

The Solution: Continue the Revolution Under the Dictatorship of the Proletariat

by Ajoy Dutta*

Shortly after the death of Comrade Mao Tsetung, the great leader and teacher of the world proletariat, the Deng Xiaoping Hu Yaobang clique, using the centrist revisionist Hua Kuofeng, managed a coup d'etat and usurped the leadership of the Chinese party and state. Thus the world communist movement fell into a great crisis for the third time. Even so, today, ten years later, the world proletariat, tempered by the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, have risen up to resist revisionism and, among other ripostes, have formed the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement.

It must be said that the incidents in China after the death of Mao were not completely unexpected. Mao himself had cautioned about such a possibility several times before his death. In 1965 Mao sharply warned: "If China's leadership is usurped by revisionists in the future, the Marxist-Leninists of all countries should resolutely expose and fight them and help the working class and masses of China to combat such revisionism."

Taking advantage of the profound mourning that the people of



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China felt after Mao's death, the Deng-Hu clique carried out their conspiratorial coup. They were cunning: they did not at first open their ugly face against the Cultural Revolution and Mao, but instead concentrated their attacks on Mao's close associates, mainly using slander. Soon enough, however, they turned to attack the Cultural Revolution itself. We Marxist-Leninists must grasp firmly the profound worldwide significance of the Cultural Revolution, the content of which is continued revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The solution to the problem of consolidating socialism and successfully advancing from socialism to communism requires dealing with three points. First, the question of socialisation of the ownership of the means of production, which means collective ownership. This is a necessary precondition, but it is not sufficient in itself without actually achieving collective *control*. This is opposed to the control of a handful of individuals or bureaucrats, which means safeguarding the interests of the bourgeoisie. If collective control is not established in reality, then the dictatorship of the proletariat will be transformed into the dictatorship of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie in the long run. To establish real collective control it is necessary to rouse the masses and to make them conscious and raise their initiative in all spheres of society, including the party. After capturing state power in the USSR, though he only had a brief experience to sum up, Lenin said, "To the extent that the majority of the working class can take the responsibility into their own hands to govern the state without depending on state officials, the necessity of the state will become more and more unnecessary, and the objective conditions for establishing communism will be created." (LCW, vol. 29, p. 183, Bengali edition)

Second, there is a contradiction between the concept of individual interest and collective interest. This contradiction exists in the mind of every individual. In all class society, including capitalism, individual interest has dominated. If collective interest does not become dominant in socialist society, if individual in-

terest is not subordinated to the collective interest of advancing the revolution, then socialism will be defeated and there will certainly be no advance to communism. In connection with this, Lenin said, "When the people cease to work for their close kith and kin and consciously work for the development of society and to create a communist world in the long run, then and only then will communism begin." ("Lecture on Summing up the Subbotniks")

Third, on the question of ownership of the means of production. In 1956, socialisation of the means of production had become almost complete in China. But as for collective ownership, there existed two forms: the state sector and the co-operative sector. Moreover, there existed the difference between town and country, between workers and peasants, and between mental and physical labour. There was the 8-grade wage-scale. There was a continuation, in a lower form, of commodity production, which is the principal form of production under capitalism. Lenin summed up that this will persist for a long time in socialist society, and it must be restricted cautiously, so as to become weaker and weaker over time. In communist society it will be completely eliminated. All this constitutes the basis for the rise of a new bourgeois class throughout socialism.

Though Lenin gave attention to this problem, he did not have the time to solve it, as he died in 1924. Comrade Stalin, though aware of this problem, departed from the Marxist-Leninist outlook to a great extent in dealing with this, and so could not grasp the essence of the continuation of classes and class struggle under socialism. Consequently, he considered the capitalist-roaders in Russia as imperialist agents, and used the method of eliminating them from the party and state. In fact, this method created a more favourable environment for the capitalist-roaders. Due to the lack of a correct method for solving this problem, bureaucracy grew more powerful, and a new bourgeoisie regenerated. Even during his own life, Comrade Stalin became surrounded by bureaucracy

and the new bourgeoisie, so that within three years of his death, these elements, under Khrushchev, easily usurped party and state leadership. In collusion with U.S. imperialism, they fiercely attacked Stalin, the great proletarian leader, which was an attack on Marxism-Leninism and socialism too.

In this situation the revisionists in China gained strength and encouragement. At the Eighth Congress of the CPC in 1956, the revisionists, led by Liu Shao-chi, came out and successfully passed the reactionary theory of the productive forces. This situation compelled Mao to concentrate entirely on the three points mentioned above; he gave up responsibility as head of state and focussed on party work.

Mao reflected deeply over the negative experience of the loss of proletarian power in Russia in 1956, and over the experience of mass struggle against the capitalist-roaders in culture and education in China. The solution was the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. On the one hand the Cultural Revolution is the line of consolidating socialism through protracted struggle, continuing revolution by the working class and its allies against the bourgeoisie and their reactionary ideologies, and to continue this throughout the transformation to communism. On the other hand it is the line of struggle against revisionism on a world scale, a struggle which it raised to a higher stage. Like the October Revolution of 1917 and the Chinese Revolution of 1949, it is a great historic event, but it is much more complex and unparalleled in history. The touch-stone of true revolutionaries today is whether they uphold the Cultural Revolution.

The Content of the Cultural Revolution

One must start by examining what Marx and Lenin had to sum up about this problem. In a letter to J. Weydemeyer, Marx observed that, "As to myself, no credit is due to me for discovering the existence of classes in modern society or the struggle between them. Long before me bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this

class struggle and bourgeois economists the anatomy of the classes. What I did that was new was to prove: 1- that the *existence of classes* is only bound up with *particular historical phases in the development of production*, 2- that the class struggle necessarily leads to the *dictatorship of the proletariat*, 3- that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the *abolition of all classes* and to a *classless society*.”

In “Critique of the Gotha Programme,” Marx also says, “Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. Corresponding to this is also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but *the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat*.”

After several years of the October Revolution in Russia, Lenin remarked on the possibility of capitalist restoration, “The transformation of capitalism to communism requires a whole historical period. Before the abolition of this period the exploiting class hopes to re-instate itself in their old position and hope turns into attempt.” (*Collected Works*, vol. 28, p. 254, Bengali edition)

On the question of the birth of a new bourgeoisie from within the Soviet system, Comrade Lenin said, “The bourgeois class are emerging not only from government officials — only a few can emerge from their ranks. They emerge even from the ranks of the peasants and handicraftsmen. This proves that even in Russia commodity production is a living factor, it is working, it is developing, and it is giving birth to a new bourgeoisie just as it does in every capitalist country.” (*Collected Works*, vol. 29, p. 189, Bengali edition)

Stalin, who had many years of experience of socialist construction, said, “We have rooted up capitalism and have established a dictatorship of the proletariat. We are speedily developing socialist industry and integrating peasant economy into it. But we have not yet rooted out the roots of capitalism. Where are these roots? The roots exist in commodity production in the towns and

small-scale production in the villages.” (*Collected Works*, vol. 11, p. 235, Bengali edition) He went on to remark, “The positive remedy to bureaucracy is the cultural development of the working class and the peasantry....” “But bureaucracy will exist, until that stage when overwhelming numbers of the working class are able to think and are capable of controlling the state. How shall we abolish bureaucracy? There is only one way, and that is to organize control from below. To organize the working class on a mass scale to criticize the errors and defects of the bureaucracy.” (*Collected Works*, vol. 11, p. 40, p. 77, Bengali edition)

Despite this, after the death of Comrade Lenin a cultural revolution on a mass scale was not organized and as a result the bureaucracy became very powerful. Though Comrade Stalin followed Lenin in this regard till 1935, he was encircled by the bureaucracy and new bourgeoisie, and he moved away from the Leninist line. This is reflected in the new Constitution adopted at the 18th Congress, which declares that Soviet society was then a classless society, and pleaded for slackening the dictatorship of the proletariat. However, Stalin partially rectified this error in his last thesis, *Economic Problems of Socialism*.

1956: A Decisive Year

Two significant events: in China, the completion of the socialisation of the ownership of the means of production; and in the USSR, the 20th Congress, the usurpation of state and party leadership by the Khrushchev-led revisionists, which strengthened the Chinese revisionists and led to an uncompromising counter-attack by Mao and the revolutionaries, both internationally and in China.

Mao was certainly making important summations. At the national conference of propaganda held in 1957, Comrade Mao said, “For the complete consolidation of socialism, socialist industrialisation and socialist revolution in the field of economy is not sufficient. It is also necessary to carry on continued socialist revolutionary struggle for

the consolidation of socialism, and the struggle to decide whether socialism or capitalism will win will continue for a long historical period.” He further remarked, “In China, although socialist transformation has in the main been completed as regards the system of ownership, and although the large-scale turbulent class struggles of the masses characteristic of times of revolution have in the main come to an end, there are still remnants of the overthrown landlord and comprador classes, there is still a bourgeoisie, and the remoulding of the petite bourgeoisie has only just started. Class struggle is by no means over. The class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, the class struggle between the various political forces, and the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the ideological field will still be protracted and tortuous and at times even very sharp. The proletariat seeks to transform the world according to its own world outlook, and so does the bourgeoisie. In this respect, the question of which will win out, socialism or capitalism, is not really settled yet.” (“On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People,” *Selected Works*)

Several years later, in 1967, following a number of years of back-and-forth struggle with the capitalist roaders, Mao explained the necessity of the Cultural Revolution: “In the past we waged struggles in rural areas, in factories, in the cultural field, and we carried out the socialist education movement. But all this failed to solve the problem because we did not find a form, a method, to arouse the broad masses to expose our dark aspect openly, in an all-round way, and from below. But now we have found that form. That form is the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.” (Report to the Ninth Party Congress) With regard to its purpose, Mao elaborated, “To struggle against power holders who take the capitalist road is the principal task, but it is by no means the goal (of the Cultural Revolution). The goal is to solve the problem of world outlook; it is the question of eradicating the

roots of revisionism." ("Talk to Albanian Military Delegation," *A World to Win*, no. 1)

The Cultural Revolution was initiated in the field of education and culture. But since, despite collectivisation and the transformation of ownership, truly complete people's ownership had not yet been realised, the capitalist roaders sought to take advantage of this and keep control in their own hands in this and every other sphere too. Thus the Cultural Revolution inevitably developed into an all-out, life-and-death struggle against the new and old bourgeoisie. It was a struggle to make the working class and the people conscious and fit to maintain ownership in their own hands, to consolidate the superstructure in conformity with the economic base, and to move society forward, with determination, towards communism. Comrade Mao Tsetung summed up rightly, Put politics in command in every sphere, take class struggle as the key link.

The capitalist roaders led by the Deng-Hu clique defame the Cultural Revolution in every way possible, but the central thrust of their attack is that it brought about economic disaster. Chou En-lai, though he had some leanings towards the capitalist road, delivered a report to the Fourth National People's Congress which exposed this:

"We have over-fulfilled the target of the third five-year plan (1966-70). We shall be able to fulfill the fourth five-year plan by 1975. Progress in agricultural production has been continuous for the last 13 years. Agricultural production has increased by 51% from 1964 to 1974. Since liberation the increase in population has been about 60%; the increase in the production of corn has been 140% and cotton 470%. Compared to 1964 industrial production has increased by 190%, steel 140%, coal 91%, petroleum 650%, electricity 200%, chemical manure 330%, tractors 520%, cotton fibre 333%.... We have successfully exploded the atomic bomb and launched space satellites. We have neither internal nor external debt. The price of commodities is fixed, and socialist construction and the living standard of

the people are advancing on a sound footing. Reactionaries inside and outside China hoped that the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution would cripple the development of the national economy. But reality has slapped them in the face."

Up until 1976, the proletarian revolutionaries in China were able to consolidate their position and continue to advance. But a number of incidents, especially the defection of Lin Biao, the sudden death of leaders of the first rank and finally the death of Comrade Mao, led to a change in the balance of forces between the revolutionaries and counter-revolutionaries. This was compounded by some errors of the revolutionaries, for example, an absence of far-sightedness with regard to a possible coup. Though organisational measures such as consolidating the revolutionary committees had begun, these had not yet really been consolidated. There were other factors weakening the revolutionaries. The Russian Revolution took place in a capitalist country, where there were many proletarians, whereas the Chinese Revolution took place in a semi-feudal, semi-colonial society where only a small portion of the people were working class. As a result the struggle in the realm of the superstructure was especially complex. Comrade Mao was acutely aware of and warned repeatedly about all this.

In spite of the reactionary coup, the contribution of the Cultural Revolution is truly great. Firstly, it checked the rise of the capitalist roaders for a decade. Secondly, because the struggle in China against restorationism and revisionism went so deeply, the revisionists have not been able to confuse the people and many revolutionaries so much as the Russian revisionists did. Thirdly, in spite of their strong desire, they could not dare to destroy the body of Mao as the Russian revisionists did. Fourthly, revolutionaries like Chiang Ching and Chang Chun-chiao were able to withstand the counter-revolutionary attacks. And finally, the Chinese counter-revolutionaries face strong resistance from their own people and so are forced to try and drug the

youth with feudal and imperialist culture.

Just as with the development of matter, the development of revolution does not move along a straight line, but in spirals. There will be temporary defeats, and temporary retreats. But the revolutionary movement of the past has shown that every temporary setback has been followed by a great leap forward. Tempered by the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, the working class of China and the world will be able to come out of the present crisis of the international communist movement. Indeed, the process has already begun. Basing themselves on the ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought and the historical experience of the Cultural Revolution, a number of Marxist-Leninist parties and organisations have already formed the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, with a view to forming an international of a new type. The people of Peru, led by the Communist Party of Peru based on Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, as they say, are continuing to advance their armed struggle in the face of severe repression by the reactionaries of Peru and of the imperialist powers, including both the U.S. and Soviet imperialists. Armed struggle is erupting in other countries as well.

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution is the principal content of Mao's Thought; it is a new and immortal contribution to the working class of China and the world; it is the touchstone of genuine revolutionaries. Just as those who accept Marx but not Lenin are not genuine Marxists, so too those that accept Marx and Lenin but not Mao and the Cultural Revolution cannot be considered genuine Marxist-Leninists. As Leninism is a qualitative development of Marxism, so too is Mao Tsetung Thought a qualitative development of Marxism-Leninism. Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought is the ideology of the working class; it is the science of revolution; it is invincible.

Long Live Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought!
Long Live the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution! □