

THE MAIN CONTRADICTION AND THE "INTERMEDIATE ZONE"

The theories propounded by the Chinese leadership about the main contradiction of modern society and what they call the "intermediate zone" in the modern world are unknown to the history of Marxism since the publication of the Communist Manifesto in 1848.

No support can be found for these theories in anything written by Marx, Engels and Lenin. No document of the international communist movement has ever advocated them. No deviationist from Marxism-Leninism, either in the left-sectarian or in the right-reformist direction has ever put them forward.

There is plenty of evidence, however, to demonstrate that these theories are the natural generalisation of the opportunist, narrow-nationalist and disruptive policies that the CPC leadership has been pursuing in international democratic organisations and in the matter of the foreign relations of the People's Republic of China. That is their only possible explanation.

Before coming to the practical plane, however, let us dispose of the theories on a theoretical plane.

Ever since the days of Marx, all Marxist classics have asserted that the main contradiction of modern society is that between capital and labour. Marxist literature has never ignored, and in fact, has fully brought out all the other contradictions of modern society, e.g., between the oppressed nations and imperialism, between the imperialist nations themselves, and so on. Not merely this, Marxist literature has scientifically and minutely worked out how the working class, in its advance to power for the building

of socialism, must utilise all the contradictions of modern society. The alliances which the working class has to form in capitalist, semi-colonial and colonial countries, in the imperialist and newly-independent countries, etc., for the national democratic and socialist revolutions are a vital and inseparable part of the heritage of Marxism-Leninism.

However, the over-riding fact remains that the basic contradiction of modern society is between capital and labour. Marx and Engels ended the *Communist Manifesto* with the historic slogan, "Workers of all countries, Unite!" Marxism would be meaningless without this focal point of the world working class struggle against the world bourgeoisie.

With the victory of the Russian Revolution this basic contradiction found its most acute expression in the contradiction between the imperialist states and the Soviet Union. Lenin wrote that

all events of world politics inevitably centre round one focal point, viz., the struggle of the bourgeoisie against the Soviet Russian Republic.

With the advance of the socialist revolutions after the Second World War, the contradiction found its sharpest form in the contradiction between the camp of socialism and the camp of imperialism, in the struggle between the two social systems. As the Moscow Declaration of 1957 stated,

In our epoch world development is determined by the course and results of the competition between two diametrically opposed social systems.

It is a recognised fact, not only among Marxists but among national revolutionary leaders in many countries of the world that the Russian Revolution, having made a breach in the world imperialist system, unleashed national liberation movements in Africa and Asia. Victorious socialist

revolutions in a number of countries after the Second World War gave a still greater impetus and strength to national liberation struggles in Asia and Africa and "contributed decisively" to their success, as clearly stated in the Eighty-one Parties' Statement. Not merely this. It is the might of the socialist system that has helped the newly-independent countries to successfully defend themselves from the economic, political and military attacks of the imperialist powers. The socialist system has been the main force that has helped the newly-independent countries to strengthen their economic and political independence.

The mighty upsurge of the revolutionary national liberation struggle has undoubtedly given powerful blows to imperialism and weakened it. It has also given great help to the struggle for socialism and strengthened world peace. But it would be putting the cart before the horse to imagine that it is the national liberation struggles that have decisively contributed to the victory of socialism and not vice versa. In fact, Marxist-Leninists consider the national liberation struggles of modern society as an organic part of the world socialist revolution, and not the other way round.

It is necessary to emphasise this fact, though it should be obvious to anyone acquainted with the ABC of Marxism-Leninism, because the Chinese leadership, in its zeal to make out that it is the true and loyal champion of colonial liberation as against the Soviet leaders who have "gone over to imperialism to oppose national liberation," has now put forth the theory that the contradiction between the oppressed nations and imperialism is the main contradiction of modern society, and not that between capitalism and socialism.

If the Chinese leadership had wanted to say that imperialism is more vulnerable in the colonies than in the advanced capitalist countries themselves, it would not be wrong.

But as usual, it jumbles a correct point with a number of others and draws totally wrong conclusions.

First, the CC CPC letter of June 14 mentions four contradictions of modern society (pp. 6 & 7) and characterises all of them as "fundamental contradictions." Among these four are mentioned the contradictions among the imperialist countries and among monopoly capitalist groups which certainly cannot be placed in the same fundamental category as the contradiction between the socialist camp and the imperialist camp, or that between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, *as has been done by the June 14 letter.*

Second, among the four contradictions mentioned, the letter does not at all attempt to say which is the fundamental one. Obviously, not all the four can be basic, however important all the four may be, however true it may be that they are all inseparable from imperialism. To say that a certain contradiction is inseparable from the contemporary world is not the same thing as to say that it is the basic contradiction of the contemporary world.

And, third, the June 14 letter altogether overshoots the mark where it states that "the whole cause of the international proletarian revolution hinges on the outcome of the revolutionary struggles of the people of these areas," (p. 12 emphasis ours) i.e., the people of the oppressed nations.

The fact is that the cause of the oppressed nations and their revolutionary struggles "hinges on" the international proletarian revolution, on the socialist system, and not that of the latter on the former. About this, there is not, and cannot be the remotest doubt in the mind of any communist. There never has been any.

Why, then, should the CPC leaders come out with a theory which they themselves have never propounded in their own history of the last forty-five years? People have not forgotten that Mao Tse-tung himself had said that it was the salvos of the Russian Revolution that unleashed

the Chinese revolutionary movement and that, but for the defeat of the fascist powers in the Second World War, due primarily to the Soviet Union, the Chinese revolution could not have succeeded in 1948. Why have the Chinese leaders chosen to forget what they themselves asserted so clearly in the past?

The reply to this question is to be found in the virulent broadcasts of the Peking Radio spitting fire and thunder, round the clock, for all the Afro-Asian and Latin American people to hear. The unending refrain of the broadcasts is that China is the champion of the oppressed peoples and nations who have been betrayed to the imperialists by the USSR as also by the communist parties in advanced capitalist countries like France, Italy, USA and others.

The reply is to be found in the behaviour of Chinese delegates in international democratic organisations. Whether it is the WFTU or the World Peace Council or the Afro-Asian Conference or the Women's International Democratic Federation, the Chinese leaders leave no stone unturned to incite the racial feelings of the Afro-Asian people against the Soviet Union and the communist parties in Europe and the USA.

In informal talks, it is openly suggested that white people cannot understand the problems of the dark people. It is suggested that working class living standards in the USSR and the West European capitalist countries having risen, communists of those countries have lost their ardour for colonial liberation. The USSR is accused of wanting to purchase peace at the sacrifice of the freedom and liberation of the colonial and oppressed peoples. Soviet representatives in the World Peace Council have been accused of calling the colonial liberation movement a movement of corpses. A demand has been made for the exclusion of Soviet fraternal delegates from every Afro-Asian organisation on the ground that they are not Asians. Apart from the racial and disruptive nature of such a demand, even geographically

it is not justified, since the greater part of the Soviet Union is in Asia and its delegations, as a rule, are composed of members hailing both from European and Asian nationalities.

But that, of course, is not the worst. The worst is that by working up such a sentiment, the Chinese leaders not only libel European communists and democrats who have consistently fought their hardest in the cause of colonial liberation, they also attempt to deprive the colonial and newly-independent peoples themselves of their most powerful and loyal allies in the whole world. This is the worst disservice that could be rendered to the oppressed nations themselves.

That such attempts of the Chinese leaders to prejudice the people of the oppressed nations against the USSR and the European working class, and thereby to drive a wedge between them have failed is due to entirely different reasons. In fact, by such attempts, the Chinese leadership in increasingly alienating none but itself from the very people whose cause it claims to champion. The monumental service rendered by the USSR to national liberation struggles and to the newly-independent countries cannot be forgotten by them. The peoples of the former and remaining colonies of Great Britain, France, Portugal, USA, etc., can never forget the heroic battles waged by the working class of these countries at the behest of their communist parties in support of the struggles of the colonies of "their own bourgeoisie." This glorious record of years of fraternal support given even by shedding blood, cannot be wiped out by the narrow-minded, chauvinistic incitement of the Chinese leadership.

So much about the main contradiction. Coming to the question of the so-called "intermediate zone," it beats all records of the Chinese leadership in inventing unprincipled and opportunist theories to suit its short-sighted and egoistic policies.

What is the theory of the intermediate zone? Section 7

of the CC CPC letter of June 14 (pp. 10 and 11) tells us that the intermediate zone means all the countries of the world excluding the USA at one end and the socialist countries at the other. Then we are reminded, about which there never has been any difference, that the USA is the main force of aggression and war, the bulwark of world reaction, the mainstay of colonialism, etc. Further, that US monopoly capital is out to "subject all the peoples and countries of the world, including its allies, to domination and enslavement," as a result of which "the US imperialists have placed themselves in opposition to the people of the whole world and have become encircled by them." And the conclusion is drawn that "the international proletariat must and can unite all the forces that can be united, make use of the internal contradictions in the enemy camp, and establish the broadest united front against the US imperialists and their lackeys." Such is the presentation of the theory of the intermediate zone.

The crux of such a presentation of the strategy of the international proletariat to form the broadest united front against US imperialism is obvious. It is that no qualitative difference is made among the countries of the intermediate zone. They include the most bellicose and revanchist of the imperialist powers, viz., West Germany; the most obdurate and brutal imperialist countries such as Belgium and Portugal; the most racist states such as South Africa and South Rhodesia; the aggressive imperialist Nato bloc; the Asian members of Seato such as Pakistan and Thailand; and the newly independent peaceloving states of Asia and Africa. All of them are bunched together in the "intermediate zone."

Lest it be objected that all these states cannot be put on the same plane, there is the reference to "the contradiction in the enemy camp," and "the lackeys of the US imperialists."

No such qualifications, however, can cure the theory of

its deformations. The Moscow Statement clearly tells us that from the point of view of social systems, the world is divided into the countries of the capitalist system and those of the socialist system. And from the point of view of the crucial issue of day, viz., war and peace, the world is divided into the camp of peace and the camp of aggression and war. The theory of the "intermediate zone" completely obliterates the vital distinction between the countries of the camp of peace and the countries belonging to the imperialist military blocs.

Thereby, it very seriously underestimates the independent, war-like propensities of West Germany, France, England, etc., underestimates the war-danger particularly for the socialist camp, and makes the non-US Nato powers something like unwilling and helpless victims of the USA. At the other extreme, it completely denies the valuable contribution to the cause of peace which has been made and is being made by the newly-independent Afro-Asian countries and the growing number of other countries which, driven by fear of the devastating nature of atomic war, are increasingly gravitating towards a foreign policy of non-alignment and peace.

Both these lapses are utterly impermissible. In the modern world, to put India, the UAR, Indonesia, South Vietnam, Turkey, West Germany, France, England, etc., in the same category is to throw overboard a vital strategical concept of the Moscow Statement, viz., the struggle for broadening and strengthening the unity of the camp of peace against the camp of aggression and war.

Thus the extremely grave consequence of the theory of the "intermediate zone" is that it disrupts the unity of the world forces of peace in their struggle against imperialist aggression and war.

Naturally what follows such an unprincipled approach to world politics is opportunism. For the operative line which follows from it is that China, the propounder of the theory

of the "intermediate zone," is free to enter into any opportunist alliances with any country in pursuit of its narrow-nationalistic and chauvinistic aims and ambitions.

How else is one to explain the amazing and growing mutual support being given by Pakistan and China to each other on most unexpected issues? In fact, such support has already advanced to the point of collusion.

Pakistan is a member of the Seato, and an avowedly communal state. Kashmir is juridically and by the verdict of its people, a part of India. India belongs to the camp of the newly-liberated, anti-colonial, peaceful countries of Asia. The first fact is unquestioned. The second and the third are recognised by all socialist countries and communist parties.

And yet what are the evaluations and policy of the Chinese leadership with regard to the questions raised by these facts? India is run down as an American tool. No occasion is lost for highlighting the anti-democratic and anti-people acts of the Indian government. On the other hand, not even the remotest reference is made to the utterly dictatorial and anti-democratic nature of the regime in Pakistan. The viciously communal character of the state of Pakistan and the campaign of communal hatred and butchery run by the rulers and newspapers of Pakistan are completely ignored. Border agreements are made with Pakistan in respect of the Kashmir territory wrongfully occupied by it. Pakistan's demand for a plebiscite in Kashmir has been supported in the name of the principle of self-determination. And to top all, even Pakistan's membership of Seato is defended as a defensive act (defence against whom?).

In return, Pakistan has declared India as an aggressor against China. Mr. Bhutto, the Foreign Minister of Pakistan, declared in the Pakistan legislature that in the event of an armed conflict with India, Pakistan's great Asian neighbour will come to its aid.

What is one to make out of all this except that China and Pakistan have drawn closer because of their common enmity towards India? Is there a single sentence in the Moscow Statement which can justify such a policy? Can a socialist country ally itself with a country in an imperialist military bloc against a peace-loving, anti-colonial country? One would be considered foolish even to put such a question.

Hence the theory of the "intermediate zone" which gives you free licence to align yourself with anybody against anybody for your own narrow national interest.

Irrespective of China's policies, communists and democrats all over the world have welcomed de Gaulle's recognition of China. But behind this new-found love between China and another country of the "intermediate zone," one cannot fail to notice the common opposition of both to the Partial Test Ban Treaty, based on pure great power ego.

Such is the actual working of the theory of the "intermediate zone."