

ON THE FORMS OF TRANSITION TO SOCIALISM

Marxism-Leninism proceeds to examine the question of forms of transition to socialism on the basis of the scientific analysis made regarding the origin of state and its evolution, and its present and future in the era of socialist revolution.

What is the state, according to Marxism-Leninism? In short, "the state is a special organisation of force; it is an organisation of violence for the suppression of some class". The bourgeois states may vary in form but their essence is the same, i.e., in the final analysis they are nothing but the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Similarly, the proletarian states may assume different forms, but their essence can be nothing but the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In view of this irrefutably established scientific truth, the modern working class, in its fight for political power and social emancipation, at every stage of its development,

is inevitably confronted with the bourgeois state, i.e., the special organisation of violence to suppress the working class. Thus, the problem of how to meet this bourgeois violence with a view to putting an end to all violence in the relations of men is one of the key problems of the socialist revolution.

It is a fact that violence is alien to the Marxist-Leninist ideals. The foremost thinkers, founders and leaders of Marxism-Leninism were always eager to find out ways and means to restrict, minimise and, if possible, to avoid the bourgeois violence in the way of effecting the socialist revolution, since peaceful transition is advantageous to the proletariat. Any number of instances from the history of the working class movement can be cited to substantiate this proposition of ours.

However, Marxism-Leninism, as Lenin has pointed out, while decisively rejecting the theory "that armed uprising is a form of struggle which is obligatory always and under all conditions" as totally alien to its science, and while making it obligatory for proletarian revolutions to seize every opportunity that history offers for effecting peaceful transition, takes serious note of the realities of how the international bourgeoisie is increasingly resorting to brutal violence and terror and how it is bent upon barring the road to peaceful transition. Lenin, noting this phenomenon as early as October 1916, observed, "However, it cannot be denied that in individual cases, by way of exception, some small country, for instance, after the socialist revolution had been accomplished in a neighbouring big country, peaceful surrender of power by the bourgeoisie is possible, if it is convinced that resistance is hopeless and if it prefers to save its skin. It is much more likely, of course, that even in small states socialism will not be achieved without civil war, and for that reason the only programme of international social democracy must be recognition of civil war, though violence is, of course, alien to our ideals. The same, *mutatis mutandis*—with necessary alterations—is applicable to nations". (Lenin, *A Caricature of Marxism*)

Our Party, keeping all these precepts of Marxism-Leninism in view and also taking note of the revolutionary changes that have taken place in the correlation of class

forces in the world during the last half a century since the above pronouncements of Lenin, and particularly the developments following the socialist victory in the anti-fascist war, states in its Programme :

“The Communist Party of India strives to achieve the establishment of People’s Democracy and socialist transformation through peaceful means. By developing a powerful mass revolutionary movement, by combining parliamentary and extra-parliamentary struggles, the working class and its allies will try their utmost to overcome the resistance of the forces of reaction and to bring about these transformations through peaceful means”. Of course, it is also simultaneously pointed out that it needs “always to be borne in mind that the ruling classes never relinquish their power voluntarily”, and that “they seek to defy the will of the people and seek to reverse it by lawlessness and violence”.

But the modern revisionists maintain that in view of the changed correlation of forces on an international scale as well as in each country in favour of the proletariat and its cause of socialism, and in view of the ever-increasing grip of the ideas of socialism on the minds of wide masses of the people, the universal law of violent revolution as propounded by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, forced on the proletariat by the bourgeoisie, and as universally accepted by all the Marxist-Leninists has become outmoded and hence to be discarded. In its place, they argue, the law of peaceful transition and parliamentary path is to be substituted; they even expound the thesis that socialist transformation can be effected by a state of so-called National Democracy where the bourgeoisie and the proletariat hold joint hegemony of the National Democratic Revolution and the National Democratic state; thus they seek to revise Marxism-Leninism on certain basic and fundamental issues of the proletarian revolution, issues such as the Marxist-Leninist concept of state and revolution and the concept of proletarian hegemony in the revolutions of the present era.

The basic teachings of Marxism-Leninism proceed on the assumption that the fundamental question of every revolution is that of state power.

Lenin commenting on the opportunist distortion of the concept of state and revolution observed: “The distortion and hushing up of *the question of the relation of the proletarian revolution to the state* could not but play an immense role at a time when states, which possess a *military apparatus expanded as a consequence of imperialist rivalry, have turned into monsters* which are exterminating millions of people in order to settle the issue as to whether England or Germany—this or that finance capital—is to rule the world”. (Emphasis added.)

These observations were made some fifty years ago, and during this period not only ‘as a consequence of imperialist rivalry’ but also due to the mortal conflict between the forces of world socialism and capitalism, the capitalist states have come to build and expand a thousand times more monstrous military apparatuses. The bourgeois states which are, in essence, nothing but a special organisation of force and violence for the suppression of the proletariat and the people, have perfected this engine of suppression to such a monstrous degree in the present period that even the smallest democratic and class struggle of the proletariat has to encounter brutal force—nay, the very existence and functioning of the revolutionary parties and organisations are confronted at every stage with terrific violence and repression at the hand of the huge police and the military machine of the state. This state of affairs has today become a rule rather than an exception. The entire course of history in the post-second world war period confirms this truth and no revolution in any of the continents of Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe was allowed by the bourgeoisie to take to the peaceful path, and lakhs of freedom-fighters and proletarian revolutionaries in several countries are being butchered by the bourgeois police and military.

In the face of these facts, the first question that obviously arises is, whether it is permissible for any Marxist-Leninist to examine the question of forms of transition of socialist revolution and national liberation revolution in isolation from the monopoly capitalist state or states in question.

Our answer should be clear and categorical, that it is

utterly un-Marxian to discuss the issue of revolution in isolation from the state. If Marxism-Leninism has come to the conclusion that the capitalist class by resorting to violence on the working class compels the latter to resort to the use of counter-violence it is precisely after a thorough and penetrating analysis of the role of the state in general, and the bourgeois state in particular, and not otherwise.

If Marx and Engels during the 1870's made exceptions of the USA and Britain from this universal law, they did so only after a concrete examination of the two bourgeois states in question, where militarism had not yet developed to high proportions, where standing armies were not built and hence there was a possibility of the workers reaching their goal of socialism by peaceful means.

If Lenin after studying the development of capitalism to the stage of monopoly capitalism and imperialism asserted that the above exceptions conceived by Marx and Engels in 1870 to the USA and Britain would no more hold valid, it was precisely based on the concrete study and analysis of the state apparatuses of the USA and Britain which had developed militarism to enormous proportions.

Similarly, if Lenin visualised the possibility of a peaceful transition of the revolution in Russia as an exception during the period between April and July 1917, it was done only after the concrete analysis of the state and revolution at that stage when the arms were in the hands of the masses, when the state was not in a position to use armed force against the proletariat, and when a 'dual power' came to exist in the process of revolution in the form of armed workers', peasants' and soldiers' soviets and the bourgeois provisional government.

The thesis of peaceful transition advocated by the modern revisionists has nothing in common with either Marxism-Leninism or its tested method of examining the question concretely, i.e., in relation to the state and its police-military apparatus. The enunciation and advocacy of this utterly revisionist thesis is nothing but giving encomiums to the bourgeoisie and ascribing to it a peace-loving and democratic character, intended to ideologically disarm and disorientate the revolutionary proletariat, and a down-

right betrayal of Marxist-Leninist teachings on the state and revolution.

To conclude, there is no denying the fact that the proletariat would prefer to achieve the revolution and win power by peaceful means. Marx, Engels and Lenin, as the foremost leaders of the world proletariat, did strive to achieve the socialist revolution by peaceful means wherever and whenever such an opportunity did open before them without allowing it to be missed.

Guided by their great teachings and their practice, our Party, as correctly incorporated in our Party Programme, "strives to achieve the establishment of People's Democracy and socialist transformation through peaceful means", while, of course, not forgetting for a moment that the ruling classes seek to bar this road at every turn by resorting to violence and terror and hence the need to be ever vigilant and prepared to meet all such exigencies.

THE CONCEPT OF NATIONAL DEMOCRACY AND NON-CAPITALIST PATH

Equally revisionist and avowedly right opportunist is the thesis of the so-called non-capitalist path and National Democracy that is being advocated and practised by the modern revisionists as a new transitional form for socialist revolution, a thesis that negates the concept of proletarian hegemony and advocates joint hegemony along with the bourgeoisie to effect socialist transition, a thesis that distorts the Leninist concept regarding the new possibilities of skipping the stage of capitalist relations for backward countries, to reach socialism.

It is true that the issue—whether the capitalist stage of development is inevitable for the backward nations which are liberating themselves after the first world war and the victorious October socialist revolution, to march to socialist development—was seriously debated at the Second Congress of the Third International, held in the middle of 1920. Lenin answered this question and the Second Congress had endorsed his thesis on the subject.