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100th Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution

The Greatest Revolution that Shook the World

- Statement of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) -

**Celebrate the Centenary of the
Great October Socialist Revolution**



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100th Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution

The Greatest Revolution that Shook the World

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The greatest revolution that shook the world and ushered in the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution took place one hundred years ago on November 7, 1917. The Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) salutes this revolution with full conviction that the transition from capitalism to socialism is inevitable. We are confident that the working and oppressed peoples of the world will find their emancipation only with a repeat of the Great October Socialist Revolution. The conditions of imperialism which gave rise to the Great October Revolution still exist at this time. There is still the contradiction between imperialism, and the oppressed peoples and nations; among the imperialist countries and monopoly groups; and between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. As long as these conditions exist there will be struggle to resolve them.



Today the reactionary forces that overthrew the first state in the hands of the working people are in profound crisis. To divert from their crisis and the need for solutions, they continue to use a Cold War portrayal of communism to deprive people of an outlook on the basis of which they can bring about the changes they require. For these reactionary forces, communism is a brutal dictatorship because it deprives them of all their privileges and smashes inhuman relations based on ownership of property. They consider the corrupt and defunct liberal democracy to be the End of History. Attempts are made to divert from the deep crisis in which the bourgeois democracy is mired to make sure the working class does not formulate what can be done to change the direction of the economy and create new arrangements that favour the working class and people. Meanwhile, the liberal democracy has been reduced to its police powers. This requires the criminalization of speech and dissent at home and war and aggression abroad.



Soviet poster: "Oppressed colonial nations shall rise up against Imperialism under the banner of the Proletarian Revolution"
 (click to enlarge).

The Soviet Union played a crucial role in the defeat of Nazi-fascism and Japanese militarism. The victories of World War II were such that the peoples the world over were marching to the drumbeat of peace, freedom and democracy, looking towards communism to affirm their rights and win national liberation. Following World War II, in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean as well as the imperialist heartlands, the reputation of communism was very high. People were making great advances in their struggles for emancipation and to end colonial and imperialist domination. To stem this advance, the Anglo-American imperialists launched the Cold War to snuff out the peoples' struggle for their rights. Institutions of international subversion and aggressive military alliances were set into motion to stop any attempts at progress. A vast international campaign of lies and distortions was launched to sow doubt about communism and the Soviet Union which had given great hope and inspiration to all peoples fighting for national liberation and social emancipation all over the world. The imperialist agencies introduced bourgeois politics into the workers' and communist movement. Based on gossips about personalities and events, the aim was and

continues to be, to deprive the working class of its own outlook.

To this day, the reactionary forces continue to claim that socialism failed in the Soviet Union because there is some inherent flaw in it. What that flaw is, they do not say. This speculation leads some to suggest that scientific socialism is fine in theory but does not work in practice. How can it be that what is sound in theory does not work in practice? This is an unsound proposition and again they do not explain. The speculators also go to great lengths to convince themselves that socialist revolution and socialist construction are phenomena of the past. Socialism and communism, according to them, are finished once and for all. They suggest that the complete restoration of capitalism in the Russian Federation and elsewhere is an irreversible trend.

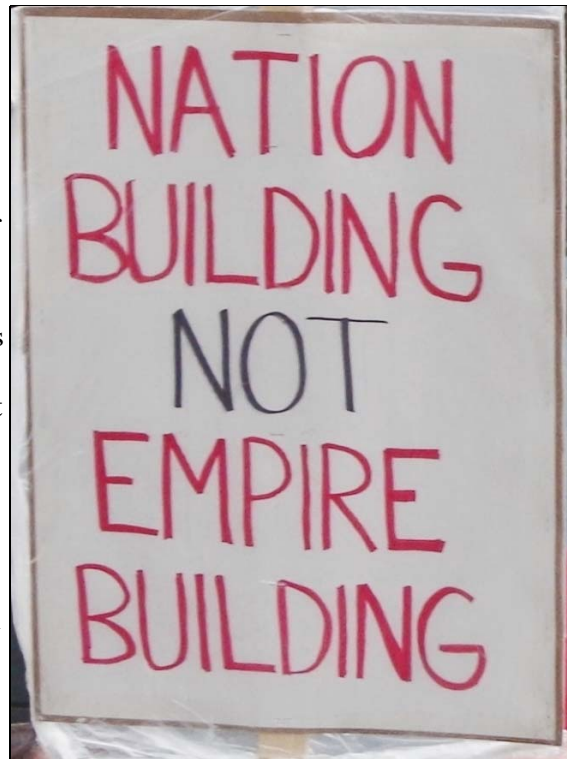
These speculators overlook how life unfolds. Dialectics teach that the advance of something necessarily involves overcoming the resistance of the old, and ushering in the new on this basis. Capitalism is old while socialism is new. Only socialism can resolve the contradictions inherent to the present conditions and create the new society.

The bourgeoisie, nonetheless, does not wish to admit that not only do the same conditions of imperialism exist at this time, but that the situation has become worse. The collapse of the Soviet Union contributed to the crisis of capitalism in a big way. All the claims that shock therapy would eliminate the problems of the capitalist system have nothing to show, despite putting much of the blame for these problems on socialism and communism. The conditions in the countries which formed the Soviet Union as well as the former people's democracies in eastern Europe are worsening with the rise of poverty, unemployment, dislocation of the economy and all manner of crime and chaos in political and cultural affairs. This is also the case in the so-called western democracies where the destruction of the social contract and welfare state arrangements and all the ills of modern capitalism are destroying the fabric of the societies. The vain hope dangled in front

of the eyes of the working class that the "benefits" of the so-called radical reforms would one day reach the working masses vanished long ago. The living and working conditions of the people continue to steadily deteriorate.

The Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) is of the opinion that socialism suffered a setback because of the failure to bring about the social and political reforms necessary to develop the leading role of the working class in the economic, political, cultural and other affairs of the society. In place of socialist reforms, capitalist reforms were introduced as of the mid-1950s. The content of the relations between people in the process of production was transformed from one which favoured the people into one that favoured a ruling caste which systematically usurped power by destroying the organs of people's power. A new bourgeoisie arose from the upper echelons of the party, state, army, police and the overthrown exploiting classes.

As the period of retreat of revolution set in worldwide and the initiative passed into the hands of the reactionary forces, even the conception of society was withdrawn by Margaret Thatcher. Along with this retreat, a vicious anti-social offensive was unleashed which has destroyed the arrangements of a civil society whereby the aim of society is to look after the well-being of the people. Nation-wrecking has become the order of the day. Private interests organized into oligopolies have taken over the functions of the state power and run rampant all over the world. It is incumbent upon the working class to take up its leading role by beginning all over again. Starting from the present, the working class is working out a plan of action which serves its own interests and those of the society. It is striving to give rise to a pro-social trend. It has to involve the masses of the people in discussion and debate as to the kind of system which should replace the present rotting system of capitalist wage-slavery and imperialist enslavement, destruction, aggression and war. In this regard, the experience of socialist revolution and construction during the 20th century is crucial to achieving success.



At this time of retreat of revolution, when the inter-imperialist contradictions are sharpening, when more and more peoples and nations are awakening to the dangers posed by imperialism to their countries, and when the working class is raising the banner of the pro-social trend against the bourgeoisie, it is incumbent on all revolutionary Marxist-Leninist forces to work out the theory and practice of the revolution. This is the time to prepare, to get ready for the time when the conditions will be ripe for the decisive battles. During this preparation and while dealing with the problems of theory and practice, the working class must not lose sight of the strategic road, the road opened by the victory of the Great October Revolution guided by Marxism-Leninism. This road is still valid and mandatory for all under the present conditions.

The Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) takes this opportunity to send its revolutionary greetings to the Communists of all lands, to the workers of all countries, to the Cuban people who are fighting in defence of their revolution and to the people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea who are fighting for their independence and the reunification of their homeland, to the Vietnamese people and all peoples fighting for the rights of all, all over the world. We salute all

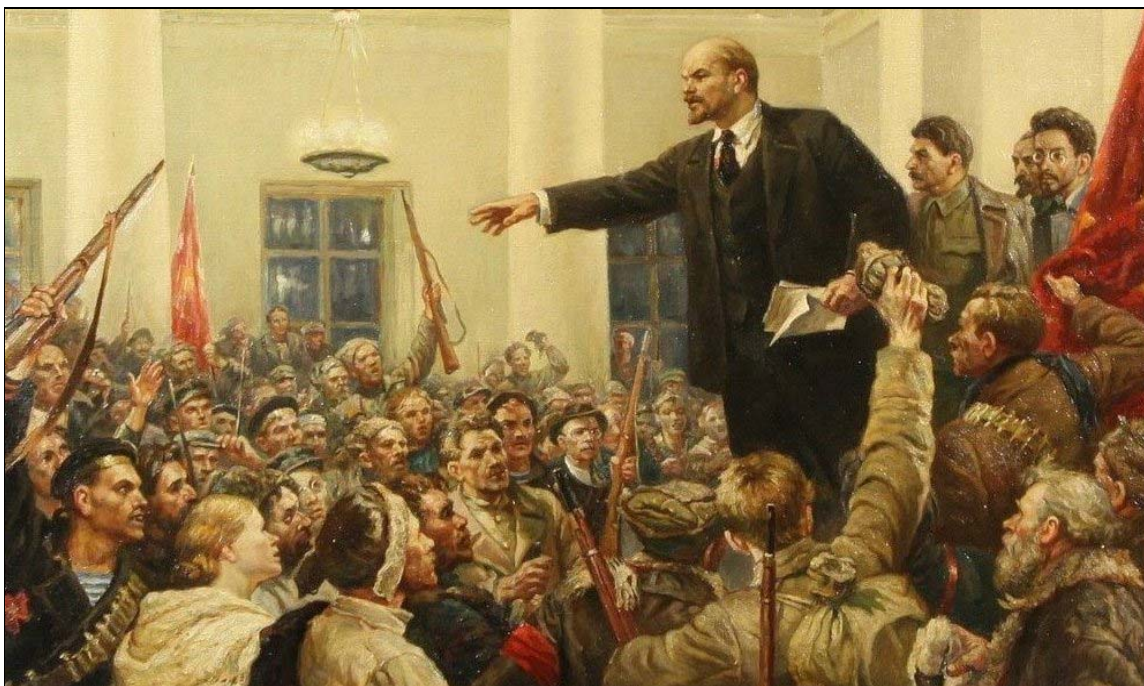
fighting forces and call upon them to carry on with confidence for the tide will change and the surging days of a revolutionary flow will come again. Things will turn around and our successes of today will be transformed into final victory.

Guided by the theory of Marxism-Leninism, workers of all countries will be able to work out their own theory and practice according to their own concrete national and international conditions, and mount the barricades of struggle for the victory of world revolution. The working and oppressed peoples of the world will open the path for the progress of society and the emancipation of humanity.

***Hail the 100th Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution!
Support the Struggle of All Working and Oppressed Peoples and Nations for Their Rights!
Workers of All Countries, Unite! Glory to Marxism-Leninism!***



Build the Communist Party and Proletarian Front!



**Lenin declares Soviet power at the historic meeting of the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets, October 26 (November 7), 1917. One of the first acts of the new government is to issue the Decree on Peace, the first step to take Russia out of World War I.
(Detail from a painting by V. Serov 1947.)**

The Great October Revolution shook the old world to its roots and brought a new one into being. Its victory signaled the end of the First World War, a terrible war fought between imperialist countries for the re-division of the world.

The October Revolution created the first socialist state and the conditions for the development of Soviet power, a nation-building project led by the Proletarian Front. Immediately, the working class and peasantry led by the Communist Party withdrew Russia from World War I and began to settle scores with its own imperialist bourgeoisie and feudal landlord class. The Proletarian Front, with its organized self-defence contingents that eventually became the Red Army, routed the police forces and military of the Russian imperialist bourgeoisie and landlords, which were aided by a military

intervention of fourteen countries.

The new country began to construct socialism not with empty policy objectives but with deeds that guaranteed the people public education, health care, basic humane living conditions and control over their economic and political affairs. These were all unprecedented achievements. Soon the country was industrialized giving it a material base to meet the needs of the people and to defend itself from imperialist aggression.[1]

The Soviet Union forged an unforgettable position in the annals of the people's history for annihilating the Nazi hordes who stormed into the country in 1941.

The Soviet peoples through their heroic struggle led by the Communist Party made the greatest sacrifice during World War II in defeating the Axis Powers of German Nazis, Italian Fascists and Japanese militarists.

The October Revolution galvanized the anti-colonial/national liberation struggles in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean and showed the peoples of the world that the imperialist bourgeoisie can be beaten. It can be done, if the road of Lenin and the Proletarian Front are upheld and developed.



Toronto, May 6, 2017

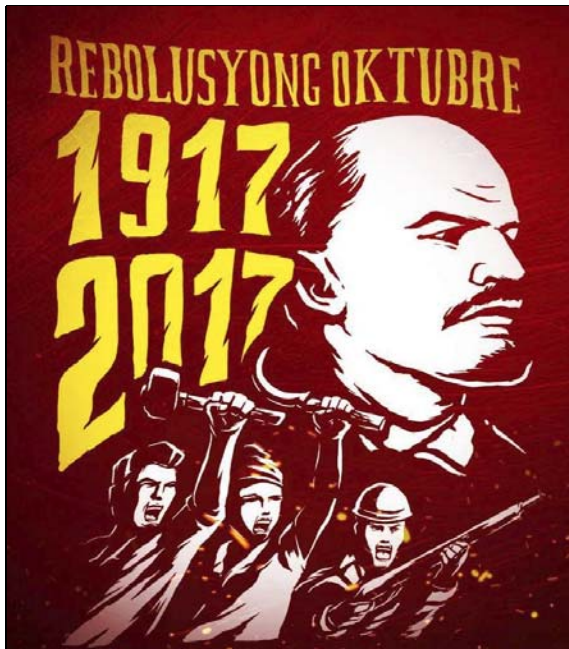
Together, Let Us Open Society's Path to Progress

The 100th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution comes 26 years since the collapse of the former Soviet Union. Humanity can clearly see the profound crisis in which the U.S. striving for world domination is mired. Also clear to all, the rule brought into being in Russia and eastern European countries since capitalism was re-established has not provided the promised prosperity and security to the peoples. The bourgeois euphoria has long expired. The Rule of Law established and re-established in those countries replaced one form of corruption with another and has now, under the guise of permanent war on terror become Rule by Exception and governments of police powers, not of law. Meanwhile, the peoples are disenfranchised and see no end to the conflicts or worsening conditions, which even flare up into reactionary bloody civil wars such as in Ukraine.

Today, anarchy and chaos prevail in all spheres of the economy, politics, and social and cultural life. The countries that abandoned the path of the October Revolution are mired in all the ills of the capitalist system: poverty on one pole and fabulous oligarchic riches on the other, and a broad marginalization of people from their economic and political affairs. In the imperialist heartlands, private interests, the anti-social offensive and warmongering are presented as values that uphold the national interest, while any country which does not accept the U.S. as indispensable is targeted for elimination. What the U.S. cannot control, it sets out to destroy. Wars are no longer politics by other means but wars of destruction. Without politics there can be no peace negotiations either.

Besides the damaging reality, the lessons of the October Revolution and its Leninist principles are not taken seriously. The persistence in sticking to social democratic prescriptions runs deep, infecting the working class movement profoundly not only in Europe but throughout the world. Social democrats confuse governments which come and go with the state power. They say winning government is necessary to implement socialist policy objectives. Falling short of gaining government status, they argue the working class and its allies must pressure or lobby the existing government power to be pro-social. This illusion-mongering of a parliamentary road to socialism is embedded within the imperialist countries. Lenin stood staunchly opposed to it and led the Russian

proletariat and peasants to victory in the October Revolution, which of course became the scourge of the social democrats in alliance with the Nazis who did everything to destroy the working class nation-building project and its positive influence on the world.



Graphic from the Philippines celebrates 100th anniversary of October revolution.

Within the imperialist countries including the Soviet Union after the death of Stalin, the betrayal of Marxism-Leninism and adoption of one or another variant of pragmatism was profound and widespread. A determined struggle had to be waged to rescue the banner of Marxism-Leninism and its principles. This included upholding the Leninist conclusion that the government is one institution within the state and not the most powerful by any means. The ultimate power of the bourgeois state is the police power which establishes various layers of secret organization comprised of private interests whose instruments include a political police and spy agencies, among others. One of the main tasks entrusted to the police power controlled and led by the ruling imperialist bourgeoisie is to deprive the working class and people and polity of an outlook which is advantageous to themselves. Everything possible is done to smash the people's political movement for

empowerment.

Any serious government considering socialism as more than a policy objective has to contend with the police power. The police power is the centre of power of the imperialist bourgeoisie. The only force capable of dealing with the police power and overcoming it is the Proletarian Front led by the Communist Party. Reluctance to build the Proletarian Front is endemic within the imperialist countries due to many factors including importantly the ideological pressure from the ruling elite, in particular pragmatism, and the abundance of social wealth stolen from the oppressed countries that can be used to bribe working class leaders and intellectuals.

From revolution to counterrevolution, history has its own twists and turns and our responsibility is to ensure we contribute to opening society's path to progress. On this important occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) expresses its complete confidence that humankind will always look back with admiration and respect to the days of October of the year 1917, when proletarian salvoes were fired marking the dawn of a new world.



History will assuredly experience once again revolutions of the calibre of the Great October Socialist Revolution. The Marxist and Leninist classics remain a living guide to turn the successes humankind has achieved to date into lasting victory. Our confidence in the working class and the human factor/social consciousness inspires us to build the Communist Party and Proletarian Front as the necessary subjective condition for revolution.

***Long Live the Great October Socialist Revolution! Long Live Leninism!
Workers and Oppressed Peoples of the World, Unite!***

Note

1. In 1944, the President of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Eric Johnston, said the Soviet economy was "an unexampled achievement in the industrial history of the whole world."

By the end of the first five-year plan in early 1933, the Soviet Union was the second most industrialized nation, with the doubling of industrial workers from 11 to 22 million, coupled with the doubling of industrial output. In the Central Asian Republics and in Kazakhstan the industrial growth rate was fourfold and sixfold. The first five-year plan was a great success as was evident in the production indexes in mining, steel, and chemicals. Factories were being built virtually everywhere with giant dams and railroads also being constructed. By the second five-year plan in 1935, coal miners had doubled production of that of Germany, and by 1936 the Magnitogorsk Steelworks was the largest in Europe, and the Chelyabinsk caterpillar tractor factory the largest in the world.

In much of heavy industrial production, such as steel, cast iron, aluminum and electric power, the output of the Soviet Union outstripped that of traditional capitalist countries. The Soviet economy comprised 10 per cent of the world's industrial production. Between 1924 and 1940, grain crops increased by 11 per cent, coal by 10 per cent, steel production by 18 per cent, engineering and metal industries by 150 per cent, and national income by 10 per cent. Factory and office workers grew from less than 8 million to 37 million and between 1913 and 1940 oil production increased to 35 million tons from 9 million tons with thousands of units of tractors, harvester combines, and machine tools also being produced. In early 1930, the number of tractors in the Soviet Union was 34,900 and by 1938 it had increased by almost fourteen times to 483,500. In the same period, the number of combine-harvesters was augmented from 1,700 to 153,500 and the number of harvesters alone increased from 4,300 to 130,800.

Volume of Industrial Output (Per Cent of 1929)

Country	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933
USSR	100	129.7	191.9	189.7	201.6
USA	100	80.7	68.1	53.8	64.9
Britain	100	92.4	83.8	83.8	86.1
Germany	100	88.3	71.7	59.8	66.8
France	100	100.7	89.2	69.1	77.4

Country	Unemployment numbers in 1933 during the period of the end of the first five-year plan in the Soviet Union
Soviet Union	0
England	2,800,000
Germany	5,500,000
United States	17,000,000
Italy	1,300,000
Spain	6,500,000

(Sources: *mltheory.wordpress.com*; Henri Barbusse. *Stalin* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1935), pp. 201-205.)



Fourth Anniversary of the October Revolution

- V.I. Lenin, 1921 -



Poster from the 1917-21 period, "Only the close union of workers and peasants will save Russia from destruction and hunger."

The fourth anniversary of October 25 (November 7) is approaching.

The farther that great day recedes from us, the more clearly we see the significance of the proletarian revolution in Russia, and the more deeply we reflect upon the practical experience of our work as a whole.

Very briefly and, of course, in very incomplete and rough outline, this significance and experience may be summed up as follows.

The direct and immediate object of the revolution in Russia was a bourgeois-democratic one, namely, to destroy the survivals of medievalism and sweep them away completely, to purge Russia of this barbarism, of this shame, and to remove this immense obstacle to all culture and progress in our country.

And we can justifiably pride ourselves on having carried out that purge with greater determination and much more rapidly, boldly and successfully, and, from the point of view of its effect on the masses, much more widely and deeply, than the great French Revolution over one hundred and twenty-five years ago.



Lenin speaks to factory workers
(D. Nalbandyan).

Both the anarchists and the petty-bourgeois democrats (i.e., the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, who are the Russian counterparts of that international social type) have talked and are still talking an incredible lot of nonsense about the relation between the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the socialist (*that is*, proletarian) revolution. The last four years have proved to the hilt that our interpretation of Marxism on this point, and our estimate of the experience of former revolutions were correct. We have *consummated* the bourgeois-democratic revolution as nobody had done before. We are *advancing* towards the socialist revolution consciously, firmly and unswervingly, knowing that it is not separated from the bourgeois-democratic revolution by a Chinese Wall, and knowing too that (in the last analysis) *struggle alone* will determine how far we shall advance, what part of this immense and lofty task we shall accomplish, and to what extent we shall succeed in consolidating our victories. Time will show. But we see even now that a tremendous amount -- tremendous for this ruined, exhausted and backward country -- has already been done towards the socialist transformation of society.

Let us, however, finish what we have to say about the bourgeois-democratic content of our revolution. Marxists must understand what that means. To explain, let us take a few striking examples.

The bourgeois-democratic content of the revolution means that the social relations (system, institutions) of the country are purged of medievalism, serfdom, feudalism.

What were the chief manifestations, survivals, remnants of serfdom in Russia up to 1917? The monarchy, the system of social estates, landed proprietorship and land tenure, the status of women, religion, and national oppression. Take any one of these Augean stables, which, incidentally, were left largely uncleansed by all the more advanced states when they accomplished *their* bourgeois-democratic revolutions one hundred and twenty-five, two hundred and fifty and more years ago (1649 in England); take any of these Augean stables, and you will see that we have cleansed them thoroughly. In a matter of *ten weeks*, from October 25 (November 7), 1917 to January 5, 1918, when the Constituent Assembly was dissolved, we accomplished a thousand times more in this respect than was accomplished by the bourgeois democrats and liberals (the Cadets) and by the petty-bourgeois democrats (the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries) *during the eight months* they were in power.

Those poltroons, gas-bags, vainglorious Narcissuses and petty Hamlets brandished their wooden swords -- but did not even destroy the monarchy! We cleansed out all that monarchist muck as nobody had ever done before. We left not a stone, not a brick of that ancient edifice, the social-estate system (even the most advanced countries, such as Britain, France and Germany, have not completely eliminated the survivals of that system to this day!), standing. We tore out the deep-seated roots of the social-estate system, namely, the remnants of feudalism and serfdom in the system of landownership, to the last. "One may argue" (there are plenty of quill-drivers, Cadets, Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries abroad to indulge in such arguments) as to what "in the long run" will be the outcome of the agrarian reform effected by the Great October Revolution. We have no desire at the moment to waste time on such controversies, for we are deciding this, as well as the mass of accompanying controversies, by struggle. But the fact cannot be denied that the petty-bourgeois democrats "compromised" with the landowners, the custodians of the traditions of serfdom, for eight months, while we completely swept the landowners and all their traditions from Russian soil in a few weeks.

Take religion, or the denial of rights to women, or the oppression and inequality of the non-Russian nationalities. These are all problems of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. The vulgar petty-bourgeois democrats talked about them for eight months. In not a *single* one of the most advanced countries in the world have these questions been *completely* settled on *bourgeois-democratic* lines. In our country they have been settled completely by the legislation of the October Revolution. We have fought and are fighting religion in earnest. We have granted *all* the non-Russian nationalities

their own republics or autonomous regions. We in Russia no longer have the base, mean and infamous denial of rights to women or inequality of the sexes, that disgusting survival of feudalism and medievalism, which is being renovated by the avaricious bourgeoisie and the dull-witted and frightened petty bourgeoisie in every other country in the world without exception.

All this goes to make up the content of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. One hundred and fifty and 250 years ago the progressive leaders of that revolution (or of those revolutions, if we consider each national variety of the one general type) promised to rid mankind of medieval privileges, of sex inequality, of state privileges for one religion or another (or "religious *ideas*," "the church" in general), and of national inequality. They promised, but did not keep their promises. They could not keep them, for they were hindered by their "respect" -- for the "sacred right of private property." Our proletarian revolution was not afflicted with this accursed "respect" for this thrice-accursed medievalism and for the "sacred right of private property."

But in order to consolidate the achievements of the bourgeois-democratic revolution for the peoples of Russia, we were obliged to go farther; and we did go farther. We solved the problems of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in passing, as a "by-product" of our main and genuinely *proletarian*-revolutionary, socialist activities. We have always said that reforms are a by-product of the revolutionary class struggle. We said -- and proved it by deeds -- that bourgeois-democratic reforms are a by-product of the proletarian, i.e., of the socialist revolution. Incidentally, the Kautskys, Hilferdings, Martovs, Chernovs, Hillquits, Longuets, MacDonalds, Turatis and other heroes of "Two-and-a-Half" Marxism were incapable of understanding this relation between the bourgeois-democratic and the proletarian-socialist revolutions. The first develops into the second. The second, in passing, solves the problems of the first. The second consolidates the work of the first. Struggle, and struggle alone, decides how far the second succeeds in outgrowing the first.

The Soviet system is one of the most vivid proofs, or manifestations, of how the one revolution develops into the other. The Soviet system provides the maximum of democracy for the workers and peasants; at the same time, it marks a break with *bourgeois* democracy and the rise of a new, epoch-making *type* of democracy, namely, proletarian democracy, or the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Let the curs and swine of the moribund bourgeoisie and of the petty-bourgeois democrats who trail behind them heap imprecations, abuse and derision upon our heads for our reverses and mistakes in the work of building up our Soviet system. We do not forget for a moment that we have committed and are committing numerous mistakes and are suffering numerous reverses. How can reverses and mistakes be avoided in a matter so new in the history of the world as the building of an unprecedented *type* of state edifice! We shall work steadfastly to set our reverses and mistakes right and to improve our practical application of Soviet principles, which is still very, very far from being perfect. But we have a right to be and are proud that to us has fallen the good fortune to *begin* the building of a Soviet state, and thereby to *usher in* a new era in world history, the era of the rule of a *new* class, a class which is oppressed in every capitalist country, but which everywhere is marching forward towards a new life, towards victory over the bourgeoisie, towards the dictatorship of the proletariat, towards the emancipation of mankind from the yoke of capital and from imperialist wars.

The question of imperialist wars, of the international policy of finance capital which now dominates the whole world, a policy that must *inevitably* engender new imperialist wars, that must inevitably cause an extreme intensification of national oppression, pillage, brigandry and the strangulation of weak, backward and small nationalities by a handful of "advanced" powers -- that question has been the keystone of all policy in all the countries of the globe since 1914. It is a question of life and death for millions upon millions of people. It is a question of whether 20,000,000 people (as compared with the 10,000,000 who were killed in the war of 1914-18 and in the supplementary "minor" wars that are still going on) are to be slaughtered in the next imperialist

war, which the bourgeoisie are preparing, and which is growing out of capitalism before our very eyes. It is a question of whether in that future war, which is inevitable (if capitalism continues to exist), 60,000,000 people are to be maimed (compared with the 30,000,000 maimed in 1914-18). In this question, too, our October Revolution marked the beginning of a new era in world history. The lackeys of the bourgeoisie and its yes-men -- the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, and the petty-bourgeois, allegedly "socialist," democrats all over the world -- derided our slogan "convert the imperialist war into a civil war." But that slogan proved to be the *truth* -- it was the only truth, unpleasant, blunt, naked and brutal, but nevertheless the *truth*, as against the host of most refined jingoist and pacifist lies. Those lies are being dispelled. The Brest peace has been exposed. And with every passing day the significance and consequences of a peace that is even worse than the Brest peace -- the peace of Versailles -- are being more relentlessly exposed. And the millions who are thinking about the causes of the recent war and of the approaching future war are more and more clearly realising the grim and inexorable truth that it is impossible to escape imperialist war, and imperialist peace (if the old orthography were still in use, I would have written the word *mir* in two ways, to give it both its meanings) [In Russian, the word *mir* has two meanings (world and peace) and had two different spellings in the old orthography. -- *Translator*] which inevitably engenders imperialist war, that it is impossible to escape that inferno, *except by a Bolshevik struggle and a Bolshevik revolution.*

Let the bourgeoisie and the pacifists, the generals and the petty bourgeoisie, the capitalists and the philistines, the pious Christians and the knights of the Second and the Two-and-a-Half Internationals vent their fury against that revolution. No torrents of abuse, calumnies and lies can enable them to conceal the historic fact that for the first time in hundreds and thousands of years the slaves have replied to a war between slave-owners by openly proclaiming the slogan: "Convert this war between slave-owners for the division of their loot into a war of the slaves of all nations against the slave-owners of all nations."

For the first time in hundreds and thousands of years that slogan has grown from a vague and helpless waiting into a clear and definite political programme, into an effective struggle waged by millions of oppressed people under the leadership of the proletariat; it has grown into the first victory of the proletariat, the first victory in the struggle to abolish war and to unite the workers of all countries against the united bourgeoisie of different nations, against the bourgeoisie that makes peace and war at the expense of the slaves of capital, the wage-workers, the peasants, the working people.

This first victory is *not yet the final victory*, and it was achieved by our October Revolution at the price of incredible difficulties and hardships, at the price of unprecedented suffering, accompanied by a series of serious reverses and mistakes on our part. How could a single backward people be expected to frustrate the imperialist wars of the most powerful and most developed countries of the world without sustaining reverses and without committing mistakes! We are not afraid to admit our mistakes and shall examine them dispassionately in order to learn how to correct them. But the fact remains that for the first time in hundreds and thousands of years the promise "to reply" to war between the slave-owners by a revolution of the slaves directed *against* all the slave-owners *has been completely fulfilled* -- and is being fulfilled despite all difficulties.

We have made the start. When, at what date and time, and the proletarians of which nation will complete this process is not important. The important thing is that the ice has been broken; the road is open, the way has been shown.

Gentlemen, capitalists of all countries, keep up your hypocritical pretence of "defending the fatherland" -- the Japanese fatherland against the American, the American against the Japanese, the French against the British, and so forth! Gentlemen, knights of the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals, pacifist petty bourgeoisie and philistines of the entire world, go on "evading" the question of how to combat imperialist wars by issuing new "Basle Manifestos" (on the model of the

Basle Manifesto of 1912[1]). *The first Bolshevik revolution* has wrested *the first hundred million people* of this earth from the clutches of imperialist war and the imperialist world. Subsequent revolutions will deliver the rest of mankind from such wars and from such a world.

Our last, but most important and most difficult task, the one we have done least about, is economic development, the laying of economic foundations for the new, socialist edifice on the site of the demolished feudal edifice and the semi-demolished capitalist edifice. It is in this most important and most difficult task that we have sustained the greatest number of reverses and have made most mistakes. How could anyone expect that a task so new to the world could be begun without reverses and without mistakes! But we have begun it. We shall continue it. At this very moment we are, by our New Economic Policy, correcting a number of our mistakes. We are learning how to continue erecting the socialist edifice in a small-peasant country without committing such mistakes.

The difficulties are immense. But we are accustomed to grappling with immense difficulties. Not for nothing do our enemies call us "stone-hard" and exponents of a "firm line policy." But we have also learned, at least to some extent, another art that is essential in revolution, namely, flexibility, the ability to effect swift and sudden changes of tactics if changes in objective conditions demand them, and to choose another path for the achievement of our goal if the former path proves to be inexpedient or impossible at the given moment.

Borne along on the crest of the wave of enthusiasm, rousing first the political enthusiasm and then the military enthusiasm of the people, we expected to accomplish economic tasks just as great as the political and military tasks we had accomplished by relying directly on this enthusiasm. We expected -- or perhaps it would be truer to say that we presumed without having given it adequate consideration -- to be able to organise the state production and the state distribution of products on communist lines in a small-peasant country directly as ordered by the proletarian state. Experience has proved that we were wrong. It appears that a number of transitional stages were necessary -- state capitalism and socialism -- in order to *prepare* -- to prepare by many years of effort -- for the transition to communism. Not directly relying on enthusiasm, but aided by the enthusiasm engendered by the great revolution, and on the basis of personal interest, personal incentive and business principles, we must first set to work in this small peasant country to build solid gangways to socialism by way of state capitalism. Otherwise we shall never get to communism, we shall never bring scores of millions of people to communism. That is what experience, the objective course of the development of the revolution, has taught us.

And we, who during these three or four years have learned a little to make abrupt changes of front (when abrupt changes of front are needed), have begun zealously, attentively and sedulously (although still not zealously, attentively and sedulously enough) to learn to make a new change of front, namely, the New Economic Policy. The proletarian state must become a cautious, assiduous and shrewd "businessman," a punctilious *wholesale merchant* -- otherwise it will never succeed in putting this small-peasant country economically on its feet. Under existing conditions, living as we are side by side with the capitalist (for the time being capitalist) West, there is no other way of progressing to communism. A wholesale merchant seems to be an economic type as remote from communism as heaven from earth. But that is one of the contradictions which, in actual life, lead from a small-peasant economy via state capitalism to socialism. Personal incentive will step up production; we must increase production first and foremost and at all costs. Wholesale trade economically unites millions of small peasants: it gives them a personal incentive, links them up and leads them to the next step, namely, to various forms of association and alliance in the process of production itself. We have already started the necessary changes in our economic policy and already have some successes to our credit; true, they are small and partial, but nonetheless they are successes. In this new field of "tuition" we are already finishing our preparatory class. By persistent and assiduous study, by making practical experience the test of every step we take, by not fearing to alter over and over again what we have already begun, by correcting our mistakes and most carefully analysing their significance, we shall pass to the higher classes. We shall go through the

whole "course," although the present state of world economics and world politics has made that course much longer and much more difficult than we would have liked. No matter at what cost, no matter how severe the hardships of the transition period may be -- despite disaster, famine and ruin -- we shall not flinch; we shall triumphantly carry our cause to its goal.

(October 14, 1921)

Note

1. The Extraordinary International Socialist Congress that sat in Basle on November 24-25, 1912, adopted a manifesto on war, which warned the peoples that an imperialist world war was imminent, showed the predatory objectives of that war and called upon the workers of all countries to make a determined stand for peace. It included a point, contributed by Lenin to the resolution of the Stuttgart Congress of 1907, that if an imperialist war broke out the socialists should utilise the economic and political crisis stemming from it to accelerate the downfall of capitalist class domination and to work for a socialist revolution.

(Source: *Lenin's Collected Works, 2nd English Ed., Vol. 33 (Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1965), pp. 51-59.*)



Lenin and Leninism

The Name and Work of V.I. Lenin Will Always Have a Place of Honour

- *Hardial Bains Resource Centre* -

V.I. Lenin was a revolutionary and the greatest Marxist theoretician of the 20th century. On January 21, 1924, he died as a result of an opportunist assassin's bullet, lodged in his neck six years earlier. The Great Lenin was only 53 years old when he died, during the very early stages of socialist revolution and construction in Soviet Russia. Amongst his greatest feats were to create the revolutionary party of the proletariat as distinct from the parliamentary parties adhered to by the Second International; establish the proletarian state of the workers and peasants in Russia, as well as lay down the analysis and the ideological and organizational lines for the development of the revolution and socialism in the conditions of imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism and proletarian revolution.

From the beginning, Lenin set his work along the theoretical conclusions of Marxism. In this respect, he had a complete outlook of scientific socialism, based on the firm belief that the only road to open the path for the progress of society is the road of the emancipation of the working class through the proletarian revolution. This belief of Lenin, far from being invalidated by the developments in the last decade of the 20th century and since then, has been fully validated.



His first ideological consideration was the defence of the Marxist trend -- that is, the trend based on the conclusions of Marxism. He presupposed that the unity of the movement hinged on the defence of this trend, which means on the development of Marxist thought and its elaboration from the conditions of his time. Besides other things, he defended the need for the elaboration of a plan for the building of the movement and condemned the spontaneist idea of "tactics as a process." The conclusions he drew from his work at the beginning of the 20th century have profound validity to the present day.

One of the ideas which has profound significance for the present is his conclusion that the task of emancipating the working class belongs to the workers themselves.

Another idea which has great validity and profound significance is his conclusion that without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement. This very idea of developing Marxist thought and elaborating it, in close connection with the revolutionary movement, has remained the line of demarcation between all schools of opportunism and revolutionary Marxists. For opportunists, revolutionary politics means detaching politics from their revolutionary essence, emasculating and transforming revolutionary theory into a series of dogmas while transforming politics into an adjunct of the bourgeois rule. On the other hand, for revolutionary Marxists, revolutionary theory develops in the course of revolutionary practice. It is an integral part of carrying out both economic and political forms of class struggle. The defence of this very idea of Lenin's is a form of class struggle which they wage.

Recognizing the objective condition where capitalism had developed to its last stage, its parasitic and moribund stage, Lenin drew the conclusion that there is no other stage of capitalism and that it is ripe for its revolutionary overthrow and for the building of socialism. Such an idea based on the conclusion of Lenin has great significance. There is ongoing pressure to abandon this idea and replace it with the idea that capitalism has many stages ahead of it and that it is capable of overcoming its own contradictions. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the regimes in eastern Europe with all their capitalist reforms showed that capitalism has no other stage of development. Countries which embarked on the construction of capitalism under the pretext of a "free market economy securing prosperity" are mired in anarchy and economic chaos and their reflection in politics just like the advanced capitalist countries that did not form part of the socialist world.

Lenin's conclusion that imperialism is the eve of the proletarian revolution remains valid today. This idea is another point of ideological struggle, and its defence and elaboration are the order of the day. It is one thing to describe the progression of imperialist decay; it is another to develop the proletarian front and provide an alternative so that the New can overcome the resistance of the Old and prevail.

Having an acute sense that his period was one of imperialism and proletarian revolution, Lenin drew the conclusion that a new kind of Party is needed in order to address the new problem of proletarian revolution. His organizational principle of democratic centralism has profound relevance today. One of the causes for the collapse of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) was the emasculation of this idea, under the heavy weight of the bureaucracy established around the Political Bureau and the reduction of the role of the membership in the life of the Party to the most perfunctory level coupled with the refusal to do theoretical work. The mass of Communist Party members had become apolitical, unable to exercise decision-making power over matters that affected them, nor over the decisions of the state. This necessarily takes place when the relation between the citizens and the polity is destroyed in favour of executive rule. Then democratic centralism is reduced to an idea devoid of the democratic principle and to a series of organizational hierarchies. The defence of the principle of democratic centralism is one of the most important tasks in laying the foundation for the mass communist party.

Today, the world is witnessing a new clash between the Old and the New of world proportions. This

requires a profound elaboration of Marxist-Leninist theory, as was done by Marx and Engels in their time and by Lenin and Stalin in theirs.

Lenin, early in his revolutionary work in 1908, devoted time to defending dialectical and historical materialism, the world view, method and outlook for the study of the relations between persons and persons, and persons and nature, the fundamental problem which theory and philosophy present for solution. Through his work, Lenin revealed how various opportunists under the cover of science posed as Marxists to attack the theory of dialectical and historical materialism.

Lenin's work has profound value in carrying out similar work at the present time, in order to defend the theory of dialectical and historical materialism which is under attack from many quarters. The attack on this theory is blurring the high road of civilization, its definition and its content, and there is pressure to divert it into a dead-end.



Lenin's conclusions about the state and revolution, the role of the working class and its organizations, the role of the peasantry and other social strata, the role of the Bolshevik Party to lead in a step-wise manner, the stages in the revolution and their completion and the building of the unity of all toiling masses around the working class, the waging of the class struggle, with the international proletariat playing its role as the strategic reserve of revolution, and the study of the objective conditions and strategy and tactics, taken together constitute a whole; a body of ideas which must be defended and elaborated. This body of ideas must be developed from the present conditions with a unique and fresh quality, which means that they must be based on modern definitions. These ideas have a profound

meaning as they were brought into being in this epoch, the character of which is still the same. For this reason, these ideas have great relevance so long as they are not reduced to dogma.

Just as Lenin defended the Marxist trend, today defending the Marxist-Leninist trend is indispensable for the building of the revolutionary movement, and this defence has to be carried out in close connection with the movement. This defence of the Marxist-Leninist trend creates Contemporary Marxist-Leninist Thought, the revolutionary theory guiding the revolutionary movement. This work cannot be reduced to repeating quotes from the works of Lenin or anyone else. The content of the defence of the Marxist-Leninist trend must be consistent with the demand of the times. One of the most important elements is to make sure the mass communist party is built to lead the opposition against the dangers which lie ahead.

In fact, Lenin's work began with taking up the tasks required to build the Party. This work cannot be reproduced in the same form and with the same content, as some tried to do in the past, but its essence has to be understood and applied. The essence is that without a revolutionary party there can be no revolution and the building of such a party has to be consistent with the conditions. There are not a few who accused Lenin of abandoning Marxism because he built the Party according to the conditions of his time. In the same fashion, if someone were to abandon the great task of building the mass communist party today for fear of being accused of abandoning Leninism, it would show a lack of conviction.

The life and work of V.I. Lenin are a great asset to the movement for emancipation. It is crucial to make use of this asset in the best possible way and to the greatest advantage of the working class

and people of the world. A lot of changes have taken place since the time of Lenin. These changes are of a calibre that if their profound significance is not appreciated in detail and in time, the asset of Lenin will be frittered away, as happened in eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

Just as in his day Lenin found in the national liberation movement a great reserve of the proletarian revolution, so too today, all movements of the peoples for improvements in their conditions, especially for the democratization of life, must be vigorously supported.

Furthermore, how to put this asset at the disposal of the revolutionary cause necessarily involves an appreciation of its essence, that it is by grasping the crucial link in the chain of how things stand that it is possible to get hold of the entire chain and bring about a revolution. In the sphere of preparing the subjective conditions for revolution, capturing the need to provide modern definitions is that link which is directly connected with the revolutionary work under the condition of the retreat of revolution. It is that link which enables the working class to carry out a contest to win the people to its side. The working class cannot prepare itself for final victory if it either does not carry out this contest or does not win key battles with the bourgeoisie during this period.

The cause of V.I. Lenin for the victory of revolution and socialism is as urgent today as it was at the beginning of the 20th century. As long as the struggle to create a new society exists, the name and work of V.I. Lenin will have a place of honour.



Leninism: An Ideology Indispensable for Opening the Path for the Progress of Society

- Hardial Bains -



Painting of Lenin addressing mass rally shortly after his return to Russia in April 1917.

The victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia in 1917 was the most outstanding example of work guided by the outlook of Leninism. It proved that for the working class to be successful in its nation-building project to move society forward, it must be guided by the most

advanced theory at each stage of its development based on its own ideological and world outlook. This is not a matter of choice; it is a necessity. Any individual, collective, political movement or party that did not take up the outlook of Leninism at the beginning of the 20th century failed, and in Europe many degenerated into European socialism and chauvinism.

Leninism was not a peculiar leftwing extremist ideology, which could be characterized as being as good or as bad as any other ideology that one could choose, be it liberalism, social democracy or some variation. Leninism was the renaissance ideology of that time and space, the outlook necessary to respond to the exigencies of the here and now, to deal with the political, social and cultural problems of the day to move society forward and open the door to progress. Leninism was the natural development of the renaissance outlook of 18th century Europe and the Marxist ideology of the international proletariat of the 19th century.

Renaissance Outlook

The Renaissance challenge to medievalism was the necessary outlook guiding the industrial revolution and bourgeois nation-building projects in England and northern Europe and the organization and victory of the 1789 French Revolution over the ruling elite of landlords and clerics and their state-organized political, intellectual and military forces. The state medievalist outlook based on Divine Right of Kings had to be overthrown for society to progress. Scientific discoveries could not be transformed into consistent practice throughout society and the economy in the absence of an ideology that recognizes that the basis for change, development and motion is found in internal contradictions with external conditions as the extenuating circumstances. The Renaissance outlook and thinking provided the ideology for the victory of capitalism over feudalism, mass industrial production over petty production, science over superstition and idealism, and modern bourgeois organization based on bourgeois "people's" democracy over absolutism, rule by decree and the Divine Right of Kings. The Renaissance outlook prepared the subjective conditions necessary to resolve the internal contradictions of the objective conditions that were ripe for change in medieval Europe, in particular the main contradiction between the advanced productive forces and the backward relations of production. The internal contradiction of medieval Europe, resolved through revolution, corresponds to Canada's present unresolved internal contradiction between the advanced socialized productive forces and the backward private monopoly-controlled relations of production.

Marxism

In the conditions of the development of capitalism in the 19th century, Marxism was the development of the Renaissance ideology explaining: the origin of profit from the work-time of the working class transforming natural resources; the internal motive force within society as class struggle and under conditions of capitalism that the leading force can only be the working class; and, that class struggle led by the working class must overthrow capitalism and replace it with socialism. Marxism laid bare the backwardness and shortcomings of existing European philosophy and provided the working class and all humanity with a consistent outlook of dialectical and historical materialism and the insistence that "philosophers have hitherto interpreted the world, the point however is to change it." Marxism was the required ideology of the period of the infancy of capitalism, the birth of the modern working class and development of the objective conditions to replace capitalism with socialism leading to the emancipation of the working class and the elimination of social classes and class society.

Leninism

Leninism was the renaissance ideology required by the working class in the conditions of the development of capitalism to its mature stage of monopoly ownership and rule at the end of the 19th century. Monopoly capitalism is the merging of industrial and banking capital into finance

capital and its creation of a bureaucratic militarized state and aggressive imperialism. The objective conditions for proletarian revolution were mature, unleashing the necessity to organize the subjective conditions. Leninism provided the scientific guide and outlook to accomplish that historic mission. The necessity had arisen to organize the working class as an independent political force with its own thinking, outlook, headquarters, defence organizations and vision for a socialist future free from the rule of the capitalists and their bureaucratic militarized state. Only in Russia did Leninism guide the working class and peasantry with consistency and steadfastness resulting in the Great October Socialist Revolution of 1917.

Modern Communism

In the conditions of the 21st century, modern communism is the required ideology. Today, modern communism is the renaissance theory based on the outlook needed by the working class and people to guide their struggles to victory. Unless individuals, collectives, political movements and parties take up the outlook of modern communism and elaborate modern definitions for all social, political, economic and cultural issues confronting humanity, the necessity for change cannot be fulfilled. Modern communism is not a peculiar leftwing extremist ideology, which can be characterized as being as good or as bad as any other ideology that one could choose, be it liberalism, social democracy or some variation. Modern communism is the renaissance ideology of this time and space, the outlook necessary to respond to the exigencies of the here and now, to deal with the political, social and cultural problems of the day to move society forward and open the door to progress leading to the emancipation of the working class and the elimination of social classes and class society worldwide. Modern communism requires an individual act of conscious participation in the act of finding out to build the alternative based on recognition of the Necessity for Change.

Leninism and the Victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution

Leninism built a political organization of the working class based on dedication to the vision to overthrow the capitalist state and replace it with a socialist state that could prepare conditions for the emancipation of the working class. The Leninist political party of the working class developed rules and structures consistent with the level of the working class and its needs in the here and now, especially democratic centralism, a spirit of sacrifice for the cause of the working class and contempt for betrayal of the socialist vision, and a sense of self-confidence that workers and peasants are their own liberators. The Leninist communist party did everything in its power to raise the thinking, outlook and organization of the workers and peasantry to the level necessary to overthrow the ruling capitalist class.

Leninism and the October Socialist Revolution pioneered a model for Russian communists based on their revolutionary practice in confronting their own capitalist class and ruling elite. Leninism developed Marxism under the conditions of the highest stage of capitalism, imperialism and the proletarian revolution. Leninism and the revolutionary activity of the working class and people transformed in practice the Russian proletariat, turning it into an advanced contingent of the international proletariat offering its resources to develop the international communist and workers' movement for the emancipation of the working class and liberation of the oppressed peoples from the colonial yoke.

Leninism taught in practice that each and every contingent of the international working class had to create models out of their own revolutionary practice. "We are our own models!" needed to resound wherever workers were organizing. Revolutionary models based on the thinking and practice of communists and workers energize and give material meaning to the difficult work of communists leading the working class within their national boundaries, confronting their own capitalist class and ruling elite.

Marxism developed to Leninism was the theoretical expression of the material developments with

the maturing of capitalism into monopoly, its spread throughout the world and the consequent growth and maturing of the working class itself. Leninism was the guide to organizing the working class and peasantry and moving them towards revolution in the early decades of the 20th century in every national setting. The unity of the international proletariat developed with its material expansion and by successfully organizing the working class in each national setting as an independent voice and material force for revolution and as a sure thinking base and contingent of the international communist and workers' movement for the emancipation of the working class.

Detractors of Leninism, both within Russia and the Soviet Union and abroad, used the Russian model, which emerged from the revolutionary practice within Russia, to block the development of revolutionary models based on the practice of the communists and the working class in each national setting guided by the ideology of Leninism. These detractors stopped the development of Marxist-Leninist theory and thinking communists by converting Leninism into a dogma and not taking it up as a guide to analyze the concrete conditions prevailing in each national setting and the actions necessary to create the subjective conditions on the basis of Leninist organization and tactics. Certain detractors from Leninism introduced into Canada models from the Soviet Union to block the development of Canadian models based on revolutionary practice and thinking in confronting the Canadian reality and ruling elite. This blocked the Leninist outlook from taking root among Canadians as a guide to developing the communist and workers' movement in Canada to achieve its inherent aim.

On a world scale, detractors from Leninism did everything in their power to block the use of Marxism-Leninism as a guide to action and supplanted it with exceptionalism. This was most notable in the U.S. when Earl Browder captured leadership of the Communist Party of the U.S. and introduced the exceptionalist line of "progressive" U.S. imperialism, which did not require its revolutionary overthrow. In Canada, the line of exceptionalism declared Canadian democracy a "model" and gave rise to the Liberal Labour Alliance whereby the role of the communist was to join forces with social democrats to deliver the vote of workers to the Liberal Party. Elsewhere the anti-Leninist line of exceptionalism was pushed in agrarian countries as socialism with specific national characteristics, as if fire, gravity or any science has "national characteristics." These attacks, such as importing models and its flipside of exceptionalism, were directed against the science of Marxism-Leninism and to block its development within the concrete conditions of the here and now and the Necessity for Change.



In Canada, the revolutionary youth confronted the importing of models and exceptionalism. Denouncing exceptionalism as an attack on science and a return to medievalism, the revolutionary youth insisted on the necessity to have our own models based on our own revolutionary practice. This enabled the Canadian communists and the working class to develop their own work based on their own conditions and thinking guided by the most advanced ideology. This led to the affirmation and deepening of Leninism in the conditions of the last decades of the 20th century and to the

renovation and reaffirmation of Leninist principles on organization and tactics when the revolution went into retreat by the turn of the century. The leadership of CPC(M-L) insisted on contemporary Marxist-Leninist Thought as the basic ideology guiding our thinking and on the conscious participation of each and every individual communist and worker in revolutionary practice to build an alternative, giving rise to the Necessity for Change analysis from which arose the motto of CPC(M-L), *The Party's Deed Is Its Word*. In this way the Canadian working class can assume its proper place among other national contingents of the international proletariat organizing and

fighting for the emancipation of the working class and the elimination of classes and class society.

Leninism and the October Socialist Revolution moved theory forward and added to the ideological richness or storehouse of Marxism and the Renaissance outlook. Lenin showed in practice that theory is a living thing that must develop with the changing conditions. This neither negates existing theory nor supplants it with something else but adds to the basic richness of the science of communism, which is the movement for the emancipation of the working class and the elimination of class society and classes internationally.

The October Socialist Revolution proved that socialist revolution can be done. Leninism and subsequent developments in the 20th century disproved in practice the theory of European socialism that society could advance through class conciliation with pro-worker representatives taking over and winning leading positions within the capitalist state machinery and pressuring the ruling elite and capitalists to make socialist concessions for the good of humanity. Leninism proved that socialism was possible only through the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and the ruling elite, and by establishing the working class as the ruling class with its own state machinery, especially its own military. The defeat of the Paris Commune of 1871 had already proved that European socialism was the basis for the bourgeoisie's nation-building project, later establishing social-democracy as the form of rule after capitalism passed from its *laissez-faire* stage into state monopoly capitalism and the liberal-democratic form of rule. The Marxist conclusion was that the working class needed to create from scratch its own nation-building state with its own military and could not simply take control of the existing capitalist state and its institutions. The October Revolution showed in practice that the working class could seize power, discard the capitalist state machinery and replace it with new governing institutions of its own making, such as the Soviets of Workers and Peasants and the Red Army.

The development of the renaissance ideology to Marxism, Leninism and Contemporary Marxist-Leninist Thought constitutes the modern communism of today and represents a guide and vision for the emancipation of the working class and the elimination of classes and class society. Modern communism is a practical guide to thinking and action in the present time and space, as Leninism was in the here and now at the dawn of the 20th century. Modern communism is a vision that must be concretized in the here and now, by recognizing the necessity to build the organizations that move the working class and society forward towards its vision. Modern communism opens the door to progress, to accomplish those big revolutionary leaps, such as the French and October Revolutions, that take years in the making but when they occur propel social conditions forward with breakneck speed.

The general task facing the communists is the organizing of the working class into its own communist organization and to prepare itself to assume political and economic power and build socialism as the transition to the emancipation of the working class, towards attaining the vision of communism and a classless society.

Modern communism is bound up with the emancipation of the working class internationally and cannot reach its goal of emancipation of the working class and a classless society without the vast majority of the world's proletariat uniting in this project. The October Revolution established Russia as a liberated homeland of the international proletariat providing contingents everywhere around the world with concrete support and inspiration for their own organizing and revolutionary efforts.

International unity of the proletariat is concretized in the many working class nation-building projects based on the concrete conditions of the time and space in which they unfold, the here and now and its necessity for change, which is the alternative the working class strives for and consciously organizes. The international movement of the proletariat depends on each and every nation-building project led by the working class. Every nation-building project depends on the

solidarity and unity of the international proletariat and the joint effort to defeat the imperialist system of states. The October Socialist Revolution established a base from which the support for the international proletariat was concretized. Detractors of Leninism used this base as a substitute for building a revolutionary base within their own national boundaries. They rested on the victory of the October Socialist Revolution and became organizers of solidarity for the Soviet Union as their end all and be all rather than working to transform their own national proletariat into another liberated contingent of the international proletariat and support the Soviet Union from that standpoint. The quantification of liberated contingents of the international proletariat provides a guarantee that the successes achieved by the movement for emancipation of the international working class can be transformed into the victory of the elimination of classes and class society worldwide. The Russian people and other nations that were to become the Soviet Union took a step towards the emancipation of the international working class and a classless society with the victory of the October Socialist Revolution. They opened the door to progress. Workers, peasants and revolutionary anti-colonialists around the world were energized by the October Revolution, which deprived the imperialists of one world market and an international system of states under their thumb, creating a flow. Everywhere, at all levels of struggle whether working class or anti-colonial, those who called themselves communists became leaders of the progressive movement.

In practical terms the October Revolution propelled communism and the science of Marxism-Leninism to unparalleled heights and popularity amongst the masses worldwide. Communist parties were formed in country after country including Canada in 1921. The quantification of communist parties demanded a new quality, a development of Leninism to modern communism. For many however, the existence of an organization calling itself communist and members calling themselves communist working for social justice and building solidarity with the Soviet Union became enough, including in Canada. A new quality of thinking Canadian workers and communists conscious of their mission and armed with Leninist strategy and tactics to realize the necessary changes engendered by the concrete reality was not developed. The quantification of the communist party as an ally of the Soviet Union was deemed sufficient. Many communist parties failed to grasp the necessary missing quality that had been started in the Leninist Party in Russia but needed to be developed anew in each and every quantification. This quality of Leninism was the ability to theorize on the political, social and economic conditions of the late 19th century, which had propelled capitalism to its highest form, imperialism, which is the amalgam of the state with the most powerful monopolies. The lessons of the Paris Commune first touched on by Marx in *The Civil War in France* became central to the new thinking of Lenin.

The Leninist thesis was presented at the Second International in the period of imperialist war preparations leading to the First World War: the working class in each country must oppose its own bourgeoisie and settle accounts with it by seizing power. This means first and foremost that the working class must be organized to oppose imperialist war and the war preparations of its own bourgeoisie. European socialism opposed the Leninist thesis and organized the working class of its respective countries to support its own bourgeoisie in war and peace, turning the working class into a reserve of the bourgeoisie. European socialism was dealt a deathblow by World War I and the October Socialist Revolution. However, European socialism reorganized after the war as representatives of the October Revolution by turning the Soviet Union into either a sterile model to be followed for which solidarity was organized or by criticizing the model of the Soviet Union and its perceived shortcomings. Both were meant to stop the development of revolutionary practice and the settling of accounts with their own capitalist class. New contingents of liberated homelands of the working class were not established through revolution in the triad of Western Europe, North America and Japan. Leninist theory was relegated to phrases used as dogma not as the summation of concrete experience giving rise to principles that guide thinking and action. Instead, organizing in the triad ensured social democratic conciliation of the class struggle and reduced communists to coordinators of decisions taken behind their backs in the style of bourgeois parties, which constitute factions that vie for power within the bourgeois state apparatus.

The October Revolution showed in practice the dead-end of European socialism. The Bolsheviks put an end to Russian participation in the imperialist war. The Bolsheviks gave all power to the Soviets as an institution to mobilize and elevate the working class, peasants and soldiers to the position of rulers of society and the new state. The October Revolution transformed the imperialist First World War into a revolutionary war on the Russian front to establish peace in Europe. The October Revolution immediately asked for a just peace treaty with Germany, which resulted in one that pulled Russia out of the war.



Poster from 1920s reads: "All Power to the Soviets! Peace for the People! Land to the Peasants! Factories to the Workers!"

The October Revolution proved that the working class can have its own independent view of how to organize the economy and politics. Not only can it have its own view and practice but that it must have its own view and practice if it is to be successful in opening the door to progress, ensuring peace among nations based on recognizing all nations big and small as equal and with their right to self-determination, and moving the world towards the emancipation of the working class and the elimination of class society.

The October Revolution put the resources of the Russian nation behind solving the problems of hunger and want and providing education and health care for all, and established concrete state mechanisms that were dedicated to solving social problems in practice without hindrance from vested private interests and the theft and draining of added-value by a privileged idle class.

The October Revolution began the process to bring ownership of the socialized economy into the hands of the working class and collective organizations of the peasantry. This meant first

the nationalization of the major industries and resources. Owners of capital that gave up opposition to the October Revolution were rewarded with compensation but removed from all positions of authority within the economy. All capitalist inheritance was banned. Those that refused to cooperate with the new working class state had their capital expropriated without compensation and were expected to work for a living.

The October Revolution began the process to harmonize the production of goods and services and the delivery of those goods and services to the people. This entailed removing the parasites from the banking and insurance sectors and eventually from all sectors of circulation of goods and services, especially the wholesale sector in the beginning.

The October Revolution began the process to solve the land question and organize the liberation of the oppressed peasantry in Russia, the Ukraine and other peasant nations and regions of the Soviet Union. This required the most difficult struggle to move farming from petty production to mass industrialized farming without destroying the peasants and forcibly removing them from the land and depopulating the countryside. This meant first expropriating the land and power of the landlords and secondly to organize the poor and landless peasants for an eventual showdown with the kulaks or rich peasants. For the first time in world history a revolution of a social class, the poor and landless peasants, was supported by the state and by the urban working class that went in great

numbers to the countryside to assist the peasantry in this epic battle to collectivize and to transform agriculture from petty to mass industrialized production and to bring them machinery and help their peasant Soviets in assuming real effective political power.

The October Revolution began to reform the methods the state used to claim revenue to fund social programs, the government bureaucracy, the Red Army and police. Government claims were established and determined at the centres of production of added-value. Revenue gathered from the wealth produced by the working class and peasants first had to go towards guaranteeing the well-being of the masses in all its forms, especially their social programs and into defending the revolution from imperialist aggression and subversion. The claims of owners of equity and debt (foreign and Russian) on realized added-value were mostly eliminated. This left the claims of the state and the claims of the actual producers as the sole claimants on the added-value produced by the working class and peasants. Russian colonial ownership of land and means of production abroad was repudiated and handed back to the existing authorities in the respective countries.

Leninism and the October Revolution unblocked the movement for enlightenment in Russia. This gave rise to significant advances in the field of rights, especially economic rights, directing the Soviet state to guarantee livelihoods and the well-being of all throughout life. This movement for rights culminated in the 1936 Constitution of the Soviet Union, which was certainly the most advanced at that time and later influenced the deliberations on the UN Declaration of Human Rights.

The October Revolution began the historic transition period of socialism. Socialism is the heroic period of class warfare bridging the gap between the 4,000-year grip on human society by ruling social classes and their exploitation of fellow human beings and the new era of communism, which represents the emancipation of the working class and the total elimination of classes and class society. The period of socialism has to solve the problem of eliminating Bourgeois Right and the arrangements based on it from the thinking and practice of society, just as bourgeois society had to eliminate the thinking and practice based on Absolute Right. Today, bourgeois society faced with the need for profound democratic and constitutional renewal is reverting to arrangements based on Absolute Right, making the recognition of Necessity for Change increasingly urgent. Among other things socialism is a period of unremitting struggle against the remnants of class society in terms of culture, especially in ideological and social forms and for an international transition to a new socially conscious human being and societies without social classes and exploitation of humans by humans.

The October Revolution was the first break in the chain of imperialist states. The imperialist system of states was breached and severely weakened by the removal of such a huge land mass and population from its control. The breach in the imperialist system of states deepened the crisis of capitalism in its constant search for markets to exploit and natural resources to plunder. The October Revolution added a new contradiction to those plaguing the imperialist system of states: the contradiction between the countries within the imperialist system of states led and dominated by the most powerful versus the new liberated homeland of the international proletariat, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

As Lenin predicted: after the working class seizes power the bourgeoisie becomes even more ferocious and determined to regain political and economic power by any means. The history after the October Revolution is one of constant and unremitting class struggle for the working class to retain power in the Soviet Union and resist the attacks of those determined to restore capitalism. The working class under the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Stalin fought heroically to defend the nation-building project of the working class from the imperialist system of states and from the intrigue and subversion of the overthrown classes within the liberated homeland of the international proletariat.

The industrialization of the Soviet Union, spread of science and the application of technology to production and distribution, especially during the 1930s when the imperialist system of states was gripped by a devastating worldwide depression, was an heroic feat accomplished without plundering foreign lands for investment funds, raw materials and markets. This was the first time that any large country accomplished the transition from petty production to mass industrial production without foreign plunder for investment funds and without mass dislocation and devastation of the peasantry. This showed the world that a socialist self-reliant economy can be built and that accumulated-value (investment funds) for social programs and extended reproduction can come from within the economy, from the hard work of the working class and peasantry combined with science and modern technology. However, this is only true when the society is free from the claims of an idle ruling class, which owns the socialized economy and directs it for its own narrow aim towards recurring crises and war. With a self-reliant socialized economy under the control of the working class and peasantry and freed from an idle ruling class, the added-value from production can go to the living conditions of the people, investments in social programs, the needs of the state and into extended reproduction of the socialized means of production and distribution.

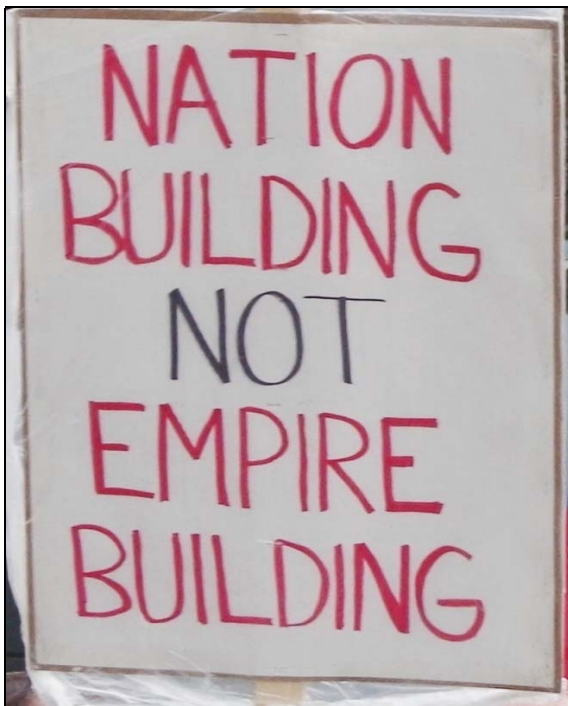


The socialist transition period to communism in the Soviet Union was sabotaged when those in authority refused to continue the class struggle against the remnants of class society in political, economic, cultural, ideological and social forms. This led to a block in the leadership to resolving in particular the political problem of raising the working class to the position of ruling class in practice. This refusal to lead the socialist transition period to deal with its contradictions opened the floodgates for a return to capitalism; this refusal and capitulation to capitalist restoration was officially announced by Nikita Khrushchev at the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1956. The October Revolution came to an unofficial official end at that time whereupon the Soviet Union was converted into a social-imperialist power competing for world domination with its nemesis, the United States. But the lessons and glorious accomplishments of the October Revolution in all fields of human endeavour will live forever. The rule of the working class lasted far longer than the Paris Commune of 1871 creating an enormous wealth of direct experience to assist the international workers and communist movement and its future nation-building projects.

Socialist society is the most revolutionary and dynamic of all human societies that have hitherto come into being; it must be so in order to mobilize the masses to oppose the remnants of class society especially in political and social form and in culture especially its ideological and social forms.

The key issue is that communists and the revolutionary working class must rise to the occasion of the here and now and the necessity to change the world they face. The working class and communists struggle in the conditions that they have been handed whether as revolutionary communist cadre within the former Soviet Union fighting to advance socialist society, fighting might and main to stop the remnants of the capitalist class from retaking political power or fighting to organize the working class in the imperialist countries for proletarian revolution whether that revolution is in flow or retreat. There is no good time or bad time or worse time or better time for communists and the working class; there is only this time and space, the here and now and the

necessity for change. Sometimes communists forget the long difficult days for the Bolsheviks during the period of Stolypin reaction after 1905 following the cruel defeat of what Lenin called the "dress rehearsal for the October Revolution." The situation for the Bolsheviks became even worse still when communist parties, especially in Europe within the Second International, deserted revolution and betrayed the working class by supporting their own capitalist class and its war preparations prior to and during World War I. It must have seemed for Lenin and the Bolsheviks that they stood alone as the only defenders of communism and the international proletariat. But the important and great thing was they persisted, and they led the working class and peasantry to the victory of the October Revolution and the "Ten Days that Shook the World!" Whatever level of development of the productive forces in the era of imperialism and its mature stage of capitalism, the working class and its communist party are confronted with the task of working out their strategy and tactics to open society's path to progress by ensuring the working class constitutes the nation and vests sovereignty in the people. That is what is required, just as Marx pointed out in the 19th century and Lenin achieved in his time and space and others are doing in their conditions.



By elevating the working class to political power to begin its own heroic nation-building project for socialism and the transition to communism, historic successes will be transformed into historic victory. As a contingent of the international proletariat, the working class in all countries whether large or small, in the midst of changes from petty to mass industrial production or within a fully developed monopoly capitalist system, all are charged by history to make a real contribution to the international struggle for the emancipation of the working class and the preservation of world peace, and the march forward to the elimination of classes and class society once and for all. The Great October Socialist Revolution led by Lenin and Leninism made such a contribution. Let us mark its anniversary by upholding modern communism and redoubling our efforts to prepare conditions for the coming revolutionary storms and to accomplish our own plans to turn historic

successes into historic victory!

(Based on a manuscript written in 1994 and edited by the Central Committee of CPC(M-L) on the occasion of the 90th Anniversary of the Great October Revolution in 2007. Originally published in TML, November 7, 2007.)

Supplement

**The Bolshevik Party in the
Period of Preparation and Realization of the
October Socialist Revolution**

