

**LENIN
ON THE SOCIALIST
STATE**





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M o s c o w

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Lenin's Theory of the Socialist State

I. LOKTEU

The dictatorship of the proletariat, i.e., the proletarian state, is historically inevitable. This basic doctrine of Marxism-Leninism appeared as the consequence of the study by Marx, Engels and Lenin of objective laws of the origin and development of capitalist society; the study of antagonisms between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, of all forms of class struggle of the proletariat, and of the place and role of the working class and all the working people in capitalist society.

The scientific theory of the state and of the proletarian dictatorship meant a revolution in socio-political outlook. Marxist teaching of the dictatorship of the proletariat had developed in the course of irreconcilable struggle against bourgeois ideologists, reformists and revisionists.

The era of imperialism sharply aggravated capitalism's antagonistic class contradictions and precipitated the maturing of the revolutionary crisis in a number of capitalist countries. Natu-

rally, under such conditions when the masses were preparing to throw off capitalist domination, the relation of the socialist revolution to the bourgeois state, the question of establishing socialist statehood acquired not only theoretical importance but practical urgency. "The question of the state," Lenin wrote in 1917, "is now acquiring particular importance both in theory and practical politics."¹

In a lecture "On the State" delivered in 1919, Lenin again drew attention to the great importance of the question of the state,² for without clarifying this matter it was impossible to count on a victorious socialist revolution, on successfully building a new society.

The main task then facing the Communists was to generalise fresh experiences of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat and the broad working masses, and develop further Marxist doctrine on the state. First of all it was necessary to vindicate and systematically expound Marx's and Engels' views on the state and the dictatorship of the proletariat which had been revised by leaders of international opportunism. It was necessary to expose the reactionary nature of reformism and revisionism.

Lenin's contribution to exposing bourgeois, reformist and revisionist distortions of Marxist doctrine of the socialist state is of tremendous importance nowadays when ideologists of the imperialist bourgeoisie and leaders of the Right-

wing Socialists deliberately distort the doctrine, propound the theory of the imperialist state being above-class, and deny the class struggle between labour and capital.

By maliciously criticising the role of the socialist state and practice of communist construction, reformists and revisionists are attempting to destroy the organisation of the working class and the working masses, and to disarm them ideologically in their struggle for the victory of socialism and communism. That is why, while fighting bourgeois ideology, reformism and revisionism, the Communist Parties are safeguarding the purity of Marxist-Leninist doctrine of the socialist state, and conducting a steadfast, uncompromising struggle against its opponents. In the course of that struggle, both Marxism-Leninism and the socialist states are strengthened.

Lenin devoted a number of works to the defence and further elaboration of Marxist doctrine of the state. Even back at the time when he was writing "What the 'Friends of the People' Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats?" (1894) and "The Economic Content of Narodism and the Criticism of It in Mr. Struve's Book" (end of 1894 and beginning of 1895) Lenin upheld and enriched Marxist doctrine. By creatively applying Marxism to the concrete historical, political, socio-economic and cultural conditions and peculiarities of Russia's development he exposed the class nature of Russian autocracy and proved the fallacy of the Narodniks' views on the state.

Lenin substantiated the necessity for a firm alliance between the proletariat and the peasant-

¹ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 25, p. 383.

² Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 29, p. 470-2.

ry with the former playing the leading role. He regarded the question of the peasantry being an ally of the proletariat in the struggle against the ruling exploiter classes as a component part of the doctrine of the socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Working out the draft of the first programme of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP) Lenin formulated the basic tasks of the labour movement in Russia—to overthrow the tsarist autocracy, carry out the socialist revolution and establish the proletarian dictatorship. The RSDLP Second Congress in 1903 included, on Lenin's insistence, these extremely important premises of Marxist theory in the Party Programme.

In "The Revolutionary-Democratic Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Peasantry" (1905), "Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution" (1905) and "The Victory of the Cadets and the Tasks of the Workers' Party" (1906) Lenin, generalising the experience of the masses during the first popular revolution in the epoch of imperialism (1905-7), enriched Marxist doctrine of the state. Elaborating the concept of bourgeois-democratic revolution developing into socialist revolution, Lenin gave a definition of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry which, by its class essence and the kind of functions it performs, is a transition period to the socialist type of state. That kind of dictatorship (such as power of the Soviets in a number of cities) existed during the 1905-7 Revolution. "In their social and political character," Lenin pointed out, "they were the rudiments

of the dictatorship of the revolutionary elements of the people."³

Lenin paid much heed to developing Marxist doctrine of the state and the proletarian dictatorship at the time of the October Revolution when the question of creating the socialist state became the centre of attention of the working class and its party.

Lenin's works "The State and Revolution" (1917), "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" (1918), "The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky" (1918), "Rough Draft of the Programme of the RCP" (1919), "Theses and Report on Bourgeois Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" (1919), "'Left-Wing' Communism—an Infantile Disorder" (1920) and many others played an immense role in developing the Marxist doctrine and defending it from attempts to revise it, Lenin elaborated all basic principles of socialist statehood and proved that the objective necessity for the establishment, at a definite stage, of the proletarian state was dictated by the fact that there could be no way out of capitalist society, where the bourgeoisie oppressed and exploited the toiling masses, other than through the dictatorship of the proletariat. "Whoever has failed to understand that dictatorship is essential to the victory of any revolutionary class has no understanding of the history of revolutions, or else does not want to know anything in this field."⁴

³ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 31, p. 350.

⁴ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 31, p. 340.

Winning political power by the working class is only a beginning of the socialist revolution, of profound, comprehensive social changes that follow. State power in the hands of the working class is the main means of curbing the resistance of the overthrown exploiter classes, of bringing about a new type of social relations, developing economy and culture. It is a mighty weapon of defending the people's gains from possible imperialist aggression. The essence of the proletarian state, i.e., the dictatorship of the proletariat, can be grasped only in connection with the economic system, the material and social conditions of society which engendered that state.

The state of the working-class dictatorship was the outcome of acute class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. It is a new type of state. Now, in addition to Marxist-Leninist theory, the rich experience of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries provides proof that the proletarian dictatorship is the primary, the main political condition for reshaping the economy and culture, for achieving the great goal of the working class—socialism and communism.

Lenin considered it extremely important to reveal all aspects and features of the proletarian state in their development, as inseparable from the historical tasks of the socialist revolution and the socialist construction, from the concrete external situation. Such an approach logically stems from the very essence of materialist dialectics. "Dialectics," Lenin wrote, "calls for a many-sided investigation into a given social phenomenon in its development, and for the external and the seeming to be reduced to the fun-

damental motive forces, to the development of the productive forces and to the class struggle."⁵

In the first place Lenin drew attention to the definition of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The state, he pointed out, is the proletariat organised as the ruling class; it is political domination of the proletariat, its undivided power directly backed by the armed force of the people.

The dictatorship of the proletariat is, according to Lenin, a dictatorship of the majority over minority. It expresses not only the interests of the working class, but of the whole of the toiling people. The proletarian dictatorship is a continuation of the class struggle in new conditions, in new forms; it is a revolutionary suppression of the resistance of the overthrown exploiters with the help of such a powerful weapon as the socialist state machine. However, the essence of the proletarian dictatorship is not violence, but creative effort, the building of a new society.

The proletarian dictatorship is a peculiar form of class alliance between the proletariat and numerous sections of the working people, the peasantry above all, the fullest possible realisation of the leading role of the working class.

Lenin showed that the dictatorship of the proletariat is the highest stage of democracy, a political form of socialist democracy.

Among many theoretical premises worked out by Lenin of paramount importance is the doctrine of the guiding role of the Communist Party.

The proletarian dictatorship can be accomplished only through the Communist Party as a

⁵ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 21, p. 218.

leading and guiding force, vanguard of the working class.

Lenin pointed out that the Communist Party alone as a public organisation of the highest type "is capable of uniting, training and organising a vanguard of the proletariat and of the whole mass of the working people that alone will be capable of withstanding the inevitable petty-bourgeois vacillations of this mass and the inevitable traditions and relapses of narrow craft unionism or craft prejudices among the proletariat, and of guiding all the united activities of the whole of the proletariat, i.e., of leading it politically, and through it, the whole mass of the working people. Without this the dictatorship of the proletariat is impossible."⁶

Socialism and communism are not built as a result of spontaneous development, they require the conscious, purposeful activities of the working class, of the whole working people. The Communist Party alone, which mastered social development laws, which united in its ranks the most advanced representatives of the working class, of the whole of the working people, and which has close ties with the masses and enjoys their full confidence, can ensure correct leadership in the process of building communist society.

The concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat must be considered dialectically. In the course of building a new society changes inevitably occur in the class structure. Hence, some elements of the dictatorship become obsolete

⁶ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 32, p. 246.

(smashing the resistance of the overthrown exploiter classes, for one) while others develop, acquiring new content. The alliance between the working class and the peasantry is strengthened, the leading and guiding role of the working class and its party increased, and socialist democracy extended.

Lenin showed that the dictatorship of the proletariat is a system of state and public organisations—the Soviets of Working People's Deputies, their executive and administrative bodies, the Communist Party, trade unions, the Young Communist League, cooperatives and other mass organisations with the help of which the proletariat is carrying out socialist construction.

The Soviets of Working People's Deputies, all state institutions and offices occupy the most important place in this system. During the period of building a new society the functions of the state can be mainly exercised "...through the Soviets."⁷

An essential role is played by the trade unions. "Within the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat," Lenin noted, "the trade unions stand, if I may say so, between the Party and the government."⁸

The trade unions are an organisation of the ruling class. However, it is not a state organisation nor an organisation for coercion; its purpose is to educate. It is a school of administration, a school of communism. "The dictatorship," Lenin stressed, "cannot be exercised or the functi-

⁷ Lenin *Coll. Works*, Vol. 32, p. 20.

⁸ *Ibid.*

ons of government performed without a foundation such as the trade unions.”⁹

The Young Communist League (Komsomol), cooperative and other mass organisations of the working people also reflect the democratic nature of the socialist system. Their task is to educate the masses in the spirit of communism, to develop their initiative, so as to involve the masses in building new life.

Marx, Engels and Lenin pointed out that the proletarian dictatorship from the very outset is not a state in the proper sense, but rather a semi-state, since in essence, historical tasks and functions it differs radically from any exploiter state. The proletarian state expresses the interests and the will of the working class, of all the working people; it serves society and is governed by the people. In the course of development conditions are being created for the gradual withering away of the state power.

Lenin repeatedly stressed that one of the most important tasks of the proletarian state was to enhance socialist democracy, to search for new forms and test them in practice. He attached particular importance to drawing the working people into running state affairs. He considered it a wonderful means of strengthening the might and enhancing the organisational, creative role of the socialist state, a means which any bourgeois state lacked and could never have. Lenin levelled searing criticism at the bourgeoisie, reformists and revisionists for their reactionary views that it was allegedly a privilege of the “selected” class i.e., the class of the exploiters,

⁹ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 32, p. 20.

to run the state, industry, to concern themselves with science and the arts. The Soviet Communist Party has always combated such views. The Party bases all its activities on the fact that the working masses are a decisive creative force of society, and that it is the people who create history. Historical experience shows that the constructive role of the popular masses, their endeavour, energy and initiative are enhanced by Communist Party leadership, by its untiring activity in fostering the communist outlook, raising the cultural and professional level of the working people and improving their well-being.

Lenin exposed the limited and exploitative nature of bourgeois democracy. Being hypocritical and formal, bourgeois democracy defends capitalist domination and seeks to perpetuate the bourgeois system. It is quite obvious, therefore, that there can be no real democracy in bourgeois society for the great majority of the population, for the workers, peasants and intellectuals. The anti-popular nature of bourgeois democracy is especially manifest today. Reactionary forces in the imperialist countries attack the democratic forces, persecute progressive organisations with increasing ferocity, and resort to direct military suppression of the growing workers', communist and liberation movements.

Naturally, intensification of imperialist reaction with respect to the economy, politics and ideology is bound to evoke a retaliatory revolutionary movement among the working class, the peasantry, and all progressive forces of capitalist society. The most profound social revolution, the first instance in mankind's history of the working class taking over state power could

not take place without setting up new institutions, which embodied various aspects of socialist democracy. Generalising the experience of the first Russian Revolution of 1905 and the February 1917 Revolution, Lenin held that the Soviets were the best political form of the proletarian state. At the same time he did not exclude the possibility of new forms that might emerge during socialist revolutions. "All nations," Lenin wrote, "will arrive at socialism—this is inevitable, but all will do so in not exactly the same way, each will contribute something of its own to some form of democracy, to some variety of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the varying rate of socialist transformations in the different aspects of social life."¹⁰

In order to maintain political power the working class must destroy the military political bourgeois state machine, a means of oppressing the masses. Lenin also showed what the attitude of the proletariat should be towards capitalist institutions which were not instruments of oppression (he had in mind the statistical apparatus, the communication media). They should be made to serve socialist construction after the power of the capitalists had been overthrown. Lenin also noted the possibility of using such institutions, which had belonged to the old superstructure, as schools, theatres, clubs, libraries and other cultural, educational and scientific establishments. However, to place those establishments at the service of the working people, their social substance and functions would have to be

¹⁰ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 23, pp. 69-70.

changed radically. At the same time Lenin warned the working class that within its own apparatus it might encounter subversive activities on the part of some bourgeois intellectuals and high-ranking officials who were still materially and emotionally linked with monopoly capital. The victorious proletariat had to overcome their resistance. And that could be done, for it was the resistance of a tiny minority. Lenin likewise vigorously condemned those who felt that bourgeois specialists could not be drawn into socialist construction and should be considered enemies of the people.

Lenin defined ways of building up the socialist state machinery and the principles as to how it should function. He showed the organisational and creative role of the proletarian state.

The basic historical tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat within the country are elimination of capitalist ownership and establishment of socialist ownership of the basic means of production, gradual socialist transformation of agriculture, expansion of productive forces and increase of labour productivity, abolition of all exploitation of man by man, suppression of the resistance of the overthrown exploiter classes and in the long run, eliminating them altogether, guidance of the peasantry, bringing about a socialist revolution in ideology and culture, development of science and technology, all-round satisfaction of the growing material and cultural requirements of the people.

Other tasks include strengthening of state and labour discipline, protecting socialist property, maintaining public order, safeguarding the rights

and liberties of the citizens, and exercising control over the measure of labour and consumption.

The basic foreign policy tasks of the proletarian state are ensuring the country's defence, promoting peace and peaceful coexistence among states with different social systems, all-round support for the workers' and national-liberation movements. The emergence of the world socialist system posed a new historical task for the proletarian state—the need to strengthen political, economic, military, cultural, scientific and other ties with the socialist countries and strengthen the might and influence of the socialist community.

In his works Lenin expounded in great detail the functions of the state of proletarian dictatorship. He attached particular importance to that question since such functions demonstrate the nature of proletarian dictatorship, the main trend of its activities in keeping with the times and topical problems. It must be noted, however, that while such functions embrace various aspects of home and foreign policy they cannot be considered independently since they are closely interrelated and one influences the other.

Lenin regarded the doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the objective necessity of such a dictatorship as an international and not a national, purely Russian, phenomenon. He repeatedly stressed its internationalist character.

Lenin armed the Communist Party, the working class, and all the working people with a comprehensive revolutionary theory. Moreover, he dedicated his life to its realisation.

Lenin on the Role of the Masses in Governing the State

V. POLYAKOV

Criticising the idealist concepts of democratic sociology concerning the role of the masses in history Lenin wrote that almost all of them merely examined the ideological motives of men's activities without going into the cause and, consequently, had not been able to grasp the objective law in the progress of social relations or to realise that these relations stemmed from the development level of material production. This problem was solved by Marx and Engels. Scientifically, from a materialist viewpoint, they proved that the mode of production of material values is the determining factor of social development and that the masses are the creators of all material and cultural values.

With the development of the productive forces, the struggle of the toiling masses resolves basic contradictions of social development, thereby determining the progress of society and its role in history. Marx and Engels proved that the masses as the creators of history play an increasingly important role.

The general sociological law of the growing role of the masses in history was discovered by Marx and Engels. However, the founders of scientific communism did not elaborate this problem deeply. They only went into its general aspect and laid the foundation for subsequent scientific study.

In new historical conditions Lenin comprehensively substantiated the thesis regarding the qualitatively new role of the people in the epoch of socialist and communist construction and proved that the gigantic tasks facing the Soviet government after the triumph of the revolution could be tackled successfully only by the heroic effort and selfless struggle of the many-million masses. And he noted that "... the greater the scope and extent of historical events, the greater is the number of people participating in them..., the more profound the change we wish to bring about, the more must we rouse an interest and an intelligent attitude towards it, and convince more millions and tens of millions of people that it is necessary."¹ Lenin emphasised the role of the Communist Party and its progressive theory, the role of the organisers of the working class, raising the consciousness and activity of the toiling masses.

The role of the masses in history is many-sided, its versatility and manifestation depending on concrete historical conditions.

The victory of the October Revolution provided vast opportunities for involving the toiling masses in governing the state. In antagonistic structures, social causes keep the masses from

¹ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 31, p. 498.

actively participating in state and public life. Under the system of exploitation based on private property and oppression of the working people only those who express the will of the ruling class are allowed to run state affairs.

Hundreds of limitations and obstacles prevent the exercise of democracy and freedom proclaimed in capitalist countries; the poor are virtually pushed aside from politics and deprived of the benefits of democracy.

Capitalist exploitation keeps the working people so downtrodden and miserable that they cannot even think of democracy or politics.

Therefore, democracy in any exploiters' state is essentially democracy for a meagre minority. Lenin wrote that "Marx grasped this *essence* of capitalist democracy splendidly when, in analysing the experience of the Commune, he said that the oppressed are allowed once every few years to decide which particular representatives of the oppressing class shall represent and repress them in parliament!"²

The masses are making headway with their progressive demands in the proletariat's class struggle to abolish the bourgeois system and win political power. This is the general trend of history.

Lenin wrote that Soviet power "... gives *real* freedom and equality to the working people..., gives them not only the 'right to', but the *real* use of, *what has been taken* from the bourgeoisie."³

The mounting role of the masses in governing

² Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 25, p. 461.

³ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 29, p. 511.

the state was conditioned by the need for economic transformations. Elaborating on Marx' and Engels' theory on dialectical interaction in the development of the basis and superstructure Lenin emphasised that politics is an expression of economics and in a transition period from capitalism to socialism it is bound to dominate the economy with respect to management and planning.

Lenin said that "history has allotted us the task of completing the great political revolution by slow, hard and laborious economic work..."⁴

With the creation of its economic basis, the socialist superstructure, which emerged as a result of economic necessity, is under its determining influence. In turn, the superstructure exerts a powerful influence on the development of all spheres of state and public life. Lenin always held that successful implementation of the tasks facing the government directly and absolutely depended on support of Party policy by the majority of people, on active participation of the masses in government affairs. He held that only the masses could shape policy. And he stressed time and again that if all the working people were drawn into state administration, all difficulties would be overcome and the construction of socialism ensured. Only he who believes in people and takes part in their creative work will triumph and retain power.

While elucidating the growing role of the masses in governing the state Lenin revealed the dialectics of this process, emphasising the general interconnection and interdependence of its deve-

⁴ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 33, p. 174.

lopment with material production, with the growth of consciousness and organisation of the masses and their practical experience. He pointed out methods, difficulties and special aspects of involving various sections of the working people in running state affairs.

At the same time Lenin consistently exposed the alien ideology of the exploiter classes in belittling the role of the masses and trying to prove they were unable to rule. Lenin firmly believed that when the liberated people have an opportunity of working for themselves after centuries of forced labour for the exploiters, they can perform miracles of heroism. He held that no revolutionary transformations are possible without the active participation of the masses and that socialism must be built by the working people themselves. Lenin wrote that "...our revolution differs from all previous revolutions in having aroused among the masses a desire to build and create..."⁵

The socialist system provided boundless opportunities for involving the masses in governing the state. In his work "Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?" written in 1917 Lenin said: "...we have a 'magic way' to enlarge our state apparatus *tenfold* at once, at one stroke, a way which no capitalist state ever possessed or could possess. This magic way is to draw the working people, to draw the poor, into the daily work of state administration."⁶ However, Lenin admitted that drawing the masses into go-

⁵ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 27, p. 183.

⁶ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 26, pp. 111-2.

verning the state was an extremely difficult matter which, for both objective and subjective reasons, could not be achieved with one fell swoop.

Capitalist exploitation and poverty, the low level of education and culture of the overwhelming majority of people, the working people's isolation from political and public life, the influence of bourgeois ideology and the entire capitalist mode of life—all accounted for the low level of consciousness of the masses, their sense of inferiority and timidity and the lack of experience in organisation and running the government. This was the main argument of the enemies of Soviet power, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries among them, who claimed that the people were unable to rule and that the young Soviet Republic would inevitably perish.

Lenin waged a persistent struggle against this malicious slander and bourgeois prejudice, deeply ingrained in the minds of the masses themselves, that it is the rich and educated who should govern. Lenin repeatedly said that Communists were not Utopians, that it was obvious not every unskilled worker or cook could immediately tackle complicated government matters, and that Soviet power could not, as if by miracle, free all people of all vestiges of the past. But it gave the oppressed an opportunity to rise, to learn from their own experience and to take government matters into their hands.

The founders of scientific communism warned that society would not be able to skip natural phases of its development or do away with them by decrees. It could, however, speed up and facilitate this development.

Lenin masterfully applied Marxism to the con-

crete situation and always demanded that objective and subjective conditions be taken into consideration. He wrote that the Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies must not introduce any transformations which were not economically expedient or which the overwhelming majority of the people were not ready for.

Foreseeing possible deviations in policy which could lead to serious mistakes and failures in certain undertakings, Lenin demanded that friendly persuasion be employed in all aspects of educational and organisational work "... without hurrying to 'consolidate' organisationally that which..." has not yet been "... fully realised, thought out, and digested..."⁷ by both the organisers themselves and the majority of the people. This important Marxist proposition which was developed by Lenin has become a law of Party activity in communist construction.

Back in 1890 Engels noted that when the masses mustered sufficient strength and realised that they were the colossal motive force, a great mass movement would develop and progress along with the development of the socialist system.

The Bolshevik Party from the very beginning of its efforts to build socialism set out to awaken the masses, to help them to "muster strength" and convince them of the need to participate actively in state matters.

Lenin insisted that the Party should bring home to the masses the essence of Soviet power, that "...when we say 'state' we mean ourselves, the proletariat, the vanguard of the working

⁷ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 24, p. 168.

class,"⁸ that the people should take all government matters into their own hands, and rule the country without the bourgeoisie and landowners.

The great force of Lenin's persuasion, the Party's ability to instil in the people confidence in their strength and awareness of the need to build a new life were organically tied in with tremendous organisational work, with developing consciousness and discipline. "...The victory of socialism is inconceivable without the victory of proletarian conscious discipline over spontaneous petty-bourgeois anarchy..." said Lenin.⁹ The consciousness of the masses is fostered by the determining influence of objective conditions. Marx noted that "consciousness can never be anything else than conscious existence."¹⁰

It is only from their own experiences that the masses became fully aware of the need for socialist transformations and broad participation in governing the state while observing the strictest organisation and discipline. Therefore, Lenin's insistence that millions of people take part in day-to-day government matters and learn how to manage affairs. Lenin said that this should not only come from books but from an immediate and general switch-over to practical experience.

Developing the teaching of Marx and Engels on the growing role of the masses in history, Lenin held that "The more profound the revolution, the greater the number of active workers re-

⁸ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 33, p. 278.

⁹ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 27, p. 258.

¹⁰ Marx, Engels, *The German Ideology*, Progress Publishers, M., 1964, p. 37.

quired to accomplish the replacement of capitalism by a socialist machinery."¹¹ In this connection Lenin ascribed an important role to outstanding leaders of the Party and Soviet government who come from the people and possessed great theoretical knowledge, practical experience and great organisational gift.

In considering complex problems of involving the working people in state administration Lenin insisted on taking stock of the real potentialities and special features inherent in each class, especially in different sections of the working people. He suggested that the most timid and backward workers and peasants be drawn into supervision of production and distribution of goods so that they could grow and develop on the job. "When they have seen how the workers' inspection participates in state affairs, let them gradually proceed from the simple duties they are able to carry out—at first only as onlookers—to more important functions of state."¹²

Lenin paid much attention to drawing working women into state and public activity. He emphasised that "...you cannot draw the masses into politics without drawing in the women as well..." and that "...unless women are brought to take an independent part not only in political life generally, but also in daily and universal public service, it is no use talking about full and stable democracy, let alone socialism."¹³

Soviet power liberated women from the yoke of czarism and granted them full equality with

¹¹ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 26, p. 364.

¹² Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 30, p. 415.

¹³ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 32, p. 161; Vol. 24, p. 70.

men in state affairs. However, Lenin explained that in order to draw women into state management or any other activity, it was necessary to transform the entire economy into large-scale socialist production, thus creating conditions for freeing women from household drudgery which took so much of their time.

Lenin regarded the youth as a loyal assistant of the Party in building a new society. "We are the party of the future, and the future belongs to the youth. We are a party of innovators, and it is always the youth that most eagerly follows the innovators. We are a party that is waging a self-sacrificing struggle against the old rottenness, and youth is always the first to undertake a self-sacrificing struggle."¹⁴ Guided by the Party the youth were always in the front ranks of the defenders of revolutionary gains.

Lenin's insistence that the masses be drawn into governing the state and given freedom of creative initiative and independence had nothing in common with the opportunist philosophy of spontaneity. Lenin noted the need for strict organisation, discipline, responsibility for entrusted work and subordination of all to state leadership. Soon after the victory of the revolution Lenin wrote that "... the complete victory of socialism... would require a tremendous organisational effort filled with the knowledge that the proletariat must become the ruling class."¹⁵

In his numerous works, letters and speeches Lenin dwelt at length on the theory of the Soviets as a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The Soviets were a form of political organisation of society combining the dominating position of the proletariat with true democracy.

Lenin wrote that "... Soviet power is nothing but an organisational form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the dictatorship of the advanced class, which raises to a new democracy and to independent participation in the administration of the state tens upon tens of millions of working and exploited people, who by their own experience learn to regard the disciplined and class-conscious vanguard of the proletariat as their most reliable leader."¹⁶

Based on the principle of democratic centralism the Soviets, by virtue of their deep-rooted democracy, gave each class, all sections of the population, irrespective of sex, race and education, an unprecedented opportunity to take part in running state affairs.

Lenin felt that further development of Soviet state organisation should not be confined to strengthening the government apparatus; it should also entail the consistent drawing of more and more sections of the people into government and the perfecting of socialist democracy. He emphasised that the Soviets could not go backwards, or mark time, they could only exist by going forward and developing democracy to the highest stage. Lenin regarded dialectics of life as a constant source of the development of democracy, for "... in actual life democracy will never be 'taken separately'; it will be 'taken together' with other things, it will exert its influence on

¹⁴ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 11, p. 354.

¹⁵ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 26, p. 364.

¹⁶ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 27, p. 265.

economic life as well, will stimulate *its* transformation; and in its turn it will be influenced by economic development, and so on.”¹⁷

In his work “The State and Revolution” Lenin noted that Marx and Engels had ranked democracy with the dictatorship of the proletariat regarding them as a dialectical entity. On the basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat the Soviets ensure and develop democracy for the majority of the people, for the working people. Lenin, like Marx and Engels, regarded the dictatorship of the proletariat and democracy as temporary phenomena necessary for certain periods of society’s development. With the victory of socialism the dictatorship of the proletariat fulfils its historical mission and ceases to be necessary, from the point of view of internal tasks, while the withering away of democracy depends on the ultimate victory of communism. Lenin said that “Communism alone is capable of providing really complete democracy, and the more complete it is, the sooner it will become unnecessary and wither away of its own accord.”¹⁸

Lenin attached exceptionally great importance to drawing the masses into the work of public organisations.

From the start of socialist construction the Communist Party has constantly relied on the Soviet trade unions. Assessing their role in governing the state and carrying out the economic and organisational functions, Lenin wrote that the trade unions are “very powerful proletarian apparatus, by means of which the Party is close-

ly linked up with the *class* and the *masses*, and by means of which, under the leadership of the Party, the *class dictatorship* is exercised. Without close contacts with the trade unions, and without their energetic support and devoted efforts... it would of course have been impossible for us to govern the country...”¹⁹

Pointing to the great role of the trade unions in the building of communism Lenin called them a school of government, a school of management, a school of communism. He also attached great importance to the growing influence of the masses in cooperative organisations, workers’ and peasants’ inspection teams, people’s courts, etc.

The Communist Party, the highest form of organisation of the proletariat, influences and leads the masses through the Soviets, trade unions, cooperative organisations, etc., with which it is closely tied up.

Lenin insisted that the Party as the highest form of all organisations consisting of the best and most advanced representatives of the working class and armed with Marxist theory can and must lead all other organisations. Lenin said the following on the role of Marxism in leading and rallying the masses: “...Marxism educates the vanguard of the proletariat, capable of assuming power and *leading the whole people* to socialism, of directing and organising the new system, of being the teacher, the guide, the leader of all the working and exploited people in organising their social life without the bourgeois-

¹⁷ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 25, pp. 452-3.

¹⁸ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 25, p. 463.

¹⁹ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 31, p. 48.

sie and against the bourgeoisie.”²⁰ And the non-party masses, if they do not follow a closely-knit party, remain scattered, not politically conscious and unstable, capable of becoming at any moment “an instrument of cunning politicians.”

Together with the growing role of the masses in public organisations the role of the Party is also enhanced since only a party that can correctly organise the entire communist construction in a planned, scientifically based way is able to direct complicated processes of social development. Lenin wrote that “. . . the more the popular movement spreads, . . . the more pressing will the *Party's* task be in leading the class, in becoming its organiser. . .”²¹

Lenin said that the aim of the Communist Party was to draw *all* the working people into permanent, decisive participation in government matters and that these duties be performed on a voluntary basis after productive work. However, Lenin connected mass participation in governing the state with preparing the necessary conditions, in particular, with the victory of socialism, for “. . . socialism will shorten the working day, will raise the *people* to a new life, will create such conditions for the *majority* of the population as will enable *everybody*, without exception, to perform state functions!”²²

Socialist statehood will grow into communist self-government as a result of the gradual development of society and this will lead to all ruling in turn; soon they will get used to “nobody's rule.” “Then the door will be thrown wide

open,” Lenin wrote, “for the transition from the first phase of communist society to its higher phase, and with it to the complete withering away of the state.”²³

Lenin insisted that the close ties of the Party with the people and strict account of the collective experience of the masses be permanent features of political leadership of society. He maintained that all leaders of the Party, Soviet and economic bodies should live and work among the people, know their life, requirements and aspirations and make every effort to ensure that the ideas and the programme demands of the Party were understood and accepted by one and all. There cannot be effective communist construction without close ties with the people in the most diverse walks of life.

Lenin considered it a great merit of the Party that ever since the first days of Soviet power it had sought advice from the people, organising public discussion of its decisions and involving the masses in carrying out these decisions. Lenin considered that Soviets should carry out their work in the same way. He emphasised that conditions should be provided for each citizen not only to elect representatives but also to take part in discussing laws and carrying them out. Under socialism, Lenin said, “. . . for the first time in the history of civilised society, the *mass* of the population will rise to taking an *independent* part, not only in voting and elections, but also in the *everyday administration of the state.*”²⁴

²⁰ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 25, p. 404.

²¹ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 8, p. 216.

²² Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 25, pp. 488-9.

²³ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 25, p. 474.

²⁴ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 25, pp. 487-8.

Lenin paid great attention to seeing that the Party, Soviets and trade unions, had close direct contact with industrial and agricultural collectives. Lenin noted that "...our victories were due to the direct appeal made by our Party and by the Soviet government to the working masses with every new difficulty and problem pointed out as it arose; to our ability to explain to the masses why it was necessary to devote all energies first to one, then to another aspect of Soviet work at a given moment; to our ability to arouse the energy, heroism and enthusiasm of the masses and to concentrate every ounce of revolutionary effort on the most important task of the hour."²⁵

The founders of scientific communism, Marx and Engels, laid the foundation stone of the theory of socialism. Lenin pointed out that only the collective experience of millions would show concretely, and in all its multiformity, the road to socialism. It is the practice of building a new life determined by the requirements of social development that can provide the correct orientation for social progress. Therefore it is impossible to chart the organisation of a new society by orders or schemes given beforehand. Replying to accusations that Communists have allegedly no plans for the future Lenin said: "As if one can set out to make a great revolution and know beforehand how it is to be completed! Such knowledge cannot be derived from books and our decision could spring only from the experience of the masses."²⁶ Therefore the Party should take

account of the real situation and not stick to any formulae if practice and experience of the masses show more effective ways for achieving their aims. In his speech "On the Anniversary of the Revolution" given at the Sixth All-Russia Extraordinary Congress of Soviets in November, 1918, Lenin warned: that one should "in no case endeavour to outrun the people's development, but wait until a movement forward occurred as a result of their own experience and their own struggle."²⁷

Lenin emphasised the decisive role of the masses in defining concrete ways of building socialism. He noted that the greater the initiative, diversity, boldness and creative spirit displayed by the masses, the better and richer the experience and the swifter the advance to socialism. Lenin demanded that the experience of the masses be constantly generalised, studied and publicised and that the sprouts of the new be treated carefully. In his work "Great Beginning" Lenin wrote: "We must carefully study the feeble new shoots, we must devote the greatest attention to them, do everything to promote their growth and 'nurture' them... Life will select the most viable."²⁸

Lenin regarded the masses' participation in governing the state as a part of the general problem of developing socialist statehood and as a dialectical process connected with overcoming contradictions and the possibility of mistakes and temporary failures. The contradictory character

²⁵ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 30, p. 139.

²⁶ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 29, p. 155.

²⁷ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 28, p. 141.

²⁸ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 29, p. 425.

of this development was quite natural and could be explained by both shortcomings and survivals of the past in the economy and the masses' consciousness and by the need to accomplish the grandiose, and completely new, tasks of building socialism.

The Soviet state tackled tasks which nobody had dealt with before. Consequently, it had to experiment and verify certain things by practice. Lenin said that "the novelty and difficulty of the change lead to an abundance of steps being taken, as it were, gropingly, to an abundance of mistakes, vacillation—without this, any marked progress is impossible."²⁹

Lenin regarded bureaucratism and red tape, those vestiges of capitalism, as one of the most serious obstacles to successful development of creative work and initiative of the masses. Lenin pointed to concrete measures in the Party's struggle against these evils and warned that it would be a long and persistent struggle with the use of methods whose effectiveness should be verified by practice.

Lenin taught the Party not to be afraid of mistakes and temporary failures, to be frank about them and learn from them and to overcome difficulties from its own experience. Lenin replied to bourgeois ideologists saying that "We are not afraid of mistakes when they are made by ordinary people who take a conscientious attitude to socialist construction, because we rely only on the experience and effort of our own people... Our hopes of victory are growing faster because our workers are becoming more

politically-conscious."³⁰

Lenin held that the main way to struggle against bureaucratism and other survivals and shortcomings was to draw all the people, without exception, into governing the state, that it was an absolutely new way at that time of improving the entire work of the Soviet state machinery.

Lenin's theory on the growing role of the masses in governing the state has been confirmed and is successfully being implemented in communist construction. Today, even enemies of communism have to admit the vitality and invincibility of Lenin's ideas. Alfred G. Meyer, American philosopher, wrote: "...the ideas and behaviour traditions of V. I. Lenin, the leader of the Russian revolution, have caught the imagination of millions in our day."³¹

Millions of Soviet people are learning how to manage government and public affairs through the trade unions, Komsomol, people's courts, people's control bodies, cooperative and other mass organisations.

The steadily growing role of the masses in governing the state is one of the main requisites for socialist statehood to develop into communist public self-government.

²⁹ Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 28, pp. 144-5.

³¹ A. G. Meyer, *Leninism*, Cambridge, Mass., 1957, p. 1.

²⁹ Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 27, p. 273.

The State and Modern Times

D. CHESNOKOU

A socialist state differs basically from an exploiter state in that it is created by a people to defend its interests from exploiters while the latter resorts to force in the interests of exploiter classes and groups. Differences between them are even more obvious with regard to the constructive functions of the revolution.

As with all questions of Marxist theory Lenin elaborated the question of the socialist state in close relation with the struggle for socialism and with due regard for the balance of class forces and the peculiarities of class struggle in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism. In doing so he distinguished between the basic laws of the development of a socialist state, which inevitably recur in other countries during their transition from capitalism to socialism, from the specific features of the proletarian revolution and transition period in Russia.

Lenin on the Ratio of Destructive and Constructive Tasks of a Socialist State

The working class needs a socialist state to suppress the resistance of overthrown exploiter classes, to complete the proletariat's class struggle against the forces and traditions of the old society. A socialist state enables the working class to do away with capitalist and pre-capitalist relations, replacing them with socialist relations, to transform petty private property into socialist property, to build socialism and communism. To accomplish all this the working class must be closely allied with all non-proletarian sections of working people. Therefore, the most important principle of a socialist state is an alliance between the working class and the peasantry, with the former playing the leading role.

A socialist state means involving all working people in running public affairs and fulfilling all tasks of socialist construction. Ever since its inception, the socialist state has been the embodiment of the highest type of democracy. Lenin held that the source of the Soviet government's might lay in the people's support, in taking stock of their experience and in drawing them into governing the state. The development of socialist democratism was, according to him, the general line of the development of socialist statehood.

The transition from capitalism to socialist society, a society developing along scientific, planned lines, calls for persistent Party and state effort to ensure higher organisational standards

and discipline of the working masses. This is a major aspect of socialist construction. Until communist construction is completed, high organisational standards of the masses should be supplemented with state discipline. This concerns not only the transition period but socialism as the first phase of communism.

Lenin repeatedly emphasised that the conversion of state discipline into voluntary discipline was a long and complicated process. "Accounting and control," he wrote, "that is *mainly* what is needed for the 'smooth working' for the proper functioning of the *first phase* of communist society. . .

"But this 'factory' discipline, which the proletariat, after defeating the capitalists, after overthrowing the exploiters will extend to the whole of society, is by no means our ideal, or our ultimate goal. It is only a necessary *step* for thoroughly cleaning society of the infamies and abominations of capitalist exploitation, and for *further progress.*"¹

Strict discipline and socialist democracy are not antipodes but two aspects of a single entity.

For a victorious proletariat cultural revolution is a major condition for building socialism. A socialist state is called upon to serve as a means of implementing cultural revolution. This is a prerequisite for the development of socialist democracy. Cultural revolution is also an important condition for higher standards of government and for the rebuilding of the state apparatus along scientific lines. Lenin repeatedly, especially in his articles written in 1922-3, stressed

¹ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 25, pp. 474.

the importance of the science of government, of efficiently operating the Soviet state apparatus and simplifying and cutting down the cost of running the state.

The constructive functions of a socialist state are particularly evident in its economic and political activities. By mustering all labouring masses, around the working class and by enabling the masses "to run all state affairs"² a socialist state creates political conditions for socialism and communism. It helps create the economic basis of communism by reorganising the entire people's economy with the help of large-scale industrialisation based on advanced technology. To reach this goal it is necessary to create state financial, managerial and planning agencies which did not exist before the socialist revolution, or were private institutions. Such agencies are essential for planned management of the economy and culture. During the transition from socialism to communism these agencies of a socialist state are destined "to grow, to develop and become strong, performing all the main activities of organised society."³ With the withering away of the state they will become bodies of state self-government and, naturally, will increasingly lose their political character.

Economics and politics are inseparable from each other firstly, because the creation and development of the socialist forms of economy take place in the conditions of struggle between socialist and capitalist elements. Secondly, because the construction of socialist economy is possible only

² Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 31, p. 420.

³ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 27, p. 408.

through cooperation of society's two main classes—the workers and the peasants. Relationships between classes are certainly a matter of policy. Thirdly, economic and cultural development under socialism has, as one of its aims, the liquidation of actual inequality between nations which is a legacy of capitalism. Economic development is meant to strengthen cooperation among nations within a socialist state on the basis of full equality and mutual assistance, which is of great political significance. Fourthly, economic development in a socialist country is of major international importance. A victorious proletariat is able not only to overthrow the exploiters, to repulse international imperialism, but also to provide an example of economic development by basically new methods, without the exploiters and against them. In 1920, Lenin said: "After proving that by revolutionary organisation we can repel any violence directed against the exploited, we must prove the same thing in another field by setting an example that will convince the vast mass of the peasants and petty-bourgeois elements, and other countries as well, not in word but in deed, that a communist system and way of life can be created by a proletariat which has won a war. This is a task of world-wide significance."⁴

Finally, in creating a new, socialist economy by millions of people who consciously set themselves the task of building a new life, the creative activity of the masses, who have shaken off the imperialist yoke, is in itself of great social and political significance and becomes all

the more successful as socialist democracy develops.

All this, taken together, points to the need for a political approach to all aspects of economic development. A socialist state's entire activity is based on a scientifically substantiated economic policy. Organisational and political activities in a socialist state go together. Divorced from each other, they turn either into political phrasemongering and empty talk or narrow utilitarian attitude which is bound to lead to ignoring national interests, to losing sight of the revolutionary perspective and to retrogression to a policy of *laissez-faire* and capitulation. Lenin always stressed the need for combating these extremes.

In speaking of the constructive functions of a socialist state one cannot ignore the need for it to organise the toiling masses, above all, the working class, to complete the class struggle against the exploiters, and to build up the country's military might and safeguard peace. The socialist revolution and working-class state must outdo capitalism in military organisation as well. It is up to the armed forces of a socialist state to uphold the gains of the revolution from all encroachments by external foes, to check their aggressive designs, to protect the peaceful labour of the workers and peasants building socialism. At the same time, the growing might of the socialist state helps contain imperialist aggression against other nations.

The same tasks are assumed by the punitive bodies of a socialist state—the court and the Procurator's Office. The only difference is that their activity is largely confined to internal relations and is concerned with seeing that all citizens of

⁴ Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 31, p. 418.

the state observe the socialist laws. Punitive measures are not only a form of punishment, they also serve to educate the people.

The State Under Socialism

The basic propositions concerning the constructive functions of a socialist state were formulated by Lenin at the onset of the transition from capitalism to socialism. Hostile capitalist encirclement and the country's economic backwardness created formidable difficulties for the victorious proletariat. The defeated exploiting classes, backed by international imperialism, put up fierce resistance in an attempt to restore capitalism. The Trotskyites demanded that persuasion, and education—the chief means of organising the masses—be replaced by methods of diktat, command and coercion. They advocated bar-rack discipline based on coercion as the alternative to Lenin's thesis that the state is strong owing to political awareness of the masses, and that purposeful self-discipline and organisation are a source of the might of proletarian dictatorship. Had such views taken hold the Communist Party and the state of proletarian dictatorship would have found themselves divorced from the working class, a wedge between the working class and the peasantry would have been driven and the socialist revolution would have been defeated.

Right-wing opportunists tried to refute Lenin's proposition on proletarian dictatorship as a continuation of class struggle in new conditions.

They rejected the Party's leading role with regard to the socialist state, and sought to saddle the Party and the state with a policy which would be a means of reviving capitalism. In the early thirties, there were ill-starred "theoreticians" and practicians who put forward right-deviationist proposals on curtailing state activity as the positions of socialism in town and country were stabilised. Right-wing revisionism played down the role of the socialist state.

The Party rebuffed these anti-Leninist conceptions, exposed their theoretical untenability and reactionary nature. It was reliably guided by Lenin's theory of the socialist state. This helped strengthen the state, enabled it to play a historical role in carrying out the tasks of transition from capitalism to socialism. The Communist Party's experience of effecting Lenin's ideas and of combating Left- and Right-wing revisionism has never lost its significance. The revisionist and sectarian line in the world communist movement will make itself felt as long as there is a social base for such deviations (petty-bourgeois elements and capitalist relations). These deviations are revealed in belittling the role of the socialist state, in demanding the immediate abolition of the state as a "bureaucratic" institution and its replacement with "self-government" even in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism.

The economic management and planning apparatus, finance bodies and trade played an increasingly important role with the industrialisation of the country and socialist reforms in agriculture. All this accentuated the need for new skilled personnel for the managerial and state

apparatus and updating it to accord with conditions of all-round socialist construction.

The Party strengthened and improved the state apparatus, developed its democratic basis and helped prepare new specialists. All this contributed to the victory of socialism and, consequently, to the changes that occurred in the socialist state as the result of this victory. Bourgeois propagandists do their utmost to smear the past of the Soviet state and belittle the world-historic significance of its victories. They play up the seamy side, errors and other unfortunate developments that took place during the valiant struggle of the Soviet people. But nothing can dwarf the exploits accomplished by the Soviet people under the leadership of the Communist Party. Socialist construction fully revealed the advantages of socialist democracy based on a solid alliance between the working class and the peasantry and the development of a tie-up between them in the sphere of production. In the second half of the twenties the Soviets became more active, the masses assumed a greater role in production and political activity, socialist emulation, criticism and self-criticism developed. There was an upsurge in the cultural-educational activity of the socialist state. Throughout this period the Party used the socialist state as a great creative force, a comprehensive organisation of working masses ensuring broader popular initiative, protecting the people's rights and drawing the masses into governing the affairs of the state. Educational work, carried out by the state in the process of socialist construction, fostered in workers' and peasants' devotion to the ideals of socialism, proletarian internationalism and So-

viet patriotism, irreconcilability towards bourgeoisie and imperialism. It also alerted the people as to the need for constant revolutionary vigilance and inspired a readiness to cope with any difficulties and any intrigues of class enemies.

The triumph of socialism in the USSR has basically changed economic and social relations in the country. Having solved the cardinal question of the transition period "Who will win?" in favour of socialism, the state of proletarian dictatorship has risen to a new, higher level. With the abolition of the exploiting classes it gradually changed from an organisation uniting the majority of the people in struggle against the exploiter minority into an organisation of the whole people. This followed from profound changes in the social make-up of society since, along with abolishing the exploiter classes, the economic basis of society was also changed. Whereas during the transition period there were different economic formations, with socialist and petty-commodity formations predominating, in the conditions of socialism public, socialist ownership of the means of production became the dominant factor in production relationships. The socialist state has a single economic basis.

During the transition period, the interests of the main classes of society—the workers and peasants—coincided on the whole, but at the same time differed, inasmuch as the working class and the class of petty-commodity producers were in a different position with regard to the means of production. Now, in the conditions of victorious socialism, the community of socialist interests of the workers and peasants has taken firm hold. Politically, collective-farm peasantry has become

much closer to the working class, which made for their socio-political oneness.

All these changes have helped to promote socialist relations in the Soviet state, and contributed to its might and prestige resulting, among other things, in a stronger alliance of workers and peasants.

Simultaneously, the leading role of the working class was enhanced. This is evident from the growth of the working class and the greater share of national property with which it is directly associated. The working class plays a major role in the economic and political life of society as the bearer of the most advanced form of labour organisation in all spheres of production. Workers initiate a new, communist attitude to labour which then spreads to other sections of the working people. The working class, by virtue of the level of its organisation and consciousness, heads society. The Communist Party, created by the working class and reflecting its world outlook, has become a recognised leader of the entire people expressing their thoughts and aspirations.

The triumph of socialism in the USSR and greater unity of all working people on the basis of socialist relations in production have engendered a new social entity—the Soviet people. There are still differences between the working class, collective-farm peasantry and intelligentsia, but they are not antagonistic. These differences are based on a similar relationship to the means of production and, consequently, on the community of interests regarding key aspects of society's economic, socio-political and spiritual life.

The exploiter classes and groups vanished

with the victory of socialism. Our society is made up of the working class, collective-farm peasantry and intelligentsia. In this connection the concept "people's" has become broader encompassing all members of society. With regard to political institutions this is now expressed in the term "of the whole people." But this is only one side of the matter. The people have changed substantially on the basis of new production relationships. They have become more coherent economically, politically and spiritually. Such words as "people's," "of the whole people," "national" have become synonymous with "socialist." If we say "national property" we mean the highest form of socialist property; "democracy of the whole people" stands for extended socialist democracy. In this sense, the state of victorious socialism is a people's state. With the triumph of socialism the state of proletarian dictatorship became a political organisation of the entire people, with the working class in the leading role.

The word "people's" does not denote the class nature of the socialist state, but signifies the organic unity of the economic basis and community of interests of all social groups in the country, it shows that the state is no longer an instrument of one class suppressing another, that it embodies society's socio-economic oneness. As for the class nature of the state it remains working-class, socialist in nature. The other two social groups—the peasantry and intelligentsia—are united with the working class on the basis of economic relations, policy and ideology. In this way, by its essence and class nature the socialist state of both stages of development (transition from capitalism to socialism, and socialism—the

first phase of communism) is homogeneous. This is one and the same state going through different stages of development.

During the first stage of its development the socialist state is characterised by the leading role of the working class, the alliance between the working class and the other sections of working people, the irreconcilability of the working people and the socialist state to capitalism and exploitation, and the high level of activity displayed by the masses in building communism. Under socialism the leading role of the working class has been enhanced. The alliance of workers and peasants has been fortified on a socialist basis, while irreconcilability towards capitalism and exploitation no longer consists of struggle against the exploiter classes in the country (they have become non-existent). Instead, there is a desire to strengthen the positions of socialism on a world scale, to promote communist construction in the USSR, to combat all survivals of capitalism in the economy and people's conscience which retard society's advance towards communism.

The class nature of the socialist state is expressed in the leading role of the working class. Inside the country this is manifested in mobilising the masses to build communism, in combating social phenomena alien to socialism, in strengthening communist labour discipline and moulding the new man of communist society. Outside the country the class nature of the socialist state is manifested in protecting society's security and the country's state interests. It is also revealed in the close alliance with the other socialist countries to strengthen and develop these

countries and the positions of socialism on the international arena in support of all progressive and revolutionary forces fighting against imperialism and reaction, in the struggle for peace and democracy the world over.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union substantiated a major proposition on the two stages of the development of the socialist state and its functions at these stages. The main internal functions of the state during the transition from capitalism to socialism were: suppression of exploiters' resistance, involvement of working people in governing the state and strengthening socialist property, economic-organisational and cultural-educational activity. The external functions of the socialist state include: defence of the country, the struggle for peace, promotion of business relations with all countries, assistance to peoples fighting against imperialism and upholding their freedom and independence, political and moral support to all revolutionary, liberation and progressive movements.

In the conditions of victorious socialism these functions, and especially of the extent of these functions, undergo certain changes. It is no longer necessary to suppress exploiters' resistance. Economic-organisational and cultural-educational function, the protection and development of socialist property and socialist democracy are retained and further developed. The same can well be said about the main external functions: the defence of the country, the struggle for peace, and cooperation with other nations. The formation of the world socialist system gave rise to another function—that of cooperation and mutual assistance within this system. Its very nature calls for

close cooperation and mutual assistance among the fraternal countries, steadfast implementation by them of the principles of socialist internationalism. Any deviation from these principles towards nationalism runs counter to the very nature of socialist relationships, harms the entire system of socialism and its struggle against imperialism. It also harms a country whose leadership display nationalistic tendencies. For this reason, the function of promoting cooperation among the socialist countries is not limited to external affairs. It is organically tied in with the internal tasks of the socialist countries, above all, with the economic-organisational activity of each of them (planning of production, exchange and consumption with due regard for division of labour within the world socialist system). In the process of socialist and communist construction this function is bound to develop and improve continuously.

Of major theoretical significance are the Party's conclusions concerning the relation of the state's internal functions to external ones. Marx and Engels, laying the foundations of the theory of the socialist state, proceeded from the proposition as to the simultaneous victory of socialism in all civilised countries. This is why the question of the socialist state's external functions, did not, in fact, come up. The Leninist theory of the socialist revolution, the experience of the Soviet state's existence in the encirclement of bourgeois states called for elaborating the question of the role and place of the socialist state's external functions. Proceeding from Lenin's propositions and generalising the experience of socialist construction, the Communist Party of the So-

viet Union worked out the question of the socialist state's external functions: the defence of the country and the upbuilding of its armed forces, the implementation of a peace-loving foreign policy and promotion of business ties with capitalist countries. As is known, the Party continues to attach particular significance to Lenin's demand for general and complete disarmament, for assistance to peoples fighting for independence, and to all revolutionary, liberation and progressive movements, for fraternal cooperation with and mutual assistance to other socialist countries.

The external functions of the socialist states reflect their new social nature and are imbued with the spirit of proletarian internationalism. They also reflect the great organising and mobilising role of socialism, the creative activity of the socialist state which, without interfering in the affairs of other peoples and states, by the very fact of its existence, inspires the working people of the non-socialist countries in the struggle for peace, democracy and socialism, not to mention the economic, political and ideological influence it has on world development. This influence will steadily grow with the strengthening of the world socialist system.

Lenin's great merit is that he discovered the Soviet form of the socialist state, showed its advantages over the parliamentary republic and noted the inevitability of new political forms of statehood in carrying out socialist revolutions in other countries. In accordance with Lenin's behests the CPSU has indefatigably been developing and improving the Soviet form of the socialist state. For instance, the triumph of socialism in

the country is reflected in changes made in the electoral system and the structure of the government bodies. These changes are incorporated in the USSR Constitution adopted in 1936. The Soviet Communist Party, together with other Communist Parties, has contributed to elaborating the question of new political forms of the socialist state in the countries that proceeded to build socialism after the Second World War. Talks and comradely exchanges of views between the leaders of a number of Communist Parties and the leaders of the Soviet Communist Party in the forties helped those states determine the social nature and functions of state power in the new people's democracies. They also helped generalise the specific features of the new political forms of the socialist state. Analysing the balance of forces after the Second World War, the CPSU put forward a proposition on the possibility and expediency of the parliamentary republic as a political form of the socialist state for countries with long-standing parliamentary traditions.

These theoretical conclusions of the CPSU were further developed in its Programme. Similar theoretical conclusions were reached by fraternal Communist Parties. This is reflected in the British Communist Party's Programme "Britain's Road to Socialism," the decisions of the Communist Parties of Bulgaria, Poland and other countries adopted in 1949-52 and developed by them at subsequent congresses. It follows from these decisions that working-class dictatorship need not necessarily be a one-party system. The absence of a multi-party system during socialist construction is not a general law, as previously believed, but the outcome of specific conditions

in which a revolution develops. It can be presumed, for instance, that as a rule countries with long-standing parliamentary traditions will decide on a multi-party system in building a new society.

To involve all members of the socialist society in running the country's affairs the Party outlined a number of measures to extend socialist democracy. These include increasing the role of the Soviets, the representative bodies of power, extending the rights of the Union and Autonomous Republics and local bodies of power, drawing a large number of activists from among workers, peasants and intellectuals into the work of the Soviets, publicizing the work of the Soviets and regularly changing their composition, while keeping to a certain degree of continuity, ensuring that deputies regularly account to the electors, streamlining and economising on running the state apparatus, promoting direct democracy, nation-wide discussion of key issues, tightening up on public control of the activity of the representative and executive bodies of Soviet power, developing all forms of democracy in the sphere of production, enhancing the role of general meetings of workers, office employees and collective farmers.

The experience of socialist construction in the USSR has enabled the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to formulate a major theoretical conclusion on the withering away of the state by strengthening and developing it. Transition to a stateless system of self-government will take place without "skipping over" the state and diminishing its role. It will be effected through the socialist state and comprehensive development of

its democratic essence. The working class, as the most advanced and organised force of socialist society, will continue to play its leading role as long as classes and class distinctions remain. The strengthening of the socialist state means, above all, the consolidation of its economic basis, the further rallying of the people, the heightening of their political awareness and initiative, still further extension of socialist democracy and involvement of all working people in governing the affairs of the state. As for the coercive bodies of the state which, under socialism, are spearheaded against external foes and are designed to defend society against aggression, the extent of their powers depends on the international situation and a degree of aggressiveness of the reactionary imperialist forces. As foreseen by the founders of Marxism, once the exploiter classes have been done away with there will be no need for a regular army. But as long as the bourgeois states continue to build up their armies and as long as there are reactionary military-political alliances directed against the socialist countries, the revolutionary and national-liberation movements, the socialist countries will be compelled to improve their armed forces and to be even more vigilant as to hostile encroachments.

Such are the main theoretical propositions worked out by the CPSU with regard to the state under socialism and developed after Lenin's death by generalising the experience of socialist and communist construction in the USSR. The experience of socialist construction in other countries shows that these propositions have won world-wide recognition.

The Socialist State and Communist Construction in the USSR

In discussing the constructive role of the socialist state in modern conditions it is necessary, above all, to dwell on its economic functions. Socialisation of the basic means of production both in industry and agriculture determines the further expansion of the state's economic-organisational activity and its qualitatively new level.

Public production under socialism is planned and guided by the socialist state. Before withering away, the state must fully master the art of centralised economic guidance and all-sided development of mass initiative. This is a necessary prerequisite for the withering away of the state.

During the transition period the socialist state serves as the main instrument for developing the new economy and socialist society as a whole. With the triumph of socialism, the economic role of the state is enhanced since besides organising the work of national enterprises it also sees to cooperative and collective-farm production.

It is not just a question of the qualitative aspect. The main thing is that under socialism the state organises the accounting, control and planning of socialist economy, ensures unified planning and centralised guidance of the economy on the basis of all-round democracy. Economic laws are purposefully applied via the state and with its help. The state serves as a kind of pivotal point for the action of objective economic laws and the purposeful will of millions of working people united by the state in building communism.

To accomplish this great task the socialist state must pursue a scientifically-substantiated policy taking into account the economic level of socialist society, the balance of the forces of socialism and capitalism in the international arena. But a correct economic policy alone is not sufficient to ensure success. It is essential that the working masses be convinced of the correctness of the Party and government policy and regard it as their own. The economic policy must be drawn up in concrete, precise long-range and annual national-economic plans determining the place of each production unit in the nation-wide struggle for communism.

And, lastly, the economic role of the socialist state is embodied in its economic-organisational activity, particularly in directing the work of enterprises through the entire system of economic and planning bodies. Eventually, conditions will be created to ensure that the economic laws of socialism are applied with due regard for their objective nature, specific features and advantages. The state's administrative activity in carrying out coercive measures will vanish with time, but its administrative-organisational function will remain even after the state has withered away. It will become a function of a public self-government agency.

The present stage of communist construction determines the heightened role of the socialist state and requires strengthening the state apparatus, enhancing the role of economists in all aspects of government, above all in industry, of having state apparatus personnel acquire a sound knowledge of economics and transmit this knowledge to the working people. This means ex-

tending the system of training economists and large-scale organisational work by the state. In modern conditions, this work is part of the state's cultural-organisational and economic activity, denoting the direct bearing of the state's economic role on its cultural-educational function. Such interdependence becomes even more evident with respect to the place and role of science in the life of socialist society. Under socialism, science increasingly becomes a direct productive force. The more complex society and production and the higher the level of its organisation, the greater the role played by scientific organisation of labour, by the scientific and technological level of personnel, by exact economic calculations based on an all-round economic analysis of the operational conditions at a given enterprise, a branch of industry and the national economy as a whole. All this is directly related to the state's economic activity. The state's cultural-educational function is concerned with guiding the development of science, the network of research centres and higher educational establishments.

Workers, peasants and intellectuals are directly involved in accomplishing the economic tasks of communist construction. The socialist state is the organisational hub of their efforts and creative activity. It serves the people, and draws on its support and initiative. The all-round development of the socialist democracy is the main trend in the development of the socialist state and its entire social and political system.

It should be emphasised that the strengthening of all norms of discipline on the basis of the heightened communist consciousness of people,

of their awareness of their responsibility to society, the extensive application of individual and group material incentives and, when necessary, of coercive measures in accordance with the laws of the socialist state, are essential for the further development of socialist democratism.

Marxism has always been opposed to an anarchic understanding of freedom and democracy whereby an individual does not reckon with society and the interests of other people, does not recognise the authority of public organisations and rejects discipline. According to Marxism-Leninism, any individual can be truly independent in society only by the liberation of all working people from exploitation, by close cooperation, cohesion and high organisation.

All this is necessitated by the internal laws of socialist society. But the need for self-control, self-discipline and discipline is also dictated by external factors affecting the development of the socialist countries. The construction of socialism and communism is being effected in conditions of irreconcilable struggle between socialism and capitalism in the international arena. To make this struggle a success it is especially necessary to ensure unity, high organisational standards and cohesion of all forces of socialism. Herein lies the essence of socialist democratism. Democratic institutions under socialism are called upon to help disclose this essence, and develop socialist democratism in every way.

The steady rise in the working people's ideological maturity and political awareness, the all-round development of socialist democracy leads to further changes in the persuasion-coercion ratio of state activity. Greater attention is paid to

persuasion, explanation and education of people by every means, through all links of the state apparatus and public organisations.

Persuasion, as the chief method of educational work, plays a truly great role now. State coercion is applied only when the manifestations of bourgeois ideology, the survivals of petty-owner psychology, morals and any prejudices breed anti-social actions and lead certain people to violate the norms and laws of socialist society.

All this predetermines the further development of the socialist state's educational function at present. Only people with conservative views and inclined to dogmatism in assessing social phenomena fail to see this. Their inability to assess the new correctly is as harmful as the views of those who take a nihilistic attitude to the past and, in the spirit of petty-bourgeois liberalism and anarchism, renounce the need for exactingness and a combination of persuasion and coercion, and who consider coercion incompatible with true democracy.

Democracy is a form of organisation of the masses, an expression of their organisational level and purposeful discipline. The extension of democracy means strengthening and developing the people's self-discipline. But until the survivals of old morals and views are done away with, the self-discipline of the masses and their influence over individual citizens are supplemented with state-law regulation of citizens' conduct with the threat of administrative or criminal punishment and, if necessary, by applying such punishment. This is essential for protecting the interests of the people and their democratic rights

against arbitrariness and anti-social actions by individuals.

One of the specific features of educational work carried out by state bodies all the way from the representative bodies of power—the Soviets—to the punitive bodies (the court, the Procurator's Office) is that they combine the method of persuasion with state-law coercion. They use the threat of punishment and apply it with regard to persons violating the laws, principles and norms of socialist society, and guilty of breaches of discipline and order. These measures also play an educational role since they help instil in people stable habits and purposeful desire to abide by socialist legality and norms.

Maintaining public order is also an inalienable part of the Soviet state's activity in educating people in the spirit of communist discipline and self-discipline. Leninism regards petty-bourgeois lack of discipline, anti-social actions and theft as the manifestation of bourgeois morals and traditions. These survivals are combated by further strengthening the socialist system, by raising material and cultural standards, by improving all forms of communist education of the working people.

The socialist state has such powerful means of education as secondary schools, higher educational institutions and cultural and educational centres. They have accomplished a great deal and can still do much more in moulding the new man, the epitome of spiritual, moral and physical development.

The building of communism implies the creation of its material and technical basis together with the transition from socialist to communist

relations. This presupposes education of the people in keeping with the peculiarities and principles of communist society, the moulding of the new man with a high level of consciousness and spiritual culture. Once this is accomplished there will be no need for state-law regulation and, consequently, for the state.

Ленин о социалистическом
государстве
на английском языке
Цена 8 коп.

