

## ON THE ISSUE OF WAR AND PEACE AND LENIN'S THESIS ON IMPERIALISM

War is a constant companion of monopoly capitalism and imperialism. The history of monopoly capitalism and imperialism, its existence and growth during the last half a century and more, is replete with violence, war and bloodshed on a scale and bitterness unknown in history. In the short span of twentyfive years, the world bourgeoisie plunged humanity into two world wars, and slaughtered forty million men while maiming another eighty million, apart from the colossal destruction of wealth accumulated through the toil and sweat of billions of men for ages. Add to this ghastly list, the scores of wars of aggression on several small and weaker states by different imperialist

states, in which millions of men were butchered in order to impose upon them colonial, semi-colonial or neo-colonial slavery. Today, the imperialists are once again feverishly preparing to plunge the world into another global war, a war with the most destructive and savage military technique of atomic and hydrogen weapons.

Let it be again noted that it is no other class in modern society than the working class guided by Marxism-Leninism that has hoisted the banner of revolt against capitalism and imperialism, a system that inevitably breeds violence and war. The Great October Revolution in Russia, as Lenin aptly put it, was fought with the slogan of "an immediate peace at all costs", and it was "the first victory to abolish war and to unite workers of all countries against the united bourgeoisie of various nations, against the bourgeoisie that makes peace and war at the expense of the slaves of capital, the wage-workers, the working people". Further, he observed that "the first Bolshevik revolution has wrested the first hundred million people of this earth from the clutches of imperialist war and the imperialist world. Subsequent revolutions will save the rest of mankind from such wars and from such world." (Lenin's speech at the Fourth Anniversary of October Revolution)

Such in brief is the Marxist-Leninist outlook on the issue of war and peace. It is precisely this outlook that guided the Soviet Union, the first socialist state, which stood as the principal bulwark in defence of world peace and against world war. It was the socialist Soviet Union that stood in the forefront in the anti-fascist war, rescued the world from the clutches of fascism and fascist war, and paved the way for the emergence of the powerful world socialist camp. The victory of national liberation and socialist revolutions in a number of countries in the wake of the anti-fascist war and the victory of the mighty Chinese revolution in particular, have tremendously altered the international balance of class forces in favour of peace, democracy and socialism, and against war and imperialism. There certainly have arisen new possibilities of averting a new world war and preventing and outlawing a nuclear war. But none can ignore the fact that these possibilities can be translated into realities only if the Communist

Parties and the socialist states of the world keep on uniting and strengthening all the forces of peace and democracy that can be united, and the Communist Parties and the socialist camp conduct the revolutionary struggle for peace on strict Marxist-Leninist lines, and they do not fall victims to either pacifist illusions fostered by the imperialists or to the class collaborationist utopias of social democracy. If the imperialists succeed in deceiving the leaders of the revolutionary proletariat in different countries by their peace manoeuvres and tricks, the danger for world peace and the real threat of a war comes nearer, notwithstanding the loud clamour and great protestations for world peace and against war.

It is in this background that we have to examine the ideological controversy regarding the thesis of Lenin on imperialism and wars.

Lenin, with his masterly and penetrating analysis of the development of capitalism had described "imperialism as the monopoly stage of capitalism", and observed that "imperialism is, in general, striving towards violence and reaction". Further, he stated that "the characteristic feature of imperialism is precisely that it strives to annex not *only* agrarian territories, but even most highly industrialised regions, because, the fact that the world is already divided up obliges those contemplating a *redivision* to reach out for *every kind* of territory; and an essential feature of imperialism is the rivalry between several great powers in striving for hegemony, i. e., for the conquest of territory, not so much directly for themselves as to weaken the adversary and undermine his hegemony". He had summed up, "That imperialist wars are absolutely inevitable under *such* an economic system, *as long as* private property in the means of production exists"; and "also the possibility and the inevitability first, of revolutionary national rebellions and wars; second, of proletarian wars and rebellions *against* the bourgeoisie; and, third, of a combination of both kinds of revolutionary wars, etc."

Life during these years has demonstrated how every syllable of this thesis on imperialism and wars by the great Lenin, a thesis propounded half a century ago, is absolutely correct to its last detail and what yeomen service it has

rendered to the cause of the international proletariat and its emancipatory mission in the world.

The modern revisionists vainly claiming to be creative Marxists seriously challenge the thesis of Lenin on imperialism and wars under the pretext of applying Marxism-Leninism to the conditions obtaining in the present new epoch, and assert that the "Marxist-Leninist precept that wars are inevitable as long as imperialism exists" is outmoded and no more valid, since imperialism, today, has ceased to be an all-embracing world system as it once used to be, and also because strong social and political forces which oppose war have emerged to compel the imperialists to renounce war. They advance the new thesis that "war is not fatalistically inevitable", a thesis that clumsily clubs different types of wars—wars between socialist and imperialist states, inter-imperialist wars, wars of national liberation, civil wars, etc.—and seek to discard the Marxist-Leninist thesis on imperialism and wars.

The authors and adherents of this new revised thesis on imperialism and wars argue that the new technological developments in warfare and the possession of the most destructive nuclear weapons by the principal contending forces of the day—imperialism and socialism, is the key factor that decisively influences the thesis of Lenin on imperialism and wars. Marxism-Leninism can never agree that the growth and development of military technique can alter the fundamental social laws of classes, class contradictions, class struggle and class war. As Lenin puts it, "Military tactics are determined by the level of military technique", but it would be a grave departure from Marxism to maintain that military technique can determine the fate of man, social laws and social development.

Since the world capitalist and imperialist social order is still in existence over three-fourths of the globe's surface covering two-thirds of humanity, since almost all the traditional capitalist and imperialist states such as the USA, Britain, France, West Germany, Japan, Italy, etc., still remain under the powerful grip of monopoly capital, and since the capitalist encirclement of the socialist states is not yet replaced by the socialist encirclement of capitalist states, the thesis of Lenin on imperialism and wars remains valid,

and to treat it as having become obsolete is to fundamentally depart from Marxism-Leninism.

The radically changed correlation of forces on a world plane in favour of socialism and against imperialism in the present epoch certainly has opened the possibilities of preventing, averting and postponing a particular war, or a war with particularly destructive technique and preserving the peace to that extent. But wars can be eliminated and lasting peace secured only when imperialism is eliminated; as long as imperialism exists, there will be soil for wars of aggression.

Lastly, as Lenin pointed out, "when assessing any given situation, a Marxist must proceed not from the possible, but from the actual". If, instead of proceeding on the basis of the actual and existing realities, i.e., the existence of powerful imperialist forces in terms of their economic, political and military resources, one were to proceed on several possibilities of averting war and establishing durable and enduring peace, and on that basis weave out theories and work out tactics, one is bound to end in grief.

#### ON DISARMAMENT AND BANNING OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

The feverish armament race, the invention, manufacture and huge stockpiling of nuclear bombs, the setting up of thousands of military bases all over the globe, the forging of aggressive military alliances and blocs and the rapid militarisation of the economies in the present era are the products of monopoly capitalism in its desperate bid to escape its destined and impending doom.

In the face of this ever-growing menace of arms drive of the imperialists, the socialist states are duty bound to develop their armed might to defend their states against any imperialist aggression and to defend the cause of world socialist revolution and peace. It is also the duty of the world socialist and peace forces to fight against the imperialists' arms expansion and war drive and raise the demand for general disarmament. While not forgetting the fact that the imperialists would not agree to such a total and general disarmament, since carrying it out would tanta-