

PEOPLES' DEMOCRACY AS A FORM OF POLITICAL ORGANISATION OF SOCIETY

A. SOBOLEV

*From a lecture read at a meeting of the
Moscow Committee and Moscow Provincial
Committee of the Communist Party
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MARXISM-LENINISM is a creative science. It develops, becomes perfected and enriched by new experience, new formulas and conclusions. In the struggle of the working class for its liberation the Marxist-Leninist thesis on the richness and variety of the transition from capitalism to Socialism plays an exceptionally important part.

The revolutionary creativeness of the working class of our country gave birth to Soviets as the State form of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Lenin and Stalin showed the tremendous international significance of the Soviets, the superiority of this highest most perfect form of dictatorship of the proletariat over all other forms of revolutionary power. Lenin and Stalin at the same time pointed out that other State forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat were possible. "The Soviets", said J. V. Stalin at the Sixth Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Revolutionary Party (Bolsheviks), "are the most, expedient form of the organisation of the struggle of the working class for power, but the Soviets are not the only type of revolutionary organisation." (Collected Works, Vol. III, p. 178.)

The regime of people's democracy is the new type of State organisation of the people's power in the countries of Central and South East Europe. The example of the countries of the people's democracy confirms the correctness of the theoretical thesis of Lenin and Stalin concerning the international importance of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as the essence of various political forms in the period of the transition from capitalism to Socialism. Comrade Stalin teaches that the regime of the countries of people's democracy in Central and South-East Europe fulfils the functions of the dictatorship of the proletariat and that the States of people's democracy are one of the forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

People's democracy as a new form of the political organisation of society was able to appear and did appear in concrete historical conditions, and primarily with the existence of the mighty Soviet Union; in a situation of the further sharpening of the general crisis of capitalism, a sharpening of all the contradictions of imperialism, a growth of the working-class movement in the capitalist countries and strengthening of the national-liberation struggle of the peoples of the colonial and dependent countries, and with the radically changing relations of forces on the international arena in favour of Socialism.

The decisive role of the Soviet Union in the emergence of people's democracy is found in the following:

Firstly, the Great October Socialist Revolution split the world into two systems, mortally wounded capitalism so that it is not in its power to recover, and opened up the era of the downfall of capitalism.

Secondly, the continuous development and consolidation of the Socialist system born in October still further shook the foundations of imperialism. The building of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. was a new, powerful blow at world capitalism.

Thirdly, as a result of the victory of the Soviet Union in the Second World War, the defeat of the aggressive States—Germany, Japan, Italy—yet another powerful blow was struck at capitalism. The system of imperialism emerged from the Second World War; immeasurably weaker than before the war, while the system of Socialism emerged far more powerful, although it was the U.S.S.R. which bore the main weight of the struggle against fascism. The relations of forces on the international arena changed in favour of Socialism, and against capitalism. This means the creation of more favourable conditions for the struggle and victory of the masses of the people in Europe and Asia.

Thus, the appearance of people's democracy as the new State form of people's power, its triumph in a number of countries of Europe and Asia, was prepared for by the Great October Socialist Revolution, the building of Socialism in the U.S.S.R., and the heroic exploits of the Soviet people who defeated the fascist aggressors, and liberated the peoples of Europe and Asia from the Hitlerite yoke and the Japanese aggressors.

After the defeat of Hitler Germany and imperialist Japan the masses of the people in a number of countries, which had passed through the stern school of the anti-fascist, anti-imperialist liberation struggle, did not want to trust their destiny to reactionaries; the masses did not want to live in the old way. The reactionary classes were incapable of ruling these countries in the old way; their positions were undermined and weakened. A new round began in the liberation movement of the working class, of all the working people in the capitalist countries and of the colonial peoples; for national freedom, for democracy and Socialism; a struggle developed for the establishment of people's democracy.

The rise and development of people's democracy should be examined concretely and historically, since people's democracy is passing through various stages and its class content changes, depending on the stage.

The first stage is the stage of agrarian, anti-feudal, anti-imperialist revolution, in the course of which people's democracy arises as the organ of revolutionary power, representing in its content something in the nature of dictatorship of the working class and peasantry, the working class having the leading role. A characteristic feature of this power is that it directs its sharp edge against imperialism, against fascism.

The second stage is the establishment of the dictatorship of the working class in the form of people's democracy and the building of Socialism.

* * *

In the countries of Central and South-East Europe people's democracy was born as a result of their liberation from German-fascist oppression and as a result of the heroic struggle of the working class and all working people against the forces of imperialism, for democracy. By its victories, the Soviet Union created the premises for the triumph of people's democracy and thereby helped the working people of these countries to overthrow the old regime and establish the new order. What form did this aid take?

Firstly, the Soviet Army directly liberated the countries of Central and South-East Europe from fascist slavery.

Secondly, the Soviet Union frustrated the plans of Anglo-American intervention in relation to the countries of Central and South-East Europe and thereby saved them from a new imperialist oppression —American-British.

Thirdly, the Soviet Army smashed the allies of Hitler Germany —the armed forces of Rumanian, Hungarian, and Bulgarian fascist reaction—which, naturally, facilitated the victory of people's democracy in these countries. The presence of the Soviet troops prevented the reactionary forces from unleashing civil war.

Fourthly, the Soviet Union gave the countries of people's democracy tremendous moral and political support, and helped them to strengthen their international position. Of the greatest importance was the economic aid. The Soviet Government helped the countries of people's democracy with equipment and raw materials for industry, and food for the population, etc.

And finally, fifthly, the Soviet Union helped and is helping the working people of these countries with its rich experience of social transformations.

These are the external historical conditions for the appearance of people's democracy. Let us pass to a consideration of the internal events in the various countries, events which were the conditions for the victory of people's democracy.

After occupying Europe, the German fascists deprived the European peoples of independence, introduced slave labour in the factories and mills, restored feudal conditions, began the physical annihilation of whole peoples. In the situation which came about as 'a result of Hitler aggression, the working class of the countries enslaved by the fascists were confronted with new tasks. The main content of the struggle of the working people in these countries was national liberation, the abolition of fascism and its consequences, the abolition of slavery and feudalism, which had been introduced by the fascists. Fascism became the chief obstacle on the road of the historic development of the enslaved countries. Without destroying fascism, the peoples of Central and South-East Europe could not advance. Therefore, the main strategic task of that period was the defeat of fascism.

The struggle against the Hitler aggressors, for freedom and national

independence, merged closely with the general democratic struggle against the local fascists, against the local landlords and big bourgeoisie, who were the prop of the German fascist occupationists.

In historical importance and essence this struggle constituted a people's democratic revolution. It was aimed against the imperialist oppression of German fascism, against the landlords and big bourgeoisie. In the final count this revolution should be included in the type of bourgeois-democratic. At the same time it was broader than the usual bourgeois-democratic revolution and went beyond its framework, since it was directed against fascism and was of a clearly expressed anti-imperialist nature.

In this period the working class of the countries of Central and South-East Europe, under the guidance of the Communist and Workers' Parties, secured the liquidation of imperialist oppression and the remnants of feudalism.

The alignment of forces also coincided with the nature of the revolution. The leader of the anti-fascist struggle could be, and actually was, the working class; no other class was capable of rousing the masses of the people for the defeat of fascism. At the head of the working class stood the battle-tested Communist Party which had shown its loyalty to the people.

The working class created a powerful anti-fascist coalition, into which it drew the peasantry, the intelligentsia, the urban petty bourgeoisie and part of the middle bourgeoisie. In the period of the anti-fascist movement, on the initiative and under the guidance of the working class, its stable militant alliance with the peasantry was formed, which alliance steadily expanded and grew strong.

In this period a split occurred among the exploiting class. One part of it—the landlords and big bourgeoisie—went over to the side of the German fascists. The other, that is to say part of the middle bourgeoisie, joined the anti-fascist coalition.

The establishment of people's democracy meant the abolition of the domination of the landlords and big bourgeoisie and the transfer of power to the people headed by the working class. In its content this power represented something in the nature of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry; its peculiarity, however, was that it was born in the anti-fascist struggle and that its sharp edge was turned against imperialism, against fascism. The guiding and directing force of people's democracy, from the moment of its origin, was the working class headed by the Communist Parties, which gave revolutionary content to this power and ensured subsequently the transfer of the countries of people's democracy to the Socialist road of development.

All these facts, while revealing the decisive role of the Soviet Union in the origin of people's democracy, at the same time categorically refute Anglo-American slander about "foreign intervention."

When analysing the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal stage of the development of the struggle, account should be taken of the difference between the agrarian countries (Rumania, Albania, etc.) and the relatively industrially developed countries (Czechoslovakia). This determined certain peculiarities of the

development of events in each, country but, however, did not change their common anti-imperialist, anti-feudal content.

After-the defeat of fascism and the establishment of people's democracy, the tasks of liquidating the remnants of feudalism, i.e., the completion of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, confronted the working class of the countries of Central and South-East Europe, in all their magnitude.

In the first period the tasks of this revolution were successfully solved; the agrarian reform was put through, the feudal survivals were abolished, the monarchy was eliminated where it had existed. It took a year or a little more for the elimination of the survivals of feudalism the European countries of people's democracy. The defeat of fascism, the overthrow of the power of the big bourgeoisie and landlords, the transfer of the land to the peasants led to a strengthening of the leading and directing role of the working class in the countries of Central and South-East Europe, and the guiding role of the working class, as Comrade Stalin teaches, is the embryo of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the transitional step to it. Thus, the opportunity was created for the transition to the new stage—to the stage of Socialist revolution.

TO THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

In order to defend and consolidate the gains of the people, it was' necessary to inflict complete political defeat on the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie, with its own party, its own press, its own representatives in the government, in the legislative organs and in the state apparatus, holding key positions in national economy, relying on the support of the international imperialist forces, fought actively for the overthrow of people's democracy, sabotaged all the economic measures of the people's democratic State, prepared one counter-revolutionary plot after another, increasingly planted subversive, wrecking groups.

In the course of prolonged and tense struggle, the working class in the countries of people's democracy exposed the treacherous behaviour of the bourgeoisie, revealed the traitorous, undermining, espionage-subversive activity of its leaders, secured the political isolation of the bourgeoisie, strengthened the alliance with the peasantry and, on this basis, inflicted decisive defeat on the bourgeoisie, completely removed it from power.

As the forces, the political consciousness and the organisational strength of the working class increased, as its ties with the working peasantry strengthened, the people's democratic revolution began to grow over into a Socialist revolution. The process of this growing over occupied a more or less prolonged space of time; in the political sphere the tasks of the Socialist revolution were finally solved approximately by 1947-48. This growing over was ensured by the rule of the working class in alliance with the peasantry, and the guiding and directing role of the Communist and Workers' Parties in the system

of people's democracy.

The Socialist revolution in the European countries of people's democracy followed its course in extremely favourable conditions: it took place in a situation of radical change in the alignment of forces in favour of Socialism, against capitalism.

The Socialist revolution in the countries of people's democracy was accomplished under the leadership of the Communist and Workers' Parties as a broad movement from below of the masses of the people, supported from above by those links of the State apparatus which were in the hands of the working class. In the course of tense struggle against reaction, the old bourgeois State apparatus was smashed step by step, and the new people's democratic State apparatus was created.

The nationalisation of factory and workshop industry, the banks, railways, etc. smashed the economic might of the capitalists in the town and eliminated the material base of reaction inside the country. The people's democratic States concentrated in their hands the key positions of national economic factories, mills, banks, railways, foreign trade, etc.

The defeat of bourgeois agents in the working-class movement was an extremely important component part of the struggle for the victory of the Socialist revolution. The bourgeoisie laid great hopes on the right-wing social-democrats. It is perfectly clear that the split in the working-class movement, the existence in it of bourgeois agents, weakened the working class. The Communist and Workers' Parties routed the ideological positions of the right-wing social-democrats and, by bringing to their side the rank and file members of the social-democratic parties and their left-wing leaders, secured the elimination of the split in the working class movement, the creation of united parties of the working class on a Marxist-Leninist basis. The creation of united workers' parties, by strengthening the leading role of the working class, promoted, the expansion and consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

As a result of the radical political, social and economic changes, people's democracy in the countries of Central and South-East Europe entered into the second stage of its development —the stage of the dictatorship of the proletariat and building of Socialism.

DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

Marxism-Leninism teaches that the class content of the transitional period is the dictatorship of the working class.

The regime of people's democracy in the countries of Central and South-East Europe is, in its content, the State form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Socialist State of the first phase of its development.

The main task of this period is to crush the resistance of the overthrown classes to organise, the country's defence against the attack of imperialist

aggressors, in the first place to strengthen relations with proletarians of all countries, in the first place to strengthen friendship with the country of victorious Socialism—the Soviet Union—to develop national economy, to consolidate the alliance between the working class and all working people in town and countryside, and to draw the masses into the building of Socialism, to create conditions for the elimination of capitalist elements.

The people's democratic State fulfils all the functions of the Socialist State of the first phase of its development. The regime of people's democracy is the chief instrument of the building of Socialism.

The experience of the Soviet Union in the matter of overcoming capitalist elements and the elimination of the exploiting classes; the experience of the entire struggle for the victory of Socialism, in our country, is of tremendous importance for the countries of people's democracy.

Comrade Stalin armed the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. with directives concerning revolutionary vigilance, methods of struggle against enemies and double-dealers, against agents from the capitalist encirclement who penetrate into its ranks. These directives of Comrade Stalin give invaluable guiding assistance to the fraternal Communist Parties.

The economic and scientific-technical assistance of the Soviet Union is of exceptionally great importance for the creation of the new social order in the countries of Central and South-East Europe.

The Soviet Union renders great assistance to the regime of people's democracy in the fulfilment of its external function. The Soviet Union is the force which paralyses the economic pressure of the imperialists on the countries of people's democracy, destroys the political and diplomatic intrigues of the ruling circles of the United States and Britain against those countries, frustrates the interventionist plans of international reaction.

These are the conditions which ensure to the regime of people's democracy the fulfilment of the functions of the dictatorship of the working class.

Characteristic of the political life of the countries of people's democracy is the multi-party system. In all the European countries of people's democracy, with the exception of Albania, not one, but two or several parties of the working people play a part in the building of the new life. In the countries of people's democracy the governments consist of representatives of several parties or social-political organisations. It has already been proved by experience that the regime of people's democracy can fulfil the functions of the dictatorship of the proletariat even with the existence of several parties. but on the essential condition that the leading and directing force of the State is the vanguard of the working class—the Communist Party. It brings along with it the other parties of the working people, influencing these parties and directing them towards Socialism.

The European countries of people's democracy have entered into the period of building Socialism, and their economics are of a transitional character.

First and foremost there are three types of ownership in the countries of

people's democracy: nation-wide socialist ownership of the means of production; co-operative ownership which in the main is socialist; private ownership of the means of production, which is of two kinds: ownership by the working peasantry, handicraftsmen and artisans, based on private labour; and capitalist private ownership, based on exploitation.

The existence of several types of ownership determined the diversity of structure of the national economy. In each of these countries there are three basic social-economic structures: socialist, small-commodity and capitalist. The Socialist sector has become the dominating structure in industry and is dominant in the national economy. Finally, an important characteristic feature of the economy of the transitional period is that in the countries of people's democracy there still exist exploiters (bourgeoisie, kulaks) and the exploitation of man by man is not yet abolished.

The social-economic structures of the European countries of people's democracy have, in their basis, a similarity with the social-economic structure of the U.S.S.R. in the transitional period. The countries of people's democracy are passing through the N.E.P. (New Economy Policy) period, but in different, more favourable historical conditions.

A fierce struggle developed on the question of the ways of building Socialism in the countries of people's democracy. The bourgeois nationalists and right-wing opportunists, striving to undermine the building of Socialism, denied the importance of the dictatorship of the working class and the role of the Communist and Workers' Parties in the struggle for Socialism, and defend the idea of ending the class struggle.

The Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of the Soviet Union, and Comrade Stalin personally, assisted the Communist and Workers' Parties of the countries of people's democracy to determine the class content of the regime of people's democracy and the laws governing the transition to Socialism. Relying on the aid of the C.P.S.U.(B.), making use of the Marxist-Leninist classics, creatively mastering the experience of Bolshevism, the Communist and Workers' Parties routed the right-wing opportunists and the bourgeois nationalists. In the course of the struggle against the right-wing opportunists and bourgeois nationalists, it was proved that the laws governing the transition from capitalism to Socialism, revealed in the Marxist-Leninist classics and proved correct by the experience of the building of Socialism in the U.S.S.R., operate also in the countries of people's democracy. The special forms of the development of these countries could grow up and in fact did grow up only on the basis of the laws, common to and essential for all countries, governing the transition from capitalism to Socialism.

An essential condition for the building of Socialism is the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in one State form or another, since the tasks of destroying the old capitalist order and setting up the Socialist order can be solved only by the working class which has taken State power into its hands.

Marxism-Leninism teaches, and the experience of Bolshevism confirms,

that the building of Socialism takes place in fierce class struggle, for the capitalist elements do not wish voluntarily to leave the historical arena. In all the countries of people's democracy the overthrown exploiting classes, supported and led by the American, British imperialists, strive in every way to restore their former rule, making use, for this purpose, of the most varied means of struggle. The regime of people's democracy copes successfully with the task of suppressing the resistance of the bourgeoisie, exposes counter-revolutionary plots, renders harmless espionage, subversive and wrecking groups, strikes blows at those who sabotage, conducts a decisive struggle against bourgeois ideology.

The planning of national economy is a most important condition for the development of the countries of people's democracy. The, chief economic-political task of the plans carried out in the European countries of people's democracy is the building of the foundation of Socialist economy. In solving this task the Communist and Workers' Parties of these countries, guided by Marxism-Leninism and the experience of the C.P.S.U.(B), concentrate attention on the creation of Socialist industry as the material basis of Socialism and, primarily on the development of heavy industry which produces the means of production.

Marxism-Leninism teaches that without the Socialist transformation of agriculture it is impossible to solve the task of building Socialism. While showing the peasantry the only correct road—the road of co-operation—the Communist and Workers' Parties of the countries of people's democracy at the same time warn against unnecessary haste, and demand from all the organisations carrying out work on the formation of co-operatives strict observance of the principle of voluntary membership of co-operatives by the peasantry, and taking into account the concrete conditions.

The establishment of people's democracy, the abolition of the rule of the exploiters, the considerable successes in the development of industry and agriculture, secured radical changes in the position of the working people. As a result of the nationalisation of industry, exploitation of the workers has been eliminated in those enterprises which have become the property of the State. In the countries of people's democracy unemployment has been completely abolished. The agrarian reform and wide-scale assistance from the State have restricted the exploitation of the peasantry by the rural bourgeoisie, and led to an improvement in the life of the peasantry. The strengthening of the currency and the increase in output of industry and agriculture made possible a substantial rise in the standard of living of workers, peasants and intelligentsia.

The Marxist-Leninist party alone can be the general staff of Socialist construction. Without such a militant, steeled party, working class is unarmed and cannot stand up against the class enemy, cannot solve the task of building Socialism. The Communist and Workers' Parties in the countries of people's democracy are growing strong and developing as parties of the new type, as Marxist-Leninist parties, leading the building of Socialism.

A decisive condition for the successful advance of the countries of people's democracy towards Socialism is friendship with the Soviet Union. For countries

building Socialism this is a vital necessity, the manifestation and the development of the principle of proletarian internationalism.

Understanding the first-class importance of friendship with the U.S.S.R. for the consolidation of people's democracy, reaction is trying with all its might to weaken this friendship, to wrench the countries of people's democracy, from the U.S.S.R.; they are trying to sow and disseminate the baneful ideology of bourgeois nationalism. Bourgeois nationalism is the chief danger for socialist construction in the countries of people's democracy. The struggle against bourgeois nationalism represents the chief political task of the Communist and Workers' Parties.

The rupture of friendship with the Soviet Union inevitably means the elimination of people's democracy, as shown by events in Yugoslavia. The Tito-Rankovic spy clique, which ruptured the friendship between Yugoslavia and the U.S.S.R. and accomplished the transition from bourgeois nationalism to fascism, destroyed the gains of the Yugoslav people, established fascist conditions and led Yugoslavia into the camp of the American-British warmongers.

The defeat of the bourgeois nationalists in Poland, Bulgaria, Albania, Rumania, Hungary, Czechoslovakia means the collapse of the perfidious plans of reaction which aimed at wrenching the countries of people's democracy from the camp of peace, democracy and Socialism.

The working class of the countries of people's democracy have a powerful socialist ally —the Soviet people, who are rendering it direct, immediate support in the struggle for Socialism. By continuously strengthening and expanding friendship with the U.S.S.R., the working class of the countries of people's democracy possess the full guarantee that they will be successful in overcoming all difficulties and building Socialism.

These are the general laws governing the transition from capitalism to Socialism in the European countries of people's democracy.

* * *

V. I. Lenin and J. V. Stalin have shown that capitalism has long since become over-ripe and, historically speaking, has outlived its day. The transition from capitalism to Socialism, being identical in content in all countries, is carried out in its own fashion in each country, depending on the concrete historical conditions. V. I. Lenin stressed that in consequence of the existence of national and State differences between countries and peoples, it is necessary in the liberation struggle of the working class of different countries to take into account what is nationally particular, nationally specific. The leaders of the international working-class movement demand that strict account be taken of the concrete conditions, the peculiarities of the historic situation; they strongly oppose a stereotyped approach and dogmatism in the solution of political problems; they urge maximum flexibility in tactics, and the use of all old and new forms of social activity in the struggle for the liberation of the working class and all working

people.

It is particularly important to seek out the forms of transition or approach to Socialism in accordance with the historical conditions.

Today the liberation struggle of the working class of the capitalist countries is unfolding in conditions of the economic and political expansion of the American imperialists, the national betrayal of the ruling classes, the ever-increasing threat that these countries will be forcibly drawn into aggressive war against the camp of peace, democracy and Socialism. In such a situation the Communist Parties of the capitalist countries consider their immediate task to be the struggle against American expansion, against the aggressive policy of the imperialists, and for national freedom and independence, for universal peace and security of the nations.

This struggle is closely interwoven with the general democratic movement of the working people against reaction, for the preservation and expansion of democratic liberties, for broad social changes. The expansion of the United States, preparations for aggressive war, the offensive against democratic rights and liberties, the fascisation of political life—all these are links in the same chain. It is clear that it is impossible to put an end to national enslavement and the subordination of the Marshallised countries to American imperialism, to defend their independence, to maintain peace and bar the way against fascism, without striking determined and persistent blocs against the enemies at home—the monopolists and landlords, the inspirers of the most reactionary home and foreign policy.

Winning independence, securing democratic development and saving peace are tasks of a general national and democratic character. For their successful solution the Communist Parties of the capitalist countries are intensifying the struggle for the masses, are striving to unite the widest sections of the people in the struggle for peace and national independence.

In present conditions, one of the political forms of rallying and uniting all the democratic forces is the regime of people's democracy, which ensures the progressive solution of all problems that are ripe for solution and opens the way to Socialism.

“THE BRITISH ROAD TO SOCIALISM”

The importance of people's democracy for solving the radical problems of development in Britain is shown in the programme of the Communist Party, *The British Road to Socialism*. The radical question of the programme is the question of the building of Socialism, of the ways, forms and methods of transforming Britain on to a Socialist basis. The programme sharply criticises the so-called “Democratic Socialism” of the Labour leaders, condemns the traitorous role of the Labour Government in relation to the working-class, the slavish servility of the right-wing Labour leaders to the bourgeoisie. Life has shown that the Labour

leaders' talk about democracy and Socialism has turned out in deeds to be swindling and deception, that the right-wing Labour leaders have nothing in common with Socialism, with the interest of the working people.

After exposing the reactionary nature of the home and foreign policy of the Labourite servants of the bourgeoisie, the Communist Party shows in its programme document that only the transition to Socialism can secure a radical, genuinely progressive solution of the social, economic and political problems of the country that are ripe for solution. Stressing the historical inevitability and vital necessity of the Socialist development of Britain, the Communist Party declares that the decisive political question in the struggle for Socialism is the question of power. "The people cannot advance to Socialism, therefore, without real political power, which must be taken from the hands of the capitalist minority and firmly grasped by the majority of the people, led by the working class."

After showing that only Socialism can lead Britain to prosperity, save her from American oppression and wrench her from the camp of war, and secure the free association of the peoples of the British Empire, the Communist Party also defines the path of Socialist development for Britain. Taking account of the experience of the working class in the countries of Central and South-East Europe in the struggle for Socialism, the Communist Party has come to the conclusion that in present conditions the establishment of Soviet power is not essential for the building of Socialism, but that there is another road, to Socialism—the road of people's democracy, which most of all corresponds to the historical conditions in Britain. The programme says outright that people's democracy is the road to Socialism.

"The British Communists declare that the people of Britain can transform capitalist democracy into a real people's democracy, transforming Parliament, the product of Britain's historic struggle for democracy, into the democratic instrument of the will of the vast majority of her people."

As the programme points out, the victory of people's democracy will mean the transfer of power from the hands of an insignificant group of monopolists into the hands of the overwhelming majority of the people headed by the working class. The establishment of people's democracy makes it possible to end the omnipotence of the millionaire monopolists through the socialist nationalisation of big industry, the banks and big land-ownership; it will make possible the creation of a strong, free and independent Britain, ensure peace, end imperialist oppression of the colonies, transform the existing empire into a free and equal association of peoples, destroy the political power of the class of capitalists and bring about the radical reorganisation of the whole State structure.

The programme states that in the struggle against the despotic rule of the capitalists the British working-class can, after winning a Parliamentary majority, use Parliament and form on its basis a people's government. After the people's government has come to power, the radical reorganisation of the State structure will have as its aim the democratic transformation of State institutions, their reorganisation accordance with the interests of the people. Parliament will be

preserved, but will be transformed and, in its transformed form, included in the State structure of people's democracy.

The basic condition for the establishment of people's democracy is the creation, under the leadership of the working class, of a broad coalition of working people.

"The essential condition for establishing such a people's power", states the programme of the Communist Party, "is the building up of a broad coalition or popular alliance of all sections of the working people: of the organised working class, of all workers by hand and brain, of professional people and technicians, of all lower and middle sections in the towns, and of the farmers in the countryside."

The need for creating a broad popular coalition is mentioned in a number of documents of the Communist Parties of France and Italy. Our policy, said Togliatti, "proceeded from the conviction of the need for the profound transformation of the economic and political structure of the country, and at the same time proclaimed the need to secure this transformation through the broad co-operation of various social groups, ideological trends and parties".

It is possible to establish the regime of people's democracy as a result of the victory of a broad democratic front of all working people under the leadership of the working class. This leadership ensures the carrying out of radical reforms in the sphere of industry and agriculture, the transfer of power to the hands of the people and its successful functioning, national freedom and independence. The strengthening of the leading role of the working class presupposes the strengthening of its unity, which is only possible on the basis of a consistent struggle against right-wing Socialists who split the working and weaken it.

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People's democracy is of immediate importance as the form of people's power for the national liberation movement in the colonial and dependent countries. Facts testify that today the agrarian, anti-feudal, anti-imperialist revolution in these countries is developing under the banner of the struggle for people's democracy.

The Chinese revolution is the example of the carrying out in face of the Leninist-Stalinist theses on the policy, strategy and tactics of Communist Parties in the agrarian, anti-feudal, anti-imperialist revolution in colonial and dependent countries, The victory of the Chinese people was prepared for by the whole trend of historical development.

The Great October Socialist Revolution weakened the capitalist system as a whole, undermined the domination of imperialism in the colonial and dependent countries, opened up the epoch of colonial revolutions carried out in the oppressed countries of the world under the leadership of the proletariat, and showed the peoples of those countries the real and effective road to liberation from imperialist and feudal oppression.

Of exceptionally great importance for the Chinese revolution was the victory of the Soviet Union in the Second World War. As a result of the defeat by the Soviet Union of the German fascists and Japanese aggressors, a further weakening of the system of imperialism came about, its positions in the colonies were still further undermined, the forces of Chinese democracy were further strengthened and the liberation struggle increased in all the colonial and dependent countries.

“If the Soviet Union had not existed”, wrote Mao Tse-tung, “if the anti-fascist Second World War had not been victorious, if—what is “particularly important for us—Japanese imperialism had not been routed, if the countries of new democracy had not appeared in Europe, if there had been no increasing struggle of the oppressed countries of the East, if there had been no struggle of the masses of the people in the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and other capitalist countries against the ruling reactionary clique, if all these factors had not existed, then the pressure from the international reactionary forces, of course, would have been far stronger than at present. Would it have been possible for us to win victory in such circumstances? Of course not. In just the same way it would have been impossible to consolidate victory after its achievement. (*On the Dictatorship of People’s Democracy*, p, 9. Russian edition.)

The Chinese revolution, in its character, is agrarian, anti-imperialist, anti-feudal. It is aimed against the foreign imperialist oppression against Chinese feudalism and Chinese big bureaucratic, compradore bourgeoisie closely linked with the foreign imperialists.

As J. V. Stalin has pointed out, the Chinese revolution, being a bourgeois-democratic revolution, is at the same time a national-liberating revolution, with its sharp edge turned against foreign imperialists, an anti-imperialist revolution, which merges with the revolutionary movement of the working class of the whole world against imperialism. It grows beyond the framework of a bourgeois-democratic revolution, thanks to the leading role of the working class.

In the course of the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolution, the Chinese working class created a united front of the democratic forces, which includes: the working class, peasantry, urban petty bourgeoisie, intelligentsia, national bourgeoisie. The organising, leading and directing force of the united front is the working class, headed by its vanguard—the Communist Party; the stable alliance of the working class and peasantry forms the invincible basis of the united front.

Examining the Chinese revolution as the combination of two currents of the revolutionary movement—against feudal survivals and against imperialism—Comrade Stalin brilliantly foretold the nature of the power that would be established as a result of the victory of this revolution.

“I think”, said J. V. Stalin in 1926. “that the future revolutionary power in China will, generally speaking, be reminiscent in its nature of the power which was spoken of in our country in 1905, i.e. something in the nature of a democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry with the difference,

however, that it will be primarily an anti-imperialist power. It will be a transitional power to the non-capitalist or, more exactly, to the Socialist development of China." (*Collected Works*, Vol. VIII, pp. 365-66, Russian edition.)

Events in China are developing precisely as foreseen by Comrade Stalin. The revolutionary power established in China as a result of the victory of the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolution represents in its content something in the nature of the democratic dictatorship of the working class and peasantry. The Chinese People's Republic is a State of people's democracy at the first stage of its development. People's democracy in China does not yet fulfil the functions of the dictatorship of the proletariat. At the present stage Socialist tasks, as immediate tasks, are not put forward and not solved. That is a matter for the future. Mao Tse-tung has pointed out that only after flourishing national economy and culture have been established after the necessary conditions have been created, will China, in accordance with the will of the whole of the people, begin to solve the tasks of building Socialism.

At the present time the work of people's democracy in China aims at accomplishing the bourgeois-democratic revolution. Practically speaking, one of the tasks of this revolution—the national-liberation, anti-imperialist task—can be considered solved. At the same time the anti-feudal tasks have not yet been fully solved. In China the agrarian revolution is being widely developed, the abolition of landlord ownership and the establishment of peasant ownership of the land is in process.

Having taken the road of people's democracy, the Chinese people have achieved important successes. The foreign imperialists and their lackeys of the Kuomintang camp have been defeated and driven out. China has won national freedom and independence. An end has been put to the political arbitrariness of the big monopolists and feudals, to the lack of rights of the working masses; power has passed to the hands of the people. As a result of the agrarian reform, which is being put through on the principle of "the land belongs to those who cultivate it", the economic basis of the existence of the landlord class is being abolished.

The people's democratic government has confiscated the property of the foreign imperialists and Chinese compradores, and of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie linked with the foreign imperialists; it has taken into its hands their factories, mills, banks and trading enterprises. As a result of this confiscation a state sector of economy has arisen in China. At the same time the people's democratic government is drawing private capital on a wide scale into the restoration and development of national economy.

The successful solution of these tasks, which are of a general democratic character, will occupy a more or less considerable historical period of time and create all the necessary conditions for the transition in the future to the new State—to Socialist construction.

The experience of the Chinese revolution, the experience of the development of people's democracy in China, is of great importance for the

struggle of the working class and all working people in the colonial and dependent countries for their national independence, for the transition to the democratic road. The experience of the Chinese revolution is evidence that it is possible to win national freedom and independence, to put an end to the remnants of feudalism, only by means of the unification of all the democratic forces of the country under the leadership of the working class and that the most expedient form of State structure after the victory over the imperialists and feudals is people's democracy.

THE COLONIAL PEOPLES

The tasks of the revolution in the colonial and dependent countries and the forms of people's power can be judged from the programme and eve-of-election manifesto of the Communist Party of India. These programme documents formulate the radical task of the present stage of the historical development of India—the realisation of the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolution. As the documents point out, the enemies of the Indian people are the imperialists, the princes and the landowners, the big monopolists, the financiers, the big speculators linked with the predatory foreigners.

The Indian Communist Party has made an appeal to all working sections of the population, to the working class, to the peasants, the working intelligentsia, the middle class and the national bourgeoisie to rally to the united democratic front in order to inflict defeat on the Anglo-American imperialists, to win national freedom and independence, to put an end to feudalism, to put a people's democratic government in the place of the present reactionary government.

The Communist Party points out that at the present time India is not faced with socialist tasks. First of all It is necessary to put an end to imperialist oppression, to feudalism, to give the peasants land, to put an end to the undermining anti-popular activity of the monopolists, big financiers, speculators, to transfer power to the hands of the people. Only after these immediate tasks have been solved, and they will take a long time, will it be possible to put the question of the next stage of development.

“At the present stage of development the Communist Party of India does not demand the establishment of Socialism in our country”, states the programme. “In view of the backward economic development of India and the weakness of the mass organisations of the workers, peasants, working intelligentsia, our Party does not consider it possible at the present time to realise Socialist transformations in our country. But our Party considers fully mature the task of putting in the place of the present anti-democratic and anti-popular government a new, people's democratic government, created on the basis of a coalition of all democratic, anti-feudal and anti-imperialist forces in the country, capable of effectively guaranteeing the rights of the people, giving land to the peasants without compensation, protecting our national industry from the

competition of foreign goods and securing the industrialisation of the country, and a higher standard of living for the working class, ridding the people of unemployment and thereby leading the country on to the broad highway of progress, cultural development and independence.”

In its essence the programme of the Indian Communist Party is a model of the minimum programme for the struggle of the colonial peoples in present-day conditions. The fulfilment of this programme, the establishment of people's democracy in India, will open up the road to progress for the peoples of India.

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The idea of people's democracy has assumed tremendous magnetic force. It is penetrating into the consciousness of the masses of the people of the capitalist and colonial countries, rousing and rallying them for the struggle against the American imperialist enslavers and local reactionaries, for national freedom, for the development and consolidation of democracy, for universal peace, for Socialism.