a new statement of the question, the result of a further development by Lenin of the fundamental principles of the Marxist theory of proletarian revolution. Lenin and Stalin, pushing Marxist science forward, demonstrated that, in conditions of imperialism, the point of view which starts from the existence of the absence of objective conditions for proletarian revolutions in individual countries, or more precisely in this or that particular country, is no longer adequate. “Now we must speak,” wrote Stalin, “of the existence of objective conditions for the revolution in the entire system of world imperialist economy as an integral unit.... Now the proletarian revolution must be regarded primarily as the result of the development

* Stalin. *Leninism* (English edition), pp. 94-95.

of the contradictions within the world system of imperialism, as the result of the snapping of the chain of the imperialist world front in one country or another.”*

Previously, i.e., in the era of the pre-imperialist stage of capitalism, it was thought that the proletarian revolution would begin where there was more development of industry, where the proletariat constitutes a majority. “No, objects Lenin’s theory of revolution; *not necessarily where industry is more developed*, and so forth. The front of capital will be pierced where the chain of imperialism is weakest, for the proletarian revolution is the result of the breaking of the chain of the world imperialist front at its weakest link....”†

That is what happened in Russia in 1917. where “the chain of the world imperialist front proved weaker than in the other countries. It was there that the chain gave way and provided an outlet for the proletarian revolution,” wrote Stalin.

The reason for this was that “in Russia a great popular revolution was unfolding, and at its head marched the revolutionary proletariat, which had such an important ally as the vast mass of the peasantry who were oppressed and exploited by the landlords”. The reason was that “the revolution there was opposed by such a hideous representative of imperialism as Tsardom, which lacked all moral prestige and was deservedly hated by the whole population. In Russia the chain proved to be weaker, although that country was less developed in a capitalist sense than, say, France or Germany, England or America”.‡

* *Ibid.*, p. so.

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

Thus it fell to the lot of the Russia of those days to break the chain of world imperialism and begin the era of proletarian revolutions.

Lenin and Stalin, who took the lead of the proletarian revolution in 1917 in Russia, based their confidence of success in the insurrection on an analysis of the situation which had then been created in our country, on a strict and precise analysis of the balance of class forces. They relied on Lenin's theory of proletarian revolution, which is based on Lenin's law of the unequal development of capitalism and of the possibility of Socialism conquering in a few countries, or even in one taken by itself. This was as different as heaven from earth from the decadent and demoralising Trotskyist theory, which started from the assumption that the proletarian revolution could be victorious only on an international scale, and that the victory of Socialism in one country was impossible.

The victory of the October Revolution showed how mistaken was the universal theory of the simultaneous victory of the revolution in the main countries of Europe, the theory of the impossibility of the victory of Socialism in one country.* As we know it was just this theory which the Trotskyists were giving out as the last word in science, asserting that the victory of Socialism in one country was impossible. Furthermore, Trotsky directly asserted that if "our initiative" in the struggle for Socialism did not give an impetus to the struggle in other countries, "it will be hopeless to think that a revolutionary Russia, for example, could hold its own in face of a conservative Europe, or that a Socialist Germany could remain isolated in a capitalist world".†

* Stalin. *Leninism* (English edition), p. 113.

† *Ibid.*, p. 97.

Trotsky set up in opposition to Lenin's theory of the victory of Socialism in one country the theory of the simultaneous victory of Socialism in the principal countries of Europe. Trotsky and his faithful echoes were simply using their "theory" to conceal their betrayal of the cause of Socialism. By this "theory" they were attempting to disarm the revolutionary Socialist movement in our country, to paralyse its efforts, to clamp it down, to arrest the process of Socialist construction in the U.S.S.R., to demobilise and disorganise the ranks of the builders of Socialism. At first we took this "theory" at its face value, as an ideological structure which, although it diverged in principle from our programme, was nevertheless dictated by pure and scientific motives. But later things turned out to be very different: it was established that the followers of Trotsky, Zinoviev, Bukharin, Kamenev and their sympathisers were carrying out the instructions of the bourgeoisie and its intelligence organisations, as an agency which had sold itself to the enemies of the workers' cause, the enemies of Socialism.

It was with exceptional impudence that the Trotskyists played the self-appointed part of "learned theoreticians" of Socialism, building up a "theoretical" foundation beneath their scribblings. Trotsky, for example, did not shrink from justifying his assertion that revolutionary (i.e., Socialist) Russia could not hold its own in face of a conservative Europe, from appealing to "the light of historical experience" and "theoretical speculation". Yet Trotsky knew very well that "historical experience" cannot be taken in the abstract, that history proceeds in concrete conditions, and that it is precisely those conditions which determine the content and significance of "historical experience".

"Historical experience", if we take the experience

of the Soviet State accumulated by the time (1922) when Trotsky made a particularly resolute attack on the possibility of building Socialism in the U.S.S.R., gave evidence entirely in favour of the possibility of building Socialism in the U.S.S.R., and not against it. But this did not upset the Trotskyists, who kept up their croakings about the collapse of Socialist construction in the Soviet Union.

The results of the first five years of Soviet power were marked by vivid proofs of its stability. It had beaten off the intervention of fourteen States, and crushed the rebellions of counter-revolutionary generals and landlords, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks; it had consolidated the achievements of October, and it had brilliantly effected the transition from War Communism to the New Economic Policy, which was a new point of departure for further Socialist advance.

“Historical experience”, to which the Trotskyists attempted to appeal, spoke against these half-baked “theoreticians”, who had distorted Marxism and vulgarised the revolutionary teaching of Marx and Engels on the State and revolution, the struggle of classes, the prospects and conditions for the organisation of Socialist society.

When the U.S.S.R. went over to the N.E.P., these “theoreticians” of the so-called “new opposition” proclaimed that Socialism was now finished, and that N.E.P. was a return to capitalism. Zinoviev, as all will remember, in this connection, even invented his notorious “philosophy of the epoch”, the essence of which was to preach complete disbelief in the victory of Socialist construction in our country, disbelief in the capacity of our proletariat to lead the peasantry after it on the road to Socialism, disbelief in the Socialist path of development of the peasantry. We all remember

how Trotsky prophesied that the proletariat after a victorious revolution would inevitably come into conflict with the peasantry—and yet that was being written in 1922! He asserted that we had not yet undertaken, or even approached the task of creating a Socialist society, and that “a genuine advance of Socialist economy in Russia will become possible only after the victory of the proletariat in the most important countries of Europe”.*

Stalin exposed this “theory”, if it may be dignified that name, as a variety of Menshevism, as “permanent” hopelessness and lack of perspective, disbelief in the powers and capacities of the proletariat of Russia.

The attempts of the Trotskyists to set up the theory of “permanent revolution” against the genuinely revolutionary, Leninist theory of proletarian revolution was a dismal failure. Stalin’s merciless criticism of the Trotskyist distortions of Marxism-Leninism, based as it was on the strictly scientific method of Marx and Lenin, revealed the treacherous character of the Trotsky-Zinoviev “philosophy”. In the exposure of the false teachings of Trotsky, Zinoviev and Bukharin an outstanding part was played by such works of Stalin as “The October Revolution and the Tactics of the Russian Communists” (1924), “On the Problems of Leninism” (1926), “The Right Deviation in the C.P.S.U.(B)” (1929), etc.

Today, after thirty years of victorious Socialist construction in the U.S.S.R., when the main difficulties of organising Socialist economy and Socialist relations in society have been left behind, when the problem of building Socialism in our country has been solved, life itself has disposed of the question of how

* *Ibid.*, p. 99.

far Lenin's theory of proletarian revolution was right.

The history of the thirty years' struggle for Socialism in the U.S.S.R., crowned with a brilliant victory on, the basis of the Lenin-Stalin theory of scientific Socialism, speaks for itself and requires no recognition, just as the young but great and mighty Soviet State does not require recognition.

The great October Revolution was the lifegiving process of development of new social relations in the Russia of those days, and later in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, The foresight and genius of Lenin and Stalin brought the Russia of those days out on to a new highroad of development, putting before our people the gigantic objectives of completing the bourgeois revolution and at the same time effecting a Socialist revolution, building a Socialist society in conditions of capitalist encirclement.

These tasks in all their magnitude faced the Party of Lenin and Stalin which had placed itself at the head of the masses of the people in, 1917. The Party and the peoples of Russia boldly set about the performance of these tasks.

What did completing the bourgeois revolution mean? Stalin brilliantly explained this in his reply to Yan-sky, contained in the article "The Party's Three Fundamental Slogans on the Peasant Problem" (1927).

Here is what Stalin wrote then: "The completion of the bourgeois revolution was not a single act. In practice it was spread over a whole period, embracing not only a part of 1918, as you assert in your letter, but also a part of 1919 (the Volga Provinces and the Urals) and of 1919-1920 (Ukraine). I am referring to the advance of Kolchak and Denikin, when the peasantry as a whole was faced with the danger of the restoration of the power of the landlords, and when the peasant-

ry, precisely as a *whole* was compelled to rally around the Soviet power in order to ensure the completion of the bourgeois revolution and to preserve for itself the fruits of that revolution.”*

This interest of the peasantry as a whole in the successful solution of the problems of the bourgeois revolution and in the completion of that revolution, which was fully assured by the proletarian dictatorship, created a certain complexity, which Stalin described as an “odd” interweaving of the direct Socialist tasks of the dictatorship with the ‘tasks of completing the bourgeois revolution.

This peculiarity of the October Revolution was not understood by Trotsky and Kamenev and their followers nor yet by the historians of the school of M. N. Pokrovskyy, who represented matters as though the “fundamental slogan” of October was not the transfer of State power into the hands of the proletariat, not the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but precisely the completion of the bourgeois revolution.

The fact that the dictatorship of the proletariat “swept the country clean of all the filth of medievalism”, was proclaimed by so-called scholars like Professor M. N. Pokrovsky as the “principal slogan”, the principal task of the October Revolution!

But that was not at all the case, as we see. The case was one of the peculiar interweaving, during the course of the October Revolution, of the “direct Socialist tasks of the dictatorship with the task of completing the *bourgeois* revolution” (my italics, A.V.).

But the task of “completing the bourgeois revolution was a ‘by-product’ of the October Revolution,

* Stalin. *Leninism* (English edition), pp. 178-179.

which fulfilled this task ‘in passing’.”*

The main thing was the overthrow of the power of the bourgeoisie, the transfer of power to the hands of the proletariat, the organisation of a State and social order based on Socialism. The October Revolution swept the country clean of the rubbish of the land-owning aristocracy, and by that feat alone became part of the history of mankind as a Great revolution. The greatness of the October Revolution was even augmented by the fact that it was a *Socialist* revolution.

“From now on a new phase in the history of Russia is opening, and the present third Russian revolution must in its final outcome lead to the victory of Socialism.”†

These words of Lenin’s were truly historic, for in them was reflected all the force of conviction of the leader of the revolution in its triumphant outcome, a conviction that the proletarian revolution, having completed the stage of bourgeois-democratic revolutionary development, was now rising to a new and higher stage of its progress towards Socialism. This conviction proved a powerful motive force in the succeeding epoch also—that of the completion of the building of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. under the inspired leadership of Stalin.

The force of this conviction was determined by the scientific foresight of Lenin and Stalin, who had mastered to perfection the powerful weapon of dialectical analysis and synthesis. This weapon opened before the mind’s eye of the great leaders of the proletariat the significance of the past and the perspectives of the future. It was this foresight of Lenin and Stalin and their

* *Ibid.*

† Lenin. *Collected Works* (Russian edition), XXII, p. 4.

immediate colleagues in the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party that ensured in October, 1917, the correct choice of the moment to strike the main blow.

Let us recall that on 24 October (6 November), in his letter to members of the Central Committee, Lenin was demanding the immediate seizure of power. "I am writing these lines on the evening of the 24th," we read in this historic document. "The situation is critical in the extreme. It is absolutely clear that to delay the insurrection now will be veritably in the likeness of death."

And further on: "We must not wait! We may lose everything! History will not forgive revolutionaries for procrastinating when they can be victorious today (will certainly be victorious today) while they risk losing much, in fact everything, tomorrow."

Lenin demanded an immediate uprising, saying that the history of -all revolutions had proved that it would be pure formality or a disaster to wait for "the wavering vote of October 25," that "the people have the right and the duty to decide such questions not by the vote but by force," that "in critical moments of revolution the people have the right and the duty to direct their representatives, even their best representatives, and not to wait for them."*

Only the genius of the revolution could speak in this way, feeling with all his being the inevitability of approaching victory, feeling both in his mind and in his heart the beating of the heart of the people, which was waiting for the call of its leader to launch itself into the decisive, "the last fight!"

History proved once more that Lenin was right, Stalin was right, the Party was right. The course of events demonstrated that the success of the October

* Lenin. *Selected Works* (English edition), VI, pp. 314-335.

Revolution depended not only on those general political conditions which were the direct consequence of the world war. Success depended to a decisive degree on the fact that battle was joined with the Russian capitalists and landlords by an army of workers and peasants, hardened in class struggles and under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Stalin, and on the fact that the bourgeoisie, headed by the hysterical Kerensky, by the S.R.s. and Mensheviks jointly with the counter-revolutionary generals and lawyers, proved incapable of withstanding the blows dealt by the Petrograd and Moscow workers, of withstanding the revolutionary storm which broke with tremendous force and rolled all over the country. Success was achieved because this blow, which decided the destiny of the revolution, was so correctly timed and was struck with such mathematical precision.

Lenin and Stalin correctly judged the situation existing at the time, correctly understood the course of events, correctly anticipated the line of development of those events, hurrying forward towards their logical outcome in the lightning stroke of revolution. Read Lenin's articles on the eve of, October: "Will the Bolsheviks Maintain Power?" "The Crisis has Matured," "The Aims of the Revolution," "Letter to the Bolshevik Comrades," "Letter to the Comrades," etc. Read Stalin's articles of a later date: "The October Revolution and the Tactics of the Russian Communists," "On the Problems of Leninism," "The Party's Three Fundamental Slogans," in which Stalin gives a crushing rebuff to the Trotskyist attempts to distort the history of October, and demonstrates most clearly and convincingly how preparations for October went forward, and what forces prepared for action, were brought into action and functioned during the process of development of the great proletarian revolution; how they

gave the insurgent proletariat, supported by the main peasant masses, the assurance of victory. Read these documents, and you will see what a mighty theoretical weapon the party of Lenin and Stalin possesses, and how, brilliantly mastering and using this weapon, the party pointed the way of victory to the proletariat, to the tried and tested detachments of proletarian revolutionaries which the working class had brought forward.

Stalin wrote in 1924: "One of the peculiar features of the October Revolution is the fact that this revolution represents the classic application of Lenin's theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat."*

"The second peculiar feature of the October Revolution", wrote Stalin on the same occasion, "lies in the fact that this revolution represents a model of the practical application of Lenin's theory of proletarian revolution."[†]

Both these peculiarities are directly bound up with the problem of the relations between the proletariat and the peasantry in the proletarian revolution. If these relations had not been established correctly, the proletarian revolution could not have advanced with the success with which the great October Revolution did so, overcoming the numerous difficulties connected with the solution of this problem.

* Stalin. *Leninism* (English edition), p. 90.

[†] *Ibid.*, p. 95.

III

THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT AND PROLETARIAN DEMOCRACY

We saw earlier that, the question of the victory of Socialism in one country is a basic question of the proletarian revolution. With this problem is linked the fate of the proletarian revolution, the victorious development of which cannot proceed in any other way than by the organisation of new socialist relations in society, the organisation of a new Socialist society.

The proletariat takes the State power into its own hands and uses it for the purpose of destroying, completely the power of the bourgeoisie, which is based on private ownership in the means of production, providing it with the opportunity of exploiting and oppressing the working people. The proletariat takes the State power to liberate labour from exploitation by capital, to build up 'social relations based on socialised means of production to utilise surplus profit in the interests of society, to establish Socialism.

The main aim of the proletarian revolution is to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat, to consolidate the authority of the workers and peasants, to solve the contradictions existing between the proletariat and the peasantry, to make use of State power in order to build Socialist society. It is clear that a logical consequence of denying the possibilities of building Socialism in a country where the proletarian revolution had conquered is to nullify the victory of the proletarian revolution.

The struggle for the general line of our Party, for the building of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. against the Trotskyist and Zinovievite renegades who denied the

possibility of the building of Socialism was, at the same time, a struggle for the proletarian revolution, for the right of the proletariat not only to struggle, against the bourgeoisie, but also to triumph over the bourgeoisie.

As is known, the traitors of the Zinoviev—Bukharin camp declared that it was, of course, possible to build Socialism in the U.S.S.R., but to complete the process of building it was impossible, because the necessary conditions, according to them, were not in Existence.

J. V. Stalin rightly said, as long ago as 1927, that such a statement of the case meant *capitulation to capitalist elements of our economy*.

Yet the task of the revolution was to overcome and eliminate these capitalist elements.

Stalin rightly pointed out as long ago as 1927, i.e., long before Zinoviev's treason had been discovered, that the inner logic of the latter's denial of the possibility of building Socialism in one country led to the conclusion that power should not have been taken in October, 1917.

The denial of the possibility of building Socialisms the U.S.S.R. meant, therefore, rejection of the dictatorship of the proletariat, a call to capitulation, to renunciation of power, to liquidation of the Soviet State.

Yet the Soviet State and the building of Socialism proceeded from strength to strength, against all "theories of capitulation. As is known, while the Trotskyist and Bukharinite "theoreticians" were bursting out of their skins with their pseudo-scientific prognostications—trying to frighten us as did Rykov, for example, by prophesying the collapse and downfall of the Soviet power, on the one hand, and assuring us, on the other, as Bukharin did, for example, that the Kulak was certain to "grow into Socialism"—they and their confed-

erates at the same time also lost no opportunity of undermining the cause of Socialist construction in practice; Rykov did his utmost to secure the adoption of his own two-year plan instead of Stalin's Five Year Plan, putting forward as a reason the argument that it was better and more practical to have two parallel plans. Stalin then and there exposed this right-wing-Trotskyist trick.

“Rykov brought the two-year plan on the scene in order subsequently, during the practical work of carrying out the Five-Year Plan, to oppose it to the Five-Year Plan, to reconstruct the Five-Year Plan and adapt it to the two-year plan, by cutting down and curtailing the appropriations for industry”, wrote Stalin in his work: “The Right Deviation in the C.P.S.U.(B).”*

The move of the Rykovs and Bukharins failed. The first Five Year Plan was left as it stood. It carried out its historic mission, ensuring an unprecedented success in the organisation of Socialist industry, in the transformation of the U.S.S.R. into an industrial country, in the creation of an economic base for the elimination of classes in the U.S.S.R. and for the building of a Socialist society.

“To change over from the beggarly peasant horse to the horse of large-scale machine industry—such was the aim the Party pursued in drawing up the Five Year Plan and working for its fulfilment”, said Stalin in his historic report “The Results of the First Five Year Plan” (1933).† The successful solution of this problem was interfered with by the Bukharins, Rykovs and their camp-followers. The Party and the working class threw them into the rubbish-heap. The Party and

* Stalin. *Leninism* (English edition), p. 285.

† *Ibid.*, p. 413.

the working class did their duty and solved the historic problem.

In fighting Socialist construction, the enemies of the people openly attacked the measures which aimed at restricting the operations of the kulaks: they attacked the extraordinary measures then adopted, asserting that in principle they were intolerable under Soviet power.

In his pamphlet "The Path to Socialism and the Worker-Peasant Alliance", Bukharin frankly took up the defence of the kulaks, demanding the elimination of "arbitrariness, even though it be revolutionary", demanding the renunciation of interference by the authorities in the course of economic life, even if such "arbitrariness" and such "interference" were essential in the interests of the poor and middle peasantry. In reality, of course, it was not a question of "arbitrariness" about which the Trotsky-Bukharin "democrats" were squeaking. The matter was one of profound differences in principle, already in those years separating these renegades from the Party, which was rightly and resolutely active against the kulaks as a class, who found in the Trotsky Bukharin group their ideologists and advocates. The outcry of the Bukharinites and Zinovievites against "arbitrariness", and the demand for "non-interference" in the course of economic life, were in those years the preparation for a more violent struggle of the counter-revolutionary groups against the measures taken by our Party and Government to ensure the victory of Socialism in our country, against the programme of Socialist reconstruction of economic and social relations in the, U.S.S.R.

It is most important to note that, at the same time, the Trotskyist and Bukharinite scum were not unwilling to stage a mock battle with the kulaks, in order to distract attention by creating the semblance of "class

struggle” and of an offensive against the kulaks.

“In 1926-27 the Zinoviev-Trotsky opposition”, Stalin pointed out later, did their utmost to impose upon the Party the policy of an immediate offensive against the kulaks.”*

The Party did not follow this path, because at that time the conditions essential for such a serious undertaking were not yet ripe. The Party took this path only in 1929 when all the conditions for eliminating the kulaks as a class, and for replacing their production by that of the collective and State farms, were in existence.

The Party could not have so brilliantly carried out the plan of eliminating the kulaks as a class on the basis of complete collectivisation, if it had not been armed with the genuinely scientific theory of Marx, Lenin and Stalin, on the one hand, and if, on the other, the working people of the U.S.S.R. by virtue of the unity of the Soviet people, had not created by that time a strong and powerful Socialist State of workers and peasants, a State of which Lenin had said that, in the period of transition from capitalism to Communism, in the period, of the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and its complete annihilation, in the period of unprecedentedly acute forms of class struggle—a State which must “inevitably be democratic-*in a new way* (for the proletarians and the dispossessed generally) and dictatorial *in a new way* (against the bourgeoisie.)”†

Trying in every possible way to weaken and undermine the dictatorship of the proletariat, the enemies of the people stopped at no methods of struggle. Conspiracies, treachery, terror, sabotage, wrecking,

* *Ibid.*, p. 323.

† Lenin. *Selected Works* (English edition). VII, p. 34.

acts of diversion—everything was put into service to arrest the forward movement of the land of the Soviets, which was becoming stronger from year to year,, and Was being transformed more and more into an advanced and mighty Socialist industrial Power.

The enemies of the people rightly calculated that the foundations of the Soviet State, as a State of a new type, is the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The fundamental principle of Marxism in its teaching concerning the dictatorship of the proletariat is the recognition that the dictatorship of the proletariat is the continuation of the class struggle of the proletarians in new forms. Lenin wrote that this, was the heart of the matter, and that this was not understood by those “Socialists” who had distorted the well-known proposition of Marxism that the class struggle inevitably leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat, “that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society” (Letter of Marx to Weydemeyer, 5 March 1852).

In his historic summary “On the Dictatorship of the Proletariat” written at the beginning of 1920, Lenin exposed the distortion of Marxism referred to, showing at the same time that the State, after power has passed into the hands of the proletariat, becomes merely a weapon of the proletariat in its class struggle, a kind of bludgeon) as Lenin wrote, *rien de plus*.

Lenin considers the dictatorship of the proletariat as the destruction of bourgeois democracy and the creation of proletarian democracy. He exposes the fiction of liberty, equality and democracy in the bourgeois-democratic States, showing that in the bourgeois States liberty reduces itself to the liberty of the owners of commodities, of the exploiters, and equality to “the equality of commodity owners”. Lenin empha-

sises that in this case there arises the question of the equality “of whom with whom? Of what?”. Lenin enters in his plan: “Equality of the exploited with the exploiters, equality of the hungry and the well-fed...”

“All are equal”, writes Lenin, “apart from money, capital, land.”

Lenin thereby explodes the bourgeois fiction of equality which represents only “formal equality while maintaining bourgeois oppression, the yoke of capital, wage slavery. He speaks with deadly sarcasm of the imperialist war of 1914–18 as “the last word of bourgeois democracy”. At the same time he points out that the bureaucracy, the courts, the militarism of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie are veiled in parliamentary forms. To this bourgeois democracy Lenin, in his plan, opposes the reality of democratism under proletarian democracy.

He devotes the last section of this plan to the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat and Soviet power, underlining “the triumphal progress of the Soviet idea throughout the world”, underlining too that “the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat has been discovered (by the mass movement of the proletariat)”.*

Even earlier, in his letter to the American workers (20 August 1918), Lenin showed what the proletarian dictatorship and proletarian democracy meant in actual practice.

“Whereas the old bourgeois-democratic constitution waxed eloquent over formal equality and the right of assembly, our proletariat and peasant Soviet Constitution brushes aside the hypocrisy of formal equality. When the bourgeois republicans were overturning thrones, no one troubled then about the formal equal-

* Lenin. *Collected Works* (Russian edition), XXV, pp. 9-10.

ity of monarchists and republicans. When It is a matter of overthrowing the bourgeoisie, only traitors or idiots can strive for formal equality of rights for the bourgeoisie. 'Freedom of assembly' for the workers and peasants is not worth a cent if all the best buildings have been seized by the bourgeoisie. Our Soviets *took away* all the good buildings, both in town and in country, from the rich and *handed over* all these buildings to the workers and peasants for their unions and meetings. That is *our* freedom of assembly—for the working people. That is the meaning and the content of our Soviet, our Socialist Constitution.

The affirmation of the reality of democratism under proletarian democracy, Lenin taught, was not achieved all at once. Proletarian democratism means "the combination of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the new democracy for the working people—civil war and the drawing of the widest masses into politics"—such a combination cannot be effected "at one stroke, and cannot be fitted into the hackneyed forms of routine parliamentary democracy. A new world, the world of Socialism—that is what is rising before us in its outline as the Soviet Republic. And it is not surprising that this world is not coming forth complete and at one stroke, like Minerva from the head of Jupiter."*

The enemies of Socialism strive to discredit proletarian democracy, putting forward as its defects the disfranchisement of the bourgeoisie, the absence of direct elections, the method of open voting, inequality in the basis of representation for the workers and the peasants, etc. However, in the first period of the transitional epoch from capitalism to Socialism all such limitations were inevitable, and were justified by the conditions of civil war, when there were innumerable

* Lenin. *Collected Works* (English edition), XXIII, p. 203.

conspiracies of all kinds among the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois elements against the Socialist revolution and the young Soviet Republic. Skilfully attempting to make use of the old parliamentary forms of democracy, the enemies of the Soviets furiously resisted the birth of the new world of Socialism. Lenin ruthlessly denounced the hypocrisy of the counter-revolutionary slanderers and their protectors, who were attacking the proletarian democracy born of the great October Revolution, the hypocrisy and slander by which the enemies of the Soviets were attempting to disguise their hatred of Socialism and to facilitate their furious resistance to the new Socialist relations in society. In his teachings Lenin stressed the inevitability of persistent repression of such resistance. Educating the broad masses of the people in a spirit of proletarian class-consciousness and of a Socialist world outlook, the Lenin-Stalin programme of Socialist reconstruction took its stand upon an entirely new conception of proletarian democracy. Defending it as a new, and highest type of democracy, the Lenin-Stalin programme saw in it a means of governing the State *without* the bourgeoisie and *against* the bourgeoisie.

Lenin wrote of this: "For the first time democracy here is serving the masses, the working people, and has ceased to be a democracy for the rich, such as democracy in all the bourgeois republics, even the most democratic, still remains. For the first time the masses of the people are solving, on a scale involving hundreds of millions of people, the problem of giving effect to the dictatorship of the proletarians and semi-proletarians—and unless this problem is solved one cannot even talk of Socialism."*

Soviet democracy in practice is the democracy of

* *Ibid.*, pp. 202-203.

millions. It facilitates the union of all working people around their vanguard, the proletariat, it hands over to the working people all the resources without which it is actually impossible to make real use of liberty and civic rights (freedom of the press, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, etc.).

That is why “proletarian democracy is a million times more democratic than any bourgeois democracy; Soviet government is a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic.”*

And this is because in Russia after the October Revolution, as Lenin said, “every rank-and-file worker, every rank-and-file agricultural labourer or semi-proletarian of the village has in general acquired such liberty, and takes such a direct part in the management of the Soviet State, as can be seen nowhere else in the world”. This, wrote Lenin, was enough “to cause all the oppressed classes to recognise the Soviet Government, that is, the present form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic.”†

It is precisely this feature that characterises the Soviet Republic as a new type of democracy, a new democratic State. The main thing here is that the new Soviet democracy brings forward the vanguard of the working people, “turning them into legislators and executives and a military defence force, and creating an apparatus capable of re-educating the masses”.‡ The problem of education of the masses is the most important problem in the system of the proletarian dic-

* *Ibid.*, p. 365.

† *Ibid.*, p. 365.

‡ Lenin. *Selected Works* (English edition), VIII, p. 318.

tatorship, which functions not only by the force it uses against the exploiters but also by persuasion, with the help of which it mobilises, organises and teaches the masses to build their State, radically refashioning social relations. Leninism teaches that when power passes to the working class the survivals of capitalism are not yet eliminated from the consciousness of men, and that the proletariat, although the foremost class in society and bearer of the most advanced and best ideas, also proves to be not free from bourgeois psychology and the defects connected therewith.

Lenin teaches us that “the proletariat is not separated by a Chinese wall from the old society”, in consequence of which the task of the advanced party, marching at the head of the Socialist revolution, is the re-education of the workers, the eradication from their consciousness of survivals of bourgeois ideology. This applies all the more to the working strata of the petty bourgeoisie, and particularly of the peasantry, who, as Lenin wrote, are emancipated from their own petty-bourgeois prejudices not “at one stroke, by a miracle, at the behest of the Blessed Virgin, at the behest of a slogan, resolution or decree, but only in the course of a long and difficult mass struggle against mass petty-bourgeois influences”.* It is a difficult problem, requiring great patience and skill. Nevertheless, the proletariat must solve this problem, come what may; and in the process of crushing elements hostile to Socialism the proletariat must itself go through a school of education in Socialist discipline. It has to eliminate the heritage of; capitalism in the shape of property-owning habits of mind, philistine traditions which are skilfully utilised against the interests of the working people, against the interests of

* Lenin. *Selected Works* (English edition), X, p. 156.

Socialism, at every sharp turn in the forward movement of the revolution.

The task of Socialist re-education is all the more important because, as Leninism teaches, the very crushing of the bourgeoisie in its resistance to Socialist reconstruction can be most successful only when the mass itself does the crushing—the mass conscious of its class interests, sufficiently educated in a Socialist spirit, sufficiently disciplined to solve the problems raised before the people lay a Socialist revolution.

“We have to crush the exploiters”, said Lenin at the seventh Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in March, 1918. “But they cannot be crushed by a police. It is only the masses themselves which can crush them—an apparatus which must be linked with the masses, must represent them, like the Soviets. They are much nearer to the masses, they make it possible to keep closer to them, they afford more opportunities of training those masses.”*

The dictatorship of the proletariat is a weapon of the proletarian revolution in the sense that with the help of its dictatorship the proletariat crushes the resistance of the exploiters it has overthrown, and carries on the revolution to the complete victory of Socialism.

Stalin teaches us that it is possible to suppress the bourgeoisie without the dictatorship of the proletariat, but that the revolution is not capable of going further, and crushing the resistance of the bourgeoisie, preserving victory and moving on to the final victory of Socialism, if it does not at a certain stage of its development bring into being a special organ in the shape of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as its own main-

* Lenin. *Selected Works* (English edition), VIII, pp. 319-320.

stay.*

The dictatorship of the proletariat means supremacy over the bourgeoisie with the help of force. It is a method of State management combining compulsion and training in discipline. The dictatorship of the proletariat performs this task with the help of Soviet power, which is its own special form of State. The particular feature of Soviet power, as the State form of dictatorship of the proletariat, is that it embraces millions of the masses of working people, drawing them into constant, essential and what is more, decisive (in Lenin's words) participation in the management of the State.

“This is why the Soviet power is a new form of State organisation, different in principle from the old bourgeois-democratic and parliamentary form, a new type of State, adapted not to the task of exploiting and oppressing the working masses, but to the task of completely emancipating them from all oppression and exploitation, to the tasks facing the dictatorship of the proletariat.”†

In “State and Revolution”, as also in a number of his later immortal scientific works, Lenin provided a finished exposition of the Marxist conception of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Lenin cleansed this conception of the opportunist distortions introduced by Kautsky, Bernstein and their followers, who in effect rejected the dictatorship of the proletariat. Lenin pointed, as the most vivid proof of this, to Kautsky's pamphlet “The Dictatorship of the Proletariat”, published in August, 1918, calling it an example of the petty-bourgeois distortion of Marxism and of base renunciation of Marxism *in deeds*, while hypocritically

* Stalin. *Leninism* (English edition), pp. 28-29.

† *Ibid.*, p. 57.

recognising it *in words*.”

This “base renunciation” of Marxism consists mainly in the fact that the Kautskyites, Mensheviks, S.R.s. and other, opportunists did not carry on their acceptance of the class struggle to the point of the *transition* from capitalism to Communism—and that, as Lenin pointed out, is the principal element in the theory of the class struggle.

Lenin’s merit consisted not only in his having cleansed Marxism from opportunist distortions and the vulgar philistinism of Kautsky and Co. It was also Lenin’s merit that he worked out the whole *system* of proletarian dictatorship, demonstrating all the exceptional importance of the dictatorship of the proletariat and its special features in conditions of Soviet power, and also the features which distinguish it from the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.*

Let us note at any rate the most important elements of that system, its main principles.

Lenin considers the dictatorship of the proletariat, first of all, as “the *continuation* of the class struggle of the proletariat in *new forms*”, and the proletarian State as “the *weapon* of the proletariat in its class struggle.”

This class struggle under the dictatorship of the proletariat acquires new forms, in keeping with the new tasks. Of these there are “*five new (most important) tasks and corresponding new forms*”, namely (a) “*the suppression of the resistance of the exploiters*”; (b) “*civil war*”; (c) “*the neutralisation of the petty bourgeoisie, particularly the peasantry*”; (d) “*the utilisation*” of the bourgeoisie (the question of making use of bourgeois experts); (e) “*the fostering of a new discipline*”.

* Lenin. *Collected Works* (Russian edition), XXV, pp. 5-12.

Lenin considers the dictatorship of the proletariat as the destruction of bourgeois democracy and the creation of proletarian democracy, underlining the falsity and hypocrisy of the one and the reality of the other. Lenin, for example, exposes bourgeois equality thus: “All are equal, *apart* from money, capital, land...”; or: “The imperialist war of 1914-18 as the ‘last word’ of bourgeois democracy”; or again: “The dictatorship of the bourgeoisie disguised in parliamentary forms”.

Further, Lenin dwells on the theme: “The dictatorship of the proletariat and the intrinsic features of imperialism”. Here Lenin advises the reader to study the work “Imperialism as the Highest Stage of Capitalism”, in which he mentions those writings of Marx and Engels where references are made to the venality of the “labour lieutenants of the capitalist class”. Lenin adds: “Two main ‘streams’: the venal and the philistine”, and concludes with the thesis: “Two internationals. The dictatorship of the *revolutionary* elements of a class. One country and the whole world” (this refers to the problem of the seizure of power by the proletariat in one country).

In the fourth section, speaking of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the Soviet power, Lenin denounces the “ignorance and thick-wittedness of the *leaders* of the Second International”, who recognised the Soviets for struggle, but not for State power!!” Lenin records “the triumphal progress of the Soviet idea throughout the world”. “The form of the dictatorship of the proletariat has been discovered (by the mass movement of the proletariat)!!” “The Third International”. “The Soviet Constitution of the R.S.F.S.R. Its article 23.”*

* Article 33 of the Soviet Constitution of 1918 deprived the

It was thus that Lenin defined the essence of the proletarian dictatorship and its role in the proletarian revolution and in the proletarian State.

In his work, "The Foundations of Leninism", Stalin wrote of the dictatorship of the proletariat that "the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat signifies the suppression of the bourgeoisie, the smashing of the bourgeois State machine and the substitution of proletarian democracy for bourgeois democracy".*

Stalin pointed out at the same time the important circumstance that the new tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat must have corresponding new forms of organisation of the proletariat, since its old forms, which grew up on the basis of bourgeois parliamentarism, are now no longer adequate. "This new form of organisation of the proletariat is the Soviets".

The Soviets, Soviet power, are the most democratic form of State authority, because the Soviets are the direct organisation of the masses of the people, the most powerful organs of revolutionary struggle of the masses, all-embracing mass organisations of the proletariat, peasantry and all working people. The Soviets are organs of State authority which ensure a constant, essential and decisive participation of the people in the democratic management of the State.

The dictatorship of the proletariat is a class alliance of the proletariat and the working masses of the peasantry for the overthrow of capital and for the final victory of Socialism, with the condition that the guiding force in that alliance is the proletariat.

Such is the definition of the dictatorship of the proletariat given by Stalin. Such is the essence of the

bourgeoisie of the franchise.

* Stalin. *Leninism* (English edition), p. 35.

dictatorship of the proletariat, which not only does not contradict the interests of the working peasantry but fully answers to its interests.

It is precisely such an understanding of the dictatorship of the proletariat that assures the direction of the whole policy of the Soviet State, which leads to the consolidation and prosperity of the Soviet country, relying on the inviolable alliance of workers and peasants.

Lenin points out that “the scientific conception of dictatorship means nothing else than unrestricted power absolutely unimpeded by laws or regulations and relying directly upon force”.*

The bourgeoisie and its agents want to interpret this proposition as a justification of arbitrariness and lawlessness. But such attempts have been fruitless up till now, and will remain fruitless for the future because of their obvious lack of any justification. It is sufficient to point out the numerous statements by Lenin and Stalin on the importance of the exact fulfilment of Soviet laws and of the observance of the discipline laid down by those laws. (See, for example, Lenin’s letter on the subject of the victory over Kolchak, “On Dual Subordination and Legality”, as well as a number of other works.) The Soviet State, based on the dictatorship of the proletariat, is not bound by the laws of another class, the laws of the authority which had been overthrown and which was built up by a different class. The Soviet State regulates social relations with the help of Soviet laws, the essence of which is to assure the interests of the working people with the help of measures of compulsion, of force—but not only of force.

“Dictatorship”, said Lenin, “means not only force,

* Lenin. *Selected Works* (English edition), VII, p. 254.

although it is impossible without force; it also means an organisation of labour on a higher level than the previous form.”*

Moreover, said Lenin, the point is that “the proletariat represents and gives effect to a higher type of social organisation of labour in comparison with capitalism. This is the substance. In this lies the source of strength and the guarantee of the inevitable and complete victory of Communism”.†

We know the classical formula of Stalin on the three main aspects of the dictatorship of the proletariat:

“1. The utilisation of the power of the proletariat for the suppression of the exploiters, for the defence of the country, for the consolidation of ties with the proletarians of other lands, for the development and the victory of the revolution in all countries.

“2. The utilisation of the power of the proletariat in order to detach the toiling and exploited masses once and for all from the bourgeoisie, to consolidate the alliance of the proletariat with these masses, to enlist these masses in the cause of Socialist construction and to ensure the State leadership of these masses by the proletariat.

“3. The utilisation of the power of the proletariat for the organisation of Socialism, for the abolition of classes, for transition to a society without classes, to a society without the State”.‡

Stalin developed the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat further, pointing out that it does not represent something frozen and motionless, laid down once and for all, functioning independently of historic

* Lenin. *Collected Works* (Russian edition), XXIV, p. 305.

† *Ibid.*, p. 336.

‡ Stalin. *Leninism* (English edition), p. 130.

conditions and circumstances. No, says Stalin, “the dictatorship of the proletariat has its periods, its special forms, diverse methods of work”.

Some methods are used by the dictatorship of the proletariat in a period of civil war, when “the violent side of the dictatorship is most conspicuous,” which however by no means signifies the absence of any constructive work. Other methods operate during the period of the building of Socialism, when “on the contrary, the peaceful, organisational, cultural work of the dictatorship, revolutionary legality, etc., are most conspicuous”.*

In the one period as in the other there are necessary machinery of repression, an army and other organisations since without them constructive work by the dictatorship would be impossible with any degree of security.

Stalin also demonstrated the “mechanism” of the dictatorship of the proletariat: the “transmission belts”, the “levers”, the “directing force”, the sum-total of which constitutes the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of which Lenin spoke.

Here we see the *Party* (the main guiding force in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat), “the highest form of class association of the proletariat” (Lenin); the *trade unions* (a school of Communism, uniting the working-class masses with -the vanguard of the working class; the *Soviets* (they unite the many millions of working people with the vanguard of the proletariat, and are the direct expression of the dictatorship of the proletariat); the *co-operatives* (facilitating contact between the vanguard and the masses of the peasantry and providing the possibilities of drawing the-latter into the channel of Socialist construc-

* *Ibid.*

tion); *the League of Youth* (which helps the Party, provides reserves for all the other mass organisations in all branches of administration).*

It is clear that the dictatorship of the proletariat is an instrument of a mass character, an organ which expresses the will of the masses of the people merging with their vanguard, enjoying the unlimited support and confidence firstly, of the proletarian part of the working people, but also of the non-proletarian part as well.

In such conditions the essential question proves to be not one of force, although the dictatorship of the proletariat cannot do without force, but of confidence, fraternal bonds of the working class and its Party with all working people.

The vanguard of the proletariat must be the teacher, guide, leader of all who work and are exploited, in arranging their social life without the bourgeoisie and against the bourgeoisie.

These are the teachings of Lenin and Stalin. And this is the part which is played in the life of the Soviet Union by the vanguard of the working class—the Communist Party (Bolsheviks), organised, reared and trained by Lenin and Stalin for its great and historic role.

* * *

The peasant question in the U.S.S.R. is the question of mutual relationship between the proletariat and the peasantry. It is a most important question, particularly if one bears in mind the relative importance of the peasantry in the U.S.S.R. It was not by chance that the gaze of all the enemies of Socialism and of the Socialist revolution in the U.S.S.R. was

* *Ibid.*, pp. 132-133.

turned in this direction, in the hope that the Bolsheviks and the proletariat they led would not be able to find the proper solution of this problem, and would come to grief over the peasant question. It was, not by chance that the leaders of the Socialist-Revolutionaries—Chernov, Kerensky, Breshkovskaya, Savinkov, etc.—proved to be the main heroes of bourgeois counter-revolution, side by side with generals like Denikin, Wrangel, Yudenich and Kolchak. Nor was it by chance that the Trotskyists and Zinovievites concentrated on the same point, striving by their provocative recipes for “tightening the screw” in respect of the peasantry to blow up the worker-peasant alliance.

The wise policy of Lenin and Stalin on the peasant question eliminated this danger. The science of Socialist construction of Lenin and Stalin ensured the stability and inviolability of that alliance, which is the foundation of the whole cause of Socialism in our country.

Lenin thus defined the policy of the proletarian State in respect of the peasantry:

“The aim here” (in economic relations with the middle peasantry. A.V.) “amounts to this: not to expropriate the middle peasant, but to bear in mind the specific conditions in which the peasant lives, to learn from the peasant methods for a transition to a better system, *and not dare to give orders!* That is the rule we have laid down for ourselves”.

Lenin emphasised that “the millions cannot all at once understand a change of policy” and that “the new conditions and new tasks in relation to this class require a new psychology”.*

The basis of that psychology is a new understanding of the position and role of the middle peasantry in

* Lenin. *Selected Works* (English edition), VIII, p. 180.

the proletarian revolution. The principal thing here, as Lenin said, was to put correctly the problem of improving the life of the middle peasantry.

“We must live at peace with them”, Lenin taught. “The middle peasantry in a Communist society will only be on our side when we make its economic conditions of life better and more easy. If we could tomorrow provide 100,000 first-class tractors, supply them with petrol, equip them with drivers (you know perfectly well that so far this is a fantasy) the middle peasant would say: ‘I’m for the Commune’ (i.e., for Communism)”.*

Lenin and Stalin teach us to consider the working masses of the peasantry as a reserve of the proletariat, as a firm support in carrying out the most far-reaching and radical measures to organise Socialist relations.

Stalin recalls the words of Engels who, in the 90’s of-last century, in his book “The Peasant Question in France and Germany”, wrote that the Socialist Party, “in order to achieve political power,.... must first go from the towns into the countryside, and become strong in the rural districts”. But what did going “from the towns into the countryside” mean? How was it to “become strong in the rural districts?”

To these questions Engels replied that it was necessary to do everything possible to make the peasant’s lot more bearable, to facilitate his transition to the co-operative, if he decided to take that step. If he could not as yet bring himself to make that decision, the peasant should be given plenty of time to ponder over it on his holding. It was necessary to give the peasantry material support out of public funds, and to be very

* Lenin. *Collected Works* (Russian edition), XXIV, pp. 169-170.

generous in this respect, because the expenditure would pay for itself later many times over, in social reorganisation as a whole.

J. V. Stalin, commenting on these remarks of Engels, emphasised that precisely in the land of the dictatorship of the proletariat what Engels had suggested could be carried out most easily and completely, all the more as such measures were already then being put into effect in the U.S.S.R.

“How can it be denied that this circumstance, in its turn, must facilitate and advance the work of economic construction in the land of the Soviets?” wrote Stalin.*

All subsequent events have completely confirmed this observation of Stalin’s, demonstrating that success in economic and public construction generally are organically bound up with the fullest participation in this construction of the working peasantry, first and faithful helper of the working class in the struggle for Socialism.

The dictatorship of the proletariat proved a stable foundation for fraternal co-operation between the working class and the main masses of the peasantry. The whole practice of the Soviet power serves as a living and overwhelming refutation of the Trotskyist-Bukharinite “thesis” alleging radical contradictions between the working class and the working peasantry.

The fraternal co-operation of the working class and the peasantry is the direct consequence of the Soviet system which is founded on the alliance of the workers and peasants: by all its special features and its qualities it brings together and unites the workers and peasants, instead of dividing them.

When Lenin was defining the essence of the Soviet

* Stalin. *Leninism* (English edition), pp. 46-47.

power, he wrote of the six specific features of the Soviets. He saw one of these specific features in the fact that the new State apparatus which the Soviets represented “provides a form of organisation of the vanguard, i.e., of the most class-conscious, most energetic and most progressive section of the *oppressed* classes, the workers and peasants, and thus constitutes an apparatus by means of which the vanguard of the oppressed classes can elevate, train, educate and lead the *entire vast mass* of these classes, which has hitherto stood entirely remote from political life, outside history”.*

The specific feature of the proletarian revolution is that it is capable, and it has the duty, of binding the many millions of working people together with the proletariat in a prolonged alliance. And this also is the specific feature of the Soviet State, as a special form of alliance between the workers and the peasants.

Of this special form of alliance Stalin wrote in his work “The Foundations of Leninism”: “This special form alliance consists in the fact that the guiding force of this alliance is the proletariat. This special form of alliance consists in the fact that the leader in the State, the leader in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat is *one* party, the party of the proletariat, the party of the Communists, which *does not and cannot share* that leadership with other parties”.†

“This is the essence. This is the source of the strength and the guarantee of the inevitable, complete triumph of Communism”.‡

Lenin explained that the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat includes the assumption of

* Lenin. *Selected Works* (English Edition), VI, pp. 263-264.

† Stalin. *Leninism* (English edition), p. 127.

‡ Lenin. *Selected Works* (English edition), IX, p. 431.

power by the proletariat and the wielding of political power by it alone. Here there is not and cannot be any question of the power “of the whole people” in the sense in which the Mensheviks and S.R.s. conceived of it. But political supremacy in the hands of the proletariat, which does not divide it and cannot divide it with other classes, requires for the achievement, of its ends the help and alliance of the working and exploited masses of other classes. Such is the teaching of Stalin when he points out that “the power of one class—having in mind the power of the proletariat—can be firmly established and exercised to the full only by means of a special form of alliance between, the class of proletarians and the labouring masses of the petty-bourgeois classes, primarily the labouring masses of the peasantry”.*

Thus the dictatorship of the proletariat represents a special form of class alliance between the working class, and the working masses of the peasantry, with the leading position belonging to the working class and its party, the party of Communists, which does not share and cannot share the leadership with other parties.

As is known the right-wing and Trotskyists denied this radical principle of Leninism, asserting, as Kame-nev did, for example, that the dictatorship of the proletariat is not the alliance of one class with another. This is a crude distortion of Leninism, as it denies the alliance between the proletariat and the working peasantry, on the one hand, and the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat in the proletarian revolution, on the other. It is a crude distortion of that highest principle of dictatorship of which Lenin spoke—having in mind the dictatorship of the proletariat—

* Stalin. *Leninism* (English edition), p. 127.

which signifies an agreement between the workers and the peasants, the establishment by their common effort of a State power in which the proletariat plays a leading part.

This role of the proletariat is determined by the specific features of the proletarian revolution, in which tremendous difficulties have to be faced in organising new social relations in the course of a prolonged and stubborn struggle. For victory in this struggle there is required the free and conscious discipline of working people who have overthrown the yoke of the landlords and capitalists at are organising a new Socialist society. "This new discipline" said Lenin, "does not drop from heaven, nor is it born out of pious wishes. It grows out of the material conditions of large-scale capitalist production, and out of them alone. Without them it is impossible. And the vehicle or the channel of these material conditions is a definite historical class, created, organised, consolidated, trained, educated and hardened by large-scale capitalism. This class is the proletariat."*

After the conquest of political power by the proletariat, the class-struggle does not cease, the proletariat continues this struggle up to the point of the elimination of classes, although in a different form, in different conditions, by different means. In order to eliminate classes, Leninism teaches, it is essential not only to overthrow the exploiters and abolish their property, but also to abolish all private property in the means of production and to abolish the distinction between town and country, the distinction between manual and intellectual workers.

This is a very long and difficult task, and to complete many great efforts will be needed. It is necessary

* Lenin. *Selected Works* (English edition), IX, pp. 431-432.

that the working people should possess the capacity to solve this problem, but it would be “a most empty phrase or the illusion of an antediluvian, pre-Marxian Socialist” (Lenin) to imagine that all the working people are equally capable of such work. Leninism rejects illusions of this kind, since that ability, it teaches, does not come of itself, but grows historically, and grows *only* out of the material conditions of large-scale capitalist production.*

Lenin wrote in “A Great Beginning”: “The proletariat *alone* possesses this ability at the beginning of the road from capitalism to Socialism. It is capable of fulfilling the gigantic task that lies on this road,, first, because it is the strongest and most advanced class in civilised society; secondly because in the most developed countries it constitutes the majority of the population; thirdly, because in backward capitalist countries like Russia, the majority of the population consists of semi-proletarians, i.e., of people who regularly live in a proletarian way part of the year, who regularly eke out their livelihood to a certain extent as wage workers in capitalist enterprises.”†

It is not the heroism of individual acts, but prolonged, most persistent and most difficult mass heroism of everyday work—that is what will solve the problem of the creation of “new social relations, a new labour discipline, a new organisation of labour, which will combine the last word of science and capitalist technique with the mass association of class-conscious workers engaged in large-scale Socialist production.”‡

Such are the historical pre-requisites which make

* *Ibid.*, p. 433.

† *Ibid.*, p. 488.

‡ *Ibid.* P. 435.

inevitable and unquestionably necessary the leading role of the proletariat as a class in the transitional period from capitalism to Socialism—a role which puts into the hands of the proletariat as a class the political supremacy, the political leadership of all the labouring elements of the petty-bourgeois classes, which are in need of such leadership for successful advance along the road to Socialism.

For the victory of 'Communism it is necessary to take "an enormous step forward 'in the development of the productive forces, to overcome the resistance (often passive, and because of this particularly stubborn and particularly difficult to overcome) of the numerous survivals of small-scale production; it is necessary to overcome the tremendous force of habit and inertia which is linked with these survivals."*

But only the proletariat is capable of overcoming this tremendous force of the survivals of capitalism in the economy and in the psychology of man, in spite of the fact that the proletariat itself in the first period of the revolution is not yet free of those survivals.

The leading role of the proletariat in the reconstruction of old social relations grows out of the very character of those relations. It is determined by the social position of the proletariat in production, and that is an overriding factor in social relations. In the transitional period from capitalism to Socialism the proletariat inevitably retains the position of the leading class in society, with all the consequences that follow. This is one of the most important laws of proletarian revolution.

The very conception of dictatorship of the proletariat signifies leadership on the part of the proletariat

* *Ibid.*, p. 433.

of the non-proletarian working masses. It is just in this way that Lenin and Stalin have defined the conception of dictatorship of the proletariat.

Leninism teaches that only the proletariat is capable of giving guidance to the whole mass of working people in the struggle for their emancipation and in the struggle to preserve and consolidate victory.

In Lenin's work "A Great Beginning", already quoted, this particular feature of the proletarian dictatorship is emphasised in the following words:

"In order to achieve victory, in order to create and consolidate Socialism, the proletariat must fulfil a two-fold, or dual task: firstly, by its devoted heroism in the revolutionary struggle against capital it must inspire and carry with it the whole mass of the toilers and exploited, it must organise them and lead them to the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the complete suppression of all resistance on its part; secondly, it must lead the whole mass of the toilers and exploited, as well as all the petty-bourgeois strata... on the road to the creation of new social relations, a new labour discipline, a new organisation of labour, which shall combine the last word of science and capitalist technique with the mass association of class-conscious workers engaged in large-scale Socialist production.

"The second task is more difficult than the first, for it cannot possibly be fulfilled by single acts of heroism; it requires the most prolonged, most persistent and most difficult mass heroism and *prosaic*, routine work. But this task is also more material than the first, because in the last analysis the new and higher mode of social production, the substitution of large-scale Socialist production for capitalist and petty-bourgeois production, can alone serve as the deepest source of strength for victory over the bourgeoisie, and as the sole guarantee of the durability and permanence of

that victory.”*

The alliance of workers and peasants under the leadership of the working class, with the leading position in the U.S.S.R. of the Communist Party—this is the foundation of the Soviet State, of a new type of State power, the Soviet power. The experience of the revolution has proved that this form of power is a much higher form of democracy than any other known to history. This the Soviet people has understood and knows, because it feels at every stage of economic and cultural construction in the U.S.S.R. all the advantages of Soviet power in comparison with other forms of power.

There is no necessity, and there is not the scope in the present essay, to give a survey of those concrete measures which would show how in practice the policy of the Soviet State in relation to the peasantry has taken shape. The path from the Land Decree and the division among the peasantry of the land, which the peasantry received thanks to the Soviet power, and from the Committees of the Poor, which were the fighting bodies of the poor peasantry in their struggle against the kulaks, to the mass collective farming movement and the mass organisation of collective farms, which settled the fate of the kulaks as a class, are within the memory of all. The great path indicated by the party of Lenin and Stalin to the poorest and middle masses of the peasantry has been the path of salvation, the path to a well-to-do life for millions of cultivators working on their own land, the path of happy labour in alliance with and under the leadership of the working class, faithful friend and fearless defender of the interests of all working people. Under the guidance of the working class and its party, the

* *Ibid.*, pp. 434-435.

working people of the U.S.S.R. have built their Socialist State, an invincible bulwark of their liberty, independence and happiness.

* * *

The Soviet State, as a State of a new type, is new in its democratism—its consistent Socialist democratism. Soviet democratism assures the predominance in society of the will of the majority of workers and peasants, the majority of the working people who participate in the management of the State. It is precisely the Soviet form of democracy that arouses millions of people to active public life, to Socialist creative work, and ensures the emergence from the masses of the people of thousands and thousands of; leaders and organisers. Lenin noted as one of the most important characteristics of Soviet power the circumstance that it is precisely Soviet power, the forms and methods of work of the organs of the Soviet State, which ensure a solution of the problem of producing and training new leaders and organisers from among the people.

Thousands and thousands of times have we seen confirmation of Lenin's and Stalin's words about Soviet democratism as the highest form of democracy, since it provides millions of the people with the opportunity of participating in the management of the State and in the building of Socialism. The most vivid evidence of consistent and fully-developed Socialist democracy is the great Stalin Constitution.

Soviet power is the form of the fullest and most developed democratism. At the same time it is also the form of the dictatorship of the working class, which assures the very possibility of democracy for the people. Soviet democracy and the proletarian dictatorship are two sides of one and the same phenomenon.

The Soviet State is strong in initiative of the masses of the people, their creative work and boundless devotion to the cause of their liberation, their freedom, the glory and grandeur of their Socialist motherland. This is the source of that lifegiving patriotism, the source of the great victories and great deeds of the Soviet people.

In the first days of Soviet power Lenin urged the necessity of applying the most varied methods and approaches in organising new social relations within the Republic of Soviets. Speaking of the task of transition to “large-scale economy, built on machine industry”, to Socialism, Lenin wrote that the concrete conditions and forms of that transition are inevitably varied and must be so, in accordance with the conditions in which the movement directed to the creation of Socialism begins.

Lenin wrote: “The more there is of such variety—of course, if it does not pass into originality for its own sake—the more certainly and the more swiftly will we be assured, both of the achievement of democratic centralism, and of a Socialist economy. It now remains for us only to organise emulation... Weighed down by the capitalist order, we cannot at present even imagine exactly what a wealth of ability lies hidden in the mass of the working people, in the variety of labour communes of this great State, in the mass of intellectuals who hitherto worked like lifeless, voiceless executors of the blue-prints drawn up by the capitalists, what forces are hidden and can develop in the Socialist organisation of society. Our task is only to clear the way for all these forces. And if as a State we set ourselves the task of organising emulation, then, providing we apply the principles of the Soviet State, providing the abolition of private ownership in land, factories, works, etc., is maintained, results will inevi-

tably be seen and this will indicate to us further forms of constructive work.”*

In his article “How to Organise Emulation”, Lenin wrote that under capitalism the initiative of the masses was stifled, because under capitalism competition “means the incredibly brutal suppression of the enterprise, energy, and bold initiative of the *mass* of the population, the vast majority, 99 per cent, of the working people; it also means that emulation is replaced by financial swindling, despotism, servility on the upper rungs of the social ladder.

“Socialism not only does not extinguish emulation, but on the contrary, for the first time creates the opportunity to apply it on a really *broad*, really *mass* scale, and really to draw the majority of the working people into fields of work where they can display and develop their abilities, reveal the talents of which there is an untapped spring among the people, and which capitalism crushed, suppressed, stifled in thousands and millions.”†

Lenin called the working people to creativeness and initiative. He pointed out that in the process of emulation “those with a *talent for organisation* must *in practice* come to the fore and rise to the top in the general administration of the State. There is a great deal of such talent among the people.”‡ During the years of Soviet power thousands upon thousands of talented organisers and leaders in all spheres of public constructive work have been promoted from out of the very heart of the people: engineers, directors, military leaders and builders of the

* Lenin. *Collected Works* (Russian edition), XXII. pp. 416-417.

† *Ibid.*, p. 158.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 167.

Soviet army, scholars, outstanding statesmen, doctors, lawyers, artists, writers, men and women skilled in the most varied professions.

Thousands and tens of thousands of heroes and heroines of labour and of the battle front have been born and trained up by our country, which never before the Soviet order saw such an abundance of remarkable people, creators and builders of a new life.

Lenin anticipated the coming into existence of new forms of Socialist emulation, such, for example, as the Stakhanov movement, which gave an immense impetus to the rise in productivity of labour and to the general advance of Socialist economic construction. Later on, speaking of the Stakhanov movement, Stalin rightly remarked that “it is preparing the conditions for the transition from Socialism to Communism”.*

* * *

The question of the State in the conditions of the proletarian revolution, naturally acquires particular importance, since it is a question of power, and the question of power, as Lenin teaches, is the fundamental question of the revolution.

Marx and Engels provided a remarkably systematic exposition of their views on the State, showing the decisive importance of the State for the proletarian revolution and for the organisation of Socialist society.

The classical formula of the “Communist Manifesto”, written by Marx and Engels, declares that “the first step in the working-class revolution is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class, to win the battle for democracy.

* Stalin. *Leninism* (English edition), p. 548.

“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, i.e., of the proletariat organised as the ruling class, and to increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible”.*

Marxism thus starts from the necessity for the proletariat to take possession of the State, to become “the ruling class”, and to utilise the State in order to centralise in its hands all the instruments of production.

Marxism also starts from the proposition that the transformation of capitalist society into Communist society will take up a whole period of history, that the transformation will be achieved by revolutionary means, and that the State in that transitional political period cannot be any other than the *revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat*.

The dictatorship of the proletariat fulfils the salutary mission of breaking the resistance of the exploiters and ensuring a vast extension of democracy, which becomes for the first time democracy for the poor—“democracy for the people, and not democracy for the rich” (Lenin). The dictatorship of the proletariat inevitably lays down restrictions upon liberty in respect of the exploiters.

Lenin emphasised that Engels expressed this perfectly in his letter to Bebel when he said that “so long as the proletariat still uses the State, it does not need it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the State as such ceases to exist”.[†]

* K. Marx and F. Engels. *Communist Manifesto* (English edition).

[†] *Correspondence of Marx and Engels* (English edition), p.

The theory of the State is the most important part of the Marxist theory of revolution, the Marxist Socialist theory. Lenin in the 90's of last century excellently defined the significance of the theory of Marx in his article "Our Programme", where he formulated the tasks facing a revolutionary Socialist party. Lenin wrote that the theory of Marx had cleared up the real task of that Party: "Not the invention of plans for the reconstruction of society, not preaching to the capitalists and their lackeys about improving the conditions of the workers, not the organisation of conspiracies, *but the organisation of the class struggle of the proletariat and the leadership of that struggle, with the ultimate aim of the conquest of political power by the proletariat and the organisation of Socialist society*".

Proclaiming himself wholeheartedly a supporter of the theory of Marx, Lenin underlined at the same time that "we do not at all regard the theory of Marx as something completed and inviolable."

Lenin pointed out that the theory of Marx had only laid "the corner-stone of that science which Socialist *must* develop further in all directions if they do not want to lag behind life.

"We think that for Russian Socialists an *independent* treatment of the theory of Marx is particularly necessary since that theory provides only general *guiding* principles which, *in particular*, are applied to England otherwise than to France, to France otherwise than to Germany, to Germany otherwise than to Russia."*

These observations of Lenin's are of profound importance as a principle and are exceptionally im-

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* Lenin. *Collected Works* (Russian 4th edition), IV, pp. 191-192.

portant for a correct understanding of the subsequent development of Marxist theory, which is not at all a “dogma”, and the development of which is vitally essential to the interests of the advancing Communist movement throughout the world.

On another occasion (“The Draft Programme of Our Party”), Lenin said in dealing with the Erfurt Programme of the German Social-Democratic Party, that we must not pledge ourselves not to imitate that programme, but that this must not in any event lead “to forgetting the *peculiarities* of Russia, which must find *full expression* in the special features of our programme”.*

Guided by the principles set forth above, Lenin developed further Marx’s teaching on proletarian dictatorship and democracy, on the State and the Socialist State in particular.

As is known, the main and fundamental aspect in the teaching of Marxism on the State was that new formulation of the question regarding the attitude of the proletariat to the bourgeois State, which Marx gave in the “Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte”, new as compared to the “Communist Manifesto”.

This new aspect—Lenin called it a tremendous step forward in comparison with the “Communist Manifesto”—consisted in “the extremely precise, definite, tangibly practical” conclusion to which Marx came in 1852, namely that “all the revolutions which have occurred, up to now have helped to perfect the State machine, whereas it must be smashed, broken.”

This conclusion is the direct result of the “summing-up” (Lenin) by Marx of that historic experience which Europe went through in the years 1848-1851.

* *Ibid.*, p. 215.

However, this experience proved insufficient to determine what should replace that machine which had to be smashed and destroyed.

Having shown in his analysis of imperialism the power of the concentration of banking capital and the unprecedented reinforcement of the State capitalist Machine, with the unheard-of expansion of its official and military apparatus, Lenin concludes: "World history is now undoubtedly leading to the 'concentration of all the forces of the proletarian revolution on the 'destruction' of the State machine on an incomparably larger scale than in 1852.

"What the proletariat will put in its place is indicated! by the most instructive material provided by the Paris Commune."*

This was what Lenin wrote in August 1917.

The Paris Commune, having proved that "the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made State machinery and use it for its own purposes" (preface of Marx and Engels to the "Communist Manifesto," 22 June, 1872), at the same time demonstrated that what was coming to replace the broken State machine of the bourgeoisie was no longer "a parliamentary but a working institution ... at one and the same time legislating and administering the laws." Therefore, instead of parliamentarism with its separation of powers, the dictatorship of the proletariat would create a new system of State based on the unity of will of the revolutionary people.

Lenin in "State and Revolution" commented as follows on this radical change in the State introduced by the Commune:

"The Commune was to have substituted for the venal and corrupt parliamentarism of bourgeois society,

* Lenin. *State and Revolution* (English edition), p. 27.

institutions in which freedom of opinion and discussion would not have degenerated into deception, for the parliamentarians would have had to do the work themselves would have had to administer their own laws, to test the results in real life, to bear direct responsibility to their constituents. Representative institutions would have remained, but there was to have been no parliamentarism as a special system, as a division of labour between the legislative and the executive, as a privileged position for deputies. We cannot imagine democracy, not even proletarian democracy, without representative institutions but we can and *must* think of democracy without parliamentarism if criticism of bourgeois society is not mere empty words for us, if the desire to overthrow the rule of the bourgeoisie is our serious and sincere desire, and not a mere 'election' cry for catching workers' votes, as it is with the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, as it is with the Scheidemanns and Legiens, the Sembats and Vanderveldes.”*

The Paris Commune was, in spite of its failure, the form of State “at last discovered” by the proletarian revolution, under which the economic emancipation of labour could be carried out.

“The Commune,” wrote Lenin, “was the first attempt of a proletarian revolution to *smash* the bourgeois State machine and the political form ‘at last discovered’, which can and must *supersede* what has been smashed.

“We shall see below,” added Lenin, “that the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917, in different circumstances and under different conditions, continued the work of the Commune and corroborated Marx’s bril-

* *Ibid.*, p. 38.

liant historical analysis.”*

We say: Lenin’s genius summed up the historical experience of the proletarian class struggle during the time which had elapsed since the Commune, and particularly the experience of the revolution of 1905, and answered the question put nearly half a century before regarding the form of State under which the proletariat would-effect its real emancipation. This answer was a new and gigantic step forward in the practice of the workers’ Socialist movement, in the Marxist theory of the proletarian revolution and the State. The answer was: “For a transition from the bourgeois to the Socialist order, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, a republic of Soviets of Workers’, Soldiers’ and Peasants’ Deputies is not only the form of a higher type of democratic institution (as compared with the ordinary bourgeois republic with a Constituent Assembly as its crown), but is the only, form capable of securing the most painless transition to Socialism.”†

Soviet power was “the political form, so long sought and finally discovered, within the framework of which the economic emancipation of the proletariat, the complete victory of Socialism, must be accomplished.”*

The merit of having discovered that political form belongs to Lenin. The merit of having consolidated and victoriously developed that form belongs to the great continuator of Lenin’s work—our teacher and leader Stalin.

The radical difference between the Soviet form of State power and the parliamentary form consists in the fact that in the Soviet form there is realised the

* *Ibid.*, p. 44.

† Lenin. *Selected Works* (English edition). VI, p. 447.

* Stalin. *Leninism* (English edition), p. 38.

universal participation of the working people, one and all, in the management of the State. However, this general proposition cannot be taken in the abstract; it must be understood concretely, i.e., in those historical conditions in which this great principle is realised in practice. The process of drawing the masses of the people into the management of the State is far from simple, and takes place in the first stages of the Socialist revolution slowly and irresolutely. Lenin underlined the novelty and difficulty of this matter, which causes many steps to be taken blindly and many mistakes and hesitations—without which, however (Lenin taught) there could be no move forward. These difficulties were multiplied many times by the fact that the cause of the new Socialist construction attracted all kinds of “adventurers and swindlers, boasters and babblers.” These difficulties were also increased by the fact that “the lapdogs of bourgeois society, from Belorusev to Martov, squeal and yap at every unnecessary splinter when cutting down an old and large forest,” wrote Lenin in “The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government”. But the proletariat is capable of overcoming these difficulties under the leadership of its party, which represents, the most conscious, disciplined and self-sacrificing vanguard of the working people, fighting for the ultimate aims of the working class. On the subject of the Mensheviks and S.R.s. who were “squealing and yapping” at the new Socialist society which was being born, Lenin wrote: “That is what they are lapdogs for, to bark at the proletarian elephant. Let them bark. We shall go our own road, striving as carefully and patiently as possible to try out and discover real organisers, people with a sober mind and practical ability, people combining devotion to Socialism, with the ability, without fuss (and in spite of fuss and confusion) to start a great number of peo-

ple working together vigorously and harmoniously within the framework of the Soviet organisation. It is *only* such people, after tests repeated tenfold, that should be advanced from the simplest tasks to the most difficult, and promoted to responsible posts as leaders of the people's labour, as leaders in administration.”*

The Soviets of Working People are a great school of training in the art State management, a great forum of political activity, a great workshop in which people are taught the art of building Socialism. This school, however, is not an open book, in which everything has been set down, and in which all one has to do is quietly to read page after page in order to become aware of the truth, and of the means whereby this truth is embodied in life. It is a school of struggle, it is a book in which many and many a page has not yet been written, a book in which there has yet to be. entered the experience of the struggle for the organisation of new social relations, quite unlike those inherited from the past. It is a school which teaches the art of understanding the particular features of the given epoch, to understand that there are “historic moments when the most important thing for the success of the revolution is to pile up as much debris as possible, i.e., to blow up as many of the old institutions as possible; there are moments when enough has been blown up, and when the next job to be done, the ‘prosaic’ one (for the petty-bourgeois revolutionary, the ‘boring’ one), of clearing the ground of the debris; there are moments when careful nursing of the new shoots springing up from under the debris on the soil not yet properly cleared, is more important than anything else.”†

* Lenin. *Selected Works* (English edition), VII, p. 336.

† Lenin. *Collected Works* (Russian edition), XXII, p. 466.

In this school people learn the science of consolidating the victory of Socialism.

In this connection Lenin said that each revolutionary, each supporter of Socialism or Communism, must*be able to discover at every moment “that particular link in the chain which must be grasped with all one’s might in order to hold the whole chain, and to make steady preparations for a transition to the next link, while the sequence of the links, their form, the way they are joined together, their difference one from another in the historical chain of events, are not so simple and artless as in an ordinary chain made by a blacksmith.”*

Leninism sees in the Soviets the embodiment of stable and powerful authority, dear and akin to the people, to the masses of workers and peasants, fulfilling both legislative and executive functions, doing the practical work and controlling from top to bottom the results of their work.

Lenin’s bequest to us was to stop every possibility, even the shadow of one, of perverting the Soviet power, that “the weeds of bureaucracy must be torn up, repeatedly and untiringly”, that the Soviets must not be permitted to be turned into something frigid and self-sufficient. Lenin’s bequest to us was to work tirelessly on the organisation of the Soviets and the Soviet power, as the highest form of Socialist democracy.

* *Ibid.*, p. 487.

IV

THE SOVIET STATE AND THE NATIONAL QUESTION

The national question is one of the most difficult and acute questions of internal policy, particularly, in States composed of many nationalities. In the countries of bourgeois democracy, even in those most advanced like the U.S.A., France, Great Britain, the national question has not been solved, and cannot be solved in the interests of the national minorities, since the whole system of capitalist social relations does not favour such a solution. Capitalist exploitation in the sphere of economic relations leaves its baneful mark on social relations in all other spheres of life as well. The merciless exploitation of the weak and the desperate competition of “free” commodity-owners on the “free” market give rise inevitably to the utilisation of racial, national and religious prejudices, in order to ensure to the economically and politically strongest groups a privileged position in the struggle for the market. This determines corresponding political and legal consequences on the one hand and moral and social consequences on the other.

The Negro question in the U.S.A., the Indian or Irish question in Great Britain, the Jewish question in France—all these “questions” are the offspring of capitalism, are organically connected with capitalism and cannot be correctly resolved within the framework of capitalism. Of course *formally*, juridically, not a single small nation in these countries is, as a rule, placed in a worse position than the predominant majority. But *in practice* there are not a few such restrictions and discriminations. It is not accidental, after all, that not a single Negro succeeded in being elected to the United

States Congress during the last fifty years. Yet the American Constitution of 1787 proclaims the equality of the electoral rights of all American citizens, while the Fifteenth Amendment of 1870 solemnly declares that the right to vote in elections “shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, colour or previous condition of servitude.”*

In the land of Socialism, in the Socialist State of workers and peasants, there is no place for a national question. There is not and cannot be any such *question* in the U.S.S.R., for there is no environment on which that question feeds, an environment which is characteristic of the capitalist countries and the absence of which is characteristic of a Socialist country.

The Dreyfus case in republican France—did it not fall as an ineradicable blot of shame on bourgeois democracy which, even though more than a hundred years had passed since the proclamation of the bourgeois republic, had not finally made an end of anti-Semitism and nationalist jingoism!

In the U.S.S.R. the national question was solved on the basis of the principles of the national policy of Lenin and Stalin, consistently and unswervingly applied from the first days of the formation of the Soviet State.

Marxism, as is known, links up the national question with the problem of the revolutionary movement of the oppressed nations for their emancipation. Leninism deepened and widened the conception of the self-determination of peoples, formulating this principle as the right of oppressed nations to complete separation, the right to an independent existence as a

* Birley. *Speeches and Documents in American History*, 1865-1913, p. 91.

State. Leninism thereby transformed the principle of self-determination from an instrument for deceiving the masses, as it was in the hands of the jingo Socialists during the imperialist war, into an instrument for the political enlightenment of the masses, an instrument for exposing imperialist policy, which had been using this principle for its own purposes of oppression and annexation.

“Leninism,” Stalin wrote on this subject, “brought, the national problem down from the lofty heights of high-sounding declarations to solid ground, and proclaimed that declarations about the ‘equality of nations’ which are not backed by the direct support of the proletarian parties for the liberation struggle of the oppressed peoples are meaningless and false.”*

Stalin further showed that the war of 1914-18 and the revolution in Russia had confirmed that the national question could be solved only in connection with, and on the basis of; the proletarian revolution. Leninism proved that the national question is part of the general question of the proletarian revolution, and that the proletariat, in solving the national question according to the principle of self-determination, can utilise the support of the national liberation movement for the purposes of its struggle against the enemies of the proletarian revolution.

In this way the proletarian revolution finds its reserves in the national revolutionary movement.

It is only the proletariat which is capable of carrying on a consistent national policy, i.e., a policy dictated by Socialist principles and corresponding in the fullest measure to the national interests of the oppressed peoples. The proletarian revolution for this reason is in the eyes of these people a particularly attractive force,

* Stalin. *Leninism* (English edition) p. 51.

which, as Engels wrote, will induce them to follow on the road to Socialism “of their own accord.”

In the process of its revolution the proletariat does not impose any of its own programmes, plans, measures upon other peoples. “The victorious proletariat,” wrote Engels, “can force no blessings of any kind upon any foreign nation without undermining its own victory by so doing.”*

In his article “The Discussion on Self Determination Summed Up” (1916), Lenin quoted this letter of Engels and underlined that the adaptation of politics to economics in the Socialist State will take place inevitably, but not immediately and not smoothly, not dimply and directly., The proletarian revolution is called upon not only to liberate the oppressed nations from their slavery, but to ensure for them also their own wide road of self-determination, without imposing its will upon them. It is not excluded that in the first stages mistakes are possible in the policy of the proletariat, and even “selfish interests —an attempt to settle down on someone else’s back,” as Lenin wrote.

“The proletariat,” said Lenin in the article just referred to, “will not become saintly and insured against mistakes and weaknesses merely because it has carried out a social revolution.” But Lenin foresees that these very mistakes will bring the proletariat to appreciation of the truth. He emphasises at this point that the quite legitimate hatred of the oppressed nation for the oppressing nation “will continue for a time, and will evaporate only *after* the victory of Socialism and *after* the final establishment of completely democratic relations between nations.”†

* *Correspondence of Marx and Engels* (English edition), p. 399.

† Lenin. *Collected Works* (English edition), XIX, pp. 298-299.

This extremely important observation throws a flood of light on the profound consistency in principle of the way Marxism-Leninism poses the national question in the proletarian revolution. The Soviet power applied this important principle in practice in its relations with the numerous nationalities of the 'Soviet State, building a Socialist multi-national federation founded upon the fraternal alliance and inviolable friendship of peoples.

The national policy of Lenin and Stalin has ensured durable and stable relations between all the nationalities of the U.S.S.R., which is founded upon the principles of voluntary consent and equality of status of all peoples inhabiting the U.S.S.R.

Stalin calls voluntary consent and equality of status of peoples the foundations of the Soviet Union as a State. Voluntary consent and equality of status are most important constitutional principles of the Soviet State. They presuppose on their part the triumph of another principle—also a very great one—the right of each nation to independent existence as a State, i.e., the right of nations to self-determination.

The right of nations to self-determination is of the very greatest importance, and the theory of this right is a most important part of the Marxist-Leninist teaching concerning national policy in a multi-national State. Around this question there went on from of old a fierce struggle of the Party against opportunists and traitors to the cause of Socialism.

The greatest merit of Lenin and Stalin, the merit of the Bolshevik Party, was that on this question, the Party, unmasking step by step the counter-revolutionary appetites of the bourgeoisie and its Trotskyist-Bukharinite and Menshevik-Bundist agents, laid firm foundations for the national friendship and fraternity of the peoples of the U.S.S.R.—

foundations on which the Socialist multinational State was able to become great and prosperous.

Soviet federation has nothing in common with bourgeois federations. The latter came into being as a result of violence, oppression, national wars. Therefore they themselves express the idea of violence and oppression.

Soviet federation came into being on the basis of voluntary consent and equality of status, on the fraternal solidarity of the working people. It is based on the principle of mutual aid and of promoting the cultural and economic development of previously backward nations.

Soviet federation is based on the principle of democratic centralism which, being one of the most important principles of the Soviet Constitution and of the organisation of the Socialist State, characterises the system of Soviet State relations as a system in which the principles of Soviet Socialist democracy are consistently applied.

The first decrees of the Soviet power, like landmarks in the gigantic reconstruction of all social relations, both economic and political, traced out the path of development of the Soviet State system, which was being-built on new foundations, in order to give effect to new social aims and ideas.

‘The national question was one of the root questions, the solution of which determined to a considerable extent the whole content of the great transformative measures carried out by the Soviet State; its solution conditioned a whole range of most important characteristic features of Soviet internal and external policy.

Laying the foundations of the new Soviet social and State order, Soviet power from the very first moment of its existence paid special attention to the set-

tlement of the national question, being, as it was, of exceptional importance to our country, where the population is composed of so many nationalities.

The particular importance of the national question in Russia also explains the fact that, for the first time in the history of any State, there was set up in the Soviet State the People's Commissariat for Affairs of Nationalities, headed by Stalin.

The first act of the Soviet Government in the sphere of the national question was the "Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia", written by Stalin in the very first days of the October Revolution.

The Declaration proclaimed a policy of "voluntary and honest alliance of the peoples of Russia". Confirming the right of peoples to self-determination which had already been proclaimed earlier by the Second Congress of Soviets, the Council of People's Commissars defined the foundations of Soviet national policy as follows:

"1. Equality and sovereignty of the peoples of Russia.

"2. The right of the peoples of Russia to self-determination, including the right of separation and of forming an independent State.

"3. The abolition of all and any national and national-religious privileges and restrictions.

"4. Free development of the national minorities and ethnic groups inhabiting the territory of Russia."

The practical application of the principles of the Declaration found its expression in the decrees on the independence of the Ukrainian Republic, on the Finnish Republic and in the decree and statement by Stalin "on Turkish Armenia", which laid the foundation of Soviet national policy—the backbone of the whole internal and external policy of the Soviet power.

In this connection mention must also be made of

the “Declaration of Rights of the Toiling and Exploited People”, adopted by the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets on January 11 and 18, 1918, and of the resolution of the same Congress “On the Federal Institutions of the Russian Republic”. These historic documents, written by Lenin and Stalin, set forth the principles of organisation of the whole Soviet State system, and laid down “the fundamental principles of a federation of Soviet Republics” (“The Declaration”).

In the “Declaration of Rights of the Toiling and Exploited People”, and in the resolution of the Third Congress “On the Federal Institutions of the Russian Republic” of 28 January, 1918, it was stated that the Russian Socialist Republic was being established on the basis of a voluntary union of the peoples of Russia, as a federation of the Soviet Republics of those peoples.

The great and historic significance of the resolution “On the Federal Institutions” and of the “Declaration” adopted by the Third Congress, as of the Congress itself, was described in his closing, speech at the end of the Congress by V. I. Lenin. He underlined that “the Third Congress of Soviets has opened a new epoch of world history”, that it had consolidated “the organisation of the State created by the October Revolution” and that “now all—even our enemies, I am convinced—can see that the new regime, the power of the Soviets, is not a fiction, not a party stunt, but a result of the development of life itself”.

With full right and justification did Stalin say as long ago as 1922 that only in our case, in the land of the Soviets, “in the camp of Socialism, has it been possible to tear up the very roots of national oppression and to establish mutual confidence and fraternal collaboration between peoples.”*

* Stalin. *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*

Stalin pointed out that the revolution in Russia would not have been victorious, Kolchak and Denikin would not have been crushed, if the Russian people had not met with support on the part of the oppressed peoples of the former Russian Empire.

“But to win the sympathy and support of these peoples,” says Stalin, “it had first of all to break the fetters of Russian imperialism and free these peoples from the yoke of national oppression.”*

The friendship of peoples founded on the genuine equality of status of all peoples of the Soviet Union, of mutual respect and confidence, is the firm foundation of the Soviet State.

Stalin said in his “Report on the Draft Constitution of the U.S.S.R.” (1936) that this Draft proceeds from the equality of nations and races, from the fact that “neither difference in colour nor language, cultural level or level of political development, nor any other difference between nations and races, can serve as grounds for justifying national inequality of rights.”†

The Stalin Constitution, like the first Union Constitution (1924), proceeds from the principle that all nation and races, irrespective of their past and present condition of their strength or weakness, must enjoy identical rights in all spheres of economic, social, political and cultural life of society.

Being a federal State formed on the basis of the voluntary union of Soviet Socialist Republics equal in rights, the U.S.S.R. protects the sovereign rights of the Union Republics, and the juridical equality of the peoples inhabiting them, with all its strength.

Voluntary consent and equality of status of the

(English edition), p. 127.

* Stalin. *Leninism* (English edition), p. 56.

† *Ibid.*, p. 571.

peoples are what Stalin calls the foundations of the Soviet State.

The idea of the peoples collaborating and dwelling together fraternally found its living embodiment in the Soviet Union—the Soviet multi-national State, representing a fraternal family of 16 Socialist Republics.

In this connection it is appropriate to dwell on the particular features of the Soviet form of federation.

At the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets (January, 1918) Lenin said that “now there has been finally recognised” (in Russia. A.V.) “a new State structure of the Socialist Soviet Republic as a federation of free Republics of the various nations inhabiting Russia.”* In this speech Lenin spoke of the specific features of Soviet federations pointing out that the foundation of Soviet federation lies in the fact that “we rule, not dividing, like the cruel lay of ancient Rome, but uniting all the working people by the unbreakable links of vital interests, of class-consciousness.”†

In this Lenin justly saw the very foundation of the Soviet State, prophesying that around revolutionary Russia there would more and more be grouped various individual federations of free nations, and that “quite voluntarily, without deceit and compulsion, that federation will grow, and it will be invincible. The best guarantee of its invincibility are those laws, that system of State, which we are creating here.”‡

Lenin with the mind of a genius saw the new world of Socialist federation being born, growing up on “ground cleared of historical rubbish”. We recall those

* Lenin. *Collected Works* (Russian edition), XXII, pp. 223-224.

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Ibid.*

inspired words of Lenin: “Now we, on ground cleared of historical rubbish, will set about building the mighty and bright edifice of Socialist society; a new type of State power, unheard-of in history, is being created, a power called by the will of the revolution to clear the land of every kind of exploitation, violence and-slavery.”*

The great inspiration of the leader of the proletarian revolution rose above all the difficulties of that time, expressing the firm confidence of a people which had risen to fight for its social and political emancipation in the ultimate success of its cause. It was the inspiration of a new era, marked by the fact that, as Lenin said, “we were acting without diplomats, without the old methods applied by the imperialists”, and that “the very greatest result was achieved—the victory of the revolution and the conquerors, together with us, united into one mighty revolutionary federation.”†

The whole development of the Soviet State—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—has proved the great justice and force of Lenin’s great foresight.

The peoples of the Soviet Union see in the Soviet power, a power which is their very own. United by their common interests, inspired by their common idea, the peoples of the Soviet Union with new force proved their devotion and love to their mother-country in the years of the Patriotic War.

In one of his articles on the national question, that on “The Policy of the Soviet Government on the National Question in Russia” (1920), Stalin said: “The Soviet Government is not a government divorced from the people; on the contrary, it is the only government of its kind, a government which originated among the

* *Ibid.*

† *Ibid.*

masses of the Russian people and which is near and dear to them.” Stalin observed that “this in fact explains the unparalleled strength and resilience usually displayed by the Soviet Government at critical moments.”*

In the subsequent development of the Soviet State this remarkable foresight of Lenin and Stalin was fully confirmed. The Soviet federation steadily grew and developed, proceeding along the very road indicated by Lenin and Stalin, ever more firmly consolidating the State relations and political unity of the numerous peoples of the former Russian Empire, who with hope and fraternal affection supported the heroic struggle of the great Russian people. The many peoples and nationalities inhabiting the former Russian Empire justly saw in the success of that struggle the guarantee of their own emancipation, of their own national independence.

Soviet autonomy is one of the conditions of the firm alliance of the individual Soviet Republics, since without this “the real sovietisation of these regions, their conversion”, Stalin wrote, “into Soviet countries closely bound to Central Russia and forming with it one political whole, is inconceivable.”†

Developing this idea, Stalin pointed the way to the transformation of the Soviet countries into one “political whole”. Stalin showed that this transformation was possible only by means of forming a *Federation, of Soviet Republics based on a community of military and economic interests*. Such a federation, said Stalin, such a general form of State alliance, “can be durable, and the results of federation real, only if it is based on

* Stalin. *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question* (English edition), p. 83.

† *Ibid.*, p. 84.

mutual confidence and voluntary consent of the countries constituting the federation.”*

This most important principle of Socialist State organisation, formulated by Stalin in his Theses for the Tenth Congress of the Party (1921), was a guiding idea of all Soviet national policy. Stalin developed this idea in his report at the Tenth All-Russian Congress of Soviets in 1922, devoted to the question of the union of the Soviet Republics.

In his report Stalin pointed to three groups of circumstances which were impelling the Republics towards union and determining the necessity for union.

These circumstances were the following.

The first group: the internal economic situation. Under this heading Stalin included:

(a) The meagreness of the economic resources remaining to the young Republics as a result of seven years of war (1914-1921). This circumstance necessitated the combination of these meagre economic resources for their more rational use, and for the development of the main branches of economy, which constituted what Stalin called “*the backbone of Soviet power in each Republic*” (my italics. A.V.)

(b) The historically-determined natural division of labour, the economic division of labour between the various regions and republics of our federation. Of this division of labour Stalin said that it “renders impossible the full development of individual regions so long as the Republics lead separate existences, and obliges the Republics to join up into a single economic unit.”

(c) The unity of the principal means of communication throughout the federation, which Stalin described as “the nerve and backbone of any possible Union.”

* *Ibid.*, p. 93.

(d) The meagreness of financial resources, which made it necessary to combine the financial strength of the various Republics into a single whole.*

The second group comprised (a) our military position, (b) our foreign trade relations, (c) our diplomatic position.†

All these circumstances concerned the external political position of the Soviet Republics, which were at that time subjected to organised boycott on the part of the capitalist environment, and were constantly faced by danger of a military character, and also by the danger of economic and political isolation.

Hence followed the task of creating a single unbreakable military front, a single economic front of the Soviet Republics, a united front in the diplomatic field.

Speaking of these two groups of circumstances, Stalin underlined their particular importance and exceptional: force in the conditions of transition to peaceful construction after the end of the civil war, when the Republics realised the meagreness of their economic resources and understood all the necessity of uniting both on the internal economic field and on the external field.

Stalin said on this subject: “That is why now, in the sixth year of existence of the Soviet Government, the question of the amalgamation of the independent Soviet Socialist Republics has become urgent.”‡

The third group of facts calling for amalgamation were associated with the special features of the Soviet power, the very nature of which leads “to a gradual but steady coming together of formerly independent

* *Ibid.*, pp. 121-122.

† *Ibid.*, p. 122.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

nationalities into a single independent State.”*

It is sufficient to recall these three groups of circumstances, each of which was of vast significance and played an outstanding role in deciding the question of the formation of a Soviet federation, for no doubt to remain as to ¹ the necessity and expediency for such a federation. The merit of Lenin and Stalin was that they pointed out to the Soviet Republics this path for their State development, a path which our Republics took and which brought them to their full florescence and might, which has withstood the test of fire and sword in the great Patriotic War.

On the same occasion Stalin also indicated the basis of amalgamation:

(a) Amalgamation into a federation was to be carried out by the four Soviet Socialist Republics—the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, the Transcaucasian Republic, Ukraine and Byelorussia;

(b) The amalgamation was to provide for the following common People’s Commissariats: foreign trade, military and naval affairs, foreign affairs, ways of communication, posts and telegraphs. The People’s Commissariats of finance, national economy, food, labour and inspection were to continue within each contracting Republic, but were to operate in accordance with the directives of the appropriate People’s Commissariat of the Union.

These were the People’s Commissariats which later acquired the title of “All-Union”. Other People’s Commissariats, such as justice, home affairs, education, agriculture, etc. (six in all) it was proposed to leave under the control of the Governments of the several Republics. This proposition was based upon the necessity of proceeding from the peculiar features

* *Ibid*, p. 124.

of life, language and culture of the respective contracting Republics. It was these peculiar features in life and culture of the various Republics which required such forms of State administration as would guarantee the freedom of national development of the peoples forming the Soviet Republics.

The Tenth All-Russian Congress of Soviets recognised as timely the amalgamation of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic, the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and the Byelorussian Socialist Soviet Republic into a Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, basing the amalgamation on the principle of voluntary consent and equality of status of the Republics, and the maintenance of the right of each of them freely to leave the Union of Republics. The Congress also instructed a delegation to draw up the conditions of entry of the R.S.F.S.R. into the Union of Republics, on principles corresponding to those which had been set forth in the theses and report presented by Stalin, special emphasis being laid on the necessity of fully guaranteeing the interests of the national development of the peoples of the contracting Republics.

Four days after the Tenth All-Russian Congress had adopted this historic decision, the first Congress of Soviets of the U.S.S.R. assembled. This Congress adopted the decision to form a Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Such are the great principles of the Lenin-Stalin national policy, on the basis of which the Soviet power disposed of the so-called national question not only having provided a theoretical solution of this most difficult problem but having also solved it in practice, in the sphere of State construction. The genius of Lenin and Stalin opened-up to the nationalities of the former Russian Empire, which had been oppressed and

exploited before Soviet power was established, a new path in life—the path of development of their national culture, the path of development and creative growth of all the national energies of the multi-millioned peoples constituting the great and mighty Socialist Power—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The Soviet-State is guided by the great principles of the national policy of Lenin and Stalin in appropriate cases also in the sphere of foreign relations. It is precisely the Soviet Union which consistently and resolutely defends the rights of small and middle-sized peoples at international conferences, defends their sovereignty and independence against all encroachments on the part of imperialist circles of the countries of bourgeois democracy.

In January, 1946, at the London session of the Security Council, the Soviet representatives spoke in defence of the principles indicated above, demanding the withdrawal of British troops from Greece, demanding a stop to the war waged against the Indonesian people by British and Dutch forces, energetically supporting the demands, of Syria and Lebanon for the withdrawal of British and French troops. The Soviet Union took up just as resolute and consistent an attitude at the General Assembly of the United Nations in New York in 1946, defending the interests of the Indian people in the Union of South Africa, and again in 1947 on the questions of Indonesia, Egypt and Palestine.

The Soviet Union consistently supports the principle of self-determination of peoples in international relations, and secured the reflection of this principle, if only in an indirect form, in the Charter of the United Nations. It defends this principle also in the practical sphere of foreign policy.

The Soviet Union supports the independence and sovereignty of nations against any attempts to weaken them or reduce their importance.

In doing so the Soviet Union proceeds from the necessity “for the proletariat to support—resolutely and actively to support—the national liberation movement of the oppressed and dependent peoples.”*

One cannot but recall, as the most brilliant illustration of this, the attitude of the Soviet Union at the New York General Assembly in 1947 on the question of establishing a Trusteeship Council. The Soviet Union exposed the game of falsification initiated on this question by the Anglo-American bloc, which attempted by breaking the rules laid down in the Charter of the United Nations to retain its dominating position in the former mandated territories, and to transform the latter into its strategic bases and military strong points.

The consistent position of the Soviet Union, and its profound loyalty to principle in the colonial, and national question, attract to the U.S.S.R. the sympathies of the oppressed and dependent peoples, and strengthen more and more the international prestige of the Soviet State and of Soviet foreign policy.

* Stalin. *Leninism* (English edition), p. 52.

V

THE SOVIET STATE— A STATE OF A NEW TYPE

In previous chapters we have already touched on questions directly connected with the teaching of Lenin and Stalin on the State, and in particular on the Soviet State.

Lenin, as was pointed out earlier, made an enormous contribution to the Marxist science of the State, removing, from the theory of the State the falsifications of the opportunist; and, what was no less important, he brilliantly applied Marxist theory in the practice of the October Revolution. At the same time Lenin showed that the very application of this theory in the practice of revolutionary, construction enriches the theory and develops it further. Thus, on the question of breaking up the State machine, Lenin demonstrated that in the process of the elimination of that machine some of its individual parts must be preserved to the advantage of the proletariat, and that otherwise the organisation of the new machinery of State would be rendered unnecessarily difficult.

In this respect very great interest is attached to Lenin's ideas set forth in such works as, for example, the article "Will the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?"

In this article Lenin points out that in the capitalist system, in the capitalist State, in addition to the "pre-eminently coercive machinery—the standing army, the police and the bureaucracy", there is an apparatus performing a mass of accounting and statistical work. This apparatus, Lenin said, must not and should not be broken up.

Lenin taught that this apparatus should be wrested from the control of the capitalists: "The capitalists

must be *cut off, lopped away, chopped off* from it, together with the threads by which they transmit their influence. It must be *subordinated* to the proletarian Soviets. It must be made wider, more comprehensive, more popular.”

*And Lenin added: “Without big banks Socialism would be impossible of realisation.”**

Lenin called the banks an “excellent apparatus” which “we *need* in order to realise Socialism.” Capitalism deforms this excellent apparatus, and that which deforms it should be lopped off.

“A single huge State bank, with branches in every rural district, at every factory,” said Lenin, “—that will already be nine-tenths of a *Socialist* apparatus. It will be general public *book-keeping*, general State *registration* of the production and distribution of products, something in the nature, so to speak, of the *skeleton* of a Socialist society.”†

With these ideas of utilising the largest banks, Lenin linked up the idea of compulsory syndication, i.e., compulsory amalgamation into associations under the control of the State. This, Lenin asserted, “will be fully realisable in Russia by the Soviets, by the dictatorship of the proletariat. And this is what *will give us a ‘State apparatus* at one and the same time universal, most novel and non-bureaucratic.”‡

We see that the “breaking” up of the bourgeois State machine is not at all an act of simple destruction, as the bourgeois philistines represent it; it is a complex and well-thought-out process, in which the

* Lenin. *Selected Works* (English edition), VI, p. 266. See also the article “The Threatening Catastrophe and How to Fight It”, in *Collected Works* (English edition), XXI, part 1, pp. 177-218.

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 268.

destruction of the “coercive” parts is combined with the selection and utilisation of those vital elements of the machine which will be included in the new system, to work and render service to a new class and to the new society.

This is an example, a particular case, but one which is of great importance in principle, since it throws light on those particular features of Lenin’s teaching on the State which characterises the Soviet State as a State of a new type.

At the Sixth Congress of the Party Lenin gave a developed exposition of the particular features of the Soviet State system from the point of view of their newness, from the point of view of what Lenin cabled the Soviet type of State, a State of the type of the Paris Commune. Lenin showed these particular features in a rough outline of the draft programme of the Party, in the shape of the “Ten Theses on Soviet Power” which speak of the tasks which “historically fall to this form of State power, this new type of State.”

The main points in these Theses are the following:

(i) The union and organisation of the workers and poorest peasants, while automatically excluding the exploiting classes and the wealthy representatives of the petty bourgeoisie;

(ii) Their vanguard must give universal training to the whole working population in practical participation in the management of the State;

(iii) The abolition of parliamentarism; the combination of the legislative and executive functions of the State; the merging of administration and legislation;

(iv) Closer connection, than in previous forms of democracy, of the entire apparatus of the State and management of the State, with the masses;

(v) The setting up of an armed force of workers and peasants, separated as little as possible from the

people, as one of the first steps towards the full objective of arming the entire people;

(vi) Fuller democratism;

(vii) Close connection with the various trades and with the productive economic units;

(viii) The possibility of doing without bureaucracy, the beginning of putting this possibility into practice;

(ix) Not a formal but a practical attainment of the use of freedom (democracy) for the working and exploited mass of the population;

(x) The development of Soviet public activity must proceed on such lines that every member of a Soviet should be bound to perform some permanent duty in the management of the State, and then that the entire population, one and all, should be drawn gradually both into participation in the Soviet organisations, (on condition of subordination to the workers' organisations), and into service in the management of the State.*

Such were the aims of the Soviet State put forward by Lenin in the years when the Soviet State was coming into being.

What was required to achieve these aims? Lenin replied to this question in a remarkable commentary, showing the *advantages* (Lenin's italics) of the Soviets in the political economic, financial and educational spheres.

Let us note the main points:

(a) The extension of the Soviet Constitution *to the whole population in the measure* in which resistance ceases.

This question was settled by the great Stalin Constitution of 1936, which established universal, equal and direct voting with secret ballot;

* Lenin. *Selected Works* (English edition), VIII, pp. 330-332.

(b) a federation of nations as a transition to a *conscious* and closer unity of the working people, as they learn *voluntarily* to rise above national enmity. This question was settled by the formation in 1923 of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics;

(c) the ruthless suppression of resistance by the exploiters is essential; the standards of “general” (i.e. bourgeois) democracy must be subordinated to this aim, and make way for it: “freedoms” and democracy *not* for all, but *for* the working people;

(d) effectively ensuring that the working people can *make use* of their freedoms;

(e) transition *through* the Soviet State to the gradual abolition of the State by systematically enlisting an increasing number of citizens, and finally *all without exception*, in the work of managing the State.*

Just as concretely did Lenin make his observations in respect of demands in the economic and other spheres.

Here it is particularly important to note the demands affecting the Socialist organisation of production on a nation-wide, scale—“under the general direction of the Soviet power, the only sovereign authority”—and also such demands as the complete concentration of banking in the hands of the State, and of the entire currency and commercial turnover in the banks; the establishment of universal registration and control; the organisation of emulation to promote “a steady improvement ‘of organisation, discipline, productivity of labour, adoption of a higher technique, economy in labour and products, the gradual reduction of the working day to six hours, the gradual leveling out of *all* wages and salaries in *all* professions and

* *Ibid.*

categories.’*

Such was the programme of the Soviet State as a Socialist State, a State of a new type. Lenin taught that the fulfilment of such a programme is a difficult task, that the circumstances in which the programme has to be applied are “exceptionally complex”, and that the proletariat in fulfilling the programme will encounter “the pressure of hostile forces”, in face of which people like the writers of the “*Novaya Zhizn*” were getting ready to retreat in pan it, terrified by the Kornilovites and in their turn frightening the workers and peasants.

“Don’t try to frighten us, gentlemen”, Lenin replied. “You won’t succeed...”

Lenin believed, and taught us all firmly to believe, in the creative powers and invincibility of the workers and peasants.

“To be afraid”—Lenin indignantly exclaimed—“that the power of the Bolsheviks, that is, the power of the proletariat which is assured of the unfailing support of the poorest peasantry, will be ‘swept away’ by the capitalist gentry! What short-sightedness, what shameful fear of the people, what hypocrisy!”

Lenin added: “Ideas become a force when they take possession of the masses. And it is just now that the Bolsheviks, i.e., the representatives of revolutionary proletarian internationalism, have embodied in their policy the idea which is bringing into action immeasurable masses of the working people throughout the world.”†

The Soviet State was a most powerful means of giving effect in the U.S.S.R. to the ideas of Socialism. The Soviet State proved “a new type of democracy”, in

* *Ibid.*, pp. 332-334.

† Lenin. *Collected Works* {Russian edition}, XXII, p. 379.

the sense in which Lenin spoke of this in his Ten Theses and in a number of other most important documents and works.

One of the important features of the “new democracy” was not only the denial of the formal equality of bourgeoisie and proletariat, rich and poor, exploiters and exploited, and the exclusion of the bourgeoisie from “democracy” and “freedoms”, an example of which was the disfranchisement of the exploiting elements, nor was it only the suppression of these elements. An important feature of the Soviet State, precisely as a State of a new type, was the very *method* of suppression. This circumstance was of the highest degree of importance, since it created a difference in principle and in quality between these basic functions of the Socialist State and the same functions in the State of any other Social system. Lenin taught us that the exploiters could not be suppressed by the police: “They can be suppressed only by the mass itself, the apparatus must be linked with the masses and must represent them, like the Soviets.”

Lenin-taught that “it would be the greatest stupidity and the most nonsensical Utopianism to imagine that the transition from capitalism to Socialism is possible without compulsion and without dictatorship.”*

Lenin and Stalin teach us that this compulsion is applied by the Soviet State with the participation of the masses of the people, through the efforts of the masses themselves. As Lenin points out, the dictatorship of the proletariat directs its blows against the exploiters through the masses of the working people, through organisations “built in such a way as to awaken precisely such masses and arouse them to historic

* Lenin. *Collected Works* (Russian edition), XXII, p. 353.

creative work (the Soviet organisations belong to this kind of organisation).”*

Stalin underlines that repressions—that inevitable element in compulsion—are an essential element of the offensive, but an auxiliary and not the principal element.

For example, in the struggle against wastefulness in our governing bodies and in ordinary life, Stalin called, in the first instance, for the creation of “an atmosphere of general moral boycott, and hatred on the part of the surrounding people” for the wastrels, such an atmosphere as would “make impossible both the life and existence of thieves and pilferers of the people’s goods.”†

Moral influence, re-education, correction, implanting of social habits and traditions—these are the elements of that compulsion, in the broad sense of the word, which in the hands of Soviet institutions and the organs of State authority become a powerful means of regulating social relations and of struggle against offences, offenders and even criminals.

It was for this reason that Lenin demanded that the mass of the working people should be drawn into the administration of the law, underlining that the Soviet courts have the tremendous task of educating the people in a spirit of labour discipline, and that “every citizen, to a man, must act as a judge and participate in the government of the country.”‡

The Soviet State is a State of a *new* type for it provides the highest form of organisation of democracy, it provides the example of a *people’s* State, built and brought into function by the hands of the people

* *Ibid.*, p. 463.

† *Pravda*. 18 April, 1926.

‡ Lenin. *Selected Works* (English edition), VIII, p. 320.

themselves, i.e., the workers, the peasants, the intellectuals, under the guidance of the most advanced of parties, the party of Lenin and Stalin.

Replying to written questions at the Extraordinary All-Russian Railway Congress in March, 1918, Lenin said: "The Soviet power does not provide representatives of the kind who fence in parliaments and exchange brilliant speeches, ensuring the lasting supremacy of capital and of officialdom.. Soviet power comes from the working masses themselves, it provides not a parliament but a meeting of workers' representatives, which issues laws that are directly administered, become part of life and have the object of fighting the exploiters." And again: "We need, not bourgeois representation but representation of the exploited and oppressed, which will carry on a merciless struggle against the exploiters. Such is the intention of the Soviet power; it includes neither parliament nor referendum."*

The thirty years of the Soviet State complete a great epoch in the history of the Soviet power—the epoch of the building of Socialism and of the establishment of genuine democracy, the fullest and most consistent in the world, in a gigantic country, in a mighty Socialist Power.

Thirty years of the Soviet State—this is the glorious heroic path of the workers and peasants of our country, led by the party of Lenin and Stalin towards Communism, to a world in which the idea of the equality and fraternity of nations will triumph completely and for all time.

* Lenin. *Collected Works* (Russian edition), XXII, pp. 239-240.

VI

STALIN'S TEACHING ON THE SOCIALIST STATE

The victory of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. as a result of the liquidation of the exploiting classes and of the firm establishment of a system of State and social ownership, the foundation of the entire political and social order, brought forward a number of problems in the sphere of the theory of the State. These theoretical problems at the same time were of serious practical importance and required a solution. The most important of these problems concerned the destiny of the State itself, it concerned the 'question of whether the existence of the State is justified in the absence of hostile classes within the country, in conditions when our society is advancing towards Communism. Is it right that under the aforesaid conditions we should not be helping the Socialist State to die away but that, on the contrary, we should regard it as our task to strengthen our State still further?

Thus questions of the destinies of the Socialist State and of the so-called dying away of the State became questions of the hour.

The very fact that these questions were raised at all was evidence that certain general propositions in the theory of the State had not been worked out sufficiently and were inadequate.

It was in this way that Stalin explained the appearance of new problems in the theory of the State, adding to what has just been said the fully justified remarks that the authors of these questions had not cleared up for themselves the historical conditions in which particular propositions in the Marxist theory of the State were worked out, nor what was the interna-

tional situation in which the Soviet State found itself; nor did they understand, or they underestimated the fact of capitalist encirclement, with all the consequences arising from that fact, like the sending of bands of spies, intelligence agents, assassins and wreckers into the U.S.S.R.

Problems of the Socialist State in connection with the aforementioned facts rose up in all their magnitude, demanding serious attention, because they went far beyond the framework of a purely theoretical interest and acquired the greatest practical importance.

Stalin replied to these questions in his speech at the Eighteenth Party Congress in March, 1939, giving a developed theory of the Socialist State and thereby further advancing the theory of Marx and Lenin in this highly important and decisive sphere of scientific Communism.

It is a great merit of Stalin that he continued and completed the work on the theory of the State begun by our great teacher Lenin, but not finished by him on account of his untimely death.

“There can be no doubt,” Stalin said in his report at the Congress, “that Lenin intended in the second part of his book” (“State and Revolution”. A.V.) “to elaborate and develop further the theory of the State, on the basis of the experience gained during the existence of Soviet power in our country. Death, however, prevented him from carrying this purpose into effect. But What Lenin did not have time to do should be done by his pupils.”*

Stalin did this, opening a new page in the theory of the State, and of the Socialist State in particular.

Stalin showed that: “Two basic functions characterise the activity of the State: inside the country (the

* Stalin. *Leninism* (English edition), p. 660.

main function), to keep in restraint the exploited majority; abroad (not the main function) to extend the territory of its class, the ruling class, at the expense of the territory of other States, or to defend the territory of its own State from attacks by other States.”*

This function existed in the slave-owners' State as in the capitalist State. The striving of the capitalist State for the extension of its territory, for expansion, follows from the whole character and from the very system of capitalism. This is most obvious, as Mr. D. N. Pritt pointed out in his lecture at Brussels on 3 June, 1947, in respect of the United States, of which he said that, for all its strength, the U.S.A. is extremely weak and, like all States which have reached the highest stage of capitalism, needs to expand. Pritt added with every justification that the leading circles of American imperialism “are almost inebriated with their own power, and are the more dangerous in that they have not yet learned the technique or the etiquette of world power.”

Stalin teaches us that the Soviet State, in spite of the fact that it took the place in Russia of the State machinery of a bourgeoisie which had been destroyed, has retained some functions of the old State, adapted to suit the requirements of ‘the proletarian State. It is important to note that the proletarian State retains some functions of the old State in an *altered* form, and that these alterations *are determined by the requirements* of the proletarian State. As is known, in addition, the requirements of the proletarian State, in their turn, are determined by its nature, so to speak, i.e., by those of its equalities, features, peculiarities, principles which are inherent in the proletarian State.

Stalin teaches us that the forms and initial func-

* *Ibid.*

tions of the Soviet State cannot remain unchanged. “As a matter of fact, the forms of our State are changing and will continue to change, in keeping with the development of our country and with the changes in the international situation.”*

Stalin quoted in this connection Lenin’s remark that during the whole “*historical period* separating capitalism from ‘society without classes’, from Communism”, there must inevitably be numerous and varied political forms, but “the essence would inevitably be one: *the dictatorship of the proletariat*.”†

Stalin teaches us that our Socialist State since the October Revolution has passed through two main phases in its development. Stalin’s teaching concerning the two phases of development of the Socialist State is of particularly great importance, not only because it contains an explanation of what particular functions and by virtue of what particular historical conditions and causes the Soviet State carried out its functions in the first and second phase. This teaching about the phases is important also because it explains the inevitability of the further development of the Socialist State, the inevitability of new changes in its functions.

“The first phase was the period from the October Revolution to the elimination of the exploiting classes. The principal task in that period was to suppress the resistance of the overthrown classes, to organise the defence of the country against the attacks of the interventionists”, and so forth.

Stalin teaches that, in the second phase of development of the Soviet State, “the function of military suppression inside the country ceased, died away, for

* Stalin. *Leninism* (English edition), p. 661.

† Lenin. *Selected Works* (English edition), VII, p. 34.

exploitation had been abolished, there were no more exploiters left and so there was no-one to suppress.”*

But, says Stalin, in place of this function there appeared the function, of protecting Socialist property from thieves and pilferers of the people’s goods; the function of military defence of the country from outside attack remained to the full; which meant the retention of the Soviet army and navy, the punitive organs and the intelligence service, indispensable “for the detection and punishment of the spies, assassins and wreckers sent into our country by foreign espionage services.”

“The function of economic organisation and cultural and educational work by the State organs also remained, and was developed to the full.”†

Stalin specially emphasises in his teaching on the Socialist State that our army, punitive organs and intelligence service have their edge turned nowadays not to the inside of the country but to the outside, against external enemies.

Such is the Socialist State, and such are its functions in the second phase of development.

Stalin’s teaching on the Socialist State, set forth by him at the Eighteenth Party Congress, in a development of the ideas expressed in Stalin’s work: “On ‘Dialectical and Historical Materialism’” (1938). Contrasting the Socialist order in the U.S.S.R. with the capitalist order, Stalin emphasised that in the U.S.S.R. the mutual relations of people in the process of production are marked by the comradesly co-operation and Socialist mutual aid of workers who are free from exploitation. It must be clear that the character and

* Stalin. *Leninism*. (English edition), p. 662.

† *Ibid.*

peculiarities of Socialist production inevitably determine the character and peculiarities of all social relations, and consequently also determine the character and peculiarities of the relations of the State itself to the public, in respect of its rights and functions.

The significance of Stalin's teaching on the Socialist State is all the more exceptional because it puts an end to under-estimation of the role and significance of our State, of its mechanism, its intelligence service, which some supposed would soon have to be relegated to a museum of antiquities. In this twaddle about relegating the Soviet State to a museum of antiquities could be heard echoes of the provocative and wrecking "theories" of the Trotskyist and Bukharinite traitors. It is known that these gentlemen tried not a little, on the instructions of foreign espionage services, to disorganise the Socialist State, instilling demoralising ideas such as that the Soviet State was "dissolving", "falling asleep", "sinking into economics", that the Soviet State existed only in the psychology of people; that Soviet law and Soviet justice were only "legal rubbish", and similar provocative nonsense.

In their time these "theories" of the Preobrazhenskys, Sokolnikovs, Bukharins were completely exposed, thanks mainly to the services of Stalin, in his works that played such a historic part, like the speech on "The Right Deviation in the C.P.S.U.(B)" (1929), "A Year of Great Change", "Problems of Agrarian Policy in the U.S.S.R.", etc.

On those occasions Stalin exposed the anti-Marxist character, the harmfulness for socialist construction, of the "exercises" of Bukharin and Co. which aimed at striking out of the hands of the proletariat such an instrument „of struggle against the exploiting elements as the Soviet State. It was not accidental, after all, that Bukharin strove to prove that the

kulak terror against Soviet men and women would come to an end as a result of improvements in the Soviet apparatus, and that consequently the kulaks were shooting outstanding Soviet people for the simple reason that the State machinery was working badly.

As regards the question of the-State, the height of distortion of Marxism and Leninism was the propaganda about the dying away of the Soviet State, for which there was even invented a special formula, according to which “first the army and navy will die away”, “then the system of punitive and repressive bodies”, and later on “compulsory labour”. This “formula-scheme was mercilessly exposed by Lenin, as is well known. He remarked: “Shouldn’t it be the other way round—first the ‘later on’, then the ‘then’ and finally the ‘first’?”

It was clear that only madmen, or else provocateurs and traitors, could invent such “schemes” in the conditions of acute class struggle of the transitional period from capitalism to Communism. In 1936-38 it was ascertained that the authors of such “schemes” were in actual fact traitors, such as, in the end, became the Trotskyists and Bukharinites who turned “into a frantic and unprincipled band of wreckers, diversionists, spies and murderers, acting on the instructions of the espionage services of foreign States.”*

The question of the “dying away” of the State, fundamentally, confused by Bukharin as long ago as 1916, was in the hands, of traitors and double-dealers a very convenient instrument for undermining the power of the Soviet State. It was particularly convenient, be-

* Stalin. “On defects in party work and measures for the liquidation of Trotskyists and other double-dealers” (Russian edition).

cause it easily served double-dealers as a screen for their real base intentions. After all, the problem of the “dying away” of the State is a purely theoretical problem; it is the most scientific of problems; it is the most “revolutionary”, most “left” problem, most impressive of all for those feeling hatred of the traditional State, historically formed as an apparatus of oppression and suppression. And it must be said that the double-dealers skilfully utilised this “problem” for their treacherous ends; attempting to poison the consciousness of our people with the virus of denial of the Socialist character of the Soviet State, of Soviet banks, Soviet industry and trade, Soviet law, the courts, the punitive bodies.

These attempts met with a decisive rebuff from our Party, and did not bring the results which the traitors expected. There will be no relapse. But the “unpardonably irresponsible attitude” towards questions of the theory of the State, as Stalin pointed out at the Eighteenth Party Congress, led to an underestimation of the role of the Soviet State, and made it necessary to clear up some questions connected with the problem of the development of the Socialist State. This was successfully done by Stalin. Developing further the Marxist-Leninist theory of the Socialist State, in particular, the most, important, question of its dying away, Stalin showed that Engels’ formula in “And-Dohring”—that “the State” (at a certain stage of its development, A.V.) “is not ‘abolished’, it withers away”— is correct, but only under one of two conditions. An indication of these conditions—which Engels did not give and could not give, for the reason, as Stalin explained, that when investigating this question Engels abstracted himself from such a factor as international conditions, the international situation—signified a new and great step forward in the theory of the Socialist State.

What are these conditions? They are two, in Stalin's view. The *first*—if we take the Socialist State in isolation from international relations, from the point of view only of the internal development of the country; the *second*—if we assume that Socialism has been victorious in all countries or in the majority of countries, that a Socialist encirclement exists instead of a capitalist encirclement, and that there is no more danger of attack from outside, there is no more need to strengthen the army and the State.

“But what if Socialism has been victorious in only one country, a separate country”—Stalin continued, developing his theory—“and in view of this, it is quite impossible to abstract oneself from international conditions—what then?”

Stalin gave the reply to this question too, pointing out that ‘the country in which Socialism has been victorious, which is surrounded by the capitalist world and which is subject to the danger of attack from outside, must have its State “strong enough to defend the conquests of Socialism from foreign attack.”’

Stalin sees far ahead. He sees the inevitability of the further development of the Socialist State. He sees the necessity of preserving the Socialist State until the capitalist encirclement has been eliminated, and has been replaced by a Socialist encirclement. Such is Stalin's teaching on the Socialist State—on the phases of its development, on its functions, on the conditions of its life and activity along the road to Communism, on its tasks and methods of struggle for the achievement of the ultimate objective of building Communist society. Stalin's teaching on the Socialist State completed the development, of the Marxist-Leninist theory of the State; it armed the builders of Socialism with a clear understanding of the prospects of the future, and put into their hands a mighty weapon for further success-

ful construction and for the struggle for a classless society, for Communism.

* * *

The working people of our country greeted the thirtieth anniversary of the Socialist revolution at a time of upsurge of their creative forces.

The Great Patriotic War, which served as an historic test of all the material and spiritual forces of the Soviet people, still further strengthened the might of the Soviet Union. The war showed the inexhaustible reserves of strength and resources of the Soviet 'country, capable not only of overcoming what might well have seemed insurmountable military difficulties, but of recovering rapidly from the sacrifices it had made and the enormous damage inflicted on it by the enemy, and of rising to the next stage of its development, moving unflinching, forward and forward.

The end of the war, victoriously completed by the armed forces of the Allies, and the transition from war to peace, put new tasks before the Soviet Union both within the country and in the sphere of external political relations. The first post-war Plan—a plan for the restoration of the national economy, to repair the effects of the destruction and the disasters caused to the Soviet country by the war imposed on the Soviet people by predatory Hitlerite Germany—requires gigantic efforts for its fulfilment. Moved by a feeling of genuine Soviet patriotism, and firmly resolved to fulfil and over-fulfil this Plan in the shortest possible time, the Soviet people are waging a heroic struggle on this front of economic and cultural construction. They are mobilising all their strength and all their energy to solve this most important problem of State, courageously and confidently looking forward into the future, firmly and valiantly marching ahead under the guidance of their

Government, headed by the great Stalin.

The Soviet people is confident of the success of its cause, confident that it will rapidly heal the wounds inflicted on it by the cruel war; and will unfold its creative capacities with even greater force, assuring a new and even greater flourishing of the Soviet State.

The Soviet people value a stable democratic peace, as the foundation of progress and of the possibility of continuously improving and increasing the welfare of millions of people.

Militarist and annexationist aspirations are alien to the Soviet people, and to the Soviet State, which is flesh of the flesh of the people. The policy of the Soviet State is a policy of work and peace, of friendship and co-operation between the peoples.

The Soviet people is always ready to defend itself, to inflict a crushing defeat on the criminal devices of the warmongers. It is always ready to answer a blow with a merciless blow, with all its strength and resolution. Soviet people know that their path ahead is sown with numerous obstacles and difficulties, that they have not a few enemies waiting for a convenient time and suitable conditions in order to attempt to crush the land of Socialism, the mighty citadel of democracy and peace.

The Soviet Union, notwithstanding many unfavourable circumstances, accepted an invitation to join the League of Nations and did join it, because the League provided some slight possibility of resisting the aggression which then threatened the world from the side of the Fascist States, who enjoyed the support of the Munichites. The Soviet Union, true to its policy of peaceful co-operation and friendship between the peoples, was one of the initiators and chief organisers of the new international organisation—the United Nations Organisation—seeing in it a new instrument

for international co-operation between great and small countries, in order to assure the peace and security of the nations.

Throughout the two years which have passed since the day the United Nations Organisation was established, the Soviet Union has unswervingly and consistently fought for the principles of international co-operation, not sparing its efforts to ensure the success of this cause. It acts in keeping with the principles proclaimed by the Charter, striving to ensure that all the members of the Organisation should fully and unconditionally observe those principles.

The end of the second World War and the transition to the ways of peace, unfortunately, were bound up-with the aggravation of a number of serious differences among the Allies. Silenced by the war and by the common interest in crushing a common enemy, these contradictions revealed themselves with new force, and brought a disturbing influence into the political relations between the Great Powers. The end of the war unleashed new aggressive aspirations of certain countries which exaggerate their strength and their role in international relations. Among these countries the principal is the United States of America, directing every effort to assure for itself a privileged position among the other States, relying on its economic strength and making use in suitable cases of methods of political and economic pressure to carry out its plans. The Truman "Doctrine" and the Marshall "Plan", like the attempts to put them into practice which were made at the Paris Conference in July, 1947, are most vivid proofs of that new course of foreign policy which, in the United States of America, has taken the place of the old course, followed by Roosevelt and his supporters in the interests of strengthening peaceful international co-operation. The new

course of foreign policy of the United States of America, forming a bloc with Great Britain, France and some other countries which have completely entered the orbit of American influence, is pregnant with serious dangers for the general peace. The sharp point of this course is turned towards assuring the success of the expansionist plans of the reactionary circles of the U.S.A. and other capitalist countries. It is turned against the interests of the countries of the new democracy, in Eastern Europe, and, first and foremost, against the interests of the Soviet Union, the Socialist State of workers and peasants.

In the difficult conditions of the present international situation, the Soviet Union continues unshakably to conduct its own foreign policy, based on the great principles of the sovereign equality of peoples, the defence of stable democratic peace and of the security of the nations, the prohibition of the economic and social progress of all States, respect for the principles of justice and international law, as the foundations for friendly international co-operation of great and small countries.

Unshakeable as a rock, opposing this "course", stands the Soviet Union, the land of Socialism, the land of genuine popular rule, of genuine democracy, a true, consistent and fearless defender of the democratic rights and liberties of the peoples, of democratic and stable peace throughout the world, guardian of the independence and security of peace-loving nations, and champion of the equality of rights and mutual respect for the interests of all States, great, middling and small, which are ready to co-operate for the progress of all mankind.