

**revisionism and the  
demise of the USSR**



# Revisionism and the demise of the USSR

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## Contents

<b>Revisionism and the demise of the USSR</b>	<b>07</b>
ABANDONING THE CLASS STRUGGLE	09
The significance of Khrushchev's attack on Stalin	09
Peaceful transition	12
State of the whole people	23
Party of the entire people	29
LENINISM v REVISIONISM ON WAR AND PEACE	32
Peaceful coexistence	32
Marxist teachings on war and peace	45
Inevitability of wars under capitalism	48
Just wars	50
To abolish war, imperialism must be overthrown	53
OPPORTUNIST DISTORTIONS REGARDING WAR	54
Weapons v the spiritual state of the masses	54
Khrushchevite revisionism and war	57
THE RISE AND FALL OF REVISIONISM	66
Undermining socialist achievements	66
Party purge	72

The second economy	74
Gorbachev	81
The collapse of revisionism	85
LESSONS OF CAPITALIST RESTORATION	88
Capitalism has no solution	88
Revolution is the only answer	93
<b>Notes</b>	<b>97</b>

## Revisionism and the demise of the USSR<sup>1</sup>

In the English edition of my book on *Perestroika*, I stated that the period between the 20th and the 22nd congresses of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) witnessed the emergence, formation, growth and systematisation of Khrushchevite revisionism on a number of very important questions of principle, during which period the teachings of Marxism Leninism were subjected to wholesale revision, distortion and downright falsification.

By the 22nd Party Congress of the CPSU, Khrushchevite revisionism had become far more systematised, bold and open, with the result that it was, in fact, able to secure the adoption and incorporation of its erroneous propositions in a new programme adopted at that congress.

The new programme declared that

[The dictatorship of the proletariat] has ceased to be indispensable in the USSR . . . the state, which arose as a state of the dictatorship of the proletariat has, in the new, contemporary stage, become a state of the entire people . . .

[As] a result of the victory of socialism in the USSR and the consolidation of the unity of Soviet society, the Communist Party of the working class has become the vanguard of the Soviet people,

a party of the entire people.\*

At the time, in view of the fact that these and many other distortions and revisions of Marxism Leninism had already been subjected to an extensive and thorough criticism in the international anti-revisionist movement, in which the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the Party of Labour of Albania (PLA) had played a most prominent role, I decided not to include a critique of these distortions in my book. Instead, I concentrated on the economic side of revisionism, the economic theories propounded, the practical steps taken and 'reforms' implemented by the Khrushchevite revisionists, on the road to, and by way of, restoring capitalism in the USSR and the eastern and central European socialist countries.

Then, I was of the opinion that the revisionist distortions of the fundamental teachings of Marxism Leninism in the field of ideology, politics and class struggle – on questions ranging from the party of the proletariat and the dictatorship of the proletariat to imperialism and war, the concept of peaceful coexistence, the nature of the state and the relationship of proletarian revolution to the bourgeois state – were so glaringly obvious as to require no further treatment.

Now, I think it was a mistake to have excluded an exposure of these revisionist falsifications of Marxism Leninism, particularly in view of the fact that the younger generation of communists, even in some of the best communist parties in the world, is hardly acquainted with the origin of these falsifications and the devastating effect they have had on the international communist movement, from which the latter is still struggling to recover.

It is precisely with the aim of assisting this process of the recovery of the communist movement from the ravages of revisionism

\* H Ritvo (annotations), *The New Society: Final Text of the Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, Massachusetts: New Leader, 1962

that I have decided to list, and criticise, the Khrushchevite falsification of some of the principal teachings of Marxism.

## ABANDONING THE CLASS STRUGGLE

### The significance of Khrushchev's attack on Stalin

The 20th Party Congress (1956) of the CPSU marked the first step along the road of revisionism taken by the Khrushchevite leadership, which came into ascendancy following the death of Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin in 1953. At that congress, on the pretext of 'combating the personality cult', Khrushchev, in his 'secret' speech, launched a vituperative attack on Stalin, accusing him of suffering from 'persecution mania', indulging in 'brutal arbitrariness', resorting to 'mass repression and terror', as someone who 'knew the country and agriculture only from films', who 'planned operations on a globe', and whose leadership 'became a serious obstacle in the path of Soviet social development'.

There was method in Khrushchev's madness. His attack on Stalin, his attempt to paint Stalin in the darkest of colours, cannot solely be explained by or attributed to his personal dislike of, and animosity towards, Stalin.

The truth is that Stalin had led the Soviet people for three long decades of extraordinary difficulty and epoch-making achievements against all internal and external enemies in the heroic struggle for socialist construction, in the arduous struggle to defend and

\* Speech to the 20th Congress of the CPSU by N S Khrushchev, February 1956, [marxists.org](http://marxists.org)

consolidate the first socialist country in the world, and achieving the crowning victory in the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet people against the fascist hordes of Hitlerite German imperialism.

During the long years of his leadership of the CPSU, Stalin fought with might and main against all opportunistic distortions of Marxism Leninism. In defending and safeguarding the revolutionary teachings of the science of Marxism Leninism, he helped to enrich and further develop the theory and practice of the science of proletarian revolution. In attacking and negating Stalin at the 20th Party Congress of the CPSU, Khrushchev was, in effect, attacking and negating the dictatorship of the proletariat and the fundamental teachings of Marxism Leninism – teachings which Stalin had throughout his life so vehemently, so brilliantly and so successfully defended and developed.

This is the true significance, the essence, of Khrushchev's attack on Stalin. It is, therefore, no mere coincidence that, at the same congress, Khrushchev, in his report, began the repudiation of Marxism Leninism on several questions of principle, which I shall deal with shortly.

The attacks on Stalin, and the erroneous propositions put forward by Khrushchev, at the 20th Party Congress, serving as they did to discredit the Soviet Union, the dictatorship of the proletariat and communism, gladdened the hearts of the imperialist bourgeoisie and its agents in the working-class movement – the revisionists, Trotskyists and social democrats – providing them with a weapon with which to destroy the prestige and influence of the communist movement all over the world.

Khrushchev's 'secret' report served the imperialists as a battering ram for attacking the communist fortress; it provided them with a manifesto for unleashing a worldwide tidal wave against the Soviet Union, against communism and against revolutionary and national-liberation movements. Indeed, it handed them an opportunity, which they grasped with great alacrity, to advocate

'peaceful transition' back to capitalism in the USSR.

Swollen with arrogance, the Titoites became increasingly aggressive and, flaunting their reactionary 'anti-Stalinist' credentials, luridly attacked the socialist system and the dictatorship of the proletariat, asserting that the 20th Party Congress of the CPSU had 'created sufficient elements' for the 'new course' which Yugoslavia had initiated and that

[T]he question now is whether this course will win or the course of Stalinism will win again.\*

Khrushchev's speech gave a new lease of life to the Trotskyite renegades from communism. Emerging from the desperate straits into which they had sunk, these counter-revolutionary agents of the bourgeoisie feverishly resumed activity in the service of the exploiting classes. The so-called Fourth International, in its *Manifesto to the Workers and Peoples of the Entire World*, stated:

Today, when the Kremlin leaders are themselves admitting the crimes of Stalin, they implicitly recognise that the indefatigable struggle carried on . . . by the world Trotskyite movement against the degeneration of the workers' state, was fully justified.†

Khrushchev's 'secret' speech, not unexpectedly, caused ideological mayhem in the international communist movement and made it prey to a deluge of revisionist ideas. Serving as a signal to counter-revolutionary elements in the socialist countries, Khrushchev's anti-Stalin tirade led directly to the Hungarian counter-revolutionary uprising of 1956.

\* Speech in Pula by J B Tito, 11 November 1956

† Quoted in *The Polemic On the General Line of the International Communist Movement* (GL), Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965, p68

### Peaceful transition

At the 20th Congress of the CPSU, Khrushchev raised the question of 'peaceful transition' to socialism, on the pretext that 'radical changes' had taken place in the international situation. While saying that the road of the October Revolution had been 'the only correct road in those historical conditions', he asserted that, in view of the changed situation since then, it had become possible to carry through the transition from capitalism to socialism 'through the parliamentary road'.

This erroneous thesis of Khrushchev's marked a clear revision of, and complete departure from, the teachings of Marxism Leninism on the state and revolution, and was a clear repudiation of the universal significance of the road of the October Revolution.

According to Khrushchev, the proletariat is in a position to win a stable majority in parliament in the conditions of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and under the latter's electoral laws.

The working class [in the capitalist countries], by rallying around itself the toiling peasantry, the intelligentsia, all patriotic forces, and resolutely repulsing the opportunist elements who are incapable of giving up the policy of compromise with the capitalists and landlords, is in a position to defeat the reactionary forces opposed to the popular interest, to capture a stable majority in parliament.\*

Khrushchev equated the winning by the proletariat of a stable majority in parliament with the seizure of state power and the

\* Report to the 20th Party Congress of the CPSU by N S Khrushchev, February 1956

smashing of the bourgeois state machine.

[For the proletariat] to win a majority in parliament and transform it into an organ of people's power, given a powerful revolutionary movement in the country, *means smashing the military-bureaucratic machine of the bourgeoisie* and setting up a new, proletarian people's state in parliamentary form.\*

Further, Khrushchev asserted that

The winning of a stable parliamentary majority . . . could create for the working class of a number of capitalist . . . countries the conditions needed to secure fundamental changes . . . and secure the transfer of the basic means of production into the hands of the people.†

As early as 1852, on the basis of the concrete historical experience of the French revolution of 1848-51, Marx reached the conclusion that, whereas all previous revolutions had perfected the state machine, the task of the proletarian revolution was to 'smash' the 'bureaucratic-military machine'. Further, in the aftermath of the Paris Commune of 1871, Marx declared:

One thing especially was proved by the Commune, *viz*, that the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes.‡

\* 'For new victories for the world communist movement', speech by N S Khrushchev to a meeting of the party organisations in the Higher Party School, the Academy of Social Sciences and the Institute of Marxism Leninism, Central Committee of the CPSU, January 1961, cited in *World Marxist Review*, No 1, Prague, 1961, p22 (my emphasis)

† Report to the 20th Party Congress of the CPSU by N S Khrushchev

‡ Preface to the second German edition of 1872 by K Marx and F Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1970, p2



Historical experience has since fully confirmed the teachings of Marxism. It was in defiance of the teachings of Marxism on the state, the question of the relation of proletarian revolution to the bourgeois state, and historical experience alike, that Khrushchev was peddling his twaddle about the peaceful parliamentary road to socialism.

At the 22nd Party Congress of the CPSU, by which time the Khrushchevite clique had consolidated its position, the Soviet revisionists were able to enshrine the thesis of peaceful transition and many other erroneous theses into the programme of the CPSU.

There was nothing new in Khrushchev's thesis concerning 'peaceful transition'. It was merely a rehash of the revisionist thesis of Bernstein and Kautsky, central to whose betrayal of Marxism were their advocacy of the legal, peaceful, parliamentary road to socialism and their violent opposition to violent revolution, the smashing of the bourgeois state machine and its replacement by the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Bernstein said that capitalism could 'grow into socialism' peacefully, that the political system of modern bourgeois society ought 'not be destroyed but should only be further developed', and that

We are now bringing about by voting, demonstrations and similar means of pressure reforms which would have required bloody revolution a hundred years ago.\*

According to Bernstein, the parliamentary road alone could effect the transition to socialism; the attainment of equal and universal suffrage by the working class was tantamount to the attainment of the basic condition for its emancipation; and one day the numerical strength of the working class would be such that the

\* Eduard Bernstein, *The Prerequisites for Socialism and the Tasks of the Social-Democratic Party*, German edition, 1923, p11 and p197

ruling class would be in no position to withstand its pressure and capitalism would collapse semi-spontaneously.

Lenin denounced Bernstein's renegade pronouncements saying:

The Bernsteinians accepted and accept Marxism minus its directly revolutionary aspect. They do not regard the parliamentary struggle as one of the weapons particularly suitable for definite historical periods, but as the main and almost the sole form of struggle, making 'force', 'seizure', 'dictatorship', unnecessary.\*

Karl Kautsky was a worthy successor to Bernstein. He too zealously propagated the parliamentary road. He too fervently opposed violent revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. He put forward the view that the bourgeois-democratic system left 'no more room for armed struggle for the settlement of class conflicts'.† He declared ridiculous the propagation of a violent political overthrow, attacking Lenin and the Bolshevik party by comparing them to 'an impatient midwife who uses violence to make a pregnant woman give birth in the fifth month instead of the ninth'.‡

The following pronouncement of Kautsky encapsulates the extent of his parliamentary cretinism:

The aim of our political struggle remains, as hitherto, the conquest of state power by winning a majority in parliament and by converting parliament into a master of the government.§

\* V I Lenin, *The Victory of the Cadets and the Tasks of the Workers' Party*, April 1906, *Collected Works (CW)*, Vol 10, English edition, Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1962, p249

† K Kautsky, *The Materialist Interpretation of History*, German edition, Berlin, 1927, pp431-2

‡ K Kautsky, *Proletarian Revolution and its Programme*, German edition, Berlin, 1922, p90. Quoted in GL, pp364-5

§ 'New Tactics' by K Kautsky, *Die Neue Zeit*, No 46, 1912. Quoted in GL, p365

Lenin subjected to criticism Kautsky's parliamentary cretinism in these bitter and withering terms:

Only scoundrels or simpletons can think that the proletariat must win the majority in elections *carried out under the yoke of the bourgeoisie, under the yoke of wage-slavery*, and that it should win power afterwards. This is the height of folly or hypocrisy; it is substituting voting, under the old system and with the old power, for class struggle and revolution.\*

Condemning Kautsky's parliamentary road, Lenin declared:

This is nothing but the purest and the most vulgar opportunism: repudiating revolution in deeds, while accepting it in word.†

And further:

By so 'interpreting' the concept 'revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat' as to expunge the revolutionary violence of the oppressed class against its oppressors, Kautsky beat the world record in the liberal distortion of Marx.‡

Marxism Leninism teaches that the fundamental question of all revolutions is that of state power. Further, it teaches, and experience confirms, that the ruling classes never relinquish power voluntarily. Even during a period of crisis, the old regime never topples – it has to be pushed. One would have thought that this universal law of class struggle was so obvious that it required no reminding or explanation.

\* 'Greetings to the Italian, French and German communists' by V I Lenin, October 1919, CW, Vol 30, p58

† V I Lenin, *The State and Revolution*, September 1917, CW, Vol 25, p494

‡ V I Lenin, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, November 1918, CW, Vol 28, p242

It goes without saying that every revolution demands, and involves, great sacrifices on the part of the revolutionary class. However, to abandon revolution on the pretext of avoiding sacrifices is tantamount to demanding that the oppressed and exploited classes accept perpetual slavery as their lot and forever endure limitless pain and sacrifice, for the birth pangs of a revolution are as nothing in terms of pain compared to the chronic agony of life under the conditions of capitalism. In the words of Lenin:

Even with the most peaceful course of events, the present [capitalist] system always and inevitably exacts countless sacrifices from the working class.\*

Marxism Leninism teaches, and historical experience confirms, that violent revolution is a universal law of proletarian revolution. The whole history of the working-class movement also informs us that the recognition or non-recognition of this universal law, of the necessity of smashing the old bourgeois state machine, and the necessity of replacing the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie by the dictatorship of the proletariat, has always marked the boundary line between Marxism and all forms of opportunism and revisionism, between proletarian revolutionaries and all renegades to the cause of proletarian revolution.

Lenin repeatedly stressed the necessity, and inevitability of

... civil war, without which not a single great revolution in history has yet been able to get along, and without which not a single serious Marxist has conceived of the transition from capitalism to socialism.†

Lenin pointed out that a long period of 'birth pangs' separates

\* 'Another massacre' by V I Lenin, June 1901, CW, Vol 5, p25

† 'Prophetic Words', speech by V I Lenin, June 1918, CW, Vol 27, p496

socialism from capitalism; that violence always plays the role of midwife in the birth of the new society from the womb of the old society, and that

The [bourgeois state] cannot be superseded by the proletarian state (the dictatorship of the proletariat) through the process of 'withering away', but, as a general rule, only through a violent revolution . . . The necessity of systematically imbuing the masses with this and precisely *this* view of violent revolution lies at the root of *all* the teachings of Marx and Engels.\*

Only those who suffer from the incurable malady of 'parliamentary cretinism', which robs those affected by it 'of all sense, all memory, all understanding of the rude external world', can subscribe to this thesis of peaceful transition to socialism.†

Only those who forget that 'there can be no peaceful evolution towards socialism' can mindlessly propagate the twaddle about there being a peaceful road to socialism.‡ In the conditions of capitalist imperialism, of unprecedented militarism, the strangulation of oppressed nations and weak countries, the wholesale furious struggle between the imperialist countries for the redivision of the world,

. . . the very thought of peacefully subordinating the capitalists to the will of the majority of the exploited, of the peaceful, reformist transition to socialism, is not only extreme philistine stupidity, but also downright deception of the workers, the embellishment

\* V I Lenin, *The State and Revolution*, p405

† K Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, March 1852, Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1978, p91

‡ 'Deception of the people with slogans of freedom and equality', speech by V I Lenin at the First All-Russia Congress on Adult Education, June 1919, CW, Vol 29, p363

of capitalist wage slavery, concealment of the truth. The truth of the matter is that the bourgeoisie, even the most educated and democratic, now no longer hesitates to resort to any fraud or crime, to massacre millions of workers and peasants in order to save private ownership of the means of production. Only the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie, the confiscation of its property, the destruction of the whole of the bourgeois state apparatus from top to bottom – parliamentary, judicial, military, bureaucratic, administrative, municipal, etc, right up to the very wholesale deportation or internment of the most dangerous and stubborn exploiters – putting them under strict surveillance in order to combat inevitable attempts to resist and to restore capitalist slavery – only such measures can ensure real subordination of the whole class of exploiters.\*

As to the question of whether a fundamental transformation of the capitalist order could be achieved peacefully, without violent revolution, without the dictatorship of the proletariat, this is how Stalin replied:

Obviously not. To think that such a revolution can be carried out peacefully, within the framework of bourgeois democracy, which is adapted to the rule of the bourgeoisie, means that one has either gone out of one's mind and lost normal human understanding, or has grossly and openly repudiated the proletarian revolution.†

In his article 'Problems of war and strategy', following in the footsteps of the Marxist-Leninist theory and the experience, among

\* 'Theses on the fundamental tasks of the Second Congress of the Communist International' by V I Lenin, July 1920, CW, Vol 31, pp186-7

† J V Stalin, *Concerning Questions of Leninism*, subsequently referred to as *Foundations of Leninism*, May 1924, Works, Vol 8, Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1954, p25

other things, of the Chinese revolution, Mao Zedong expressed himself on this question in these effusive terms:

The seizure of power by armed force, the settlement of the issue by war, is the central task and the highest form of revolution. This Marxist-Leninist principle of revolution holds good universally, for China and for all other countries.\*

And further:

Experience in the class struggle in the era of imperialism teaches us that it is only by the power of the gun that the working class and the labouring masses can defeat the armed bourgeoisie and landlords; in this sense we may say that only with guns can the whole world be transformed.†

It is the above fundamental teachings of Marxism Leninism, fully corroborated by historical experience, that Khrushchevite revisionism betrays.

Lenin stressed time and again that by virtue of its fundamental economic traits,

Imperialism . . . is distinguished by a minimum attachment for peace and freedom, and by a maximum and universal development of militarism'. 'To 'fail to notice' this' in the discussion of the question of peaceful or violent change is 'to stoop to the position of a common or garden variety lackey of the bourgeoisie.‡

At a time when a tiny group of imperialist countries, especially

\* 'Problems of war and strategy' by Mao Zedong, November 1938, *Selected Military Writings*, Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1963, p267

† 'Problems of war and strategy' by Mao Zedong, p273

‡ V I Lenin, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, p239

the US, maintain hundreds of military bases abroad; when US imperialism alone spends \$540bn (\$23,000 per second) on its annual military budget – a sum in excess of the combined military expenditure of the rest of the world; when hundreds of thousands of imperialist soldiers are occupying foreign lands and waging predatory wars of spoliation, killing millions of innocent men, women and children, as for instance in Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine; when imperialism, in league with the most autocratic, dictatorial and medieval regimes, is doing all in its power to suppress national liberation and proletarian revolutionary struggles; when imperialist powers, armed to the teeth, are ready to drown in blood the revolutionary struggles at home and abroad – in these circumstances, to talk of a peaceful, parliamentary road to socialism, as do the Khrushchevite revisionists, including our home-grown revisionists of the Communist Party of Britain (CPB), is to give proof of one's insanity or gross and open repudiation of proletarian revolution.

But, then, it is in the very nature of things that those who suffer from the incurable malady of parliamentary cretinism, 'which holds those infected by it fast in an imaginary world and robs them of all sense, all meaning, all understanding of the rude external world', cannot help subscribing to their chimerical faith in the peaceful, parliamentary road to socialism.\*

It goes without saying that, while emphasising the necessity of violent revolution for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, Marxist Leninists have always recognised the need, given suitable conditions, for the proletariat to participate in the arena of parliamentary struggle. However, such participation is aimed at using the parliamentary platform as a means of exposing the reactionary, rotten and outmoded nature of the bourgeois system and educating the masses – not for sowing illusions about 'peaceful transition to socialism'. In other words, the proletariat participates in the

\* K Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, p91

parliamentary arena for the sole purpose of using parliament for exposing bourgeois parliamentarism.

In the words of Lenin:

The party of the revolutionary proletariat must take part in bourgeois parliamentarism in order to enlighten the masses, which can be done during elections and in the struggle between parties in parliament. But to limit the class struggle to the parliamentary struggle, or to regard the latter as the highest and decisive form, to which all the other forms of struggle are subordinate, means actually deserting to the side of the bourgeoisie and going against the proletariat.\*

In the light of the above, it must be clear that those who hold dear the ideals of communism, those who are committed to the emancipation of the proletariat, and through it the liberation of mankind, cannot but express their total and unreserved agreement with these concluding words of the Communist Manifesto:

The communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.

WORKING MEN OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!†

By the 22nd Congress of the CPSU (October 1961), the Khrushchevite revisionist clique, having consolidated its position in the party, went on to systematise the wrong line that it had pur-

\* 'The Constituent Assembly elections and the dictatorship of the proletariat' by V I Lenin, December 1919, CW, Vol 30, p272

† K Marx and F Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, p76

sued since the 20th Congress, the essence of which was 'peaceful transition', 'peaceful competition' and 'peaceful coexistence'. The 22nd Congress adopted an out-and-out revisionist programme, which, in addition to one-sidedly stressing the possibilities for peaceful transition and characterising peaceful coexistence as the general principle of the foreign policy of the USSR, went on to replace the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat with that of the state of the whole people, and the concept of the party of the proletariat with that of the party of the entire people. It substituted humanism for the Marxist-Leninist theory of class struggle and the bourgeois slogan of 'liberty, equality and fraternity' for the wonderful ideals of communism.

It was a programme characterised by its opposition to revolution, or to the completion of the revolution in those countries which were already socialist; it was, in essence, a programme for the preservation or restoration of capitalism, whose end product, sadly, was to be the collapse of the USSR and the eastern and central European socialist countries, as well as tremendous setbacks to the proletarian-revolutionary and national-liberation movements.

### State of the whole people

At the 22nd Congress of the CPSU, Khrushchev flagrantly unfurled the banner of opposition to the dictatorship of the proletariat and its replacement by 'the state of the whole people'. The programme adopted at this congress stated that the dictatorship of the proletariat 'has ceased to be indispensable in the USSR' and that

The state, which arose as a state of the dictatorship of the proletariat, has, in the new contemporary stage, become a state of the

entire people.\*

Through this thesis, in complete violation of the fundamental teachings of Marxism Leninism on the significance of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Khrushchevites disarmed the Soviet proletariat, as well as the proletariat of many other countries, in particular of the proletariat of the eastern European socialist countries.

Even a novice in Marxism knows that the state is nothing but an instrument of class rule, a tool for ensuring the dictatorship of one class over another, the subjugation of one class by another. As long as the state exists, it cannot stand above classes; so long as the proletariat uses the state, it does so to hold down its adversaries. Indeed, the very existence of the state is an eloquent proof of the irreconcilability of class antagonisms. The moment the state comes forward as a representative of the whole of society, it becomes redundant and superfluous, and disappears as such.

However, the proletariat needs its own state – the dictatorship of the proletariat – for the ‘entire historical period which separates capitalism from “classless society”, from communism’.† The dictatorship of the proletariat is necessary to make possible the ‘expropriation of the expropriators’, to crush the inevitable resistance and attempts at restoration of the former exploiting classes, to organise the economic reconstruction of society – in a word, to prepare the material and spiritual conditions for the transference of society from the lower phase to the higher phase of communism.

Since classes, and struggle, continue long after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, and for an entire historical epoch, during this period the dictatorship of the proletariat too is needed, for without

\* *Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*

† V I Lenin, *The State and Revolution*, p418

it the long, difficult and complicated journey from the lower to the higher stage of communism cannot be transversed. In the never-to-be forgotten words of Lenin:

Only he is a Marxist who *extends* the recognition of the class struggle to the recognition of the *dictatorship of the proletariat*. This is what constitutes the most profound difference between the Marxist and the ordinary petty (as well as big) bourgeois. This is the touchstone on which the *real* understanding and recognition of Marxism is to be tested . . . opportunism *does not extend* the recognition of the class struggle to what is the cardinal point, to the period of *transition* from capitalism to communism, to the period of the *overthrow* and the complete *abolition* of the bourgeoisie. In reality this period inevitably is a period of an unprecedentedly violent class struggle in unprecedentedly acute forms and, consequently, during this period the state must inevitably be a state that is democratic in a *new way* (for the proletariat and the propertyless in general) and dictatorial in a new way (against the bourgeoisie).\*

Marxist Leninists have never shied away from openly stating their views on the state. The proletariat and its political party have never concealed that the proletarian socialist revolution is aimed at overthrowing bourgeois rule (the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie) and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat; that this dictatorship is needed for an entire historical epoch separating capitalism from a classless communist society. Marxist Leninists have no reason to conceal this truth, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, by its very nature, is the rule of the vast majority over a small minority of exploiters and would-be exploiters. It is only the bourgeoisie and its political representatives (political parties),

\* *Ibid*, p417

who govern on behalf of a tiny minority of exploiters who, in an attempt to deceive the masses, do their best to conceal the class nature of the bourgeois state and portray their state machinery as being 'of the whole people' and above or without class allegiances.

Khrushchev's promulgation as to the abolition of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union and its alleged replacement by the 'state of the whole people' was nothing short of the replacement of the teachings of Marxism Leninism on the state by bourgeois falsehoods.

Faced with criticism of their falsehoods on these crucial questions, the Khrushchevite clique attempted in vain to concoct a theoretical basis for the concept of the 'state of the whole people', asserting that the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat referred to by Marx and Lenin applied only to the first stage, and that between this and the higher stage of communism and the withering away of the state, there lies yet another stage – that of the 'state of the whole people'.

The sophistry of the Khrushchevite clique of charlatans is only too evident when compared to the definite and clear pronouncements of Marx and Lenin on the subject under consideration. In his *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, Marx enunciated the widely-known axiom according to which the dictatorship of the proletariat lasts for the entire period of transition from capitalism to communism. This is how Lenin clearly explained this Marxist axiom:

In his *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, Marx wrote: 'Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. Corresponding to this is also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.'<sup>\*</sup>

\* V I Lenin, *The State and Revolution*, p464

Up to now this axiom has never been disputed by socialists, and yet it implies the recognition of the state right up to the time when victorious socialism has grown into complete communism.\*

And further:

The essence of Marx's theory of the state has been mastered only by those who realise that the dictatorship of a single class is necessary not only for every class society in general, not only for the proletariat which has overthrown the bourgeoisie, but also for the entire historical period which separates capitalism from 'classless society', from communism.<sup>†</sup>

The Khrushchevites asserted that only by the replacement of the dictatorship of the proletariat by the 'state of the whole people' could democracy be deepened into 'genuine democracy for the whole people'; they pretentiously asserted that their line of the abolition of the dictatorship of the proletariat represented 'a line of energetically developing democracy' and an example of how 'proletarian democracy is becoming socialist democracy of the whole people'.<sup>‡</sup>

Anyone in the least acquainted with the subject knows that democracy is a form of state, and, as such, is a class democracy. There is no such thing as non-class democracy – 'democracy of the whole people'.

In the words of Lenin:

Democracy for the vast majority of the people, and suppression

\* 'The Discussion on self-determination summed up' by V I Lenin, July 1916, CW, Vol 22, p323

† V I Lenin, *The State and Revolution*, p 418

‡ 'Report to the 22nd Congress of the CPSU' by N S Khrushchev, October 1961, and 'Report on the programme of the CPSU', delivered at the congress

by force, ie, exclusion from democracy, of the exploiters and oppressors of the people – this is the change democracy undergoes during the transition from capitalism to communism.\*

In other words, the only way that democracy for the masses of working people can be developed, deepened and expanded, is through the exercise of the dictatorship of the proletariat over the exploiting classes; without the latter there can be no real democracy for the working people. Proletarian democracy and bourgeois democracy are *mutually exclusive*. The most thorough elimination of bourgeois democracy is a condition for the most thorough flourishing of proletarian democracy.

The denigration of the dictatorship of the proletariat, far from being a step in the extension of democracy on the road to communism, was intended to, and actually did, serve as an instrument for the curtailment of democracy – proletarian democracy – for the masses, leading to the empowerment of privileged sections and strata of Soviet society, thus paving the way back to the restoration of capitalism.

No wonder, then, that the Khrushchevite revisionists oppose this basic Marxist-Leninist teaching on democracy. According to them, there is no democracy if the enemies of the proletariat are suppressed and the only way to develop democracy is through the abolition of the dictatorship of the proletariat over its enemies, the cessation of their suppression, and the establishment of 'democracy of the whole people'.

The Khrushchevite views on democracy are indistinguishable from the renegade Kautsky's concept of 'pure democracy', in criticising whom Lenin said:

'[P]ure democracy' is not only an ignorant phrase, revealing a

\* V I Lenin, *The State and Revolution*, p467

lack of understanding both of the class struggle and of the nature of the state, but also a thrice-empty phrase, since in communist society democracy will wither away in the process of changing and becoming a habit, but will never be 'pure' democracy.\*

Since democracy is a form of state, it stands to reason that once the state disappears – withers away – as it will when society reaches the higher stage of communism, democracy too will disappear.

The dialectics (course) of development is as follows: from absolutism to bourgeois democracy; from bourgeois democracy to proletarian democracy; from proletarian democracy to none.†

Thus it can be seen that Khrushchev's 'democracy for the whole people', just like his 'state of the whole people' was nothing but a hoax, designed to cover up his revisionist clique's betrayal of the proletariat, its opposition to socialism, and prepare the ground for the restoration of capitalism.

### Party of the entire people

Also at the 22nd Congress of the CPSU, Khrushchev launched his attack on the proletarian character of the Communist Party, announcing the replacement of the party of the proletariat by a 'party of the entire people'. The programme adopted at the 22nd Congress said:

As a result of the victory of socialism in the USSR and the consoli-

\* V I Lenin, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, p242

† V I Lenin, *Marxism on the State*, Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1958, p42



dation of the unity of Soviet society, the Communist Party of the working class has become the vanguard of the Soviet people, a party of the entire people.\*

Even a bare acquaintance with Marxism Leninism is sufficient to make one realise the absurdity of this proposition. A political party is a vehicle of class struggle. No political party is ever devoid of a class character. A non-class or supra-class political party is a chimerical absurdity. There has never been, nor can there be, such a thing as a 'party of the entire people' that does not give expression to the interests of a particular class.

A party of the proletariat is built in accordance with the revolutionary theory and organisational principles of Marxism Leninism; it is a party formed by advanced members of the working class who are boundlessly loyal to the historical mission of the proletariat, that is, to leading society to the higher stage of communism through the dictatorship of the proletariat; it is the organised vanguard and the highest form of organisation of the proletariat.

In addition to enlisting members of working-class origin, the party of the proletariat also has members of other classes within its ranks. However, the latter do not enter the party as representatives of other classes; from the moment of joining the party they must jettison their former class stand and adopt the stand of the proletariat. In the words of Marx and Engels:

If people of this kind from other classes join the proletarian movement, the first condition must be that they should not bring any remnants of bourgeois, petty-bourgeois, etc, prejudices with them but should whole-heartedly adopt the proletarian outlook.†

\* *Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*

† Circular letter to A Bebel, W Liebnickht, W Bracke and others by K Marx and F Engels, September 1879, *Marx and Engels Selected Correspondence*, Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1955, p307

All the crucial principles as to the character of the proletarian party were, in the opinion of the Khrushchevites, nothing but 'stereotyped formulas' whereas their 'party of the entire people' was in conformity with the 'actual dialectics of the development of the Communist Party'.

One of the spurious arguments used by the Khrushchevites in favour of their 'party of the entire people' was that the entire people of the USSR had accepted the Marxist-Leninist outlook of the working class, and the aim of the working class, that of the building of communism, had become the aim of the entire Soviet people.

But in the conditions of continued class struggle in the USSR, how could one assert that everyone in the USSR had accepted the Marxist-Leninist outlook? Could it be maintained that the hundreds of thousands of old and new bourgeois elements in the USSR had all become firm Marxist Leninists? And, if Marxism Leninism had truly become the world outlook of the entire Soviet people, as was alleged by the Khrushchevite revisionists, did it not then follow that there was no difference in Soviet society between party members and those outside the party's ranks, and that, therefore, there was no need at all for the existence of the party? Why should it matter if there existed a 'party of the whole people' or not?

The real aim of the Khrushchevites in proposing a 'party of the whole people' was to change the proletarian character of the CPSU and transform it from the Marxist-Leninist party it was into the revisionist party that it became. The Khrushchevites thus initiated the process of degeneration of the CPSU from a Marxist-Leninist party into a revisionist party, which went on to supervise the restoration of capitalism in the once-glorious Soviet Union.

'A party that wants to exist', said Lenin, 'cannot allow the slightest wavering on the question of its existence or any agreement with

those who may bury it.\*

For the failure of the broad membership of the CPSU to oppose the Khrushchevites, the Soviet people were to pay dear, for this renegade clique of revisionists was able in the end to bury the once-great CPSU and cause the collapse of socialism in the land of Lenin and Stalin, with devastating effects on the revolutionary proletarian and national-liberation movements the world over.

## LENINISM v REVISIONISM ON WAR AND PEACE

### Peaceful coexistence

It was Lenin who advanced the idea of peaceful coexistence. Since socialism does not triumph in all the countries at once, socialist countries are obliged to exist side by side with capitalist countries. In such a situation, the socialist state should adopt a policy of peaceful coexistence towards countries with different social systems.

Following the victorious October Revolution, Lenin on more than one occasion proclaimed the peaceful foreign policy of the Soviet state. For their part, the imperialists, bent on destroying the newborn republic, launched their war of intervention against the latter. Making countless sacrifices, and suffering untold hardships, by

\* 'How Vera Zasulich demolishes liquidationism' by V I Lenin, July 1913, CW, Vol 19, p414

1920 the Soviet people emerged triumphant from the imperialist armed intervention.

The war over, the Soviet people turned to the task of peaceful construction. It was in these circumstances that Lenin advanced the slogan of peaceful coexistence, while at the same time recognising that there was no guarantee of such coexistence, owing to the inherently aggressive nature of imperialism. Hence the need for the socialist state to be constantly vigilant. The following ideas ran like a red thread through Lenin's correct policy of peaceful coexistence.

First, that the socialist state existed in the teeth of imperialist opposition. Even though it adhered to a peaceful foreign policy, imperialism had little desire to live in peace with it and would seize every opportunity to oppose – even destroy – the socialist state. Lenin said:

The existence of the Soviet Republic side by side with imperialist states for a long time is unthinkable. One or the other must triumph in the end. And before that end supervenes, a series of frightful collisions between the Soviet Republic and the bourgeois states will be inevitable.\*

Second, that it was only through struggle and repeated trials of strength between imperialist countries and the socialist state, the adoption by the latter of a strict policy, its reliance on the sympathy and support of the proletariat and oppressed peoples of the world, and the utilisation by it of the inter-imperialist contradictions, that the Soviet state was able to live peacefully side by side with the imperialist states.

Third, that in the practical execution of the policy of peaceful co-

\* Report of the Central Committee to the Eighth Congress of the RCP(B) by V I Lenin, March 1919, CW, Vol 29, p153

existence, different criteria had to be applied to different countries in the capitalist world. This demanded the establishment of closer relations and friendship between the Soviet state and those countries bullied and oppressed by imperialism. Lenin set the Soviet state the main task of defeating the exploiters and winning over the waverers – the latter including ‘a whole series of bourgeois states, which, as bourgeois states, hate us, but which, on the other hand, as oppressed states, prefer peace with us’.\*

Fourth, that peaceful coexistence was a policy to be pursued by the proletariat in power towards countries with different social systems. It was not the sum total of the foreign policy of the Soviet state. Lenin repeatedly stressed that the fundamental principle underlying the foreign policy of the Soviet state was none other than proletarian internationalism.

He declared:

Soviet Russia considers it her greatest pride to help the workers of the whole world in their difficult struggle for the overthrow of capitalism. Victory will be ours.†

Fifth, that it was impossible for oppressed classes and nations to coexist peacefully with the oppressor classes and nations.

The above basic ideas of Lenin on the question of peaceful coexistence were fully upheld by Stalin during the 30 long years he was the leader of the Soviet Union. While fully subscribing to, and carrying out, Lenin’s policy of peaceful coexistence, Stalin was vehemently opposed to withholding fraternal support from the

\* Report on the work of All-Russian Central Executive Committee and the Council of People’s Commissars by V I Lenin, delivered at the First Session of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, Seventh Convocation, February 1920, CW, Vol 30, p316

† ‘To the Fourth Congress of the Communist International and to the Petrograd Soviet of Workers’ and Red Army Deputies’ by V I Lenin, November 1922, CW, Vol 33, p417

revolutionary struggles of other people so as to curry favour with imperialism. Identifying two opposing lines in foreign policy, he pointed out:

One thing or the other:

*either* we continue to pursue a revolutionary policy rallying the proletarians and oppressed of all countries around the working class of the USSR – in which case international capital will do everything it can to hinder our advance;

*or* we renounce our revolutionary policy and agree to make a number of fundamental concessions to international capital – in which case international capital, no doubt, will not be averse to ‘assisting’ us in converting our socialist country into a ‘good’ bourgeois republic.

. . . America demands that we renounce in principle the policy of supporting the emancipation movement of the working class in other countries, and says that if we made this concession everything would go smoothly . . . perhaps we should make this concession?

. . .we cannot agree to these or similar concessions without being false to ourselves . . .\*

Following in Lenin’s footsteps, Stalin firstly upheld the proposition that

The revolution which has been victorious in one country must regard itself not as a self-sufficient entity, but as an aid, as a means

\* ‘The work of the April Joint Plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission’ by J V Stalin, delivered at a meeting of the Active of the Moscow Organisation of the CPSU(B), April 1928, *Works*, Vol 11, pp58-60

for hastening the victory of the proletariat in all countries.\*

. . . it constitutes the first stage of the world revolution and a mighty base for its further development.†

In 1925, in his fight against Trotskyite and Zinovievite liquidationists, Stalin had the occasion to point out that one of the perilous characteristics of liquidationism was:

. . . lack of confidence in the international proletarian revolution; lack of confidence in its victory; a sceptical attitude towards the national-liberation movement in the colonies and dependent countries . . . failure to understand the elementary demand of internationalism, by virtue of which the victory of socialism in one country is not an end in itself, but as a means of developing and supporting the revolution in other countries.‡

Thus it is clear that Lenin's policy of peaceful coexistence, a policy faithfully adhered to by the USSR during the three decades of Stalin's leadership, goes hand in hand with proletarian internationalism – a policy of alliance with, and support for, the oppressed nations and proletarian revolutionary movements of the advanced countries in their struggles for national liberation against imperialism and for social emancipation respectively.

Beginning with the 20th Congress of the CPSU, the ascendant Khrushchevite renegade clique began the falsification of, and departure from, Lenin's policy of peaceful coexistence – all in an effort to curry favour with imperialism, especially US imperialism.

\* 'The October Revolution and the tactics of the Russian communists', December 1924, *Works*, Vol 6, p415

† *Ibid*, p419

‡ 'Questions and answers', speech delivered at Sverdlov University by J V Stalin, June 1925, *Works*, Vol 7, p169

In the name of peaceful coexistence, the Khrushchevites replaced international class struggle with international class collaboration and advocated a policy of 'all-round co-operation' between socialism and imperialism, thus opening the sluice gate to imperialist penetration of the socialist countries – a policy neatly tailored to the requirements of US imperialism's schemes for the 'peaceful evolution' of the socialist countries into 'good' bourgeois republics.

The Khrushchevites asserted:

- that peaceful coexistence was the supreme and overriding instrument for solving vitally important problems confronting society and should be made the 'basic law of life for the whole of modern society';\*
- that the leaders of imperialism had come to accept peaceful coexistence, loudly announcing the Kennedy administration's alleged admission of the reasonableness and practicality of peaceful coexistence between countries with different social systems;
- that peaceful coexistence was 'the general line of foreign policy of the Soviet Union and the countries of the socialist camp';†
- that the principle of peaceful coexistence was the determining factor in the general line of the foreign policy of the CPSU and other Marxist parties, that it was the basis of the strategy of communism in the contemporary world, and that all communists had allegedly 'made the struggle for peaceful coexistence the general principle of their policy';‡
- that peaceful coexistence had assumed the importance of a condition precedent for victory in the people's revolution-

\* Speech at the UN General Assembly by N S Khrushchev, September 1960

† Speech at a reception given by the Embassy of the DPRK in the Soviet Union by N S Khrushchev, July 1961

‡ 'Peaceful coexistence and revolution', *Kommunist*, No 2, Moscow, 1962

ary struggles, and that the victorious Cuban revolution, the achievement of independence by more than 40 countries, including Algeria, the growth in the number and strength of communist parties, and the increased influence of the international communist movement, were all achieved under conditions of peaceful coexistence between states with different social systems and were attributable precisely to these conditions;

- that peaceful coexistence was 'the best way of helping the international revolutionary labour movement achieve its basic class aims', declaring that the possibility of a peaceful transition to socialism in the capitalist countries had grown under the conditions of peaceful coexistence;\*
- that the victory of socialism in economic competition was bound to deliver a crushing blow to the entire system of capitalist relationships, with the programme of the CPSU adopted at the 22nd Congress of the CPSU boldly asserting that 'when the Soviet people enjoy the blessings of communism, new hundreds of millions of people on earth will say 'We are for communism!' and that by then even the capitalists may 'go over to the Communist Party'.

From the above it is clear that Lenin's policy of peaceful coexistence was directed at imperialist policies of war and aggression, was based on the standpoint of international class struggle and the historical mission of the proletariat, which requires socialist countries, in addition to pursuing the policy of peaceful coexistence, also to render firm support to the revolutionary struggles of the oppressed peoples and nations, as well as proletarian revolutionary movements of the working class. Khrushchevite peaceful coexistence, on the other hand, served imperialism and encour-

\* 'Open letter of the CC of the CPSU to all party organisations, to all communists of the Soviet Union', July 1963

aged imperialist policies of war and aggression, seeking as it did to replace proletarian world revolution with pacifism and a complete renunciation of proletarian internationalism.

The Khrushchevite policy was one of class capitulation, and robbed the Leninist policy of peaceful coexistence of its revolutionary essence by distorting, mutilating and falsifying it beyond recognition. Whereas Lenin's policy of peaceful coexistence was but one aspect of the international policy of the proletariat in state power, the Khrushchevites transformed peaceful coexistence into the general line of the foreign policy of the socialist countries – even into the general line of all communist parties.

Capitalism and socialism are two diametrically opposite systems. Capitalism can never reconcile itself to the existence of socialism. From time to time it will turn its desire to overthrow socialism into armed struggle aimed at such overthrow. The war of intervention by imperialism against the young Soviet republic, the brutal war waged by Hitlerite fascism against the USSR, and the genocidal wars waged by US imperialism against the Korean and Vietnamese people are just a few examples of such murderous attempts to wipe out socialism.

It is only through struggle and armed defence, only through inflicting staggering defeats on imperialism, that the socialist countries won the right to live side by side with imperialism – the right to peaceful coexistence. Any policy of peaceful coexistence devoid of struggle would have got the socialist countries absolutely nowhere.

In the absence of hot wars, during periods when imperialism is unable to wage wars owing to weakness and unfavourable conditions, it launches cold wars, during which, while vastly expanding its armaments and preparing for war, it resorts to every means, every trick, to sabotage the socialist countries politically, economically, culturally and ideologically. The cold war waged by imperialism against the socialist countries, especially the Soviet Union,

between the end of the second world war and the collapse of the USSR and the east European people's democracies, provides eloquent proof, if proof be needed, of this self-evident truth. Since the collapse of the USSR, imperialism's cold war against the remaining socialist countries has continued unabated.

Imperialism by no means confines its war plans and wars of aggression to socialist countries. In its quest for domination, for control of sources of raw materials, for avenues for export of capital and for the extraction of maximum profits, it wages wars against the revolutionary liberation movements of the oppressed nations, as well as against countries seeking to maintain their independence and safeguard their sovereignty. The brutal predatory wars against the Iraqi, Afghan and Palestinian peoples, which have claimed the lives of millions of innocent people, are living proof, if proof be needed, of this all too self-evident truth.

Being the targets of imperialist provocations, war preparations and wars, the socialist countries have an abiding duty to help each other and to wage a joint struggle against imperialism, instead of shying away from it in the name of some imaginary doctrine of 'peaceful coexistence', which in its Khrushchevite formulation can justly be termed 'peaceful capitulation and class collaboration'. The victories of all revolutions to date, far from being attributable to peaceful coexistence, were the result of hard-fought battles, wars and revolutionary struggles. Only a shameless lickspittle like Khrushchev could describe his ceaseless retreats at the cost of all proletarian principles, and his meek acceptance of, and capitulation to, US imperialism's humiliating demands as 'a victory for peaceful coexistence'.

Denying the irreconcilable contradiction between the systems of socialism and capitalism, denying the basic contradiction between the camp of socialism and the camp of imperialism, the Khrushchevites ended up, and could not but end up, transforming peaceful coexistence between these two systems into 'all-round

cooperation'. In insisting that peaceful coexistence be accepted as the general line of the foreign policy of all socialist countries, Khrushchevite revisionism threw overboard the cardinal principle of the foreign policy of socialist countries, namely, proletarian internationalism.

Yet according to Lenin:

The foreign policy of the proletariat is alliance with the revolutionaries of advanced countries and with all the oppressed nations against all and any imperialists.\*

Following the October Revolution, Lenin, and thereafter Stalin, repeatedly insisted that the Soviet Union, where the dictatorship of the proletariat had been established, was a base for advancing the proletarian world revolution. By going against this basic teaching, by transforming peaceful coexistence into the general line of the foreign policy of all socialist countries, the Khrushchevites converted the USSR from the base of world revolution it had been up to then into a base for humiliating retreat and capitulation to imperialist demands, and assisting imperialism in the peaceful transformation of the USSR and the eastern and central European countries into 'good' bourgeois republics.

Furthermore, by insisting that the communist parties of all the capitalist countries and of the oppressed nations also adopt peaceful coexistence as their general line, the Khrushchevites were engaged in replacing the revolutionary line of the communist parties with their policy of peaceful coexistence, and intentionally applying that policy to relations between oppressed and oppressor classes and between oppressed and oppressor nations.

Such a policy could not fail to weaken the proletarian and nation-

\* 'The foreign policy of the Russian Revolution' by V I Lenin, June 1917, CW, Vol 25, p87

al-liberation movements alike, and thus harm the socialist countries into the bargain – for the successes of proletarian and national-liberation struggles, by hitting at and weakening all reactionary and imperialist forces, serve to enhance the cause of world peace and social progress, and thus to strengthen the struggle of the socialist countries for peaceful coexistence with countries having a different social system. Only the correct application of the Leninist policy of peaceful coexistence, with proletarian internationalism and international class struggle at its core, can be in harmony with the revolutionary struggles of the people of all countries.

The Khrushchevite policy of peaceful coexistence was manna from heaven for imperialism, especially US imperialism, which emerged as the leader of the imperialist camp following the second world war. Behind the cloak of peaceful coexistence US imperialism attempted to forbid the Soviet Union and other socialist countries to support the revolutionary struggle of the people in the capitalist world. In a speech before the US House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee on 28 January 1959, J F Dulles, the US foreign secretary, stated:

The Soviet government could end the 'cold war' so far as it is concerned, if it would free itself from the guiding direction of international communism and seek primarily the welfare of the Russian nation and people. Also the 'cold war' would come to an end if international communism abandoned its goals . . .

John F Kennedy, and his Secretary of State Dean Rusk, said the same thing. In the latter's words,

'There can be no assured and lasting peace until the communist leadership abandon their goal of world revolution'.\*

\* Address at the National Convention of the American Legion by D Rusk,

In addition, behind the façade of peaceful coexistence, US imperialism pushed ahead with its policy of 'peaceful evolution' of the USSR and other socialist countries into bourgeois republics. In the words of Dulles, the 'renunciation of force . . . implies, not the maintenance of the *status quo*, but peaceful change',\* that it is 'not sufficient to be defensive',† for freedom 'must be a positive force that will penetrate', and that 'we hope to encourage an evolution within the Soviet world'.‡

In other words, to US imperialism, peaceful coexistence had this content: people living under imperialist domination and slavery may not fight for liberation; those who have already liberated themselves must again be subdued and subjected to a condition of imperialist domination and slavery; and the entire world must be incorporated into the American 'world community of free nations'.

It is thus not difficult to see why US imperialism and its satellites greeted the Khrushchevite general line of peaceful coexistence with such alacrity and enthusiasm. They did so because, among other things, the Khrushchevites had, through their capitulationist policies, brought shame on, and weakened, the Bolshevik party that was, up to the death of Stalin, quite rightly regarded by all fraternal parties as the 'shock brigade' of the world revolutionary and labour movement – a title fully justified by the selfless help given by the CPSU to ease the position of those suffering under the bondage of capitalism.

During the time of Lenin and Stalin, the Soviet state faced many a life-and-death struggle, yet never for a moment did the

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September 1963

\* Address to the award dinner of the New York State Bar Association by J F Dulles, January 1959

† Speech to the California State Chamber of Commerce by J F Dulles, December 1958

‡ Testimony before the US House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee by J F Dulles, September 1966

Bolshevik party or the Soviet people flinch from their revolutionary duty or bow to difficulties. There were no fortresses they could not storm – and this at a time when the Soviet state was incomparably weaker than imperialism. However, as from the mid-1950s, when the world situation was far more favourable to revolution and socialism was far stronger than ever before, the Khrushchevite revisionists brought the ignominy of letting the Soviet state founded by the great Lenin be bullied, bossed around and humiliated by US imperialism, disgracing the entire socialist camp into the bargain.

The Khrushchevites used the prestige enjoyed by the USSR in pursuit of their ignoble project of collaboration with US imperialism. For its part, US imperialism rewarded the Khrushchevites with humiliation and further humiliation.

The US emerged from the second world war as the most powerful and ferocious imperialist country, with the mad strategic aim of conquering the world. It took over the role of the defeated Hitlerites and became a world gendarme for the suppression of the revolutionary struggles of the oppressed peoples and nations, extinguishing the flames of proletarian revolutionary struggles, and rolling back the tide of socialism in eastern Europe and, ultimately, the Soviet Union.

There could thus be no all-round cooperation between this deadly enemy of humanity and the socialist countries. If the Khrushchevites thought that such cooperation was feasible, it could only be because they were determined to travel along the path leading back to capitalism in the USSR. That being the case, anything that lowered the prestige of socialism and the Soviet state, any policy that weakened the dictatorship of the proletariat and the party of the proletariat, was grasped by the Khrushchevites with gusto. In every single field, from their attack on Stalin, through their erroneous theories on the nature of the proletarian party and the proletarian revolution, to their economic reforms, they pursued single-mindedly the aim of restoring capitalism. Their falsification

of Lenin's line on peaceful coexistence must be seen in this light, and in this light alone.

### **Marxist teachings on war and peace**

It is impossible to avoid discussion, and controversy, on questions of war and peace. Not merely because these questions are of the highest theoretical and scientific significance, but also because war, devastation and destruction of human life on a vast scale confront us at every turn.

Leaving aside the two world wars, which together claimed the lives of 100 million people, maimed many more and caused unprecedented material destruction on an unimaginable scale, imperialism has seen to it that the world has not witnessed even a single year of peace since the end of the second world war in 1946. Millions of people have been slaughtered in the imperialist wars led by US imperialism against the people of Korea, Indo-China, Congo, Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Palestine and Yugoslavia. During the last 19 years alone, imperialist wars have devastated Iraq, Afghanistan, Congo and Yugoslavia. The Israeli fascists have been busy destroying Lebanon and Palestine with characteristic Hitlerite sadistic brutality in the service, and on behalf, of US imperialism, which is determined to preserve and extend its domination over the entire region stretching from the Middle East to the former eastern republics of the erstwhile Soviet Union – all as a means of securing total world domination.

However, in all these discussions on the burning questions of war and peace, as Lenin pointed out, the most important thing that is usually forgotten, which receives insufficient attention, and which, therefore, causes so much futile controversy, is that

[P]eople forget the fundamental question of the class character



of the war; why the war broke out; the classes that are waging it; the historical and historico-economic conditions that gave rise to it.’\*

It is important to restate briefly the Marxist-Leninist teachings on this exceptionally important question, as well as the revisionist distortions and falsification of this teaching, in order to ensure that the Marxist-Leninist teachings, and these alone, permeate the working class and the oppressed peoples in their struggles for proletarian revolution and national liberation through the overthrow of imperialism.

According to Leninism, war is the continuation of politics by other (forcible) means. In order to evaluate a given war, and define one’s attitude towards it, one must look at the class character of the war, ie, the class waging the war, and the policy and aims pursued by that class prior to the war –not who attacked first.

Marxism . . . requires an historical analysis of each war to determine whether or not that *particular* war can be considered progressive, whether it serves the interests of democracy and the proletariat and, in *that case*, is legitimate, just, etc.†

Looking at any particular war in its historical perspective, Marxism says:

[I]f the ‘substance’ of a war is, *for example*, the overthrow of alien oppression . . . then such a war is progressive as far as the oppressed state or nation is concerned. *If*, however, the ‘substance’ of a war is redivision of colonies, division of booty, plunder of foreign lands . . . then all talk of defending the fatherland is ‘sheer

\* ‘War and revolution’ by V I Lenin, May 1917, CW, Vol 24, p398

† ‘A caricature of Marxism and imperialist economism’ by V I Lenin, October 1916, CW, Vol 23, p32

deception of the people’.\*

The military conflict cannot be separated from the politics that drove the belligerents to armed conflict.

Thus, whether a war is progressive, and therefore just and legitimate from the point of view of the proletariat, or is reactionary and therefore unjust and illegitimate from the point of view of the proletariat, depends on the class character of the war, the class waging the war, the aims for which it is waging the war, and the policy of which the particular war is the continuation. Only after careful consideration and deep analysis of these factors can the proletariat determine its attitude towards such a war. In its attitude to any given war, the proletariat must be guided by the principles of proletarian internationalism and by its duty to contribute to the preparation, and acceleration, of the world proletarian revolution.

Lenin emphasised that

War is not only a continuation of politics, it is the epitome of politics . . . †

In other words, war, under the conditions of capitalism, is not an aberration, a break from the norm of political struggle, but quite the opposite, especially in the latest stage of capitalism – imperialism. Wars under capitalist imperialism are normal business – as normal as the exploitation of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie and oppression of the oppressed nations by a tiny handful of imperialist oppressor states.

Only bourgeois pacifists and opportunists in the working-class movement can view peace as something in essence distinct from war, for they have never grasped the fact that war is a continu-

\* ‘A caricature of Marxism and imperialist economism’ by V I Lenin, pp32-33

† ‘Seventh All-Russia Congress of Soviets’ by V I Lenin, December 1919, CW, Vol 30, p224

ation of politics by other (forcible) means; that imperialist war is a continuation of imperialist politics of peace and that imperialist peace in turn is a continuation of the politics of imperialist war; that imperialist wars grow out of imperialist peace, which in turn prepares the ground for further imperialist wars. The bourgeoisie have an obvious interest in the masses not grasping the indissoluble connection between war and the policy preceding it. The opportunists, in their inability, or unwillingness, to grasp this inevitable link between a war and the policy preceding it, between periods of imperialist peace and periods of imperialist war, help the bourgeoisie in hoodwinking and pacifying the proletariat.

### Inevitability of wars under capitalism

Unlike the Kautskyites and their latter-day descendants, with their theories of ultra-imperialism and collective imperialism, which are nothing but a masked defence of imperialism and vain attempts to hide from the working class the contradictions inherent in imperialism, which inevitably lead to war, Leninism taught, and life confirms, that modern war is a product of imperialism, and as such cannot be eliminated without putting an end to imperialism – an end to the exploitation of one human being by another and one nation by another.

It is beyond doubt that capitalism's transition to the stage of monopoly capitalism, to finance capital, is connected with the intensification of the struggle for partitioning the world.\*

One of the major basic features of imperialism, that of the transition from pre-monopoly, free-competition capitalism to its mo-

\* V I Lenin, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, p74

nopoly stage, is that it marks the completion of the territorial division of the world among the most powerful capitalist states. Once this partition has been effected, there can only be re-division and re-partition, consequent upon a change in the relative strength of the various imperialist countries, which is due to the law of uneven development whereby some countries spurt ahead and others lag behind.

If, as happens often, those countries who were economically weak yesterday, and therefore whose share in the global booty is relatively meagre, race ahead of their rivals and become more powerful, thus rendering the old division obsolete, they cannot fail to demand a new division – a new partition – on the basis of bourgeois 'justice'. The new, younger and stronger robbers claim the same 'sacred' right to rob as the older and fatter bandits. This can only be achieved by the former robbing the latter, as the younger robbers 'came to the capitalist banquet table when all the places had been taken up' And these matters, under the conditions of capitalism, are settled by means not very peaceful, for

Finance capital and the trusts do not diminish but increase the differences in the rate of growth of the various parts of the world economy. Once the relation of forces is changed, what other solution of the contradictions can be found *under capitalism* than that of force?\*

Approvingly citing Hilferding to the effect that 'Finance capital strives for domination, not for freedom,' Lenin observed:

Domination is the substance of imperialist policy, both in its internal and external policy.†

\* *Ibid*, p91

† 'A caricature of Marxism and imperialist economism' by V I Lenin, p43

World domination being the substance of imperialist policy, imperialist war is merely a continuation of this policy by other (violent) means.

The two world wars of the 20th century, as well as scores of small wars waged by imperialism, especially US imperialism, from the predatory wars against the people of Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos to those against the people of Yugoslavia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine and Lebanon (the last two waged by US imperialism through its Israeli Zionist surrogates) are eloquent proof, if proof be needed, of the Marxist-Leninist teachings on the question of war.

### Just wars

Marxist Leninists do not oppose all wars. Apart from imperialist wars, there are other wars, wars which are just, which move mankind forward, and which, therefore, deserve the support of the proletariat.

Socialists cannot, without ceasing to be socialists, be opposed to all war.\*

Such wars, which socialists, far from opposing, are wholeheartedly in favour of are:

1. Civil wars waged by the proletariat to overthrow the bourgeoisie: such wars are the inevitable continuation and intensification of class struggle; one cannot repudiate civil war without renouncing the socialist revolution.
2. Wars of national liberation waged by the oppressed nations

\* 'The military programme of the proletarian revolution' by V I Lenin, September 1916, CW, Vol 23, p77

against colonialism and imperialism: such were the wars waged by the Chinese people against Japanese imperialism, and the Korean and Indo-Chinese peoples against Japanese, French and US imperialism, and such are the wars presently being waged by the people of Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon and Palestine against Anglo-American imperialism and their surrogate, Israeli Zionism. In the case of such national-revolutionary wars, not only is the defence of the fatherland in such a war legitimate on the part of the oppressed nation, it is incumbent on the socialists and proletarians of the oppressor nation to side with the oppressed nation and wish, and work for, the defeat of their own imperialist bourgeoisie – irrespective of who attacks whom first.

3. Wars against absolutism and medievalism, as, for instance, in Saudi Arabia, other Gulf states and statelets, Nepal, the Philippines, etc. In these places, medieval autocracy and absolutism, in close alliance with imperialism, especially US imperialism, subjects the people to a barbarous existence, deprives them of the most elementary civil liberties and stands in the way of economic and social progress. The struggle of the peoples of these countries for a democratic revolution, for the overthrow of medievalism, is as just, legitimate and progressive as was the revolutionary struggle of the various European peoples against feudalism and alien oppression in the period from 1789 to 1871. Therefore, this struggle deserves our wholehearted support.
4. Wars of victorious socialism: any wars waged by victorious socialist countries against imperialism in defence of socialism, against bourgeois states attempting to crush the socialist states would be just, legitimate and progressive and, therefore, worthy of the support of the whole of progressive humanity. Such, for instance, was the war the Soviet Republic

waged against the imperialist predatory coalition in the early days of the Soviet regime. Such, too, was the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet people against the Nazi marauders, unleashed upon the Soviet Union by German imperialism. Such indeed would be any wars today involving the DPRK, Cuba, the People's Republic of China, etc, were imperialism to dare to launch wars against these countries. In the words of Lenin:

. . . the victory of socialism in one country does not at one stroke eliminate all war in general. On the contrary, it presupposes such wars. The development of capitalism proceeds very unevenly in the various countries. It cannot be otherwise under the commodity production system. From this it inevitably follows that socialism cannot be victorious simultaneously in all countries. It will be victorious first in one, or several countries, while the others will for some time remain bourgeois or pre-bourgeois. This must not only create friction, but a direct striving on the part of the bourgeoisie of other countries to crush the victorious proletariat of the socialist country. If we waged war under such circumstances, it would be a legitimate and just war. It would be a war for socialism, for the liberation of other nations from the bourgeoisie.\*

\* 'The military programme of the proletarian revolution' by V I Lenin, September 1916, CW, Vol 23, p79

### To abolish war, imperialism must be overthrown

Marxism Leninism teaches, and history confirms, that it is impossible to eliminate war without overthrowing imperialism, for as long as imperialism lasts, wars are inevitable.

Imperialism has put the fate of European civilisation at stake: this war, if there does not follow a series of successful revolutions, will soon be followed by other wars; the fable of the 'last war' is an empty, harmful fable, a philistine 'myth' . . .\*

Failing the overthrow of imperialism, any peace following a war can be no more than a truce and a continuation of imperialist war.

Thus the struggle for peace must be inextricably linked with the struggle to eliminate the division of society into classes, with the struggle for revolution and socialism, for

. . . it is impossible to escape imperialist war, and imperialist peace . . . which inevitably engenders imperialist war, it is impossible to escape that inferno, *except by a Bolshevik struggle and a Bolshevik revolution.*†

In an earlier pronouncement, Lenin emphasised the connection between peace and the end of a class-divided society thus:

. . . the proletariat struggles against war and will always struggle against it unremittingly without, however, forgetting for a mo-

\* 'The position and tasks of the Socialist International' by V I Lenin, November 1914, CW, Vol 21, p40

† 'The fourth anniversary of the October Revolution' by V I Lenin, October 1921, CW, Vol 33, p56

ment that war can be abolished only with the complete abolition of society's division into classes . . .\*

## OPPORTUNIST DISTORTIONS REGARDING WAR

The opportunists of the Second International, and their latter-day descendants, the Khrushchevite revisionists, have built up a veritable arsenal of distortions on the question of war and peace, with the sole purpose of prettifying imperialism and of blunting the fighting capacity of the proletariat through a combination of covering up the danger of war represented by imperialism and intimidating the masses with the notion that war would destroy humanity.

Kautsky's renegacy went so far as to assert that the source of war was not imperialism but the liberation movements of the oppressed nations and the USSR, which he referred to as 'the dictatorship', while the imperialist states, presumably, were nothing but pure democracies.

### Weapons v the spiritual state of the masses

Revisionists and opportunists are forever attempting to obliterate the distinction between just and unjust wars and propagate the

\* 'European capital and the autocracy' by V I Lenin, April 1905, CW, Vol 8, p268

erroneous theory that *weapons* are the decisive factor and that, therefore, in view of the overwhelming superiority of armaments enjoyed by the imperialist states, it is pointless for the proletariat and the oppressed people to confront imperialism with armed combat.

Marxism Leninism holds the diametrically opposite view to that held by Kautsky – a view which is fully confirmed by a series of successful armed struggles, both proletarian-revolutionary and revolutionary-liberation struggles against imperialism.

In every war, victory is conditioned in the final analysis by the spiritual state of those masses who shed their blood on the field of battle. Conviction of the justice of the war, consciousness of the necessity to sacrifice their lives for the good of their brothers, raises up the spirits of the soldiers and makes them endure unheard-of burdens. The tsarist generals say that our Red Army men endure such hardships as the army of the tsarist system would never have been able to endure. This is explained by the fact that every worker and peasant, placed under arms, knows what he is fighting for and consciously sheds his blood in the name of the triumph of justice and socialism.

The comprehension by the masses of the aims and reasons for the war has an immense significance and guarantees victory.\*

Only this Leninist teaching furnishes an explanation for the victories of the Red Army during the civil war and war of intervention, as well as for the successes of a host of other revolutionary struggles. If weapons were to be the decisive factor in war, as is the assertion of Kautsky and all other revisionists and social demo-

\* Speech at the Broad Conference of Workers and Red Army men in the Rogozhisky-Simonovsk district of Moscow by V I Lenin, May 1920, CW, Vol 31, p132

crats, not only the victory of the October Revolution, but also the victory of the Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese revolutions would be entirely inexplicable. If weapons alone decided the outcome of war, the cause of the Iraqi, Afghani, Palestinian and Lebanese resistance would be hopeless indeed, for how could the resistance movements in these countries match the combined weaponry of Anglo-American imperialism and zionism?

And yet we witness, right before our eyes, the resistance in these countries scoring daily victories against the predatory occupation armies of imperialism and zionism. The mighty Anglo-American armies of occupation in Iraq and the Nato forces in Afghanistan are as powerless in the face of the resistance in Iraq and Afghanistan as is the Israeli army of occupation in the face of the Palestinian and Lebanese resistance. The 'spiritual state of the masses' in these countries more than makes up for the inferiority of their armaments.

These struggles are a daily refutation of the pessimistic theories of opportunist 'socialists', social democrats and bourgeois pacifists of all kinds, as they constitute daily living proof of the Marxist-Leninist teachings on this important question.

Instead of linking the struggle against war to the struggle for the abolition of imperialism, and to the elimination of the division of society into classes, the opportunists spread the illusion that world peace can be maintained, and the equality of nations secured, through disarmament, and that the money saved from disarmament can be put aside for the assistance of backward countries. They fail to grasp the simple truth that imperialism is in the business of extracting the maximum of profit, in the pursuit of which it seeks domination, not freedom and equality. Imperialism would not be imperialism if it stood for assisting people at home, never mind the oppressed peoples abroad.

### **Khrushchevite revisionism and war**

On the question of war and peace, as on many other questions, Khrushchevite revisionism was to follow in the footsteps of Bernstein, Kautsky and other leading revisionist social democrats of the renegade Second Socialist International.

After the second world war, US imperialism emerged as the strongest imperialist power, and, stepping into the shoes of German, Japanese and Italian fascism, it has ever since attempted to build a vast empire of unprecedented proportions and achieve world domination through the suppression of national-liberation movements and by rolling back the frontiers of socialism. Thanks to the treachery of Khrushchevite revisionism, of the Khrushchevites' wholesale revision of Marxist-Leninist doctrines, including on the question of war and peace, US imperialism managed the partial achievement of its aims, albeit temporarily.

Khrushchev, in his day, praised Eisenhower, the chief executive of imperialism, as someone who enjoyed 'the absolute confidence of his people',\* and who entertained 'a sincere desire for peace'<sup>†</sup> – the same Eisenhower who organised the overthrow of Patrice Lumumba of the Congo and the resultant, and continuing, slaughter of millions of Congolese people.

Khrushchev went on to praise J F Kennedy as being even better qualified than Eisenhower to shoulder the burden of the maintenance of world peace. JFK, said Khrushchev, showed 'solicitude for the preservation of peace'.<sup>‡</sup> It was therefore quite in order to expect him to 'create reliable conditions for a peaceful life and

\* 'The nations: upside down', Time, New York, 12 October 1959

† 'A 1969 conversation with Khrushchev: the beginning of his fall from power' by Dr A McGehee Harvey, *Life*, New York, 18 December 1970

‡ Letter to J F Kennedy from N S Khrushchev, October 1962

creative labour on earth’.\*

Undoubtedly, Kennedy was the master of spin and good at deploying deceptive phrases about peace, all of which were, however, designed to serve US imperialism’s global strategy of ‘peacefully’ promoting the neo-colonisation by the US of Asia, Africa and Latin America; the ‘peaceful’ penetration and domination of other imperialist and capitalist countries; helping the ‘peaceful evolution’ of the socialist countries along the road taken by the Titoites in Yugoslavia; and weakening and destroying by ‘peaceful’ means the national-liberation and other struggles against imperialism.

These ‘peaceful’ means often included the brutal overthrow, through CIA-instigated coups, of popular regimes and the blockading of countries such as Cuba. Both these tactics, peaceful and violent, are characteristic of all reactionary classes, who employ priest-like deception hand-in-hand with butcher-like suppression.

Imperialism’s deceptive peace policy merely complements, and supplements, its war policy. Already in the early 1960s, US imperialism’s military budget shot up from \$46.7bn in 1960 to \$60bn in 1964. Today, the US’s military budget stands at a colossal \$540bn – more than the combined military budgets of all the other countries in the world. A capitalist country that spends these gargantuan sums on the military can certainly not be suspected of harbouring peaceful intentions.

All this is patently clear from all the wars waged by US imperialism from the end of the second world war up to the present – from Korea, Indo-China, Yugoslavia to Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as its proxy wars against Palestine and Lebanon. Not content with these wars, it has a long list of countries against which it is actively planning to wage further murderous wars.

Going against the Leninist thesis, fully corroborated by histori-

\* New Year message of greetings to J F Kennedy from N S Khrushchev and L Brezhnev, published in *Izvestia*, 3 January 1963

cal practice, that it is impossible to eliminate war without putting an end to imperialism, Khrushchevite revisionism, following in the footsteps of Kautsky, maintained that all wars could be prevented without eliminating imperialism. In 1952, Stalin emphasised the continuing validity of the Leninist thesis on the question of war and peace thus:

To eliminate the inevitability of war, it is necessary to abolish imperialism.\*

The correctness of the Leninist thesis, and the utter bankruptcy of the Kautskyite-Khrushchevite nonsensical fantasies, has been fully confirmed by the two world wars and the ceaseless local wars and armed conflicts launched or instigated by imperialism – especially on the continents of Asia, Africa and Latin America. In the face of this harsh reality, the vigorous propagation by Khrushchev and his cohorts of the Kautskyite theory of ‘ultra-imperialism’, of the view that a world without armaments and without wars can be created without the abolition of imperialism, can have only one purpose: namely, to sabotage and abolish national-liberation wars and revolutionary civil wars against imperialism and its stooges, and thus encourage and help imperialism in its preparations for new wars.

The Khrushchevite leadership went further by turning to nuclear fetishism and nuclear blackmail as the theoretical basis and guiding principle of its policy on the question of war and peace and a number of related issues. It came to hold that, with the appearance of nuclear weapons, the distinction between just and unjust wars had been rendered obsolete.

\* J V Stalin, *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*, September 1952, Peking: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1972, p37

The atomic bomb does not distinguish between imperialists and working people, it strikes at areas, so that millions of workers would be killed for every monopolist destroyed.\*

The Khrushchevites advised the oppressed peoples to abandon all ideas of revolution and refrain from waging just and popular wars and wars of national liberation, asserting that such wars could easily result in the complete annihilation of the human race through a nuclear holocaust:

. . . any small 'local war' might spark off the conflagration of a world war . . . [In modern times] any sort of war, though it may break out as an ordinary non-nuclear war, is likely to develop into a destructive nuclear-missile conflagration . . . [and in the destruction of our] Noah's Ark – the globe.†

Following Khrushchev's line, the socialist countries would have but one option – to capitulate to imperialism's nuclear blackmail and threats and collaborate with its schemes for world domination. According to Khrushchev, there

. . . can be no doubt that a world nuclear war, if started by imperialist maniacs, would inevitably result in the downfall of the capitalist system, a system breeding wars [this is the same Khrushchev who at the same time maintained that wars were no longer inevitable even if imperialism continued to exist! – HB]. But would the socialist countries and the cause of socialism all over the world benefit from a world nuclear disaster? Only people who deliberately shut their eyes to the facts can think so. As regards Marxist Leninists, they cannot propose to establish a communist

\* 'Open letter of the CC of the CPSU to all party organisations, to all communists of the Soviet Union', July 1963

† Radio and television speech by N S Khrushchev, June 1961

civilisation on the ruins of centres of world culture, on land laid waste and contaminated by nuclear fallout. We need hardly add that in the case of many peoples, the question of socialism would be eliminated altogether because they would have disappeared bodily from our planet.\*

In other words, according to Khrushchev and his fellow renegades, all the major contradictions in the world – that between capital and labour, between imperialism and socialism, between imperialism and the oppressed nations, and the inter-imperialist contradiction between various imperialist countries – had all ceased to exist with the emergence of nuclear weapons. In their view there remained but one contradiction, namely, the fictitious contradiction fabricated by them between the alleged common survival of imperialism and oppressed classes and nations, on the one hand, and their complete annihilation on the other.

*Pravda* of 16 August 1963 summed up these Khrushchevite gems in this single short rhetorical question: 'What is the use of principles if one's head is chopped off?†' The profanity and renegacy underlying *Pravda's* question is truly breathtaking, for it boils down to saying that those who died for the victory of the October Revolution, the millions of Soviet people who laid down their lives in the Great Patriotic War fighting against fascism, the tens of millions of gallant fighters who gave their lives in the struggle for national liberation against imperialism were dim-witted fools bent upon losing their heads for the sake of principle!

Following this theory of nuclear fetishism and nuclear blackmail, the Khrushchevites put forward the proposition that world peace could be defended, not by forming the broadest united front

\* Speech at the Sixth Congress of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany by N S Khrushchev, January 1963

† 'Left of Common Sense', *Pravda*, 16 August 1963



against imperialism, especially US imperialism, but by cooperation between the Soviet Union and US imperialism.

We [the USSR and the US] are the strongest countries in the world and if we unite for peace there can be no war. Then if any madman wanted war, we would but have to shake our finger to warn him off.\*

Khrushchev made these assertions when US imperialism, having just waged a genocidal war against the people of Korea, was busy intensifying its equally genocidal war of aggression against the Vietnamese people. Besides, imperialism is not interested in the preservation of peace or freedom but in the pursuit of domination. Only renegades of the Kautskyite-Khrushchevite revisionist type can entertain any illusions on this score in an attempt morally, spiritually and militarily to disarm the proletariat and the oppressed people in their struggles for liberation against imperialist exploitation, oppression and brigandage.

Following this renegade capitulationist policy, the Khrushchevites attempted to oppose proletarian revolutionary and anti-imperialist national-liberation wars, going as far as siding with imperialism to extinguish the sparks of revolution in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

For example, under Khrushchevite leadership, the USSR withheld support from the national-liberation war of the Algerian people for a long time. It sided with French imperialism, describing the Algerian question as merely an 'internal affair' of France. It refused to recognise the provisional government of the Republic of Algeria for many years. When the victory of the Algerian revolution became a foregone conclusion, the Khrushchevites rushed

\* N S Khrushchev interviewed by US correspondent C L Sulzberger, *Pravda*, 10 September 1961

to bestow their recognition on it and yet shamefully credited the Algerian victory to their capitulationist policy, which went under the name of 'peaceful coexistence'.

Another victim of the Khrushchevite policy of capitulation to imperialism was the then newly-born Republic of Congo. On 13 July 1960, the USSR, along with the US, voted for a Security Council Resolution to dispatch UN forces to the Congo – thus helping US imperialism, draped in a UN flag, intervene in that country's internal affairs, where it murdered the great Congolese patriot, Patrice Lumumba, imposed a puppet regime, and laid the ground for the country's wholesale looting by imperialism, especially US imperialism. The Congolese people, murdered in their millions in the aftermath of US intervention, have yet to recover from this Khrushchevite sell-out.

The Khrushchevites treated with disdain the fact that major contradictions in the world had become concentrated in the vast areas of Asia, Africa and Latin America – the most vulnerable areas under imperialist rule and storm centres of world revolution delivering devastating blows at imperialism.

The revisionists treated with contempt Lenin's correct estimation of the revolutionary struggles of the peoples of Asia and their significance for the revolutionary struggle of the socialist proletariat. Writing in 1913, Lenin said:

. . . a new source of great world storms opened up in Asia . . . It is in this era of storms and their 'repercussions' in Europe that we are now living.\*

Stalin, following Lenin, correctly stated the relationship of the revolutionary struggle of the colonial people to the struggle of the

\* 'The historical destiny of the doctrine of Karl Marx' by V I Lenin, March 1913, CW, Vol 18, p584

proletariat in the West for its social emancipation. This is what he said in 1925:

The colonial countries constitute the principal rear of imperialism. The revolutionisation of this rear is bound to undermine imperialism not only in the sense that imperialism will be deprived of its rear, but also in the sense that the revolutionisation of the East is bound to give a powerful impulse to the intensification of the revolutionary crisis in the West.\*

The above statements of Lenin and Stalin, and the theses they enunciated had long been accepted and self-evident truths of Marxism Leninism. Only with the advent of Khrushchevite revisionism, which was bent upon belittling the national-liberation movements, did they come to be undermined by the leadership of the USSR and those who followed it.

For its part, US imperialism refused to play ball. In response, the Khrushchevites, instead of admitting the erroneousness of their theories and discarding them, alternately indulged in nuclear adventurism and complete capitulation to US imperialism, as for instance during the Cuban missile crisis.

Marxism Leninism teaches, and life confirms, that the road to peace lies through the struggle against imperialism – not through capitulation to it. Back in 1958, Mao Zedong said that

If the US monopoly groups persist in their policies of aggression and war, the day is bound to come when the people of the world will hang them by the neck.†

\* 'Revolutionary movement in the East', Interview given by J V Stalin to Mr Fuse, Japanese correspondent of Nichi-Nichi, July 1925, *Works*, Vol 7, pp235-6

† Speech at the Supreme State Conference by Mao Zedong, *Renmin Ribao*, September 1958

And further:

By this policy these anti-popular, aggressive imperialist forces are courting their own ruin, creating their own gravediggers.\*

Sure enough, true to its nature, imperialism, headed by US imperialism, has persisted in its policies of war and aggression. Equally true to their nature, the people of the world have answered these policies tit for tat by waging revolutionary war against imperialism. Right before our eyes, the people of Colombia, Nepal, Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine and Lebanon are busy hanging Anglo-American imperialism and its surrogate, Israeli zionism, by the neck. The imperialists and their flunkies are engaged in a veritable operation of self destruction and ruination.

Of course, Khrushchev and his followers did not merely confine themselves to a revision of Marxist-Leninist teaching on the question of war and peace. They went far beyond this and indulged in the wholesale revision, and downright distortion, of Marxism Leninism in the fields of political economy, philosophy and class struggle. It was this wholesale revision, accompanied by revisionist practice, which over a period of three and a half decades led to the collapse of the once glorious USSR and the liquidation of the CPSU, the party of Lenin and Stalin.

\* 'Declaration of communist and workers' parties of the socialist countries', meeting in Moscow on the 40th anniversary of the October Revolution, November 1957

## THE RISE AND FALL OF REVISIONISM

### Undermining socialist achievements

The bourgeoisie understands, said Lenin, that

. . . working-class activists who follow the opportunist trend are better defenders of the bourgeoisie than the bourgeois themselves.\*

From its very birth, the Soviet republic faced formidable challenges, both internal and external. All the same, it defeated internal saboteurs and imperialist interventionist armies at a time when it was incomparably weaker than its enemies; it scored unprecedented achievements in socialist construction; it made the greatest contribution to the achievement of victory in the war against fascism; and it rendered selfless internationalist support to proletarian revolutionary and national-liberation struggles of the people of all countries. There was no fortress that the Soviet people could not storm as long as they fought under the banner of Marxism Leninism and the leadership of the Bolshevik party headed by Lenin and Stalin.

That was precisely why the prestige of the Soviet people, the Soviet state and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union stood

\* 'Report on the international situation and the fundamental tasks of the Communist International' by V I Lenin, delivered at the Second Congress of the Communist International, July 1920, CW, Vol 31

so high, enjoying the sincere respect and love of all progressive humanity.

Shortly before his death, Stalin observed:

. . . representatives of the fraternal parties, in their admiration for the daring and success of our party, conferred upon it the title of the 'Shock Brigade' of the world revolutionary movement. By this they were expressing the hope that the success of the 'Shock Brigade' would help to ease the position of the peoples languishing under the yoke of capitalism. I think that our party has justified these hopes . . .\*

Stalin was absolutely correct in saying that the party of Lenin had justified the hopes of all communists. The CPSU was truly worthy of the admiration and support given to it by all the fraternal parties.

But, beginning with the 20th Congress, which brought the Khrushchevite revisionist clique to power in the CPSU, all this changed. Through its revisionist line in matters of politics, ideology, philosophy and economy, in its domestic as well as foreign policy, this clique started the process of undermining the party, the Soviet economy and the Soviet state, which over a period of three-and-a-half decades led to the collapse of socialism in the USSR and the liquidation of the CPSU and the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

No matter how hard the imperialist bourgeoisie tried, no matter how many millions of soldiers it hurled at the Soviet Union, the latter always came out victorious. The victory of opportunism in the CPSU, the usurpation of power by the Khrushchevite renegade clique, furnished the key to breaching the Bolshevik fortress: that

\* Speech at the Nineteenth Party Congress by J V Stalin, October 1952, English edition, Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1952, p9

is, to overwhelm it from within.

George Keenan, a prominent American architect of the Cold War, had the prescience to write as early as 1947:

If . . . anything is ever to occur to disrupt the unity and efficacy of the party as a political instrument, Soviet Russia might be changed overnight from one of the strongest to one of the weakest and most pitiable of national societies.\*

The disruption of 'unity and efficacy of the party as a political instrument', so earnestly sought by imperialism, began to be achieved when, at midnight on the last day of the 20th Party Congress in February 1956, Khrushchev delivered his four-hour-long anti-Stalin tirade – the so-called 'secret speech' – in which he denounced Stalin's alleged 'cult of the individual', accusing him of every conceivable crime.

Khrushchev's speech, carefully leaked by the revisionists to the imperialist media, had disastrous consequences and sparked uprisings in East Germany and Hungary. Khrushchev was forced to retreat, if only temporarily. According to his biographer, Khrushchev told his opponents in the leadership: 'All of us taken together aren't worth Stalin's shit.'<sup>†</sup>

Khrushchev's policies on a host of issues, ranging from the question of Stalin to favouring private agricultural production, the virgin lands adventure, the decentralisation of industry, and the shift of emphasis from heavy to light industry, aroused great opposition in the Presidium (as the Politburo was known at that time).

Matters came to a head at the Presidium meeting of 18-21 June 1957, where Khrushchev came under violent attack by the opposi-

\* 'The sources of Soviet conduct' by G Keenan, *Foreign Affairs*, New York, July 1947

† W Taubman, *Khrushchev: the Man and His Era*, London: Free Press, 2005, p324

tion, led by Molotov and others, for his erroneous economic policies. The opposition had the support of seven of the Presidium's eleven members. As the news of Khrushchev's rejection and imminent removal from the position of General Secretary leaked out, Moscow members of the Central Committee, many of whom owed their positions to Khrushchev, surrounded the Presidium and demanded the convocation of the entire Central Committee. A hurriedly convened meeting of the CC, which lasted six days, concluded by supporting Khrushchev and expelling Molotov, Malenkov and Kaganovich from the Presidium as well as from the CC.

Having routed what he and his supporters characterised as the 'anti-party' opposition, Khrushchev ruled the roost until the autumn of 1964, when he was overthrown and turned into a nonentity by his successors. During these seven years, in the field of domestic affairs he intensified his attacks on Stalin; dismantled the machine and tractor stations (MTS); decentralised planning and introduced market mechanisms into the conduct of the economy; emulated American agricultural methods; transferred resources from industry to agriculture, with emphasis on private production; and he shifted investment priorities from heavy to light industry – in the name of raising Soviet living standards, but actually achieving the opposite, for without the development of heavy industry, it is impossible either to improve agriculture or extend the supply of consumer goods.

This shift in priorities was flatly in contradiction with Stalin's warning that 'ceasing to give primacy to the production of the means of production' would merely 'destroy the possibility of the continuous expansion of our economy'.\* Already, in Khrushchev's first year as General Secretary, investment in heavy industry exceeded that in the sector producing articles of consumption by a mere 20 percent, compared with 70 percent prior to the war.

\* J V Stalin, *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*, p23

In the field of ideology, there was a decided shift away from class struggle, the vanguard party of the proletariat and the dictatorship of the proletariat. In the name of getting rid of the heritage of the alleged 'cult of the personality', censorship, which had restricted the harmful activity of petty-bourgeois and bourgeois elements, was relaxed.

This liberalisation in intellectual and cultural activity under Khrushchev's 'thaw' had the effect of allowing bourgeois ideas and ideology to flood Soviet art, with films, poetry and novels critical of, if not downright hostile to, the Soviet past. Previously banned works were published. Khrushchev's 'thaw' provided just the opportunity for which the enemies of socialism had waited so long: namely, to spread bourgeois economic ideas into Soviet academic circles. As a result, western influence began to make inroads into many areas of the economy.

In the sphere of foreign policy, jettisoning proletarian internationalism, Khrushchev concentrated on collaboration with imperialism, especially US imperialism, in the process causing disunity within the socialist camp and beginning the process of its disintegration over the following decades. Imperialism was well pleased and satisfied with Khrushchev's disruption of the unity of the socialist camp. *Newsweek* of 26 March 1962 wrote thus in this regard:

Nikita Khrushchev has destroyed, irrevocably, the unified bloc of Stalin's day. That is perhaps Khrushchev's greatest service – not to communism, but to the western world.\*

In order to impose its erroneous opportunist line on the international communist movement, the Khrushchevite clique engaged in blatant and crude interference in the internal relations of fraternal

\* 'Moscow and Peking: how wide the split?', *Newsweek*, New York, 26 March 1962, cited in GL, p324

parties, going to the extent of forcing changes in the leadership of fraternal parties and countries. Since the Communist Party of China took a leading part in opposing Khrushchevite revisionism, it became a special target for Khrushchev's attacks and vengeful actions, which harmed party and state relations between these two giants of socialism.

Once again, these actions of Khrushchev gladdened imperialist circles. With malicious glee, the *US News and World Report* of 30 September 1963 noted:

We ought to be grateful for [Khrushchev's] mishandling of his relationship with the Chinese . . . we should be grateful for his introducing disarray into international communism by a lot of quite bumptious and sudden initiatives.\*

Khrushchev was not the first opportunist in the international communist movement, nor will he be the last, but that he did the most damage to it – of this there cannot be the slightest doubt. And this, for the following two reasons.

First, he collected all the counter-revolutionary anti-Marxist views of history's opportunists, revisionists and renegades, and, out of them came with a full-fledged revisionist line comprising 'peaceful transition', 'peaceful competition', 'peaceful coexistence', 'the state of the whole people' and 'the party of the entire people', hand-in-hand with capitulation to imperialism.

Second, Khrushchev was the General Secretary of the CPSU, the party created by Lenin, the party which led the Great October Revolution to victory and brought into existence the first socialist country, which accomplished unprecedented achievements in the field of socialist construction and went on to make the largest con-

\* 'With test-ban treaty – has Khrushchev changed his way?', *US News and World Report*, New York, 30 September 1963, cited in GL

tribution to the victory against fascism in the second world war. Quite rightly, therefore, Marxist Leninists and progressive humanity at large held the CPSU in the highest of esteem and considered the Soviet Union as the base of the world revolution, as it had been under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin.

The Khrushchevite clique took full advantage of the legitimate prestige of the CPSU and the Soviet Union to cover up the rotten essence of its revisionist and splittist line and to deceive a lot of people. In this, the Khrushchevite clique sadly had great success, for traditional confidence in the CPSU and lack of awareness of the truth stood in the way of a lot of communists and quite a few communist parties from recognising, and resisting, Khrushchevite revisionism and splittism.

Once set into motion, the revisionist line of the Khrushchevite clique gave a boost to the luxuriant growth of bourgeois forces within the USSR and the CPSU, while catering to the needs of imperialism. In turn, the activities of the bourgeois forces, combined with the US imperialist policy of nuclear blackmail and pressure for the 'peaceful evolution' of the socialist countries back to capitalism, served to reinforce and strengthen Khrushchevite revisionism.

### Party purge

In order to overcome resistance within the CPSU to its revisionist line, the Khrushchevite clique carried out a series of purges at all levels of the party, government, economic, cultural and educational institutions, dismissing those it deemed untrustworthy and replacing them by their protégés. Nearly 70 percent of the members of the CC of the CPSU who were elected at its 19th Party Congress in 1952 were purged in the course of the 20th and 22nd Congresses, which took place in 1956 and 1961. Nearly 50 percent of the members of the CC elected at the 20th Congress were

purged at the time of the 22nd Congress.

On the pretext of 'renewing the cadres', on the eve of the 22nd Congress, the Khrushchevite clique removed from office 45 percent of the members of the party central committees of the Union Republics, Territories and Regions, and 40 percent of the municipal and district party committees. In 1963, on the pretext of dividing the party into 'industrial' and 'agricultural' sections, the Khrushchevites went on to replace more than half of the members of the central committees of the Union Republics and regional party committees.\*

In addition, the Khrushchevites opened party membership to wide layers of the non-proletarian sections of the Soviet population, hand-in-hand with the propagation of the idea of 'party of the entire people'.

By the 1980s, the intelligentsia came to acquire a disproportionate influence in the Communist Party, especially at the top, with half the membership of the party, and an even higher percentage of the leadership, coming from this milieu.†

Parallel with the developments in the economic sphere, accompanied as they were with the growth of the second economy, the drastic changes in the class composition and class character of the CPSU played their part in the destruction of Soviet socialism, for this section of society – the intelligentsia – realising that it had much to gain from the restoration of capitalism, increasingly found common ground with those operating in the second economy.

Through these massive changes in personnel and party membership, the Khrushchevite revisionist renegades achieved complete control of the party, the government and other significant organisations. Characteristically, while denying the existence of classes

\* See GL, p441

† See J Gooding, *Socialism in Russia: Lenin and His Legacy*, 1890-1991, New York: Macmillan, 2002, p208

and class struggle within the Soviet Union, the Khrushchevites sided with the growing number of privileged petty-bourgeois strata in attacking the proletariat, turning the dictatorship of the proletariat into a dictatorship of the privileged strata, and laying the basis for the restoration of capitalism.

Although Khrushchev was removed in 1964, his erroneous ideological propositions, his policies on economic liberalisation and political 'democratisation' persisted just as before. After Khrushchev's departure from the political scene, his ideas and policies were championed by a powerful group of economists, journalists, historians, playwrights, sociologists and physicists, who worked relentlessly to undermine the party and its revolutionary ethos through their corrosive bourgeois influence.

### The second economy

The most destructive consequence of the economic 'reforms' of the Khrushchev and Brezhnev periods was the growth of private enterprise, the second economy, and the strata who were the beneficiaries of its growth. Private economy, which was restricted within the narrowest of limits under Stalin, emerged with new vigour under Khrushchev, registered a flourishing growth during the time of Brezhnev, and overwhelmed the primary Soviet economy under the loving tender care of Gorbachev.

The private economy, legal and illegal, apart from being an alternative source of income, created widespread corruption and criminality, gave a further stimulus to ideas, sentiments and theoretical thought in justification of private enterprise, provided funds for critics of the Soviet socialist system, and furnished a material basis for the restoration of capitalism in the USSR. The legal private economy inevitably brought in its trail illegal activities, which assumed an impressive variety of forms, penetrating in the end

all aspects of Soviet society – its most common form being theft from the state.

In addition to individuals stealing to ply their trade 'on the side', stealing from the state assumed wholesale and scandalous proportions. In time, this activity gave rise to the emergence of underground capitalists in the real meaning of the word, who made large capital investments, organised production on a fairly large scale, hired and exploited workers, and disposed of their commodities on the black market.

Konstantin Simis, a prominent Soviet lawyer who represented many underground entrepreneurs in the 1970s, subsequently related his experience in a book entitled *USSR – the Corrupt Society*, and subtitled 'The secret world of Soviet capitalism'. He wrote of 'a network of private factories . . . spread across the whole country', numbering several tens of thousands, manufacturing 'knitwear, shoes, sunglasses, recordings of western popular music, handbags, and many other goods'. These manufactures ranged from the owners of 'a single workshop' to 'multimillion-rouble family clans' who owned dozens of factories.\*

[By 1960], the Soviet shadow economy was already institutionally mature and of notable scope and size . . . [it] spread out, grew and prospered – under Brezhnev (1964-82), thanks to benign neglect if not tacit encouragement.†

The second economy furnished the soil for the emergence and growth, on the one hand, of organised crime, and, on the other hand, a whole stratum of petty-bourgeois dissidents, with their catchword of 'freedom': freedom to propagate religious obscurant-

\* K Simis, *USSR – the Corrupt Society*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1982

† 'Subverted Sovereignty: historic role of the Soviet underground' by G Grossman, in S S Cohen et al, *The Tunnel at the End of the Light*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998, p31

ism; freedom to exploit, make money and not to work; freedom to write and publish anything, including especially material critical of socialism and its achievements. Spurred on by internal private economic development and distortions of Marxism Leninism set in train by the Khrushchevite revisionist leadership, as well as the material and ideological support they received from the imperialist camp, these dissident groups, numbering several tens of thousands by the mid-1980s, promoted bourgeois individualism, greed and acquisitiveness. While spewing out poison against everything socialist, they carried on a veritable campaign in favour of private property, free enterprise, free markets, and suchlike bourgeois 'freedoms'.

Over the 30 years following the accession of Khrushchev to the position of the General Secretary of the CPSU, the second economy grew increasingly. According to some experts, for certain regions of Russia and Ukraine between 1965 and 1989, the correlation between income on the one hand and expenditure and savings on the other became tenuous indeed, with amounts of money spent or saved increasingly exceeding the legally earned income. They surmised that the difference was accounted for by illegal income.

Furthermore, the second economy grew at a faster rate than the Soviet (first) economy. According to the leading Soviet specialist on the second economy, T I Koriagina of the Economic Research Institute of the USSR, while official national income and the value of retail goods and services in the Soviet Union as a whole increased four or five times between the early 1960s and the late 1980s, the second economy grew eighteen times.

Koriagina also estimated that the yearly value of illegal goods and services grew from roughly 5bn roubles in early 1960s to 90bn roubles in the late 1980s, when the national income in the respective periods was 146bn roubles and 422bn roubles. According to his figures, the value of the second economy was roughly 3.4 percent of the national income in 1960, 20 percent in 1988 and 12.8

percent in 1990 (the lower figure for 1990 is explained by the fact that by 1990 a portion of the previously illegal activity had been legalised). Further, according to Koriagina, in 1988 the total of illegally accumulated personal wealth amounted to 200-240bn roubles, representing 20-25 percent of all personal wealth.

Since Koriagina's calculations relate to income from illegal economic activity alone, to get a measure of the totality of private economic activity, we are obliged to add to her figures those representing legal private activity. Even at a conservative estimate, the size of all private economic activity must have been 10 percentage points higher than the above estimates – representing around a third of national economic activity by the time of the Soviet collapse.

Koriagina also estimated that in 1988 the total personal wealth accumulated through illegal economic activity amounted to 200-240bn roubles, accounting for 20-25 percent of all personal wealth in the USSR. She also estimated that the number of people engaged in the illegal parts of the private (second) economy rose from under 8 million people in the early 1960s to 17-20 million (6 to 7 percent) in 1974, and approximately 30 million (about 12 percent of the population) in 1989. If legal private economic activity is included, then by the late 1970s, the urban population (62 percent of the total) earned about 30 percent of its total income from non-official sources, that is from either legal or illegal private activity.

This is how one American academic, writing in 1988, summed up the reach of the second economy:

During the last three decades of the Soviet era, illegal economic activity penetrated into every sector and chink of the economy; assumed every conceivable shape and form; and operated on a scale ranging from minimal or modest for the mass to the substantial for the many, to the lavish and gigantic, as well as elabo-



rately organised, for some.\*

Some of those engaged in this private economic activity (illegal and legal) became very wealthy and were known as the 'Brezhnev new rich'. The larger the illegal economy grew, the more it undermined the legitimate Soviet economy. Since the second economy necessarily meant theft of time and material from the state sector, it could not but result in the much reduced efficiency of the state sector, thus bringing the latter into disrepute into the bargain.

The second economy had a most corrupting influence on party and state officials, for illegal production and sales necessitated the bribery of quite a few party officials and state functionaries. And the more widespread and organised the second economy became, the more the corruption spread, for such activity could not have lasted a month without the venality of some in the party or the state administration.

As early as 1960, the Soviet second economy had assumed notable scope and size, as had corruption, which penetrated to the highest levels of the party. Khrushchev's right hand man, deputy premier and secretary of the Central Committee, Frol Kozlov, was forced to retire in disgrace after the authorities discovered precious stones and wads of money belonging to him in the safe of a deceased Leningrad official. Kozlov had received these as part payment for using his position to stop criminal proceedings against illegal businessmen.

This is how Alexander Gurov, a high police officer in the USSR, described the origin and development of party corruption from the Khrushchev to the Gorbachev period, and its inextricable connection with the emergence and development of the illegal economy and organised crime:

\* 'Subverted Sovereignty: historic role of the Soviet underground' by G Grossman, *ibid*

[Organised crime] was bound to happen as soon as our system opened up and that was in the so-called thaw of the 1960s when Nikita Khrushchev was in power . . . It was impossible to imagine powerful organised crime groups under Stalin . . . What we got after that in our society was the moral code of the plunderer. And of course it was run totally in the interest of the [party] bureaucracy. For example, we had a so-called trade mafia in Moscow with representatives in top party bodies as early as 1974. If I or anyone else had tried to warn people about the danger of the shadow economy then, liberals would have laughed and the government would have called us crazy. But that was how it started. And the government allowed it to happen, for reasons that ought to make us think. It began under Khrushchev and developed under Brezhnev. But the Gorbachev era was the period in which organised crime really became powerful in our country.\*

Through the 'economic reforms', Khrushchevite revisionists created the conditions for the growth of the second economy, which in turn undermined the centrally planned socialist economy, bred disbelief in the efficacy of socialism and the effectiveness of planning, and, together with the accompanying widespread corruption, destroyed the faith of the Soviet working class in the integrity of the Communist Party itself. At the same time, the second economy created the material basis for the emergence of a stratum whose interests could not in the end be served within the boundaries of socialism. Thus were prepared the conditions for the restoration of capitalism.

While all this wrecking activity, aimed at destroying socialism and restoring capitalism, was taking place at an ever-increasing pace, the revisionist leadership was busy pulling the wool over the

\* S Handelman, *Comrade Criminal: Russia's New Mafiya*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995, p56

eyes of the Soviet masses by boastful, not to say false, claims to the effect that the USSR was marching full steam ahead in the direction of the higher stage of communism. Just as he was busy lining his pockets by protecting criminals and illegal businessmen, Kozlov shamelessly assured the delegates at the 22nd Congress of the CPSU that 'in Soviet society there no longer exists a social basis on which any opportunist trends could thrive in the party'.\*

The truth is that the existence of bourgeois influence (which by this time was in plentiful supply) is the *internal* source of revisionism (opportunism), while surrender to imperialist pressure (which the Khrushchevite leadership was increasingly guilty of) is the *external* source. Characteristically, Khrushchevite revisionists, while denying the existence of classes and class struggle in the USSR, actually sided with the emerging bourgeois strata that had been created by their own 'reforms' in attacking the proletariat, and in the end succeeded in turning the dictatorship of the proletariat into a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie – and of the most gangster type, too.

Not only Marxist Leninists, but also perceptive bourgeois analysts well understood the opportunist essence of the programme and policies of Khrushchev and his revisionist successors. Writing in 1975, Moshe Lewin made this observation:

It is astonishing to discover how many ideas of Bukharin's anti-Stalinist programme of 1928-29 were adopted by the current reformers.†

By the 1960s, three of the four leading economic institutes were dominated by economists favouring a market economy. The com-

\* J and M Pitman, *Peaceful Coexistence – Its Theory and Practice in the Soviet Union*, New York: International Publishers, 1964, p69

† Moshe Lewin, *Political Undercurrents in Soviet Economic Debates*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975

plete and open repudiation of socialism, the candid propagation of the market economy, and the restoration of capitalism in the USSR can only make sense if they are understood as a continuation and implementation of the revisionist (opportunist) programme of Bukharin and Khrushchev, the essence of which meant nothing short of capitulation to the bourgeoisie.

The all-pervasive illegal economic activity, theft, corruption and pilfering, with the attendant growing inequality, sapped the Soviet people's faith in the fairness of the system. Thus, the second economy, while creating a stratum of would-be capitalists, destroyed the people's faith in socialism by elevating the power of money as a rival pole of attraction to membership of the CPSU.

### Gorbachev

By the time of the accession of Gorbachev to the leadership, all the material and ideological conditions for the restoration of capitalism had been prepared.

In March 1985, Gorbachev became the General Secretary following the death of Chernenko. In the manner of Khrushchev, he moved quickly to purge the party of elements he could not rely on, and who might have stood in the way of his programme of capitalist restoration. Within a year of becoming General Secretary, he managed to replace half of the full and candidate members of the Politburo, 14 of the 23 heads of central committee departments, 5 of the 14 heads of republics, 50 of the 157 first secretaries of regions (*krais*) and districts (*oblasts*), 40 percent of the ambassadors and 50,000 managers.\*

In order to accelerate the process of capitalist restoration,

\* See R Keeran and T Kenny, *Socialism Betrayed*, New York: International Publishers, 2004, p83

Gorbachev initiated the policies that went under the twin names of *Glasnost* and *Perestroika* – adopted at the plenary meetings of the CPSU Central Committee in January and June 1987. *Glasnost* performed the same role in the sphere of ideology as that performed by *Perestroika* in the sphere of economics. Just as *Perestroika* was aimed at restoring fully the capitalist relations of production by destroying all the remnants of the centrally planned economy, likewise *Glasnost* aimed at destroying what remained of the science of Marxism Leninism in the political life and institutions of the USSR and replacing it by norms characteristic of bourgeois democracy.

Gorbachev's pretended reform programme of 1985-86 had, by the time of the January 1987 Central Committee Plenum and the 19th Party Conference of June 1988, become a veritable assault on socialism – a counter-revolutionary programme aimed at undermining the leadership of the Communist Party, state property, central planning, and the multinational integrity of the USSR. The 19th Party Conference became an anti-communist jamboree. In the name of the fight against 'Stalinism', it rehabilitated Bukharin, rolled out a red carpet for the forces clamouring for the full restoration of capitalism, conferred legitimacy on the second economy, and gave approval to voluntary associations (the 'informals'), asserting that they had a legitimate role in Soviet society.

The 'informals' stood for any kind of activity not directly organised by the party. Their platform comprised cultural liberalism, the reduced role of the party, the relaxation and lowering of ideological standards, hostility to class struggle, bourgeois notions of democracy, fawning upon everything western, praising the 'democratic' charms of present-day capitalism, subservience to the market and a deep hostility towards economic planning.

Meanwhile, new laws on cooperatives and on leases stimulated a vast expansion of capitalist elements and commodity production.

By 1987-88, Gorbachev's reform had metamorphosed into party liquidation. *Glasnost* had become synonymous with anti-commu-

nism; economic reform had materialised into the wholesale privatisation and dismantlement of the remains of the socialist economy, with the support for 'socialist markets' turning into 'market socialism', ie, capitalism. Anti-Stalinism, with its catchphrase of 'democratisation' and 'decentralisation', became, as it had been under Khrushchev, the slogan of Gorbachev reformers, who, under the pretext of 'improving' the party and the economy, and in the name of criticising the 'cult of the personality', indulged in a wholesale revision of the party history and denigration of world-historic Soviet achievements.

While 'democratisation' marked a total shift from Marxism Leninism to a social-democratic type of party organisation, with its rejection of the leading role of the party and of democratic centralism as the organising principle of the party, the concept of peaceful coexistence, now transformed into 'universal human values', became a euphemism for an open alliance with capitalism and imperialism.

Gorbachev had nothing but contempt for the CPSU and on one occasion characterised it as 'that mangy dog' – the very party from which he derived all his authority – an authority that he used for completing the victory of counter-revolution and the restoration of capitalism in the USSR.

Engaged as he was in deliberately dismantling the last remnants of socialism in the USSR, Gorbachev, despite his contempt for the party, stayed long enough in his job as its General Secretary to supervise the demise of the socialist camp, as well as the disintegration of the USSR and the liquidation of the CPSU. During his last three years at the helm (1989-1991), counter-revolution swept through eastern Europe, with not a little help from Gorbachev and his clique, aided by imperialism. In November 1989, the Berlin Wall came down; a year later, Germany was reunified on Nato's terms. One after another, the socialist countries of eastern Europe fell like dominoes.

The turmoil in eastern Europe, coupled with the disintegrating effects of the capitalist forces unleashed in the USSR, worsened relations among the constituent republics of the Soviet Union – leading to the declaration of independence from the Union by republic after republic. By mid-December 1991, following the secession of all other republics, the Russian Federation was left alone without the need for an official declaration of independence.

In the wider international arena, the Gorbachev clique betrayed national-liberation movements and smaller socialist countries. In May 1989, arms shipments to Nicaragua were stopped. In 1990, the Soviet Union put an end to the \$5bn annual aid to Cuba, which included the supply of oil and other essential items. Already on 15 February 1989, the last Soviet troops had left Afghanistan, leaving the Najibullah government to the mercy of imperialist-backed mercenary warlords – thus negating the sacrifices made by Soviet soldiers and their Afghan allies, and with absolutely no concessions in return from imperialism. The South African and Palestinian liberation struggles were similarly jettisoned.

By the time that the 28th Party Congress of the CPSU convened in July 1990, the question was no longer *whether* the market economy should be fully restored, but simply *what sort* of market economy was to take the place of the centrally planned economy, which, having been undermined over the three previous decades, had received its coup de grace from the Gorbachev clique.

With the brazen shamelessness that was characteristic of him, Gorbachev, in his message to mark the anniversary of the October Revolution on 7 November 1990, portrayed his total betrayal of socialism and his capitulation to imperialism as acts of 'freedom and emancipation'.

[*Perestroika*] . . . has brought [us] freedom and emancipation . . . We opened up to the world . . . having stood in opposition to the world, we denied ourselves the opportunity of participating in civi-

lisation's progress at its most crucial turning point. We suffered terrible [losses], perhaps our greatest losses, thanks to this.\*

Notwithstanding the triumph of Gorbachev and his clique at the 28th Party Congress, the so-called Democrats, headed by Boris Yeltsin, ostentatiously walked out of the party, stating that the party was not reforming itself quickly enough. While giving the appearance of a split between Gorbachev and the so-called Democratic Platform, the walkout in practice was merely a continuation of the very dexterous and skilful division of labour between the two factions of counter-revolutionaries, with both sides continuing with what they were best at, namely, destroying the CPSU and the remnants of the socialist economy – Gorbachev from within the CPSU and Yeltsin's Democrats from the outside.

Within a year of the 28th Congress, this is precisely what they managed to accomplish. In June 1991, Yeltsin was elected President of the Russian Federation (RSFSR). On 6 November 1991, taking advantage of the failed August coup, Yeltsin banned the CPSU and ordered its dissolution. In December, he ordered the removal of the Red Flag from the Kremlin. On 25 December, Gorbachev, having done his 'life's work', resigned. On 31 December 1991, the USSR formally ceased to exist.

### The collapse of revisionism

Thus was brought to an ignominious end the once great and glorious Soviet Union, the first motherland of the international proletariat and the first base of world proletarian revolution, thanks to the ravages of Khrushchevite revisionism over a period of three

\* See Anatoly Chernyaev, *My Six Years With Gorbachev*, University Park: Pennsylvania State University, 2000, pp297-98

and a half decades. Socialism was replaced by gangster capitalism, while the dictatorship of the proletariat was replaced by a tiny handful of kleptomaniacs who stole the vast wealth and resources so carefully nurtured and built by the Soviet people over seven decades of titanic struggle against the forces of reaction and imperialism.

It is crucially important for the international proletariat and the oppressed peoples of the world to understand the cause of the collapse of the CPSU and the USSR, for the interpretation of the Soviet collapse is inextricably bound up with a fight over the future. The proletariat will hardly fight for, and make the necessary sacrifices to achieve, socialism if it thinks that it is a failed system. It will hardly make a serious attempt to overthrow capitalism if it is convinced that a market economy is the key to human liberation.

My book on *Perestroika* was an attempt to show that the USSR and the CPSU collapsed not because of any inherent flaws in the science of Marxism Leninism, but because of the departures from that science effected by the Khrushchevite revisionist leadership of the CPSU, which was guilty of the wholesale revision and downright distortion of Marxism Leninism in the field of political economy, philosophy and class struggle over a period of more than three decades.

During these decades, distortions and falsifications of, and departures from, Marxism Leninism multiplied, and eventually quantity turned into quality. What began with Khrushchev as a trickle had by the time of Gorbachev assumed the proportions of a veritable flood, ending up in the restoration of capitalism in the land of Soviets, the land of Lenin and Stalin – the land of once triumphant socialism. Thus, what collapsed was not Marxism Leninism: it was revisionism that came to an inevitable and scandalous collapse, taking down with it the USSR itself.

This collapse of revisionism, which is a 'manifestation of bourgeois influence on the proletariat and bourgeois corruption of the

workers',\* has been, slowly but surely, forcing proletarian parties the world over to analyse in a most thoroughgoing manner the developments in eastern Europe and the USSR, to draw from these collapses the proper conclusions and to learn the appropriate lessons.

It has impressed upon them the necessity of sharpening their ideological weapons and of fighting against the lowering of theoretical standards that has been going on ever since the usurpation of the leadership of the CPSU by the Khrushchevite revisionists at the 20th Party Congress in 1956. It is this lowering of theoretical standards that explains why such a large number of working-class parties throughout the world proved to be helpless spectators in the face of the onslaught of revisionism. The collapse of revisionism is now increasingly dragging them to grasp the truth that 'without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement'.†

It is incumbent upon communist parties to realise that the 'role of vanguard fighter can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by the most advanced theory'.

This thought cannot be insisted upon too strongly at a time when the fashionable preaching of opportunism goes hand in hand with an infatuation for the narrowest forms of practical activity.‡

\* 'Hasty conclusions' by V I Lenin, May 1914, quoted in *Lenin on the Struggle Against Revisionism*, Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1960, p1

† V I Lenin, *What Is To Be Done?*, February 1902, Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1973, p28

‡ *Ibid*

## LESSONS OF CAPITALIST RESTORATION

### Capitalism has no solution

Capitalism has no solution to the problems facing humanity. In truth, the continuing existence of capitalism is the real problem standing in the way of humanity's advance to a prosperous and healthy life, free from exploitation, poverty, hunger, homelessness, racism and war.

The restoration of capitalism in the former Soviet Union and the other socialist countries of eastern Europe, far from bringing the prosperity that the peoples of these countries were promised by the revisionist restorationists and the statesmen and ideologues of imperialism, has been nothing short of catastrophic.

Everywhere, production and per capita income have fallen precipitously, with life expectancy registering a drastic fall. The free health service, the education system, with its proliferation of crèches, kindergartens and holiday camps that were a source of legitimate pride to the peoples of those countries, have all but disappeared.

In just the first four years following the collapse of the USSR (1991-95), production halved, followed by two years of stagnation, only to plunge again consequent upon the crisis that engulfed the Russian economy in 1998. The standard of living of 85 percent of the Russian population today is far below that which was enjoyed by the citizens of the Soviet Union. A third of the population live below the official subsistence minimum, with 10 percent being

chronically short of food.

Between 1990 and 1994, male life expectancy in Russia fell by six years (from 64 to 58) and that of women by three years (from 74 to 71). In the 18 years since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the population of Russia has declined by a staggering 15 million – the biggest peacetime loss anywhere in the world – approaching the scale of losses incurred by the Soviet Union during the Great Patriotic War. This loss of population, solely attributable to the restoration of capitalism, can only be described as genocide on a grand scale.

Unemployment, which was eliminated in the USSR in 1932, is today rampant, with an estimated 40 million people out of work in the territory of the former USSR. During the time of Stalin, more than 20,000 schools were built every five years, while under the rule of the capitalist thieves, more than 12,000 schools were destroyed between 1991 and 2008, that is, their number was reduced from 48,600 to 36,300.

The wealth produced by the honest toil of the Soviet working class has been stolen by a handful of mafiosi, while the masses of the people have been reduced to penury. Fraternal harmony and friendship have given way to fratricidal warfare. Prostitution, alcoholism, drug abuse and drug trafficking, organised and violent street crime, homelessness, and such other concomitants of the 'free market' have assumed epidemic proportions.

No wonder, then, that the peoples of the former USSR feel a great sense of nostalgia for the Soviet Union and long for the wonderful life that they led during its existence. It is fear of this growing nostalgia, the fear of anger at the miseries brought upon the masses by the restoration of capitalism, that is behind the present-day attempts of the bourgeoisie to equate communism and fascism, and its attempts to belittle, denigrate and defame the history and achievements of socialism.

The bourgeoisie, in an endeavour to deny the working class a fu-

ture, is going all out to destroy its past. In view of this, and knowing the world-historic significance of what is at stake, the class-conscious proletariat must defend the record and epoch-making achievements of socialism, especially those of Soviet socialism.

If capitalism has little to offer the peoples of the former socialist countries, it has not much to offer peoples elsewhere either. The entire capitalist world has been, since the end of 2007, in the midst of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression of 1929. The last three years have witnessed the near-meltdown of the imperialist financial system, and the near-bankruptcy of state treasuries consequent upon the rescue packages for failing banks and the resultant austerity measures being taken by the bourgeois governments to repair public finances depleted by a massive transfer of funds to the banking sector.

The British government is implementing a programme of drastic cuts in public expenditure, combined with tax increases, to the tune of £81bn over the next four years, which will result in 'the longest, deepest sustained period of cuts in public services spending' since the second world war.\* As a result, it is estimated that over a million workers will lose their jobs, pushing up unemployment (which in the UK presently stands at 7.6 percent) further still.

Unemployment in the US – the mecca of capital – stands at 9.8 percent. And if the broad measure of unemployment, which includes the underemployed as well as the unemployed, is adopted, then 17 percent of the US workforce falls in this category. This has produced wage cuts and fierce competition for jobs, with 5.6 people fighting for each job opening.

Unemployment in the European Union stands at 23 million, accounting for 9.6 percent of the economically-active population. Of these jobless, 15.7 million are in the eurozone, representing 10

\* 'Public services: serious cuts to come', presentation by R Crawford of the Institute for Fiscal Studies at a budget briefing, June 2010

percent of the workforce. In some EU countries, the percentage of the unemployed stands much higher. In Spain, for instance, unemployment has reached 19.5 percent of the workforce, while a staggering 44.5 percent of Spaniards under the age of 25 are unemployed. Global unemployment stands at 240 million.

The near-bankruptcy of the banks has spilled over into the near-bankruptcy of the states. The bank bailouts are threatening to translate themselves into sovereign defaults.

Greece and Ireland have been temporarily rescued from going bust by massive EU-IMF rescue packages. Portugal, Spain and possibly Italy are next in the firing line. The authorities are overwhelmed by bad news converging in on them from every direction. The entire eurozone is under assault. The markets undergo regular turmoil following rumours of default by Greece or Ireland, and the knock-on effects on the sovereign debts of Spain, Portugal and other debt-laden eurozone economies.

Descriptions of what is happening in Greece, Ireland and, increasingly, Portugal and Spain, are beginning to read not unlike a passage from Dante's *Inferno*. Each new measure taken by the authorities, while bringing temporary respite, ends up by being merely a prelude to the next crisis. Every time the authorities take some measure to help the economy dodge a bullet, they find that there are plenty more bullets homing in.

The fear of contagion that caused such turmoil in the banking sector following the implosion of Bear Stearns and Lehman Brothers in 2008 is now wreaking havoc in the sphere of sovereign debts following the near-implosion of Greece and Ireland. The worst scenarios, hitherto considered unimaginable by the bourgeois pundits, have become remarkably easy to imagine and predict.

Finding themselves in uncharted waters, the representatives and ideologues of finance capital are beginning to shed, albeit reluctantly, their smug complacency. Before the latest crisis, only small and emerging market countries went bust and were rescued

by IMF packages. Greece and Ireland have broken through that barrier – nothing seems impossible any more. No wonder, then, that the sharks of investment funds are playing safe and credit lines have frozen.

The governments of Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Spain have been forced, as has the British, to resort to drastic austerity measures, which, far from alleviating this unprecedented crisis of over-production, will only end up by plunging the capitalist world deeper into the ditch of recession.

In response to these attacks on the working class, it is most unlikely that the latter will stoically accept soaring unemployment, hand in hand with wage cuts and a massive reduction in welfare spending. There have already been violent demonstrations in Greece and militant student protests in Britain, as well as large working-class protests in Portugal, Spain, Ireland, France and some other countries. As time goes by, these protests are bound to gather momentum, grow quantitatively and become much more focused and directed against the real culprit – the outdated system of capitalist production.

If the condition of the working class is becoming increasingly difficult in the centres of imperialism, the lives of people in the rest of the world are simply dire and unbearable. Some 1.3 billion people, inhabitants almost entirely of poor countries, live in absolute poverty on less than \$1 a day; 3 billion people live on less than \$2 a day. Of the 4.4 billion people living in the so-called third world, three-quarters (3.3 billion) do not have their basic needs met. A quarter (1.1 billion) have no access to safe drinking water; a quarter have inadequate housing; nearly a fifth (900 million) go hungry. Nearly a fifth are illiterate; and just under 2 billion have no electricity.

Nearly 12 million children in the poor countries die each year before reaching the age of five from easily preventable or malnutrition-related diseases. An African woman dies in childbirth every

two minutes, and more than 15 percent of African children do not reach their fifth birthday.

At the other end of the spectrum, a mere 225 of the richest people in the world have a combined wealth of over \$1,000bn – equal to the annual income of the poorest 47 percent of the global population.

These, then, are the intolerable conditions of existence that capitalism imposes on people the world over, while resorting to the time-honoured weapons of racism and xenophobia to divide the working class, and waging predatory wars of domination, as in Iraq and Afghanistan, as a means of prolonging its life. Over the last hundred years, imperialist wars have claimed the lives of over 100 million people (on top of the several hundred million who died a silent death consequent upon the miserable conditions of existence inflicted upon them by this system), destroyed untold wealth and wreaked environmental destruction on an unprecedented scale.

### **Revolution is the only answer**

This is not a system which can be reformed. It needs to be overthrown. It must and it will be overthrown. The present crisis has wiped the post-second world war shine off the face of capitalism and discredited all its boastful claims to be the bearer of prosperity and democracy. The imperialist triumphalism that accompanied the collapse of the USSR and the eastern European socialist countries has all but disappeared. The Fukuyamas of this world who, following the Soviet collapse, crowed about the 'unabashed victory of economic and political liberalism', pronounced 'the end of history' – 'the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and universalisation of western liberal democracy as the final form of



human government', have fallen strangely silent.\*

'Economic liberalisation' and 'western liberal democracy' are currently being smashed to smithereens on the stock exchanges and financial markets in the principal centres of imperialism and on the battlefields of Afghanistan and Iraq, and are being increasingly challenged in the streets of Athens, Dublin, Madrid, Lisbon, Paris and London.

The capitalist crisis of overproduction, with its resultant burdens on the working and oppressed peoples, and the imperialist predatory wars are mobilising hundreds of millions of people on a global scale in a life-and-death struggle against finance capital. In view of this, the winners of the 1991 counter-revolution will not have the last word. The international proletariat, learning from the Soviet collapse and the revisionist treachery that brought it about, is bound, inspired by the heroism of the Soviet people and their epoch-making achievements under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin, to march forward to its social emancipation, never losing sight of the fact that the Soviet Union 'will be forever celebrated as the glorious harbinger of a new society' – to quote the words of Karl Marx apropos the Paris Commune.†

As this crisis strikes deep, the British proletariat, like the proletariat in every other country, will be confronted with the simple truth that, in the fight against the omnipotence of giant monopolies, gargantuan banks and the financial oligarchy, the customary trade-union and parliamentary methods of struggle are entirely inadequate. The Leninist theory of revolution, and Leninist tactics and methods of organisation, offer the only road to salvation open to a proletariat faced with this stark choice:

\* F Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, London: Penguin, 1992

† K Marx, *The Civil War in France*, 1871, Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1966, p102

Either place yourself at the mercy of capital, eke out a wretched existence and skink lower and lower, or adopt a new weapon – this is the alternative imperialism puts before the vast masses of the proletariat. Imperialism brings the working class to revolution.\*

Let proletarian parties everywhere grasp the truth and wisdom contained in the above words as they prepare to lead the struggle of the proletariat for its social emancipation. Only the most resolute adherence on their part to the ideological and organisational principles of Marxism Leninism; only the pursuit of Bolshevik revolutionary tactics, combined with the maximum unity in the ranks of the overwhelming majority of the working class, will crown their efforts with success.

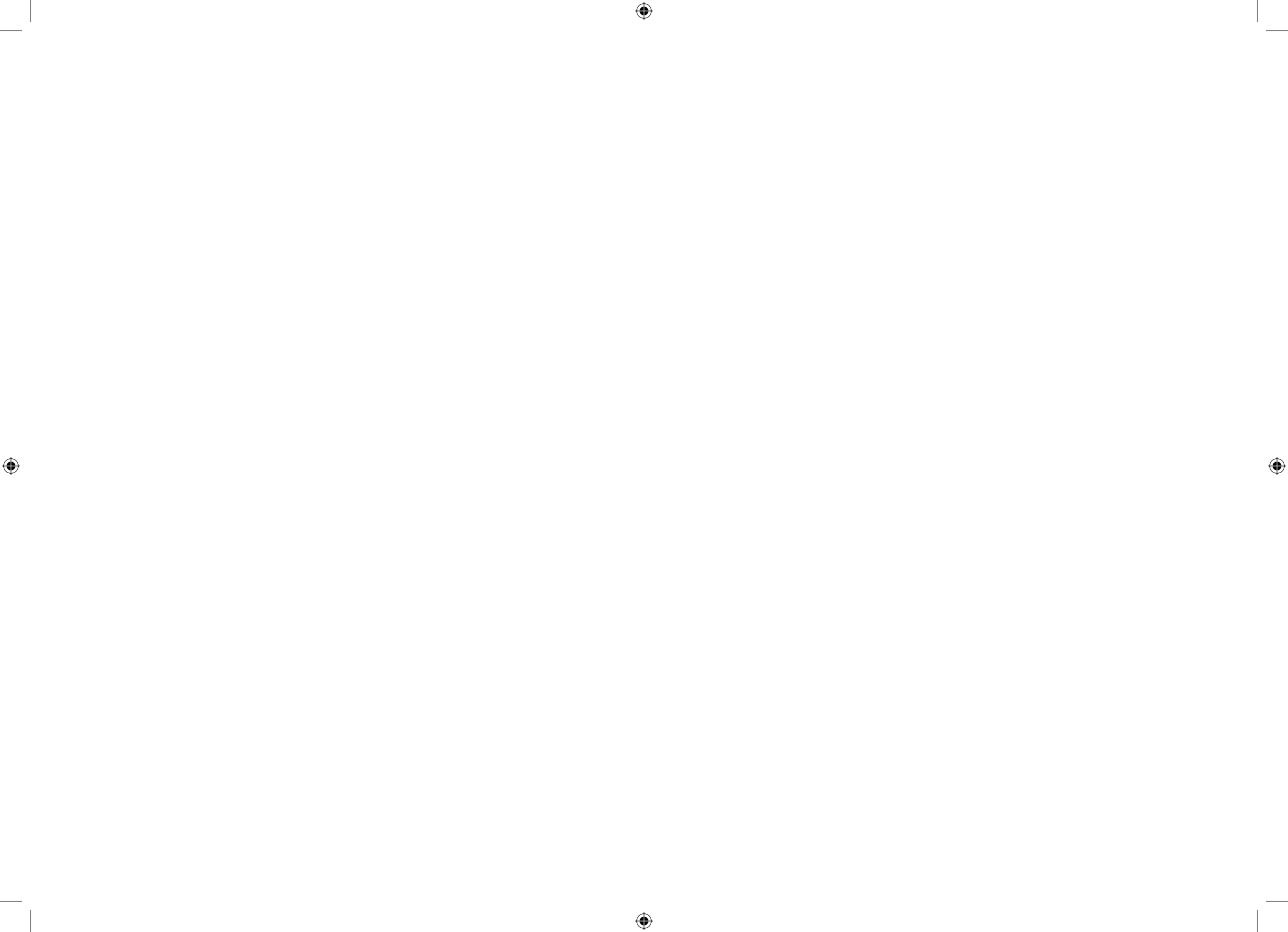
### **Harpal Brar**

London, February 2011

\* J V Stalin, *The Foundations of Leninism*, pp74-75

## NOTES

1. This article was written as a preface to the new Spanish edition of H Brar's *Perestroika, the Complete Collapse of Revisionism*, which is due to be published later in 2011. The English edition of *Perestroika* was published in London in 1992.



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