

Remembering Lenin The Great Teacher

The 67th anniversary of the passing away of the great leader of the world proletariat V. I. Lenin comes on 21st January, 1991. On this occasion we pay our deepest revolutionary homage to this great revolutionary genius who not only created history but whose name will continue to inspire and kindle for a long time to come the heart and mind of the legions of toiling multitude all over the world with the thoughts and fire of revolution. It was he whose contribution raised the understanding of Marxism—an invincible weapon in the hands of the working class—to the level of Marxism-Leninism in the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution. This is why Stalin, the worthy disciple and an able continuer of the thoughts of Lenin, correctly explained Leninism as "Marxism of the era of imperialism and the proletarian revolution," to be more precise, as "the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution in general, the theory and tactics of the dictatorship of the proletariat in particular."

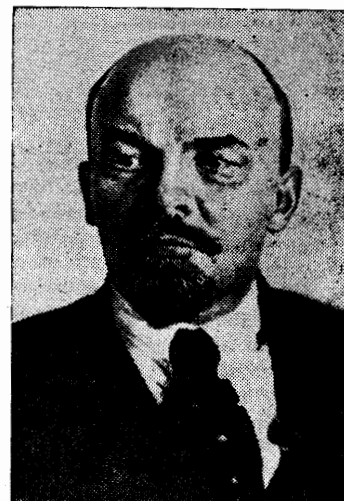
It is a tragedy of history that the Bolshevik Party of Russia reared and led by no less a revolutionary than Lenin who built up and trained this party as the conscious and vanguard detachment of the working class capable of leading the class to power, the party which attained an impregnable strength even after the demise of Lenin under the able stewardship of Stalin has, in course of time and passing through various ordeals and turns of events been infested with the revisionist moths due to serious weaknesses who usurped the leadership of the party, slowly but surely, and reduced the CPSU to a non-communist party. No less painful is the fact that the first socialist State founded by Lenin in 1917 in Russia and further consolidated by Stalin which worked as the bulwark of international

revolution and stood in firm defence of the struggle of the oppressed and colonial people has become a dangerous victim of attack of revisionism since the time of Khrushchev. Now the worst crime and treachery has been perpetrated against the world proletariat and humanity, to the delight of the imperialist-capitalist, by the revisionist renegade Gorbachev clique by finally putting an end to the dictatorship of the proletariat and degenerating the socialist state of Soviet Union into a bourgeois state as also changing the production relation and motive force of production, completing in its wake the process of restoration of capitalism. This is one occasion which devolves on all genuine communists the world over a great responsibility to take a firm pledge to face this catastrophe boldly and squarely and carry forward the behest of Lenin.

It is a teaching of Lenin—not to lose heart over a defeat but to prepare for new battles for future victory. All through his

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life Lenin conducted an unrelenting struggle against economism - opportunism - parliamentarism - revisionism - reformism of all hues on the one hand as he was equally undaunted on the other in his struggle against Left sectarianism and dogmatism-doctrinairism then affecting the communist movement from time to time. Lenin's penetrating analysis of imperialism as the last phase of capitalism, being absolutely moribund and decadent in the period of monopoly capitalism, his linking the national and colonial question with the question of overthrowing imperialism and viewing the colonial question as an integral part of international (Contd. on page 4)



Teachings of Lenin

(The following are the excerpts from Lenin which was first published on the occasion of the second anniversary of the Great November Revolution in Pravda on 7th November, 1919, under the caption 'Economics and Politics in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat.' We think it fit to reproduce the excerpts from the article which in today's perspective assumes an immense value in view of the present catastrophe faced by the world communist movement. —Editor, P. Ear)

Theoretically, there can be no doubt that between capitalism and communism there lies a definite transition period. It cannot but combine the features and properties of both these forms of social economy. This transition period has to be a period of struggle between dying capitalism and nascent communism—or, in other words, between capitalism which has been defeated but not destroyed and communism which has been born but which is still very feeble. (Contd. on page 8)

Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute

Religious Frenzy Mixed With Ulterior Political Motive

Almost the entire country has turned into a burning cauldron of communalism. Although the BJP-VHP-RSS driven Ratha was stalled on October 22 last and their frenzied 'Karsevaks' were somehow prevented from demolishing the Babri Masjid but the communal venom created and spread out of it has been showing its devastating effect in more intensity with more murderous bloodbath. The grim fire of this fratricidal communal strifes is engulfing one state after another with hundreds of lives slain, thousands deadly injured and property worth crores of rupees, mostly of the poor people, destroyed. The innocent children are not spared, disabled and old not left out and women are the targets of the rioters. Distrust and disdain on the one hand and acute sense of insecurity on the other mostly among the minority community are poised to tear apart the entire social fabric of the country. Where are we leading to? Is such a situation conducive to prosperous development of the people and social progress? Can we stand with our heads erect among the comity of nations as a civilized country?

What is the reason for such communal holocausts?

Actually, whatever misleading and mischievous arguments might be put forward in justification of misdeeds the present debate owes its origin to simply a religious fanaticism mingled with ulterior political motive. With heinous political aim such a non-issue has been reopened with the overt and covert support of some parliamentary political parties and administration. What is the dispute actually about? According to the Hindu Fundamentalists (Contd. on page 2)

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee Condemns US aggression on Iraq

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI, condemning US aggression on Iraq has issued the following statement to the Press on 17th January, 1991:

The heavy bombarding of Iraq and Kuwait by the US imperialists with the dittoing of those powers helping them is not only an attack against Iraq but carries in it a threat of a global war. We, along with all peace and freedom loving people of the whole

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Proletarian Era

Organ of SOCIALIST UNITY CENTRE OF INDIA
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Founder Editor in Chief: COMRADE SHIBDAS GHOSH

Temple-Mosque Controversy

(Contd. from page 1)

forces led by the BJP-VHP-RSS combine the location of the Babri Masjid in present-day Ayodhya was the 'birthplace of Lord Rama', the human 'incarnation of God'. This mosque was built by Babar's Governor of Avadh, Mir Baqi at Babar's behest in 1528 allegedly by demolishing the said Rama temple believed to be 'renovated' by Vikramaditya of the Guptas in the 4th Century AD. So, they say that this mosque must be shifted from this place to give way to the rebuilding of the temple. According to the Muslim fundamentalist forces on the other hand, there was no temple there at the time of the construction of the mosque and hence there cannot be any question of shifting the mosque. On the surface, around this bickering is happening all the grisly incidents leading to killings, maimings, arson, destruction and what not.

In this context one thing must be clear at the very outset. We firmly believe that communalism, be that of majority community or of minority community, is like a venom and in that sense very dangerous and harmful to the society. But it should be clearly understood that even if a good section of the majority community stands in frenzied defence of communal passion it is bound to pose a greater danger to the society because it is they who as a community constitute the bulk of the society.

This is why communalism of the majority community has the danger of assuming greater dimension by virtue of sheer preponderance in number. Not only this; it should also be borne in mind that any action on the part of any community which is communally-oriented is bound to create equal, if not greater, counter-reaction among the other community and this in turn sets in motion a kind of chain

reaction with more and more disastrous consequences. So the greater responsibility to put a curb on all this madness lies mainly on the majority community.

Now a few words about the birthplace of Rama. Some erudite and respected historians have opined that since Rama has been conceived as a mythological character having no mortal existence — there cannot be any question of his birthplace, far less any temple being erected there. It is also known that in his tribute to Valmiki, the great poet who wrote the Ramayana, Rabindra Nath Tagore mentioned that the birthplace of Rama was in the realm of dreams of the great poet. One point should be noted with all seriousness that the leaders of the BJP-VHP-RSS combine have not been able to refute this point, nor have they attempted to do so. Their only stock-in-trade is assertion and re-assertion of their firm belief that the question of birthplace of Rama is not such that it needs any proof since it is a matter of belief as if from time immemorial. Now which one should be considered as truth—the sheer belief of the fundamentalists or the findings of the scholars through intense research? Must we place belief and faith above historical truth? This apart, there are 14 to 15 temples in Ayodhya each of which has so long been claimed to be the genuine 'Janmasthan.' Be that as it may, the present controversy that is rocking the country today was not there in the past and it was only since December 22 of 1949, when the idols of Rama-Sita were foisted in a deep dark night by some fundamentalist forces in connivance with the administration, the present site is being claimed to be the only place of Ramjanmabhoomi.

But nowhere in the contemporary historic or literary works was there any mention of the des-

truction of the Rama temple at the behest of Babar. Not to speak of *Babar Nama* (Babar's memoir) or *Ain-i-Akbari*, even in *Ramcharitmanas* by Tulsidas which was concluded in 1574, there was no mention of any such incident. It is to be remembered that Tulsidas was a great devotee of Sri Rama. Can any devoutly religious man while creating his best work almost immediately after the incident which was alleged to have happened in 1528 and which in that case, is supposed to grievously hurt his faith, overlook it? On this point also the BJP-VHP-RSS combine has failed to present any palatable answer. This apart, even if this alleged incident of demolition of temple is taken as fact, it must be remembered that such incidents were quite characteristic of the era. Instances can be multiplied to show that the victors used to attack the religious shrines of the vanquished. In Spain in the middle ages the Muslims ruled for 600 years. But after the Christian conquest over the Muslim rulers, many mosques of Spain were destroyed and the people were induced or coerced to Christianity. Similarly, in Sri Lanka many Hindu temples were converted into Buddhist ones under the Buddhist rulers.

In India Hindu rulers behaved more or less in the similar way in the medieval period. According to no less a great Hindu religious leader than Swami Vivekananda, the Jagannath temple of Puri belonged to the Buddhists, but it was captured forcibly by the Hindu kings during their rule. So even if it is taken for granted for argument's sake that there was a Rama temple which was pulled down by the first Mughal emperor, should this incident of the 16th century pose as a basic question before us today or should we not consider the dangerous attempt to revive the old thoughts and ideas

of the 16th century in the present-day India at the fag end of the 20th century, a far more basic question, threatening so ominously the unity and solidarity of our common people?

Actually, Ramjanmabhoomi - Babri Masjid controversy was hatched up by the British imperialists with some ulterior motive in the mid-Nineteenth Century. The writings of the British officials like P. Carnegie, an Officiating Commissioner of the settlement office, Faizabad, and historians like Lady A. Beveridge and Fuhrer, etc., had given some communal distortions. Unfounded in all previous historical documents these motivated chroniclers suddenly discovered that Babar destroyed the temple and founded the mosque in its place. But that these were sheer presumptions and not fact is in a way admitted in their own writings even. One of them wrote that Ayodhya "must at least have possessed a fine temple in Janmasthan..." and "it seems that in 1528 Babar visited Ayodhya and under his orders this ancient temple was destroyed..." (P. Carnegie, emphasis added). Another wrote, "Presumably the order for building the mosque was given during Babar's stay in Oudh." (Lady A. Beveridge, emphasis added). It is clear from their languages as quoted the conclusion drawn by them was on the basis of presumption and unfounded and subjective thinking. The motive behind such distortion was however later unravelled by the Indian historians who showed that the British authorities like Colonel Steeman, then Resident of Lucknow, in their bid to justify the annexation of Avadh, employed this controversy superbly to drive a wedge in the Hindu - Muslim unity, at a time when the rumblings of the Sepoy Mutiny were distinctly heard.

This is indeed the character of all the exploiting classes whether foreign or native. When they face crisis they en-

deavour to create division or disunity among the common people by fanning up religious sentiments and other disintegrating factors. Otherwise, how could this debate long forgotten surface in 1986 with such a menacing proportion in the country? Such issues cannot crop up on its own. What are the forces acting as the architects behind the issue this time?

The Babri Masjid had been under lock and key by a court order since 1949 and it was unlocked in 1986 in probably a quickest judgement of the Indian judiciary during the Rajiv Gandhi regime. and *darshan* and *kirtan* were allowed to be performed from then on. From that time a frenzy has been whipped up for the construction of the Rama temple by pulling down the Babri Masjid through such acts like countrywide Shilapujan and so consecrated bricks from different parts of the country were brought to the proposed temple site.

In 1989 the Shilanyas was performed by Rajiv Gandhi himself just before the Lok Sabha poll. All these happened under the direct patronage of the Congress(I) with an eye on vote bank of the majority community. It is, however, the BJP which reaped the maximum dividend on this communal politics by the Congress(I) which was discredited because of misrule and rank corruption charges on its leaders. But we have shown earlier that the Congress(I) has been acting as the main architect of communalism, parochialism, divisivism and casteism since the last part of the rule of Smt. Indira Gandhi the branded communal parties and parochial organisations carrying these activities notwithstanding. It was the Congress(I) which played the main role in many communal riots in our country. Even in recent period, according to knowledgeable circles, the Congress(I) engineered riots in Hyderabad and Karnataka with the aim

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of replacing the Chief Ministers of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka by the pet men of Rajiv Gandhi.

The BJP, on getting a big boost in election politics through this communal politics took full advantage of the dependence of the NF government on its support for the latter's survival and took recourse to blackmailing the NF government by declaring their contemplation of construction of the Rama temple by pulling down the Babri Masjid at any cost. When the NF government was compelled to stall the BJP Ratha Yatra, the BJP withdrew its support from the NF government and what followed next is all known to us. The BJP is now thinking that the communal politics which gave them such a boosting in terms of electoral gains will give them still further dividend if vigorously pursued. They are hell bent on building the Rama temple on the ruins of the mosque, whatever the consequences. To them it is the national dignity, it is the foundation of nationalism and it is the only secularism and democracy. According to the BJP, Hindutva is synonymous with nationalism and since the Hindus are overwhelming majority, acceptance of this demand of the Hindus should be deemed democratic. In fact, what the BJP leaders are preaching is nothing but a kind of pseudo-nationalism—a euphemism for Hindu fundamentalism, because they equate nationalism with Hindutva which has nothing to do with the scientific concept of secularism.

But one must not be carried away by such deceptive arguments. Democracy does not mean that because of Hindu majority the voice of the minority has to be stifled. Rather, the concept of democracy is just the reverse. This concept of equality of rights emerged with the aim of protecting the right of the minority and even of an individual.

Temple-Mosque Controversy

They also claim that since Hinduism preaches mutual toleration and shows spirit of accommodation towards other religions therefore all should accept 'Hindutva' even if belonging to a different religion. A little bit of critical examination will clearly reveal that this interpretation of 'Hindutva' of the BJP-VHP-RSS combine bespeaks no spirit of toleration or accommodation, rather it carries in it a veiled threat to the minority community people practising non-Hindu religion. This is highly objectionable and dangerous indeed! So, the BJP is vulgarising this concept of democracy and Hindutva with the sole aim of reaping rich dividend in elections and this frenzied behaviour of the BJP has nothing to do with genuine adherence to faith or belief. Had it been so, why the leaders of the BJP who were in the Jana Sangh did not raise the dispute after independence till 1986. The latest utterances of the BJP leader L. K. Advani after much debate nationwide as reported in the Press that since he was a political leader his Rathayatra was a political campaign and not a religious one bear enough testimony to the BJP's ulterior motive banking on the religious sentiments of the people. Moreover, the present leaders of the BJP were in the Janata Party which came to power in 1977. But neither the debate was initiated nor such a situation as the present one was created then. Does it prove their genuine adherence to the belief? Apart from their hypocritical behaviour in whipping up the present frenzy compared to the past silence on the issue from religious point of view itself such hysteria of the BJP-VHP-RSS combine cannot be justified. No religion ordains to hate other religions, not to speak of allowing such gruesome killings of the innocent fellow brethren of other faith as the BJP-driven Ratha yatra has set in motion

ghastly fratricidal killings practically encompassing the entire country.

It is painful that all these ghastly acts are being engineered at the behest of those who carry portrait of Swami Vivekananda who was not only a great religious leader but a great man and is known as a pioneer in the Indian nationalist movement. We find in the life and thoughts of Swami Vivekananda the qualities like compassion, tolerance, magnanimity and love for humanity. But these Advanis or Singhals do not want to adhere to the essence of the teachings of Swami Vivekananda whom they are using for some narrow political gain. Swami Vivekananda preached supreme tolerance for all religions and to recognize belief of all kinds. Vivekananda was, in fact, a believer for searching truth from other religions. That is the reason why he went to the shrines of other religions i.e., from mosques to churches and bihars to offer his prayer. He also preached: "At the very outset, I request the humanity to accept this principle, 'don't destroy anything', the destructive reformers are of no use to the world." (Free translation ours, 3rd part p-1972 Works of Vivekananda Bengali Edition). But the Advanis and Singhals say that without demolishing the Babri Masjid, their brand of Hinduism cannot be saved! Is their Hinduism same as that preached by the religious leader, Swami Vivekananda? Do the activities of these peddlers of Hinduism have anything to do with religion judged from the point of view of Vivekananda? Definitely not.

What the BJP aims at is to establish a religious state in India—Hindu Rashtra. Thus they want to take us to the dark middle age when religion reigned supreme, reducing human beings to abject slaves to the kings or monarches. Today, when religion has no progressive role, such an act with the object of esta-

blishing Hindu Rashtra will definitely stand in the way of the progress and advancement of the country as a whole. In order to free man from the shackles of religion and thus ushering in a modern scientific thinking in the society and democratising the entire society through social revolution, the ruling bourgeoisie of the West once fought an uncompromising battle and established democratic values, norms and secular concepts in the society. This was necessary as religion and religious values could provide no answer to the growing contradiction within the society and these stood as a stumbling block to the further progress of the society.

Even if the past events are left aside, we have seen what happened recently in Bangladesh. The military rulers of Bangladesh declared their country as an Islamic state and the democratic and progressive section of the people of Bangladesh valiantly fought against this act. Though they could not prevent the military rulers from converting Bangladesh into a theocratic state, at that time, now those rulers have been thrown out of power by the people cutting across their barrier of religion thereby paving the way for newer possibilities there. Now is not the move of the BJP to convert India into a Hindu Rashtra nakedly comparable to that of the military rulers of Bangladesh? What should be our ideal—the valiant fight of the people of Bangladesh for secularism or the move of the BJP for a Hindu Rashtra?

So, in our country just the opposite of what is happening in Bangladesh is being seen to dominate the national scene. The BJP-VHP-RSS combine is out to create a vertical divide in the society. Whatever might be the excesses committed against the Karsevaks the BJP is trying to take maximum advantage of the incident as can be seen that video cassettes

of the incident are being shown in different places and particularly in those places which are dominated by the minority community. Again, the urns of the ashes of the dead Karsevaks are being taken out in processions to rouse passion. It is apparent that they are trying to keep the controversy alive till the next election so that they can derive maximum dividend out of this controversy in election.

One more point should be discussed in passing. It is spread out by the Hindu fundamentalist forces led by the BJP that the minorities are not patriotic. But is this assertion correct? Did not Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan popularly known as Badsha Khan or Frontier Gandhi fight for the country? Did not Moujama Abul Kalam Azad struggle for freedom? Didn't Asfaquilla brave the gallows for the freedom of the country? Was not Netaji's Azad Hind Fouz (INA) constituted with the Muslim soldiers as well along with the Hindu soldiers? Didn't they die for the freedom of the country? Moreover, are not the millions of Muslim toiling people fighting against the injustice and oppression of the ruling capitalist class both in the factories and fields? It is a fact that the Muslim masses did not en masse take part in the freedom struggle. But the reason for this should be sought elsewhere. As shown by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the great leader of the proletariat, our nationalist movement was religion-oriented. More precisely, it was Hindu religion-oriented nationalism that dominated the freedom struggle. This is the reason why the Muslim people could not be inspired and attracted to the mainstream of nationalist movement. Though India attained political freedom, yet democratization of the society and cultural integration remain unaccomplished and the reason for this is the inherent weakness of the reformist oppositional leadership of the Congress.

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proletarian revolution, his unique contribution in making the possibility of victory of socialism in a single country a reality by breaking the weakest chain of imperialism, contrary to earlier belief, in the background of uneven development of capitalism, his brilliant exposition that after the October Revolution in Russia, international revolution, whatever may be its form and content in any country, needed very much the hegemony of the working class for successful culmination and not to remain half-baked and truncated, his elucidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat as a special form of class alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry in Russia, and stressing very much the importance of strengthening and heightening the class struggle in the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat needs in today's perspective a deeper realisation by the communists the world over. His invaluable and timely warning that the overthrown bourgeoisie inevitably cherish the hope of restoration and it may be converted into attempts at restoration has been proved, painfully though, to be correct to the hilt. His clarion call that in the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat "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)" still rings in the ear.

Lenin castigated the leaders of the Second International as the principal SOCIAL PROP OF THE BOURGEOISIE, as the real AGENTS OF THE BOURGEOISIE IN THE LABOUR MOVEMENT and characterised them as the real channels of reformism and chauvinism. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the founder General Secretary of our party and an outstanding Marxist thinker and philosopher of the era showed that the communist parties which had turned revisionists were communists in name only but social democratic in practice and had reduced themselves to the position of national communist parties. And modern revisionism has appeared today as the main danger in the communist movement and acts as the force of compromise between labour and capital. The modern revisionists led by Mikhail Gorbachev and his clique are not only dreaming but also visualising a change of character of imperialism in view of a 'technological revolution' taking place in the meantime. They also say that the era of 'cold war' has ceased to exist and there is no more danger of outbreak of war. But it was Lenin who brilliantly analysed the nature and character of imperialism, showed its essential features and also concluded that so long imperialism remained, there would remain the danger of outbreak of war—which is known as the law of inevitability of war in the period of imperialism. Many recent facts of history—to cite one example, i.e., Middle East of today—will clearly show how correct has been the analysis of Lenin. The traders of pacifism dream of a 'peaceful' world and are confident of the 'peaceful' intention of the imperialists—but they fail to explain the basic cause behind the growing militarisation of economy in all the capitalist countries which in effect is fraught with dangerous consequences. Besides, Lenin mocked at those who dreamt of raising the

standard of living of the masses, in view of amazing advance in technical knowledge of capitalism, with the words that "if capitalism did these things it would not be capitalism," for uneven development and wretched condition of the masses are fundamental and inevitable conditions and premises of this mode of production. These words and teaching of Lenin are thousand times valid in today's condition whatever may have been the height of development in the field of technology.

The imperialists and their hangers-on, those who bloat over the dismantling of the socialist state in Russia and some East European countries and gleefully declare the doom of communism are actually living in a fool's paradise. Ignorant as they are they fail to understand that these are nothing but temporary setbacks, although very severe at that. They do not know that the revolution in Russia took place not according to the promptings of imagination or some fancy of any individual leader or leaders. The October Socialist Revolution

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in Russia became successful as the logical culmination of the law of development of the society. The science of Marxism could comprehend this law successfully and it was through the correct and creative application of the understanding of this law by the Bolshevik Party led by Lenin that the Russian Revolution became successful and the Russian Proletariat victorious. It was truly an epoch-making event that shook the world which witnessed the magnificent spectacle of a correct scientific theory becoming an invincible material force by gripping the masses with a noble ideology, and bringing about the first rupture in the chain of world imperialist-capitalist system.

Lenin has taught us that the "living soul of Marxism is the concrete analysis of the concrete situation." Since Marxism-Leninism is a science and not a dogma, it needs to be concretely applied, constantly developed and enriched in the process. Human history is a witness to the development of not only natural science but also to the development of Marxism as a living science. Marx and Engels developed this philosophy as the science of all sciences by integrating, co-ordinating and in its wake generalising the then particular knowledges and truths of different branches of science. Since then science has made enormous strides and the modern developments of Physics, Chemistry, Life Sciences etc. have more and more corroborated and vindicated the principles of Dialectical Materialism. It should be clearly understood that to conceive the philosophy of Marxism as something unchangeable and absolute is out and out non-Marxian and hence unscientific and has nothing to do with Marxism. Similarly, to change the basic tenets of Marxism on the ostensible plea that they are no longer valid in the changed situation of today amounts to revising the fundamentals of Marxism, i.e. revisionism which is sheer vulgarisation of Marxism and not Marxism proper. It is to be borne in mind that as in the case of natural science it is

impossible to go against its fundamentals although the understanding of these fundamentals continues to grow and develop with the ever-changing knowledge of science, so also the basic tenets of Marxism tested and verified in history cannot be simply wished away and declared to have lost their validity in the name of a changed situation. It is therefore necessary for the genuine Marxists to provide a correct and concrete understanding of those basic tenets in the changed concrete situation of today. The revisionist-reformists everywhere have proved themselves to be incapable of making such creative and scientific application of Marxism. So the main task before the genuine communists is to snatch the flag of communism from the hands of those who have maligne the flag and are working as the real agents of the bourgeoisie in the labour movement, who are communists in name only but acting as virtual enemies of communism in different countries. This is a hard task no doubt before all the genuine communists. But in this battle lies the emancipation of civilization and mankind from the bondage of wage slavery and the rule of capital.

The real question is the question of clarity of thought, firm revolutionary conviction and dedication, a correct revolutionary theory and a correct leadership. Lenin himself has said: "...it is not so much a question of size of an organisation as of the real, objective significance of its policy: does its policy represent the masses, does it serve them, i.e., does it aim at their liberation from capitalism, or does it represent the interest of the minority, the minority's reconciliation with capitalism?" In fact the strength of revolutionary movement of any country has to be drawn from the treasurehouse of knowledge that Marxism-Leninism has bequeathed to us.

In our country, following the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Zedong and concretising, elaborating, developing and enriching those teachings further and conducting a ceaseless battle particularly against the brand of revisionism represented by the CPI(M) and CPI and in the process of building up a genuine communist party in India on the correct base political line of anti-capitalist socialist revolution as also through relentless ideological struggle on each and every issue of international communist movement, the understanding of Marxism-Leninism has attained a new height in the thoughts of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. No conscious communist can forget for a moment that the inexorable law of social change will assert and reassert itself and the birth pang of revolution will urge our conscience for its deliverance. To respond to this call needs a deeper and clearer understanding of the theory and practice of revolution and a constant pursuit of truth by remaining vigilant over adhering to principles without making any compromise. This is the behest of Lenin. Let all of us be equal to the task. Marxism-Leninism - Comrade Shibdas Ghosh's thoughts is the beacon light. Communism and the philosophy of Dialectical Materialism will come out triumphant.

Long Live Marxism-Leninism
Long Live Revolution
Workers of all Countries Unite

Stalin's tribute to Lenin

(The Editorial Board of the Proletarian Era has decided to reproduce this homage paid to Comrade Lenin by Comrade Stalin who delivered the speech at a memorial meeting of the Kremlin Military School on 28th January, 1924, just a week after the demise of Comrade Lenin. This speech by Comrade Stalin dwells in a nutshell on the revolutionary genius of the giant communist leader Lenin. We think it significant in the present context when the counter-revolutionary current is sweeping the world communist movement. —Editor, P. Era)

Comrades, I am told that you have arranged a Lenin memorial meeting this evening, and that I have been invited as one of the speakers. I believe there is no need for me to deliver a set speech on Lenin's activities. It would be better, I think, to confine myself to a few facts to bring out certain of Lenin's characteristics as a man and a statesman. There may perhaps be no inherent connection between these facts, but that is of no vital importance as far as gaining a general idea of Lenin is concerned. At any rate I am unable on this occasion to do more than what I have just promised.

A MOUNTAIN EAGLE

I first became acquainted with Lenin in 1903. True, it was not a personal acquaintance; it was maintained by correspondence. But it made an indelible impression upon me, one which has never left me throughout all my work in the Party. I was in exile in Siberia at the time. My knowledge of Lenin's revolutionary activities since the end of the 'nineties, and especially after 1901, after the appearance of *Iskra*, had convinced me that in Lenin we had a man of extraordinary calibre. I did not regard him as a mere leader of the Party, but as its actual founder, for he alone understood the inner essence and urgent needs of our Party. When I compared him with the other leaders of our Party, it always seemed to me that he was head and shoulders above his colleagues — Plekhanov, Martov, Axelrod and the others; that, compared with them, Lenin was not just one of the leaders, but a leader of highest rank, a mountain eagle, who knew no fear in the struggle and who boldly led the Party forward along the unexplored paths of the Russian revolution

ary movement. This impression took such a deep hold of me that I felt impelled to write about it to a close friend of mine who was living as a political exile abroad, requesting him to give me his opinion. Some time later, when I was already in exile in Siberia — this was at the end of 1903 — I received an enthusiastic letter from my friend and a simple, but profoundly expressive letter from Lenin, to whom, it appeared, my friend had shown my letter. Lenin's note was comparatively short, but it contained a bold and fearless criticism of the practical work of our Party, and a remarkably clear and concise account of the entire plan of work of the Party in the immediate future. Only Lenin could write of the most intricate things so simply and clearly, so concisely and boldly that every sentence did not so much speak as ring like a rifle shot. This simple and bold letter strengthened my opinion that Lenin was the mountain eagle of our Party. I cannot forgive myself for having, from the habit of an old underground worker, consigned this letter of Lenin's, like many other letters, to the flames.

My acquaintance with Lenin dates from that time.

MODESTY

I first met Lenin in December 1905 at the Bolshevik conference in Tammerfors (Finland). I was hoping to see the mountain eagle of our Party, the great man, great not only politically, but, if you will, physically, because in my imagination I pictured Lenin as a giant, stately and imposing. What, then, was my disappointment to see a most ordinary-looking man, below average height, in no way, literally in no way, distinguishable from ordinary mortals. . . .

It is accepted as the usual thing for a "great man" to come late to meetings so that the assembly may await his appearance with bated breath; and then, just before the great man enters, the warning whisper goes up: "Hush! . . . Silence! . . . He's coming." This rite did not seem to me superfluous, because it creates an impression, inspires respect. What, then, was my disappointment to learn that Lenin had arrived at the conference before the delegates, had settled himself somewhere in a corner, and was unassumingly carrying on a conversation, a most ordinary conversation with the most ordinary delegates at the conference. I will not conceal from you that at that time this seemed to me to be rather a violation of certain essential rules.

Only later did I realize that this simplicity and modesty, this striving to remain unobserved, or, at least, not to make himself conspicuous and not to emphasize his high position—that this feature was one of Lenin's strongest points as the new leader of the new masses, of the simple and ordinary masses, of the very "rank and file" of humanity.

FORCE OF LOGIC

The two speeches Lenin delivered at this conference were remarkable: one was on the political situation and the other on the agrarian question. Unfortunately, they have not been preserved. They were inspired, and they roused the whole conference to a pitch of stormy enthusiasm. The extraordinary power of conviction, the simplicity and clarity of argument, the brief and easily understandable sentences, the absence of affectation, of dizzying gestures and theatrical phrases aiming for effect—all this made Lenin's speech a favourable contrast to the speeches of the usual "parliamentary" orator.

But what captivated me at the time was not these features of Lenin's speeches. I was captivated by that irresistible force of logic in them which, although somewhat terse, thoroughly overpowered his audience, gradually electrified it, and then, as the saying goes, captivated it completely. I remember that many of the delegates said: "The logic of Lenin's speeches is like a mighty tentacle which seizes you on all sides as in a vise and from whose grip you are powerless to tear yourself away: you must either surrender or make up your mind to utter defeat."

I think that this characteristic of Lenin's speeches was the strongest feature of his art as an orator.

NO WHINING

The second time I met Lenin was in 1906 at the Stockholm Congress of our Party. You know that the Bolsheviks were in the minority at this congress and suffered defeat. This was the first time I saw Lenin in the role of the vanquished. But he was not a jot like those leaders who whine and lose heart when beaten. On the contrary, defeat transformed Lenin into a spring of compressed energy which inspired his followers for new battles and for future victory. I said that Lenin was defeated. But was

it defeat? You had only to look at his opponents, the victors at the Stockholm Congress — Plekhanov, Axelrod, Martov and the rest. They had little of the appearance of real victors, for Lenin's implacable criticism of Menshevism had not left one whole bone in their body, so to speak. I remember that we, the Bolshevik delegates, huddled together in a group, gazing at Lenin and asking his advice. The talk of some of the delegates betrayed a note of weariness and dejection. I recall that Lenin bitingly replied through clenched teeth: "Don't whine, comrades, we are bound to win, for we are right." Hatred of the whining intellectual, faith in our own strength, confidence in victory—that is what Lenin impressed upon us. It was felt that the Bolsheviks' defeat was temporary, that they were bound to win in the early future.

"No whining over defeat"—this was a feature of Lenin's activities that helped him to weld together an army faithful to the end and confident of its strength.

NO CONCEIT

At the next Congress, held in 1907 in London, the Bolsheviks were victorious. This was the first time I saw Lenin in the role of victor. Victory usually turns the heads of leaders and makes them haughty and conceited. They begin in most cases by celebrating their victory and resting on their laurels. Lenin did not resemble such leaders one jot. On the contrary, it was after a victory that he was most vigilant and cautious. I recall that Lenin insistently impressed on the delegates: "The first thing is not to be carried away by victory, not to grow conceited; the second thing is to consolidate the victory; the third thing is to crush the opponent, for he has been defeated, but by no means crushed." He poured withering scorn on those delegates who frivolously asserted: "It

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Temple-Mosque Dispute

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This is the reason why communalism, casteism, racism, parochialism, etc.,—all the feudal disintegrating forces are ravaging our country. Even after independence no attempt was made to counter the menace of communalism, separatism, racism by unleashing a social and cultural movement and by firmly upholding the principle of secularism. The concept of secularism even has been distorted in our country since independence and all the political parties who profess to abide by the principle of secularism actually mean by secularism equal patronage to all religions. But the word secular means wordly—pertaining to this world. Therefore all secular concepts start with the non-recognition of any supernatural entity.

In the process of development of civilization based on the objective necessity of opening the scope of the fullest development of man by freeing him from the bondage of supernatural thoughts, the concept of secularism appeared. And "the concept of secular state", in the words of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, "developed in order to free the state, the social and economic life, the political and cultural movement from the influence of the church and the religion." From this historical perspective the concept of freeing the state affairs from religious influence is recognised and the religion is considered as the private affair of the individual. But in our country this concept of secularism has been given a goodbye in the mainstream of the national freedom struggle nor has it been pursued by the Congress government in independent India.

Now about the oft-repeated charges of the BJP that the Muslims are appeased, we like to ask its leaders if they have any moral right to raise such question when

they can also be charged on the same count of pandering equally, if not more, to the Hindu community. As a matter of fact, all parliamentary political parties have been resorting to pandering to the various communities of the people in the exigency of parliamentary politics with the aim of getting electoral dividend and this has nothing to do with the genuine interest of the people.

The communalism of today has assumed a much bigger dimension than what it was in the past when communal clashes occurred between different communities centring round some distrust or ill-feeling or for some difference of opinion or misunderstanding, behind-the-scene role of other forces and the vested interest notwithstanding. But now this has been institutionalised and the police, administration and the parliamentary political parties are directly involved in engineering communal riots and the communal politics itself has become the core of the politics of the ruling class.

The behaviour of the parliamentary parties bears testimony to how they are instrumental in engineering communal tension and communal riots. The role of the Congress(I) has been discussed earlier how it was instrumental in whipping up the controversy right from the unlocking of the mosque to the Silanyas. Even the the Janata Dal - led NF Government cannot be excused for its failure to stall the Rathayatra at the beginning. The NF Government allowed the communally venomous Rathayatra to snowball with the ultimate design to play a sordid game in election politics. It was because of this sordid game of communal politics that the NF Government failed to declare the mosque as a national monument despite repeated suggestions of the well-meaning and intellectual

sections of the people of the country.

The role of the CPI(M), the ally of the National Front is also not free from blemishes in this respect despite its posture as the champion of secularism. The CPI(M) not only not suggested and put pressure on the NF Government for stalling the Rathayatra at the very beginning but it allowed the Ratha to pass through West Bengal also resulting in riots in Jhalda in Purulia and Palkhana in Howrah districts with the loss of many precious lives. According to the CPI(M) it is ready to fight communalism even jointly with the Congress(I) which, as we have shown; has been playing the communal card, but not with the SUCI. Does this behaviour of the CPI(M) not expose the real character of its fight against communalism?

Now Shri Chandra Shekhar, the present lame duck Prime Minister is trying to solve the controversy with the latest formula of Rajiv Gandhi in which a probe body will be constituted with five Supreme Court judges and this body will probe the findings of the archeological and historical findings to ascertain the existence of the temple. This attempt is nothing but a gamble and it is likely to give rise to new controversy as all these findings are subject to interpretation. This Rajiv Gandhi formula is nothing but a sheer ploy to keep alive the issue.

But we must have to get rid of this conspiracy of the ruling class to keep the religiously susceptible common people of the country embroiled in fratricidal strife. The people will have to realise that apart from the exigency of the election politics, there is a far more graver design behind this move to keep alive the controversy on Ramjanmabhoomi - Babri Masjid. The entire country is groaning under capitalist exploitation, grinding poverty, acute unemployment, starvation, disease and death. Lock-

outs, lay-offs, closures, retrenchment and refusal of minimum wages both in the industrial as well as in agricultural sectors are most adversely affecting the life of the people. Unprecedented price-rise, massive taxation and deficit financing have created havoc in social life. These are the burning problems confronting the life of the people. To fight against the oppression and exploitation, against illiteracy, starvation, attack on democratic rights, vicious corruption and degeneration of values and morality—to fight against all these evils—should be the prime consideration of the people. The ruling class wants to keep the people divided so that they cannot unleash a united movement against this exploitative and oppressive rule and herein lies the design of the ruling class to keep alive the temple - mosque controversy.

But must we fall prey to the design of the ruling class? Is not whole world laughing at us because such a frivolous temple - mosque dispute can divert the attention of the entire country from the burning problems confronting the country? The toiling people of the country will have to realise that their interest lies in the struggle for emancipation and not in building any temple. They will have to realise which one is prior and the united struggle is the prior necessity for realising their just demands. Again this united struggle alone can uproot all the forces of disintegration forever.

We appeal to the people in general and well-meaning as well as Left and democratic forces in particular to rise to the occasion and undertake vigorously the task of developing a militant democratic movement particularly against communalism at the present hour in the background of the movement on burning problems in people's life. In this way the government must be forced to yield to the suggestion made by the well-mean-

ing people of both the communities for transformation of the Babri Masjid into a national monument. This suggestion is most reasonable as this has a historical precedent. In Istanbul when a dispute over a mosque which was allegedly built by demolishing a 900-year old church in medieval period arose, Kamal Atatürk, the architect of modern Turkey, declared the disputed shrine as national monument in 1935. So, this is the only sensible course for resolving the current dispute. But any government serving the interest of the ruling class will not implement this most sensible suggestion with the ulterior motive of keeping alive the controversy so that the people cannot put up a united struggle against the ruling class, unless it is compelled to by the pressure of mass movement. So building up a united mass movement is the need of the hour.

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is all over with the Mensheviks now." He had no difficulty in showing that the Mensheviks still had roots in the labour movement, that they had to be fought with skill, and that all overestimation of one's own strength and, especially, all underestimation of the strength of the adversary had to be avoided.

"No conceit in victory"—this was a feature of Lenin's character that helped him soberly to weigh the strength of the enemy and to insure the Party against possible surprises.

FIDELITY TO PRINCIPLE

Party leaders cannot but prize the opinion of the majority of their Party. A majority is a power with which a leader cannot but reckon. Lenin understood this no less than any other party leader. But Lenin never

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STALIN ON LENIN

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 was a captive of the majority, especially when that majority had no basis of principle. There have been times in the history of our Party when the opinion of the majority or the momentary interests of the Party conflicted with the fundamental interests of the proletariat. On such occasions Lenin would never hesitate and resolutely took his stand on principle as against the majority of the Party. Moreover, he did not fear on such occasions literally to stand alone against all, considering — as he would often say — that “a policy of principle is the only correct policy.”

Particularly characteristic in this respect are the two following facts.

First fact. This was in the period 1909-11, when the Party had been smashed by the counter-revolution and was in a state of complete disintegration. It was a period of disbelief in the Party, of wholesale desertion from the Party, not only by the intellectuals, but partly even by the workers; it was a period when the necessity for a secret organization was being denied, a period of Liquidatorism and collapse. Not only the Mensheviks, but even the Bolsheviks consisted of a number of factions and trends, which for the most part were severed from the working-class movement. We know that it was at this period that the idea arose of completely liquidating the secret party and of organizing the workers into a legally-sanctioned, liberal, Stolypin party. Lenin at that time was the only one not to succumb to the general contagion and to hold aloft the Party banner assembling the scattered and shattered forces of the Party with astonishing patience and extraordinary persistence, combating each and every anti-Party trend within the working-class movement and defending the Party idea with unusual courage and unparalleled perseverance.

We know that in this fight for the Party idea, Lenin later proved the victor.

Second fact. This was the period 1914-17, when the imperialist war was in full swing, and when all, or nearly all, the Social-Democratic and Socialist parties had succumbed to the general patriotic frenzy and placed themselves at the service of the imperialism of their respective countries. It was a period when the Second International had hauled down its colours to capitalism, when even people like Plekhanov, Kautsky, Guesde and the rest were unable to withstand the tide of chauvinism. Lenin at that time was the only one, or nearly the only one, to wage a determined struggle against social-chauvinism and social-pacifism, to denounce the treachery of the Guesdes and Kautskys, and to stigmatize the half-heartedness of the betwixt-and-between “revolutionaries.” Lenin knew that he was backed by only an insignificant minority, but to him this was not of decisive moment for he knew that the only correct policy with a future before it was the policy of consistent internationalism, that the only correct policy was one of principle.

We know that in this fight for a new International Lenin proved the victor.

“A policy of principle is the only correct policy”—this was the formula with which Lenin took “impregnable” positions by assault and won over the best elements of the proletariat to revolutionary Marxism.

FAITH IN THE MASSES

Theoreticians and leaders of parties, men who are acquainted with the history of nations and who have studied the history of revolutions from beginning to end, are sometimes afflicted by an unsavoury disease. This disease is called fear of the masses, disbelief in the creative power of the masses. This sometimes gives

rise in leaders to an aristocratic attitude towards the masses, who although they may not be versed in the history of revolutions are destined to destroy the old order and build the new. This aristocratic attitude is due to a fear that the elements may break loose, that the masses may “destroy too much”; it is due to a desire to play the part of a mentor who tries to teach the masses from books, but who is averse to learning from the masses.

Lenin was the very antithesis of such leaders. I do not know of any revolutionary who had so profound a faith in the creative power of the proletariat and in the revolutionary fitness of its class instinct as Lenin. I do not know of any revolutionary who could scourge the smug critics of the “chaos of revolution” and the “riot of unauthorized actions of the masses” so ruthlessly as Lenin. I recall that when in the course of a conversation one comrade said that “the revolution should be followed by normal order,” Lenin sarcastically remarked: “It is a regrettable thing when people who would be revolutionaries forget that the most normal order in history is revolutionary order.”

Hence, Lenin's contempt for all who superciliously looked down on the masses and tried to teach them from books. And hence, Lenin's constant precept; learn from the masses, try to comprehend their actions, carefully study the practical experience of the struggle of the masses.

Faith in the creative power of the masses—this was the feature of Lenin's activities which enabled him to comprehend the elemental forces and to direct their movement into the channel of the proletarian revolution.

THE GENIUS OF REVOLUTION

Lenin was born for revolution. He was, in truth, the genius of revolutionary outbreaks and a supreme master of the art of revolutionary leadership. Never did he feel so free and happy as

in times of revolutionary upheavals. I do not mean by this that Lenin equally approved of all revolutionary upheavals, or that he was in favour of revolutionary outbreaks at all times and under all circumstances. Not at all. What I do mean is that never was Lenin's brilliant insight displayed so fully and conspicuously as in times of revolutionary outbreak. During revolutionary upheavals he literally blossomed forth, became a seer, divined the movement of classes and the probable zigzags of revolution as if they lay in the palm of his hand. It used to be said with good reason in our Party circles: “Lenin swims in the tide of revolution like a fish in water.”

Hence, the “amazing” clarity of Lenin's tactical slogans and the “astounding” boldness of his revolutionary plans.

I recall two facts which are particularly characteristic of this feature of Lenin.

First fact. It was in the period just prior to the October Revolution, when millions of workers, peasants and soldiers, driven by the crisis in the rear and at the front, were demanding peace and liberty; when the generals and the bourgeoisie were working for a military dictatorship for the sake of “war to a finish”; when so-called “public opinion” and the so-called “socialist parties” were inimical to the Bolsheviks and were branding them as “German spies”; when Kerensky was trying—already with some success—to drive the Bolshevik Party underground; and when the still powerful and disciplined armies of the Austro-German coalition stood confronting our weary, disintegrating armies, while the West-European “Socialists” lived in blissful alliance with their governments for the sake of “war to a victorious finish.”

What did starting an uprising at such a moment mean? Starting an uprising in such a situation meant staking everything. But Lenin did not

fear the risk, for he knew, he saw with his prophetic eye, that an uprising was inevitable, that it would win; that an uprising in Russia would pave the way for the termination of the imperialist war, that it would rouse the worn-out masses of the West, that it would transform the imperialist war into a civil war; that the uprising would usher in a Republic of Soviets, and that the Republic of Soviet would serve as a bulwark for the revolutionary movement all over the world.

We know that Lenin's revolutionary foresight was subsequently confirmed with unparalleled fidelity.

Second fact. It was in the very first days of the October Revolution when the Council of People's Commissars was trying to compel General Dukhonin, the mutinous Commander-in-Chief, to terminate hostilities and to start negotiations for an armistice with the Germans. I recall that Lenin, Krylenko (the future Commander-in-Chief) and I went to General Headquarters in Petrograd to negotiate with Dukhonin over the direct wire. It was a ghastly moment. Dukhonin and General Headquarters categorically refused to obey the orders of the Council of People's Commissars. The army officers were completely under the sway of General Headquarters. As for the soldiers, no one could tell what this would say, subordinated army of twelve million as it was to the so-called army organizations, which were hostile to the Soviets. In Petrograd itself, as we know, a mutiny of the military cadets was brewing. Furthermore, Kerensky was marching on Petrograd. I recall that after a pause at the direct wire, Lenin's face suddenly lit up; it became extraordinarily radiant. Clearly, he had arrived at a decision. “Let's go to the wireless station,” he said, “it will stand us in good stead. We will issue a special order dismissing General

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STALIN on LENIN Comrade Mukherjee on Gulf War

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Dukhonin, appoint Krylenko Commander-in-Chief in his place and appeal to the soldiers over the heads of the officers, calling upon them to surround the generals, to terminate hostilities, to establish contact with the German and Austrian soldiers and take the cause of peace into their own hands."

This was "a leap in the dark." But Lenin did not shrink from this "leap"; on the contrary, he made it eagerly, for he knew that the army wanted peace and would

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world, condemn this aggression with the utmost severity it demands and urge all governments, including the government of India, having anti-imperialist role and tradition, to mount diplomatic and political pressure to the extent of severing diplomatic relations with the US imperialists to stop war and withdraw from the Gulf region immediately and settle the question of Kuwait and Palestinian problem amicably.

We appeal to the common people of India to stand as one man and keep constant vigil on any attempt of the unscrupulous traders and the powers-that-be to impose further burden of price hike on them taking advantage of the situation.

win peace, sweeping every obstacle from its path; he knew that this method of establishing peace was bound to have its effect on the German and Austrian soldiers and would

give full rein to the yearning for peace on every front without exception.

We know that here, too, Lenin's revolutionary foresight was subsequently confirmed with

the utmost fidelity.

Brilliant insight, the ability rapidly to grasp and divine the inner meaning of impending events, was that quality in Lenin which enabled

him to lay down the correct strategy and a clear line of conduct at crucial moments of the revolutionary movement. *Pravda* No 34, February 12, 1924

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The necessity for a whole historical era distinguished by these transitional features should be obvious not only to Marxists, but to every educated person who is in any degree acquainted with the theory of development. Yet all the talk on the subject of the transition of socialism which we hear from present-day petty-bourgeois democrats... is marked by complete disregard of this obvious truth. Petty-bourgeois democrats are distinguished by an aversion to class struggle, by their dreams of avoiding it, by their efforts to smooth over and reconcile, to take the edge off sharp corners. Such democrats, therefore, either avoid recognising any necessity for a whole historical period of transition from capitalism to communism or regard it as their duty to concoct schemes for reconciling the two contending forces, instead of leading the struggle of one of these forces.

* * *
Socialism means the abolition of classes. The dictatorship of the proletariat has done all it could to abolish classes. But classes cannot be abolished at one stroke.

And classes still remain and will remain in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The dictatorship will become unnecessary when classes disappear. Without the dictatorship of the proletariat they will not disappear.

Classes have remained, but in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat every class has undergone a change, and the relations between the classes have also changed. The class struggle does not disappear under the dictatorship of the proletariat; it merely assumes different forms.

Under capitalism the proletariat was an oppressed class, a class bereft of the ownership in the means of production, the only class which stood directly and completely opposed to the bourgeoisie, and therefore the only one capable of being revolutionary to the very end. Having overthrown the bourgeoisie and conquered political power, the proletariat has become the

Teachings of Lenin

ruling class; it wields state power, it disposes of means of production already socialised; it guides the wavering and intermediary elements and classes; it crushes the increasingly stubborn resistance of the exploiters. All these are specific tasks of the class struggle, tasks which the proletariat formerly did not and could not have set itself.

The class of exploiters, the landowners and capitalists, has not disappeared and cannot disappear all at once under the dictatorship of the proletariat. The exploiters have been smashed, but not destroyed. They still have an international base in the form of international capital, of which they are a branch. They still retain certain means of production in part, they still have money, they still have vast social connections. Because they have been defeated, the energy of their resistance has increased a hundred and a thousandfold. The "art" of state, military and economic administration gives them a superiority, and a very great superiority, so that their importance is incomparably greater than their numerical proportion of the population. The class struggle waged by the overthrown exploiters against the victorious vanguard of the exploited, i.e., the proletariat, has become incomparably more bitter. And it cannot be otherwise in the case of a revolution, if this concept is not replaced (as it is by all the heroes of the Second International) by reformist illusions.

* * *
The task of the proletariat in relation to this class—or to these social elements—is to strive to establish its influence over it, to guide it. The proletariat must take the leadership over the vacillating and unstable.

If we compare all the basic forces or classes and their inter-relations, as modified by the dictatorship of the proletariat, we shall realise how unutterably nonsensical and theoretically stupid is the common

pettybourgeois idea shared by all representatives of the Second International, that the transition to socialism is possible "by means of democracy" in general. The fundamental source of this error lies in the prejudice inherited from the bourgeoisie that "democracy" is something absolute and not concerned with classes. As a matter of fact, democracy itself passes into an entirely new phase under the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the class struggle rises to a higher level, dominating over each and every form.

General talk about freedom, equality, and democracy is in fact but a blind repetition of concepts shaped by the relations of commodity production. To attempt to solve the concrete problems of the dictatorship of the proletariat by such generalities means accepting the theories and principles of the bourgeoisie in their entirety. From the point of view of the proletariat, the question can be put only in the following way; freedom from oppression by which class? equality of which class with which? democracy based on private property, or on a struggle for the abolition of private property?—and so forth.

Long ago Engels in his *Anti-Duhring* explained that the concept "equality" is moulded from the relations of commodity production; equality becomes a prejudice if it is not understood to mean the abolition of classes. This elementary truth regarding the distinction between the bourgeois-democratic and the socialist concept of equality is constantly being forgotten. But if it is not forgotten, it becomes obvious that by overthrowing the bourgeoisie the proletariat takes the most decisive step towards the abolition of classes, and that in order to complete the process the proletariat must continue its class struggle, making use of the apparatus of state power and employing various methods of combating, influencing, and bringing pressure to bear on the overthrown bourgeoisie and the vacillating petty bourgeoisie.

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