
MAO ZEDONG'S THEORY OF PEOPLE'S WAR IS THE MILITARY STRATEGY OF THE PROLETARIAT AND OPPRESSED PEOPLES OF SEMI-COLONIES

“When human society has reached a level where classes and the state are eliminated, no just or unjust war shall occur. Then the era of continuous peace shall began for humanity.”(Mao Zedung, Military Notes)

What is war? Mao Zedung defines war as follows:

“War is the highest form of struggle for resolving contradictions, when they have developed to a certain stage, between classes, nations, states or political groups...” (M. Zedung, Military Notes, p. 99)

Conforming to this basic law, wars have occurred in history and continue to occur today where people are slaughtered. With the transition from the primitive communal society to the slave society, the state was the means of the slave-owners to oppress the slaves.

The first wars in history originally occur to eliminate a despot in the communal society or to expand land or territory, and then it transformed into wars with the aim of plundering and possessing property. In the words of Engels, wars became a “continuous industry”. With the appearance of imperialism, war as an industry transformed into a higher form. The biggest monopolies of the world are those controlling the war industry today.

No matter what appearance they may have, wars in the past and today are forms of class struggle. Since the first appearance of societies, war between oppressors and oppressed have not ceased.

Wars occurred between slaves and masters, feudal aristocracy and peasants and, when capitalism appeared, between bourgeoisie and proletariat, and after imperialism appeared, oppressed nations and oppressed peoples were added to the list. At this stage, the wars between the oppressed peoples and imperialism and between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie have become the major issue.

With the Great October Revolution of 1917, class struggle reached a stage where the struggle against imperialism and all reactionary powers led by the vanguard of proletariat is the only locomotive of history. The wars of oppressing and exploiting powers based on plunder and sharing out impeded the advance of human societies. The struggle of the oppressed against them are just wars which impel human society forward. Today, the wars of imperialism and their collaborationists are unjust and reactionary wars.

Like just wars advancing human societies forward, the people's wars of today and those of tomorrow waged and lead by the proletariat to realise the democratic people's revolution in the semi-colonies, colonies and semi-colonial, semi-feudal countries (where bourgeois democratic revolutions have not been completed), are just revolutions.

Marxist-Leninist-Maoists, taking the different characteristics of wars into consideration, fight against unjust wars and support just wars.. The issue is not who attacked first,

but between whom war has occurred. In short, the only criterion for Marxist-Leninist-Maoists is the class nature of those engaged in war.

In the era of imperialism and the proletarian revolution, all wars advancing the proletarian world revolution today are just and progressive wars. The bourgeoisie tries to show the justness of the wars it initiates to protect its interests and to exploit and plunder the peoples of the world, to show the unjustness of the wars waged by the oppressed masses. This is how they write their official history.

The Khrushchevite modern revisionists participated in this chorus of the imperialist bourgeoisie.

The Khrushchevite modern revisionists distorted Lenin under the banner of “peaceful coexistence”. They declared that the wars waged by the proletariat and oppressed peoples against imperialism and reactionary forces as unjust, saying that they are “against all wars”, and they wanted to leave the proletariat and other toiling masses without arms in facing the attacks of imperialism.

Mao Zedung waged a great struggle against such ideas that advocated this submission and regarded imperialist plunder as legitimate. He exposed the real nature of the modern revisionism before the masses.

Today, those raising counter-revolutionary theories such as “the class struggle has ended”, “the world has globalised”, “no more contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie”, “the bourgeoisie has lost its imperialist character” or “the conditions suitable for socialism do not exist and, therefore, the proletariat should wait until the conditions suitable for socialism appear” ,etc., under different banners, aim to stifle the revolutionary struggle of proletariat.

Such kind of anti-Marxist-Leninist-Maoist theories have existed ever since the appearance of Marxism. Their aim is to neutralise Marxism and they will continue to exist as long as the bourgeoisie and the proletariat exist.

Especially those opportunists and revisionist movements that belittle the people’s wars led by the vanguard of the proletariat as “peasants wars” and those who object to this historic war of proletariat, cannot ignore the reality that they stand in the same front with the imperialists and their collaborators.

Today the imperialist bourgeoisie, through its ideologues, tries to spread the view that people’s war has become invalid and that it has no chance of success in today’s world. Today, there are those movements claiming to be Marxist-Leninists which label the proletarian parties waging people’s war as “anarchist” or “terrorist” and speak the same words of the imperialist bourgeoisie.

We support all just wars. The reason is that we, as Marxist-Leninist-Maoists, are for the elimination of all wars. We think that if wars advancing the proletarian world revolution achieve final victory, all wars of wars will be eliminated from the historical scene.

THE WAY FOR THE PROLETARIAT OF SEMI-COLONIES TO SEIZE POWER AND PEOPLE'S WAR AS A MILITARY SCIENCE

In the class struggles between the oppressors and the oppressed, the war conducted by the oppressed peoples against the oppressors is called people's war. It is not correct to take Mao's strategy of people's war to be the same as the wars conducted by the peoples in history.

The Great October Russian Revolution 1917 was also a people's war. However, it followed the strategy of seizing power through a general armed mass uprising led by the proletarian vanguard. On the other hand, Mao's theory of people's war is the military strategy of protracted armed struggle of a people oppressed by imperialism led by the proletarian vanguard and gradual seizure of power from the enemy.

Every war bears the characteristics of its own era and is shaped according to the class contradictions resulting from the social structure it arises from. For example, in the period of wars conducted by the bourgeoisie against feudalism, the closest allies of the bourgeoisie were the peasantry and the proletariat. Whereas in the period of imperialism and proletarian revolutions, such relations have changed completely and the proletariat and the peasantry have combined to fight against the bourgeoisie.

These class relations still continue, for the bourgeoisie is the most reactionary and dominant section and the proletariat and peasantry are the oppressed sections of society. In the past, the bourgeoisie led the struggle against feudalism, but today the proletariat leads the struggle against the bourgeoisie.

The reason is that proletariat is the only class which can advance history, eliminate exploitation and oppression, transform society into one without classes and eliminate all classes including itself.

"All people's wars and rebellions in the past were restricted in terms of their purpose as well as leading and driving forces, whereas the people's war we are waging as the vanguard of the proletariat is a war conducted 'for the people' and 'by the people' in terms of scope and meaning under the conditions of the new era." (V.N. Giap, Vietnam's War of National Liberation, p. 29)

In order to falsify the theory of people's war, the opportunists and revisionists assert that all wars in which people participate are people's war. By doing so, they want to distort the strategy of the revolutionary path which Mao universalised from the specific conditions of China and which is valid for semi-colonies and colonies dependent on imperialism.

They also cause confusion in the ranks of the proletariat and the oppressed peoples struggling to complete the democratic revolution and prepare the conditions for socialist revolution. The truth is that the aim of opportunism is not to make revolution, or to organise the masses in a revolutionary manner in order to struggle against imperialism.

They make every effort to substitute their subjective intentions for reality and fail to make concrete analysis of the concrete situation. By doing so, they confuse the objectives of the proletariat in the power struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

The theory of people's war is the liberation theory of the peoples of colonies and semi-

colonies countries. According to this theory, the proletariat, in the capitalist countries, must conduct a peaceful struggle for a long time in the cities to increasingly gain strength and to seize power immediately through an armed rebellion when it finds the conditions suitable. This has been proven by the Great October Revolution.

The strategy of people's war is to mobilise the peasants in the countryside led by the proletarian vanguard, the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist party, against the local and central authority and the feudal system, to establish the united front of the people and the people army through the struggle, and to build all these from simple to complex, from small to big, and from weak to strong.

Mao's strategy of people's war is the strategy of liberating the countryside in portions and the eventual surrounding of the cities to seize power all over the country. People's war is the art of war by which the proletariat will take the power from the ruling classes. During the people's war, the proletariat will use all forms of struggle, bloody or bloodless and legal or illegal organisation for the development of the war. Although the main form of struggle is armed, this does not mean to deny and fail to apply other forms of struggle.

The art of people's war is the most advanced art of war, by which people learn war through warfare. It is an art by which unorganised and unarmed oppressed and exploited peoples of colonial, semi-colonial and semi-feudal countries, led by the proletarian vanguard, can defeat the enemy who is superior in terms of number and arms.

People's war is an art of war which destroys the enemy gradually, pushes him to withdraw step by step and divides him. It is a fruit of severe clashes, bitter defeats, great successes and rich experience. This art has been formed with the blood of millions of oppressed peoples. It is the art of fighting by rebelling against exploitation and oppression. It is the armed form of struggle through which the proletariat seizes political power led by its vanguard, the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist party.

People's War is the people's struggle which gives priority to armed struggle from the very beginning in order to build the people's democratic dictatorship. This struggle is led and organised by the communist party. People's war is led by the party, notably a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist party. The party leads and organises the people's army in all political, economic and cultural fields.

Contrary to the claim of all opportunists and revisionists, the proletariat won victory by waging people's war in many countries including China, Albania, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Today this struggle is conducted by the vanguard of the proletariat in many semi-colonies.

Further, there is no similarity between focoism and the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist concept of people's war. Today, especially petty-bourgeois revolutionaries try to misrepresent the focoist armed struggles and Mao's theory of people's war as being the same and to present focoist ideas to the masses as a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist theory. This is nothing but an attempt to revive the focoist theory.

There is no similarity between Mao's people war theory, ideology, policies and methods of organisation and the focoist ideas. The fact that petty-bourgeois revolutionary organisations are abandoning the armed struggle and compromising with the ruling classes and

selling the revolution, especially in the Latin American countries, considered to be the homeland of focoist ideas, show the dilemma of these ideas.

Petty-bourgeoisie capitulation and betrayal of the achievements gained with the blood of people in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala and many other countries show once more that the petty bourgeoisie is incapable of leading the revolution. The reason for the fact that the focoist petty bourgeois gained success in Cuba in 1959 should be sought in the concrete conditions at the time. However, Cuba cannot not be regarded as a socialist country at any time.

Since the very early years of the revolution, Cuba was offered to Russian social-imperialism by the rulers who did not have trust in the power of the Cuban people and purchased every single commodity from Russia, and as a result have left the people of Cuba on the verge of starvation.

The petty bourgeoisie and the oppressed national bourgeoisie of the colonies were influenced by the Mao's theory of people's war. Especially the fact that China won a great victory by means of people's war influenced all oppressed classes and taught them that they liberate themselves by fighting against imperialism and its local collaborators.

Stating that "without a people's army, the people have nothing", Mao taught the masses to unite with the vanguard of the proletariat against imperialism and its local collaborators and landlords, to wage a protracted armed struggle, and to build their own people's army during such a period of struggle.

Mao showed the path of liberation to the oppressed peoples with the strategy of people's war. The peoples of many semi-colonies and colonies who followed this strategy won victory.

Mao's people's war theory, military theory and strategy represent the most advanced art of war in the military science of Marxism-Leninism. When Mao said that there is no other way to seize power but to follow the strategy of people's war in the colonies, semi-colonies and semi-feudal countries, he did not express abstract reality but rather presented the issue concretely.

Due to the difference between imperialist-capitalist countries and the countries dependent on and exploited by imperialism as well as to the economic, social and political differences between these countries, the path of revolution to be followed by the proletariat can not be same in these different types of countries.

In other words, the strategy of revolution to be followed by the proletariat of imperialist countries and that of the countries dependent on imperialism cannot be same. This difference must be recognised by the proletarian parties.

The October Revolution 1917 achieved victory in a capitalist country, a "feudal-imperialist" country, in the words of Lenin. Mao had no model of revolution conducted in a semi-colonial or colonial country such as China, but had only a model of the proletariat revolution. Mao stated that the main issue is to seize political power, and he described the way to achieve it in-depth.

Being aware of the Marxist-Leninist principle saying that revolution is a mass undertaking, he analysed how the masses can participate in the revolution on the basis of the

Marxist-Leninist line, and which strategies and tactics should be followed.

Mao, in his analysis of China, distinguished between imperialist countries and the countries dependent on imperialism, linked the particular with the universal dialectically, and analysed the other forms of struggle. Mao answers the question of the basic differences between imperialist countries and the countries dependent on imperialism as follows:

Firstly, the semi-colonies and colonies are not those countries exploiting and oppressing other countries, but those on the orbit of the imperialist financial capital, and they are highly dependent on the latter.

Secondly, imperialist financial capital impedes the development of the “national capitalism” and creates a collaborationist local capitalism dependent on imperialism in the semi-colonies.

Thirdly, imperialism has close relations with the dominant classes belonging to the pre-capitalist relations of production (i.e., feudalism) in these countries. As the bourgeois democratic revolution has not been carried out or completed in these countries, feudalism continues to rule in the superstructure and infrastructure.

Fourthly, imperialism is basically an impediment to the free development of productive forces even though it develops the productive forces involuntarily in these countries. In short, due to the fact that imperialism establishes close alliances with the most reactionary classes, i.e., feudalism and the representatives of the collaborationist capitalism, they are the main targets of the new democratic revolution. In order to make the subject more clear, we would like to quote a longer extract from Mao here:

“In the face of such enemies, the Chinese revolution cannot be other than protracted and ruthless. With such powerful enemies, the revolutionary forces cannot be built up and tempered into a power capable of crushing them except over a long period of time.

With enemies who so ruthlessly suppress the Chinese revolution, the revolutionary forces cannot hold their own positions, let alone capture those of the enemy, unless they steel themselves and display their tenacity to the full. It is therefore wrong to think that the forces of the Chinese revolution can be built up in the twinkling of an eye, or that China’s revolutionary struggle can triumph overnight.

In the face of such enemies, the principal means or form of the Chinese revolution must be armed struggle, not peaceful struggle. For our enemies have made peaceful activity impossible for the Chinese people and have deprived them of all political freedom and democratic rights.

Stalin says, ‘In China the armed revolution is fighting the armed counter-revolution. That is one specific feature and one of the advantages of the Chinese revolution.’ This formulation is perfectly correct. Therefore, it is wrong to belittle armed struggle, revolutionary war and army work.” (Selected Works, Vol. II, p.317).

Mao’s ideas on the path and the military strategy as well as the difficulties which may be encountered by pursuing this strategy as well as his view that the only choice for the proletariat is to follow the strategy of armed struggle, i.e., people’s war to defeat the enemy, are valid for present conditions. Mao determined correctly the main and the secondary forms of struggle for the proletariat to win victory for the revolution against imperialism, feudalism

and collaborationist capitalism under the semi-colonial and colonial conditions of China.

“...In China war is the main form of struggle and the army is the main form of organisation. Other forms such as mass organisation and mass struggle are also extremely important and indeed indispensable and in no circumstances to be overlooked, but their purpose is to serve the war. Before the outbreak of a war all organisation and struggle are for the preparation of war,...” (Selected Works, Vol.2, p.221)

Basing himself on the fact that imperialism still existed in these countries, that feudalism was not eliminated, that there was an absence of a strong proletarian class, and that the country developed in an uneven way, Mao concluded that the main form of struggle in countries such as China must be armed struggle. These conditions are different in the capitalist countries.

Mao pointed out the difference of imperialist-capitalist countries from semi-colonial countries and emphasised that it was important to give priority to the armed struggle in the military strategy, to recognise the dialectics of relations between the countryside and the cities, according to which while the city must be regarded as secondary to the countryside, the struggle must be conducted in a co-ordinated way in both areas.

“...Clearly then the protracted revolutionary struggle in the revolutionary base areas consists mainly in peasant guerrilla warfare led by the Chinese Communist Party. Therefore, it is wrong to ignore the necessity of using rural districts as revolutionary base areas, to neglect painstaking work among the peasants and to neglect guerrilla warfare.

However, stressing armed struggle does not mean abandoning other forms of struggles; on the contrary, armed struggle cannot succeed unless co-ordinated with other forms of struggle. And stressing the work in the rural base areas does not mean abandoning our work in the cities and in the other vast rural areas which are still under the enemy's rule; on the contrary, without the work in the cities and in these other rural areas, our own rural base areas would be isolated and the revolution would suffer defeat.

Moreover, the final objective of the revolution is the capture of the cities, the enemy's main bases, and this objective cannot be achieved without adequate work in the cities.” (Selected Works, Vol. II, p.317)

As seen here, Mao dealt with the strategy, tactics, the forms of struggle under people's war as well as the dialectics between countryside and city and the other theories about military art in a deep perspective.

The fact that this theory which originated from the special conditions of China is valid for the struggles of proletariat against the bourgeoisie in the all semi-colonies, is due to Mao's broad perspective and vision. This of course does not mean that the conditions in all semi-colonies are the same and that the other semi-colonies will or must follow the strictly the same line as that of the Chinese proletariat.

However, what is to be understood here is the general logic of the armed struggle, i.e., people's war, and to apply it to the particular conditions in each country. This attitude applies also to those countries where general mass uprising is valid. Just like the fact that all developed countries will not follow the same way as that of the October Revolution of 1917...

SOME WORDS ON THE NECESSITY AND SIGNIFICANCE OF PEOPLE'S WAR TODAY

The theoretical formulations of Mao on the basis of the special conditions of China and his practice are not particular only to that country. They are military strategies which are valid universally. The teachings of Mao on the military art of the people's war are indispensable MLM weapons for proletarian revolutionaries.

Working classes and their Communist Parties (CP) in the imperialist countries need to learn a lot from Mao about the military art for strategies relating to mass uprising. It is obligatory to learn from Mao's theories about the art of war including but not limited to united fronts, alliances, strategic defence, equilibrium, the dialectic of attack, withdrawal, tactics of defence, and the political essence of war in order to gain success in the struggle against the bourgeoisie.

It is wrong to think that the people's war theory of Mao is valid only in the countries where the peasantry is the majority. The theory of people's war in the semi-colonies of imperialism is a generally valid strategy. The fact that the population of peasants have decreased in proportion to urban population does not mean that feudalism is eliminated from those countries completely and that capitalism is dominant there.

The most important matter is that there is the existence of imperialism, i.e. the matter of colonial and semi-colonial countries. Imperialism is stronger in cities where its local collaborationists exert more control, whereas the countryside is the weakest areas and "the soft spot" of the enemy.

The realities of the semi-colonial countries favour the advance of the revolution in the countryside in the context of the balance of power between revolution and counter-revolution. On the other hand, the existence of feudalism is closely related to the reality of semi-colonialism.

The existence of feudal relations result in both favourable and unfavourable effects on the revolution. The favourable effects result from the fact that the feudal-peasant economy in the countryside form an important source for the people's war, whereas the unfavourable effects result from the fact that the intensity of feudal relations result in the weakness of proletarian elements in the countryside.

The strategy of people's war does not vary depending on the intensity or absence of feudal relations. Those circles reducing the MLM ideas of Mao on this matter to the level of the Focoist "vanguardist war" are the product of the anti-MLM "left" opportunism, and are raising nothing but armed economism.

The logic of the vanguardist war is that the masses will follow the vanguard when a few sensational actions are performed in the cities. This merely spreads the dream that a few intellectuals will carry out the revolution instead of the masses which, must in fact fight led by the vanguard of the proletariat.

However, the people's war concept of Mao is not only the product of "the military

aspect”, but the result of the complete MLM military theory and is aimed to mobilise and organise the masses and eventually to seize political power.

The new policies of imperialism such as “New World Order” or “globalisation” are aimed at exploiting the semi-colonies more severely. The fact is that the masses are exploited more severely and that a considerable part of the plunder obtained from all dependent countries are transferred to imperialist and developed countries.

This has made the peoples of dependent countries more destitute and pushed a considerable part of the masses to the borders of starvation. This is contrary to what some opportunists and neo-liberal defenders of imperialism and the “internationalisation of capital” claim. Imperialism has made the collaborationist local capitalism more incompetent and stopped the development of the national capitalism let alone help advance these countries.

The new policy of imperialism has not developed the industry of semi-colonial countries. It has neither eliminated feudalism nor completed the bourgeois democratic revolution in these countries. In short, the usury capital of imperialism has formed a serious impediment to the capitalist development of these countries.

Capitalist development in the countries called the “Asian Tigers” which imperialists boast so much about and where imperialism uses as the example of the idea of “free market” are nothing other than the centres for assembling industries. The existence of feudalism and all reactionary relations are maintained in these countries. In the overwhelming majority of the Asian, Latin American and African countries, very weak increases in the development of the working class are reported.

For example, in Turkey which has a population of 65 million, the population of workers employed in the heavy industry does not exceed five hundred thousand, whereas the total population of the working class is about five million.

In Brazil, which has a notable place in the automobile production, the production has been concentrated in a few cities while a considerable part of the country remains in medieval darkness. A very small portion of the urban population live in luxury while the remaining are destitute and unemployed.

The most import reality of the semi-colonies is the gathering of a great part of the population in a few big cities which is caused by the great poverty and lack of land in the countryside. At the beginning of the development of capitalism in Europe, the reason why the population flowed from villages to the cities was caused by the fact that capitalism was developing in the cities.

On the other hand, in semi-colonies, imperialism and its collaborationists can suppress the struggle of proletariat violently in the cities, whereas it cannot control the countryside. Therefore, the conditions to develop revolutionary struggle in the countryside are still valid. The armed struggle is still primary in these places.

The primary path of the struggle must be the armed struggle for the CPs in these countries to overthrow the oppression of imperialism and to obtain the support of other oppressed people, notably the peasants against the local collaborationists. The reason for this is that the enemy is well armed and the proletarian parties have no opportunity to

organise, make propaganda and transfer their political messages freely. They should perform these activities with arms.

In the words of Mao, the struggles must be armed from the very beginning to the end, and the proletariat must build its people's army during the struggle against the army of the ruling classes in the semi-colonial countries dominated by imperialism.

Imperialists are not only satisfied with repression, or neutralising the revolutions only ideologically, they will resort to extreme violence in order to achieve their goals. They make every effort to suppress especially the proletarian movements waging people's war and send large amounts of aid and assistance to the governments of the semi-colonies.

The biggest fear of the imperialists and all reactionary forces is the proletarian movements conducting armed struggle. This fear is not without a reason. This is because the masses duped by imperialism and the reactionary powers will, through the armed struggle, awaken more quickly and the proletarian parties can better organise the masses against imperialism and collaborationist capitalism and feudalism.

Opportunists and revisionists are the most opposed to starting the armed struggle by the proletariat and the taking of the road to power in semi-colonial countries.

They put forward such arguments as "the proletariat must take the peaceful road to power; they must not frighten the bourgeoisie; if the proletariat is armed, the bourgeoisie will increase the suppression and this will limit the possibilities of legal organisations." And when they say that the "proletariat will take the power by violence", it is only meant to trick the progressive masses and a mask of disguising their compromising faces.

Those who do not comprehend the reality of semi-colonial countries, those who do not see the domination of imperialism, those who do not see that the proletariat and oppressed masses do not have the least democratic rights, by suggesting that the proletariat must prepare for revolution for a long time peacefully as in the imperialist-capitalist countries do not see that there is a Chinese Wall between capitalist countries and semi-colonial countries. In essence, this approach makes the revolution impossible.

This opportunist-revisionist policy which is put forward by those who do not take revolution seriously, wish for the proletariat and his allies to submit to bourgeois power, satisfied with their fate or make some noises about democratic rights, namely reforms.

The opportunist-revisionist currents that can not see the reality of the semi-colonial country, deny the principal duty of the proletariat here, can not go any further than reformism. Some "left" opportunists in these countries, even as they first started on the correct line, have gone over to the reformist marsh in the process according to their compromising petty-bourgeois character. Or they can not go further than the populist line.

Most of the European Communist Parties can not comprehend the reality of the semi-colonial countries; They mix up their own countries' reality with the reality of the semi-colonial countries. Because of this they accuse the Communist Parties of the proletariat of semi-colonial countries waging people's war of adventurism. Such approaches that in effect dance to the beat of the ideological attacks of the imperialist bourgeoisie must be totally rejected.

Such rightist approaches that has infiltrated into the international communist movement are many today. If these rightist approaches are not exposed and condemned, the proletariat in the imperialist countries will not be able to grasp its real duty, can not enter into international solidarity and can not mobilise the working class in their country against imperialist policies.

The policies of the Second International and later the Khrushchevist modern revisionists are no different from this. In places where the revolution has developed, imperialism first attacks intensely and makes a great ado about them being “a danger to world peace”. Then the opportunist and revisionist currents later join this chorus.

The proletariat of the semi-colonial, semi-feudal countries that uphold people’s war and apply it in practice, do not copy the struggle that developed in China or another country but integrate the universal theory of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism with the specific characteristics of their own country, not dogmatically or according to a set pattern.

The principal thing being that Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is not a dogma but a guide to action. Here is what Mao says:

“The experience of the Chinese revolution, that is, building rural base areas, encircling the cities from the countryside and finally seizing the cities, may not be wholly applicable to many of your countries, though it can serve as your reference.

I beg to advise you not to transplant Chinese experience mechanically. The experience of any foreign country can serve only for reference and must not be regarded as dogma. The universal truth of Marxism-Leninism and the concrete conditions of your country—the two must be integrated.” (Selected Works, Volume 5, From the speech of Mao to some representatives of South American Communist Parties)

The validity of people’s war in the semi-colonies of imperialism is a fact that can not be denied. But the form that it will take must conform to the specific characteristics of each country. The imperialists intensify their exploitation of the semi-colonial countries in order to ease their own crisis, and justify their suppression of the revolutionary movements in these countries in a most bloody way under the umbrella of the “United Nations” and under the pretext of “preserving world peace”.

The imperialist bourgeoisie have made agreements and compromises among themselves so as to effectively face the revolutionary movements in the semi-colonies. The development of the revolutionary offensive in the semi-colonial countries is the biggest blow that will strike imperialism.

Especially if the development of the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, anti-capitalist fight led by the proletariat, do not stay limited in a single country. As a result, imperialism immediately tries to suppress the revolutionary movement before it can develop. The revolutionary movements in cities of semi-colonial countries can be suppressed in a short time but suppressing the armed movement in the rural areas is difficult.

Protracted people’s war first gains control of the rural villages and provides for the development of the armed struggle step by step. This struggle in the countryside will develop more quickly and the overthrow of imperialism and its local collaborators will be

accelerated if it is supported by the struggle in the cities.

The proletariat must wage protracted war in this type of countries. It is determined by the objective situation. The revolution is strengthened if the proletarian party knows how to use every possible opportunity to advance the revolution, taking every kind of struggle to serve people's war, and isolating the enemy by uniting all forces that can be united.

In the past, petty-bourgeois organisations have waged the armed struggle in many South America countries. But having no genuine proletarian party as vanguard, and not using the strategy of people's war strategy, these organisations had no chance of success and after a certain time, these movements compromise in accordance with their petty-bourgeois character.

These movements can serve the front of the world proletarian revolution. But the struggle being waged by the proletarian parties of semi-colonial countries along the line of protracted people's war, that rejects both the right and left opportunism, will develop more quickly.

This struggle is more important under the present conditions where the contradiction between imperialism and oppressed peoples is still the main contradiction. Recent developments in Congo (Zaire) once more proves that the proletariat must wage protracted people's war. If the vanguard party of the Congolese proletariat would move in this direction, it can have a serious chance to build revolutionary power under the present conditions. The Congo experience shows that the dreams of a quick victory through an uprising has failed completely.

The imperialists and their lackeys joined hands to suppress the revolution. The people could not succeed because the proletariat and oppressed masses are unorganised and do not have their own army. Class struggle has shown us once more the correctness of Mao's proposition "without a people's army, the people have nothing."

The class struggle in Congo has, at the same time, exposed the bankruptcy of the opportunist, revisionist theories of "peaceful transformation". The proletariat must have a clear line in fighting to take the power from the bourgeoisie. The theories advocating class compromise or asserting unsuitability with the particular realities of a country bump into the wall of class struggle and are broken into pieces.

Once more, it is shown that the proletariat must protect its independence, not compromising its principles and organisation even as it enters into an alliance with the petty-bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie. The Congo example has also exposed the revisionist-Trotskyite theory of "international revolution" or the theory of bringing down imperialism simultaneously in most countries of the world that tries to infiltrate itself into the International Communist Movement under the name of Marxism-Leninism.

Another example is Afghanistan. Revolution and counter-revolution are face to face in Afghanistan. If the proletariat does not take the people's war strategy as its principle, it can not bring the revolution to victory.

The proletariat can organise and arouse the masses to fight by taking up arms from the start. The proletariat can organise the masses through war. The proletariat can destroy

imperialism, feudalism and comprador capitalism only through armed struggle. There is no other choice for the Afghan proletariat and people.

The Kurdish national struggle being waged in Turkish and Iraqi Kurdistan can teach the proletariat of semi-colonial countries many lessons. Armed struggle has been waged here for years. But the national bourgeoisie has entered into compromises with imperialism because leadership of the struggle is not in the hands of the proletariat. Its aim is only to gain bourgeois national rights.

They are also against uniting their struggle with the struggle of the proletariat of oppressing nation because they do not approach it from the standpoint of proletarian internationalism but only from the standpoint of the oppressed nation's interests. They have fallen into the situation of Arafat. The situation of Iraqi Kurdish national bourgeoisie is such today.

More examples can be given. But these are enough for the matter under discussion. Our point here is that the proletariat in semi-colonies must develop the people's war because it is here where the weakest link in the imperialist chain is located. It is here where the greatest blow against imperialism can be delivered.

The expression of "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun" is more true than ever before. In the semi-colonial countries the mass uprisings will be suppressed immediately where the proletariat is weak and capitalism is not the dominant mode of production. It is impossible to seize and maintain the power through uprisings, and it is possible to suppress and defeat the mass uprisings in the cities through military power of the imperialists and their local collaborationists.

In the era of imperialism and proletarian revolutions and at the current stage of such era, no considerable change has occurred in the primary duties of proletariat in the semi-colonised and colonised countries, and the duties of the democratic revolution of some countries have narrowed.

However, the dependence of semi-colonial countries on imperialism and usury character of imperialist capital has reached its highest point. In such countries, the imperialists try to dominate the people through the most intensive oppression. This necessitates the proletarian parties to attach the highest importance to the armed struggle.

The armed struggle, i.e. People's War applied in our country and many other countries by the fraternal parties are the best proof for truth and explain what the proletariat needs to do in such countries.

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