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L.I. BREZHNEV

The Great  
October  
Revolution  
and  
Mankind's Progress

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## The Great October Revolution and Mankind's Progress

Report  
at a jubilee meeting  
of the Central Committee of the CPSU,  
the Supreme Soviet of the USSR,  
and the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR  
to mark the sixtieth anniversary  
of the Great October  
Socialist Revolution

November 2, 1977

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Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR

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**LEONID ILYICH BREZHNEV**  
General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee,  
Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet  
of the USSR

Dear comrades,  
Esteemed foreign guests,

The Soviet people, Communists of all countries and all progressive mankind are now celebrating a great anniversary. Sixty years ago, led by the Party founded by Lenin, the workers and peasants of Russia overthrew the power of the capitalists and landowners. That was the first victorious socialist revolution in world history.

Those unforgettable days in October shook the entire world. A new epoch, the epoch of the world's revolutionary rebirth, the epoch of transition to socialism and communism, was ushered in. It opened the road along which hundreds of millions of people are marching today and upon which the whole of mankind is destined to embark.

We were the first. And things had not been easy for us. We had to stand firm while being encircled by hostile forces. We had to break the shackles of centuries-old backwardness. We had to overcome the enormous force of historical inertia and learn to live in accordance with new principles—the principles of collectivism.

And today, as we sum up the main result of six decades of struggle and work, we can say with pride: We have held our ground; we have stood fast and won.

We won during the stormy, anxious years of the Civil War and armed intervention, when we had to fight for the very existence of Soviet power.

We won in the fervent, exciting years of the first five-year plans, when the country's existence depended on whether the workers and peasants of our country would be able to lay the foundations of socialism and convert their Motherland into a great industrial power within the extremely short period allotted to them by history.

We won in the grim, fiery years of the Great

Patriotic War, when the country's existence depended on whether socialism would withstand the onslaught of world imperialism's shock forces and save mankind from fascist enslavement.

We won in the difficult, tense postwar years, when, despite the cold war and nuclear blackmail, we quickly rehabilitated our economy ravaged by war and reached the forward lines of economic, scientific and technical progress.

The Soviet Union has lived in peace for more than thirty years. A developed socialist society, the result of the historic, creative work of the Soviet people, has been built; it exists and is being perfected.

Honour and glory to the Soviet people, to the people who have been victorious!

Honour and glory to all generations of Soviet people, to the men and women, members of the Communist Party and non-members, who had not spared strength, energy and, whenever necessary, their very lives, in order to raise the Motherland to the summits of social progress!

Here we address the most cordial, most sincere words of gratitude and affection to the veterans of the Revolution. The number of those who stormed the old world under the banner of the Leninist Party in October 1917 is dwindling. But the greatness of their feat is now seen more vividly than ever. Honour and glory to the pioneers of the October Revolution!

During these jubilee days we recall with gratitude the revolutionary solidarity that was steadfastly displayed for the Land of Soviets by our class brothers in other countries. Their determined action has time and again helped to disrupt imperialism's aggressive designs.

Long live proletarian internationalism, that powerful weapon of the working people of all countries!

## I. The Soviet Union in the Vanguard of Social Progress

Comrades, every time we celebrate the anniversary of the October Revolution we perceive anew its significance and its great impact on the course of history, on the destiny of the world.

Understandably, the problems solved by the October Revolution were primarily Russia's problems, posed by its history, by the concrete conditions existing in it. But basically, these were not local but general problems, posed before the whole of mankind by social development. The epochal significance of the October Revolution lies precisely in the fact that it opened the road to the solution of these problems and thereby to the creation of a new type of civilisation on earth.

The October Revolution proved that a radical change of society's political foundations was possible. The proletariat of Russia gave the answer to the most urgent, the most important political question, namely, whether the exploiters' monopoly of power was unchangeable or whether it could and should be replaced by the power of the working people.

The six decades of socialist construction most vividly demonstrate what can be achieved by working people who have taken over political guidance of society and have assumed responsibility for their country's destiny. These decades have proved that there is no way, nor can there be a way to socialism without the working people taking over power, without socialist statehood.

The victory of the October Revolution gave working people their first opportunity to put an end to exploitation and free themselves from the bondage of economic anarchy. This key problem of social progress was resolved through the abolition of

private property and its replacement with public property. Anarchy of production gave way to scientific, planned economic management.

Within a historically short period of time, a huge backward country was turned into a state with a highly developed industry and collectivised agriculture. It now takes only two and a half working days for our industry to produce as much as was produced in the whole year of 1913. Today the Soviet Union's industrial output is greater than that of the whole world a quarter of a century ago. The gigantic economic growth of history's first socialist country is the result of labour freed from exploitation, the result of the labour of people who are aware that they are working for themselves, for the common good.

The October Revolution and socialism have also enriched the history of mankind by bringing about the intellectual and cultural emancipation of working people. One of the "secrets" of the oppressors' rule has always consisted in reinforcing direct physical oppression of the masses with spiritual oppression. The ruling classes did all they could to make it difficult for the working people to gain access to education and cultural values, to make them captives of false ideas and concepts. That is why the cultural revolution was a natural continuation of the political revolution in our country.

Within the lifetime of a single generation, the Soviet land liberated itself completely and for ever from the onerous burden of illiteracy. The working people began to take an active part in cultural life; they became the creators of cultural values. A new, socialist intelligentsia has emerged from the midst of the people, and has brought fame and glory to their country with outstanding achievements in science, technology, literature and art. A union

which the best minds in history had dreamed of, the historic union of labour and culture, has taken place. In the history of our country, in the history of world culture, this marks an event of tremendous significance.

Among the most notable achievements of the October Revolution is the solution of the nationality question, one of the most poignant and sensitive questions in the history of human society.

While calling for a militant alliance of the working people of all the nations and nationalities of our country, the Party and Lenin had always upheld the right of nations to self-determination, to complete and unconditional equality. The victory of the October Revolution was thus also a victory in the struggle for national liberation. The peoples of former tsarist Russia, for the first time, had had a possibility of making a historical choice, the right to determine their own destiny.

They made their choice. They united voluntarily to form a powerful federal state, and relying on the disinterested assistance of the Russian people, they resolutely embarked upon the building of a new life.

The unity of the nations and their mutual assistance accelerated the development of all the republics at unprecedented rates. Hostility and mistrust in the relations between nations gave way to friendship and mutual respect. Internationalism was firmly established in place of the psychology of national arrogance that had been implanted for ages. Mutually enriched national cultures, forming an integral Soviet socialist culture, shone forth with fresh, vivid colours.

The equality, fraternity and unbreakable unity of the peoples of the Soviet Union became a fact. A new historical community, the Soviet people,



emerged. The increasing process of the drawing together of nations is seen in every sphere of life in our society. Such, comrades, is the outstanding result of the Leninist nationality policy; such is our experience, the epochal significance of which is indisputable.

The establishment of the principles of social equality and justice is one of the greatest achievements of the October Revolution. We have every right to say that no other society in the world has done or could have done as much for the masses, for the working people, as has been done by socialism. Every Soviet citizen enjoys in full the rights and freedoms enabling him to participate actively in political life. Every Soviet citizen has the possibility to choose a road in life that conforms to his inclinations and abilities, and to do work that is useful to his country and people.

The conditions under which Soviet people live and work are steadily improving. Soviet citizens do not know the humiliating feeling of uncertainty about the morrow, the fear of being left without work, without medical care and without a roof over their heads. Society safeguards their rights and interests and upholds their civic and human dignity.

Conscientiousness in work, a high sense of civic duty and high ideological and moral qualities are what determine a person's standing and prestige in our country. Herein lies an inexhaustible source of the creative initiative and intellectual growth of the individual. This is the most convincing proof of social justice and social equality.

A new Constitution of the Soviet Union was adopted recently. It reaffirms that in our country the prime purpose of all transformations, of all changes is to provide every person with conditions of living that are worthy of man. It gives further convincing proof that concepts of freedom, of human

rights, democracy and social justice become truly meaningful only under socialism.

Comrades, the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution has put our country and our people in the vanguard of social progress. Today, sixty years later, we hold a worthy place in its most advanced areas. We have been the first in the world to build a developed socialist society, and we are the first to have embarked upon the building of communism.

Never before has our country possessed such a huge economic, scientific and technical potential. Never before has its defence capability been so strong and dependable. Never before have we had such favourable opportunities for carrying out the tasks for which, in the final count, the Revolution was accomplished—for promoting the well-being of the people, extending socialist democracy and furthering the harmonious development of the individual.

The inspiring goal of our time lies, indeed, in making full use of the potentialities of developed socialism. This is also what determines the measure of the responsibility that history has now placed upon us.

The Party and its Central Committee are aware of this responsibility. The 24th and 25th Congresses of the CPSU charted the strategy and tactics of building communism at the present, very important stage of our history. In the economic field, the course has been taken towards achieving a rapid growth of social production, towards raising the efficiency and quality of all economic activity.

Pursuing this course we have achieved notable successes. Since 1967, the fiftieth anniversary of Soviet power, our country's economic potential has almost doubled. But the qualitative changes are

really just as significant. Scientific and technical progress is becoming an ever more important factor in economic development. The most modern industries are developing at priority rates. Labour productivity is growing steadily.

In accordance with the Party's policy, economic development is being more and more oriented towards carrying out the many tasks that are directly linked with improving the conditions of life and work of the Soviet people.

To a large extent the fulfilment of these tasks is dependent on the state of the agricultural sector of our economy. One can say with confidence that never before has so much been done in our country to promote agricultural growth. Within a short period of time, the material and technical basis of agriculture and the rural economy have been radically changed. Land improvement work, comprehensive mechanisation and chemicalisation have been carried out on an unparalleled scale.

We can see now the results of these great efforts. It will be recalled that in 1967 our farms produced 148 million tons of grain, 11.5 million tons of meat and about 6 million tons of cotton. This year, which is far from being a good or even an average year in terms of weather conditions, we expect to have 194 million tons of grain, nearly 15 million tons of meat and 8.4 million tons of cotton. I believe that these are significant figures, although we are aware that not all the problems of agriculture have been solved. The Party is making every effort to ensure that this sector of our economy will fully satisfy the country's growing requirements.

There has also been noteworthy progress in the solution of such a difficult problem as housing, which requires huge outlays. One-third of all the housing built in the years of Soviet power has been constructed during the past decade. In those ten

years, 110 million Soviet people have experienced the joy of moving into new apartments.

Large resources have been allocated for the expansion of the consumer goods industry. During the past ten years this industry has nearly doubled its output and has considerably improved the quality and assortment of goods. The retail trade turnover has also doubled. The Soviet people's need for many durables that were only recently regarded as being in short supply is now being satisfied.

Economic growth has made it possible substantially to raise wages and build up social consumption funds. During the past ten years, the real incomes of Soviet people have grown by 60 per cent. I should like to call attention to the fact that the living standards and the conditions of everyday life in rural communities have improved appreciably.

Every fact and every figure indicating the rate of our development is convincing evidence of developed socialism's enormous possibilities. This was seen ever more clearly during the socialist emulation movement launched to mark the anniversary of the October Revolution. Soviet people undertook greater production commitments and have carried them out. They put forward their own production plans, which they have not only fulfilled but also overfulfilled. The Motherland thanks the participants in the anniversary movement. It thanks all those who have marked the glorious anniversary of the great Revolution with notable labour achievements.

Comrades, while noting our successes, we are fully aware that we still have many problems and that a vast field of work awaits us.

The main areas of our work and the concrete tasks of today have been defined by the recent Party Congresses and plenary meetings of the Central Committee. Their decisions are known to everybody. They make new, higher demands as

regards the work of our cadres, as regards the work of all Soviet people. These demands spring from the fact that the course of social development poses ever more complex tasks in various spheres of life. The more complex the tasks and the more difficult the work, the more important are coordination, efficiency and discipline—everything that implies a high degree of organisation.

Efficient organisation at every level, in every link of Party leadership, state guidance and economic management, at every work place, is a necessary, an indispensable condition for the fulfilment of the tasks set by the 25th Congress.

At the same time this is a very important requisite for solving the problems that we shall have to face in the future. At the dawn of Soviet power, Lenin said that "our natural wealth, our manpower and the splendid impetus which the great revolution has given to the creative powers of the people are ample material" for making rapid progress and building a truly powerful and prosperous Russia.\* To this has now been added our great economic, scientific and technical potential, and also our rich experience in building a new life. We do have everything that we need to advance with confidence to our cherished goal—communism—and to attain ever new summits of progress.

But, comrades, these are indeed summits. And the path leading to them may be steep and difficult. In order to go along this path at an optimal rate, to use a technical term, already now we need to gear our present plans to the fulfilment of the tasks of the future. And that is exactly what the Party has been doing.

Orientation of our work not only towards current needs but also towards the future is a distinctive feature of our agricultural policy, in particular. We

\* V. I. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 27, p. 161.

have been working for a complete solution of the question of food supplies and the satisfaction of the country's growing needs, and we have been doing this in conditions in which the population and its requirements are increasing while the land area remains the same. That is why accelerated and intensive development of every branch of agriculture is being planned for the future, too. That is why we have allocated, and will continue to allocate, large sums for investment in agriculture and will continue to expand the industries serving the needs of the countryside.

An important role in our plans is assigned to the Non-Black-Earth Zone of Russia. This vast area in the very heart of the country must become a zone of highly productive crop and livestock farming. The output of that area will add considerably to our food resources.

Other comprehensive programmes worked out in the past few years are also oriented towards the future. These are, first of all, the programmes for developing Western and Eastern Siberia, for building the Baikal-Amur Railway, and industrial and timber-processing complexes in the Soviet Far East. They are designed to meet the country's future requirements in oil, gas, coal, ferrous and non-ferrous metals, timber and other raw materials. There is great social significance too in the implementation of these programmes. It will mean the development of many remote regions of the country, where dozens of new towns will be built and new cultural centres established. The very idea of "undeveloped outskirts" will disappear completely.

The great construction projects of our day have most forcefully brought out the steadfastness, enthusiasm and ideological staunchness of Soviet young people. Carrying on the fine traditions of their fathers and grandfathers, members of the

Komsomol, young men and women, are advancing in the front ranks of the builders of communism, growing more mature while working, and learning to manage the economy and govern the affairs of society and the state. The country's future is in their hands. We are sure that it is in good hands.

In thinking about the future, we attach much importance to science. It has to make a tremendous contribution to fulfilling the most important tasks of communist construction including: the discovery of new sources of energy and substitutes for many types of natural resources; the technical re-equipment of the economy aimed at minimising manual and especially arduous physical labour; raising agricultural production; combatting diseases, and increasing the human life-span.

The future of our economy lies in the achievement of ever greater efficiency. There is no other way of ensuring the successful and dynamic development of the economy. That is why the Party has pursued and will steadily continue to pursue a policy of accelerating scientific and technical progress, perfecting planning and management, ensuring more efficient organisation and order at every work place and at every management level.

When looking into the future, we have to draw yet another conclusion. The Soviet people's level of political consciousness, culture and civic responsibility will have an ever greater part to play in every sphere of life and in the development of our society. One of our primary tasks is to foster in our citizens a desire to attain great social goals, ideological conviction and a truly creative attitude to work. This is a very important area of struggle for communism; and the course of economic construction and the country's socio-political development will be increasingly dependent on our successes in this area.

As you see, we have many problems ahead, and these are big problems. But the strength of socialism lies precisely in the fact that the new social system makes it possible not only to anticipate such problems but also to draw up plans in advance for their solution.

Comrades, the Soviet people look confidently to the future. They are sure that life will continue to improve, and become more beautiful, and more meaningful. An earnest of this is the dedicated work of millions of men and women inspired by the ideals of communism. An earnest of this is the Communist Party's Leninist, scientifically substantiated policy.

For each of us Leninist Communists, it is a source of the highest satisfaction that the Soviet people link all their achievements and victories with the Party. That is quite natural because the Party is inseparable from the people. In its ranks are the finest representatives of the working class, the collective-farm peasantry and the people's intelligentsia. It enjoys the people's complete confidence.

But comrades, the confidence of the people places great responsibility on us. That is why every decision of the Party, every step it takes in the political, organisational, and ideological and educational fields, has to be such as to strengthen still further the unity of the Party and the people, and to ensure that the people's trust in the Party will remain strong in the future as well.

Our Party has everything needed to carry out its historical responsibility. We are inspired by the noble goal of promoting the people's well-being. We have many years of experience in building a new life. Our actions are guided by Marxism-Leninism, a science which incorporates within it all the achievements of the human mind. We are confident of our strength.



The great march begun in October 1917 and the great struggle for communism continue. Lenin wrote that "since we are out to fight, we must desire victory and be able to point out the right road to it." \* We do desire victory. We do know the road to it. And we shall attain victory and reach communism!

## II. The October Revolution Has Changed the Face of the World

Comrades, no event in world history has had such a profound and lasting effect on mankind as the Great October Socialist Revolution. The flashes of the October storm illuminated the way into the future for the peoples of many countries. History began to advance literally in seven-league strides.

The most important of the international consequences of the October Revolution, which have shaped the face of our epoch, has been the emergence and development of the world socialist system. At one time, the bourgeoisie, terrified by the victory of the October Revolution and its powerful influence on the minds of millions, sought to uncover "the hand of Moscow" in every revolutionary event in the world. Nowadays, few people give credence to such fairy-tales. Revolutions start and triumph by virtue of each country's internal development and the will of its people. The series of triumphant socialist revolutions in Europe, Asia and America signified a continuation of the ideas and cause of the October Revolution.

As a result, the practice of world socialism has been extended and enriched. Each of the countries that have taken the socialist road has, in some respects, dealt in its own specific way with the problems of socialist statehood, the development of

\* V. I. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 9, p. 57.

socialist industry, the drawing of the peasantry into co-operatives, and the ideological re-education of the masses.

There is no doubt that the transition to socialism by other peoples and countries with different levels of development and national traditions will invest socialist construction with an even greater diversity of specific forms. That is quite natural.

However, life provides confirmation that the general fundamental and inalienable features of socialist revolution and socialist construction continue to apply and retain their force.

The sum total of experience in the development of world socialism provides convincing evidence, among other things, of the following:

the question of power continues to be the main issue in a revolution. It is either the power of the working class, acting in alliance with all the working people, or the power of the bourgeoisie. There is no third possibility;

transition to socialism is possible only if the working class and its allies, having gained real political power, use it to end the socio-economic domination of capitalist and other exploiters;

socialism can be victorious only if the working class and its vanguard, the Communists, are able to inspire and unite the working people as a whole in the struggle to build the new society, to transform the economy and all social relations along socialist lines;

socialism can consolidate its position only if the working people's power is capable of defending the revolution against any attacks by the class enemy (and such attacks are inevitable, both internal and, most of all, external).

Those are only some of the lessons of the development of socialism today. They once again confirm the great international importance of the experience

of the October Revolution, despite the specific conditions attaching to it. They once again confirm the great truth expressed by Lenin in these words: "It is the Russian model that reveals to *all* countries something—and something highly significant—of their near and inevitable future." \*

But world socialism also has experience of a different kind, which confirms that a departure from the Marxist-Leninist course, a departure from proletarian internationalism inevitably lead to setbacks and a hard time for the people.

It is well known what grave consequences have been brought about in China by attempts to ignore the economic laws of socialism, by the departure from friendship and solidarity with the socialist countries, and by alignment with the forces of reaction in the world arena. The Chinese people's socialist gains have been gravely endangered.

Some leaders of capitalist countries now obviously count on the present contradictions and estrangement between the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union and other socialist countries continuing for a long time and even growing more acute in the future. We think that this is a short-sighted policy. Those who pursue it may well miscalculate.

There is no point in trying to guess how Soviet-Chinese relations will shape up in the future. I would merely like to say that our repeated proposals to normalise them still hold good.

Comrades, the new relations that have been established—thanks to the internationalist policy of the fraternal parties—between the socialist countries, above all between the countries of the socialist community, are a great contribution by the world socialist system to the life of the contemporary world.

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\* V. I. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 31, p. 22.

We can say with a clear conscience: our alliance, our friendship and our co-operation are the alliance, friendship and co-operation of sovereign and equal states united by common aims and interests, held together by bonds of comradely solidarity and mutual assistance. We are advancing together, helping one another and pooling our efforts, knowledge and resources to move forward as rapidly as possible.

We have taken the course of jointly tackling the problems of raw materials, fuel and energy, food and transport. We have been intensifying our specialisation and co-operation, especially in engineering, on the basis of the latest scientific and technological advances. We intend to solve these problems reliably, economically and for a long term. We intend to solve them with due consideration for the interests and needs of each fraternal country and the community as a whole.

Comrades, in the distant days of October 1917 the workers and peasants of Russia fought alone against the old world, the world of greed, oppression and violence. They built socialism in a country surrounded by the hostile forces of imperialism. They built and defended it successfully. Today we are not alone. Our country has become part of a great family of socialist nations. Can we Soviet Communists and all the Soviet people cherish anything more in the world around us than this socialist family? For its prosperity, for our common well-being we have been doing everything we possibly can!

It is hard to overestimate the tremendous influence exerted by our October Revolution on the development of the national liberation movement.

It was the victory of the October Revolution that really awakened the political consciousness of the colonial peoples and helped them to achieve such great success in their fight for liberation from oppression by imperialism. As early as 1919, Lenin

wrote that "the emancipation of the peoples of the East is now quite practicable." \*

Since the Second World War, since our victory over fascism, more than 2,000 million people have thrown off the yoke of the colonialists and have risen to independent statehood. The colonial system of imperialism in its classical forms can, on the whole, be regarded as having been dismantled. That, comrades, is an epoch-making development.

It is of exceptional importance that many of the countries that have achieved liberation have rejected the capitalist road of development and adopted a socialist orientation, setting themselves the goal of building a society free from exploitation.

The socialist countries are staunch and reliable friends of these countries, and are prepared to give them all possible assistance and support in their development along the progressive path. This means not only moral and political, but also economic and organisational support, including assistance in strengthening their defences.

The fighters for freedom have no easy way before them. They have to work hard to lay the foundations of the public economy required for socialism. Tough battles with the exploiting elements and their foreign patrons are inevitable. From time to time these result in zigzags in the policies of the young states and sometimes even lead to retreats. But the overall trend of development is incontestable. The will of millions of working people who have come to know what they are striving for and their place in life is a sure guarantee that national independence will be strengthened and that the social system free from exploitation and oppression will ultimately be victorious.

None of this, of course, means that imperialism has reconciled itself with such a course of develop-

\* V. I. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 30, pp. 153-54.

ment. Not at all, for its positions in the former colonies are in some cases still quite strong, and the imperialists are doing everything they can to try and retain these, and to deepen and extend them wherever possible.

It is no longer a simple matter for them to decide on direct armed intervention in the affairs of countries that have freed themselves. The last major act of this kind—the US war against the people of Vietnam—ended in a defeat that was too crushing and ignominious to encourage a repetition of such gambles.

There is growing resistance to the attempts to involve the young states in imperialist military blocs, and the non-alignment movement is one piece of evidence of this.

It is likewise doubtful whether imperialism will be helped by its attempts to make use of the reactionary regimes it has set up or bribed in former colonies. After all, these regimes cannot offer the peoples anything but new forms of dependence on the same old imperialism.

When the first waves of the peoples' struggle for national liberation were mounting in the countries of the East, Lenin wrote: "...no power on earth can restore the old serfdom in Asia or wipe out the heroic democratism of the masses in the Asiatic and semi-Asiatic countries." \* Today we can state confidently: no power on earth can wipe out the results of the heroic liberation struggle of the millions upon millions of people in the former colonies and semi-colonies of imperialism. The cause of the peoples' liberation is indomitable, the future belongs to it. The light kindled by the October Revolution shall not fail on this front of world history, either.

Comrades, the victory of the October Revolution

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\* V. I. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 18, p. 584.

ushered in a new stage in the struggle of the international working-class movement.

The building of socialism in the USSR, and then in other countries, helped to foster the political maturity of the proletariat in the capitalist countries. Its ranks became more organised. There arose a force destined to play a great role in history—the international communist movement. The front of the proletariat's allies in the struggle against monopoly domination, for democracy and socialism, grew broader.

Meanwhile, capitalism is ever more clearly showing that it is a society without a future. Its economy is afflicted by a chronic fever. Technological progress is pushing masses of workers out of the factories on a scale that threatens to shake the entire socio-political system. Prices are rising continually, and inflation remains a cardinal problem. Shocking exposures of unsavoury political manipulations, corruption, abuse of power, and flagrant transgressions of the law by leaders at the highest level explode like bombshells first in one country and then in another demonstrating the degradation of the ruling class. A record crime rate completes the picture. All this signifies that the objective economic and socio-political preconditions for the transition to socialism have attained a high degree of maturity. The desire of the masses in the capitalist countries for radical changes is mounting.

Of course, the bourgeoisie is an experienced adversary. It changes its tactics, and manoeuvres. It resorts to partial reforms in an effort to bolster up its position and stem the gravitation of the masses towards socialism.

In this situation the communist parties are working to perfect the strategy and tactics of their revolutionary struggle. They are striving to rally all the democratic forces in the struggle against the domi-

nation of the monopolies. Their theoretical guidelines in this context contain interesting points, though probably not everything here should be regarded as finalised and incontrovertible. This is understandable: a quest is a quest. What is important is that it should proceed in the right direction.

Whatever routes are chosen, the ultimate mission of the Communists is to lead the masses to the principal goal, to socialism. The experience of the struggle for the victory of the October Revolution showed that changes of tactics, compromises in order to win new allies, are quite possible in revolutionary practice. But we are also convinced of something else: under no circumstances may principles be sacrificed for the sake of a tactical advantage. Otherwise, as the saying goes, you'll keep the hair, but lose your head.

The greater the influence of the communist parties, the more vigorously imperialism tries to divert the Communists from the correct path. This is done both crudely—by pressure and threats—and more subtly. There are now instances when the Communists in bourgeois countries are promised that their "right to a place in society" will be "recognised". A mere "trifle" is demanded in exchange: that they give up fighting the power of capital, give up the struggle for socialism, and abandon their international class solidarity. But the Communists won a place for themselves in society long ago. They won it precisely by their revolutionary struggle. Their role in society is recognised by the peoples, and no one can deprive them of it!

The imperialists would very much like to undermine the cohesion of the communist ranks. That is why, for example, the falsehood is persistently being spread that the communist parties in the socialist countries—and, especially, the Communist Party of



the Soviet Union—are imposing upon the Communists in the West their prescriptions for the socialist transformation of society. But this is an obvious fabrication.

Our Party, like all the other Marxist-Leninist parties, firmly adheres to the principles generally accepted in the communist movement: equality, independence, non-interference in internal affairs, solidarity, and mutual support among the Communists of all countries.

Today, as we mark the sixtieth anniversary of our Revolution, we Communists of the Soviet Union declare once again that we will always be loyal to the great brotherhood of the Communists of the world! We warmly wish the communist and workers' parties and their allies, who are fighting the dictatorship of capital, who are struggling for freedom, peace and social progress, every success. You can always rely on our friendship, solidarity and support!

Comrades, Soviet power was established under the sign of Lenin's Decree on Peace, and ever since our country's entire foreign policy has been one of peace. Objective historical conditions have dictated its concrete expression as the peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems.

In our day the principles of peaceful coexistence have by and large taken firm root in international affairs as the only realistic and reasonable principles. This is a result of the changed correlation of forces in the world—above all, of the growth of the strength and international authority of the Soviet Union and the entire socialist community. It is also a result of the successes of the international working-class movement and the forces of national liberation. And finally, it is a result of the acceptance of the new realities by a certain section of the ruling circles in the capitalist world.

At the same time, it is a result of the tremendous work done in recent years by the Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist community to reshape international relations in the direction of peace.

The changes for the better in the world, which have become especially appreciable in the 1970s, we refer to as international détente. These changes are tangible and specific. They consist in the recognition and enactment in international documents of a form of code of rules for honest and fair relations between countries, which erects a legal and moral-political barrier against those given to military gambles. They consist in the achievement of the first agreements—modest though they may be for the moment—for blocking some of the channels of the arms race. They consist of a whole system of agreements covering many areas of peaceful co-operation between states having different social systems.

The changes for the better are most conspicuous in Europe, where good-neighbourly relations, mutual understanding and the nations' mutual interest in, and respect for, one another are gaining in strength. We prize this achievement, and consider it to be our duty to safeguard and consolidate it in every way. We therefore attach great importance to co-operation with such countries as France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Britain and Italy—with all the European states, big and small, of a different social system.

It is natural, too, that we attach great importance to relations with the United States. There is much that divides our countries—from the socio-economic system to ideology. Not everyone in the United States likes our way of doing things, and we too could say a great deal about the way things are in America. But if differences are accentuated, and if attempts are made to lecture one another, the

result will only be a build-up of distrust and hostility, useless to both countries and dangerous to the world as a whole. At the very inception of the Soviet state Lenin made it clear to the American leaders of the time that "whether they like it or not, Soviet Russia is a great power" and "America has nothing to gain from the Wilsonian policy of piously refusing to deal with us on the grounds that our government is distasteful to them." \* This was true half a century ago. It is all the more true today.

Life itself demands that considerations of a long-term character, prompted by a concern for peace, be decisive in Soviet-American relations. This is the course we follow, and this is what we expect in return. There is no lack of will on our part to continue developing relations with the USA on the basis of equality and mutual respect.

International relations are now at a crossroads, as it were, which could lead either to a growth of trust and co-operation, or to a growth of mutual fears, suspicion, and arms stockpiles, a crossroads leading, ultimately, either to lasting peace or, at best, to balancing on the brink of war. Détente offers the opportunity of choosing the road of peace. To miss this opportunity would be a crime. The most important, the most pressing task now is to halt the arms race, which has engulfed the world.

Regrettably, the arms build-up continues and is acquiring ever more dangerous forms. New modifications and types of weapons of mass destruction are being developed, and it is well known on whose initiative this is being done. But every new type represents an equation having several unknown quantities in terms of political as well as military-technical or strategic consequences. Rushing from one type of arms to another—apparently with the naive hope of retaining a monopoly on them—only

\* *Lenin Miscellany*, Vol. XXXVII, p. 254, in Russian.

accelerates the arms race, heightens mutual distrust and hampers disarmament measures.

In this connection I would like to reiterate, most forcefully, something I said earlier. The Soviet Union is effectively ensuring its defence capability, but it does not, and will not, seek military superiority over the other side. We do not seek to upset the approximate equilibrium of military strength existing at present, say, between East and West in Central Europe, or between the USSR and the USA. But in return we insist that no one else should seek to upset it in his favour.

Needless to say, maintaining the existing equilibrium is not an end in itself. We are in favour of starting a downward turn in the curve of the arms race and gradually scaling down the level of military confrontation. We want to reduce substantially and then eliminate the threat of nuclear war, the most formidable danger facing humanity. That is the objective of the well-known proposals made by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

Today we are proposing a radical step: *that agreement be reached on a simultaneous halt in the production of nuclear weapons by all states.* This would apply to all such weapons—whether atomic, hydrogen or neutron bombs or projectiles. At the same time, the nuclear powers could undertake to make a start on the gradual reduction of existing stockpiles of such weapons, and move towards their complete, total destruction. The energy of the atom for peaceful purposes exclusively!—this is the appeal of the Soviet state, in the year of its sixtieth anniversary, to the governments and peoples of the world.

There is another important task that has a direct bearing on the problem of reducing the danger of nuclear war, namely, that of seeing through to the end the work of banning nuclear weapons tests, so

that such tests are banned entirely—underground as well as in the atmosphere, in outer space, and under water. We want to achieve progress in the negotiations on this matter and bring them to a successful conclusion. Therefore, we state that we are prepared to reach agreement on a moratorium covering nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, together with a ban on all nuclear weapons tests for a definite period. We trust that this important initiative on the part of the USSR will be favourably received by our partners at the negotiations and that the road will thus be cleared for concluding a treaty long awaited by the peoples.

The Soviet Union is confidently pursuing a policy of peace. We actively and persistently call for the contest between socialism and capitalism to be decided not on the field of battle, not on munitions conveyors, but in the sphere of peaceful work. We want the frontiers dividing the two worlds to be crossed not by flight paths of missiles with nuclear warheads, but by threads of broad and diversified co-operation for the good of all mankind. By steadfastly pursuing this policy, we are giving practical expression to one of the main rallying cries of the October Revolution and carrying out one of Lenin's most important behests: Peace to the peoples!

If it should prove possible to solve the main problem—that of preventing another world war and establishing durable peace—new bright vistas would open before the inhabitants of our planet. There would then be the preconditions for solving many other vitally important problems confronting mankind today.

What are these problems?

One such problem, for example, is that of providing enormous numbers of people with food, raw materials and sources of energy. For according to the estimates we have, by the end of the century

the population of the Earth will have increased from 4,000 to 6,000 million people. Another problem is that of ending the legacy of economic backwardness bequeathed by colonialism in Asian, African, and Latin American countries. This is necessary for normality in the future development of relations between states and generally for the progress of humanity as a whole. Finally, there is the problem of protecting man from the many dangers with which further uncontrolled technological development threatens him, in other words, the conservation of nature.

These are very real and serious problems. With every decade they will become more acute, unless a rational collective solution is found for them through systematic international co-operation.

Our world today is socially heterogeneous—it is made up of states with different social systems. This is an objective fact. By its internal development and by its approach to international relations the socialist part of the world is setting a good example of how the major problems facing mankind can best be solved. But, needless to say, it cannot solve them for the whole of humanity. What is needed is purposeful effort by the people of every country, broad and constructive co-operation by all countries, all peoples. The Soviet Union is whole-hearted in its desire for such co-operation. In this—if one looks deeper—lies the essence of the foreign policy course that we refer to as the policy of peaceful coexistence.

Comrades and friends, the achievements of the October Revolution and the potentialities of socialism are today the surest guarantee of mankind's further progress. The October Revolution is a banner of great changes raised aloft over the twentieth century by the will and hands of the working people.

We are advancing towards the epoch when socialism, in some specific, historically determined form or other, will be the prevailing social system on earth, bringing with it peace, freedom, equality, and well-being to the whole of working mankind.

This is no Utopia, no beautiful dream. This is a real prospect. It is daily brought nearer by our work and struggles, comrades. It is brought nearer by the work and struggle of millions of our contemporaries. This work is the continuation of the cause begun by the October Revolution.

Let us always be loyal to the banner of Great October, the scarlet banner of the Revolution!

May the light of the immortal Marxist-Leninist ideas shine ever more brightly over the world!

Long live the great Soviet people!

Long live our great Party, the Party of Lenin!

Onward, to the victory of communism!

*(L. I. Brezhnev's report was heard with great attention and punctuated with prolonged stormy applause.)*

Л. И. БРЕЖНЕВ

ВЕЛИКИЙ ОКТЯБРЬ

И ПРОГРЕСС ЧЕЛОВЕЧЕСТВА

на английском языке

Цена 10 коп.

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