

MADURAI DOCUMENT RAISES

REVISIONIST SLOGAN OF PEACEFUL TRANSITION

Editorial Board, DESHABRATI

The People who serve the cause of reaction and implement a counter-revolutionary line under cover of revolutionary phrase-mongering, desperately try to keep up a revolutionary facade. They do not attempt to impose their line all at one go—no, that is too risky for them—they prefer to advance step by step and get their line accepted gradually.

This desperate attempt to keep up a revolutionary facade is revealed in all its ugly nakedness in that portion of the document where the neo-revisionist leading clique deals with the question of the form of transition to socialism. It is here that their revolutionary phrase-mongering utterly fails to hide their real face, the face of a lackey of the reactionary ruling classes. This portion of the document reads: "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 out-moded and hence to be discarded. In its place, they argue, the law of peaceful transition and parliamentary path is to be substituted;" and further, "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 proletarian hegemony in the revolutions of the present era."

This is one of a series of articles now appearing in the Bengali Weekly DESHABRATI, criticising the Madurai ideological document produced by the neo-revisionist leading clique of the CPI (M). This article, originally in Bengali, was published in the DESHABRATI of November 2, 1967.

And so, the authors of the Madurai document remind us on more than one occasion of the important Marxist-Leninist concepts about the state. They have repeatedly stressed that the state is only an organisation of violence for the suppression of one class by another, that the bourgeois states are nothing but armed organisations for the violent suppression of the proletariat and the people. They have also not forgotten to refer to the fact that a fundamental question of every revolution is that of state power and that all the basic Marxist-Leninist teachings about revolution have revolved round this fundamental question.

Having done all this for our benefit, they pose a question—whether it will not be a violation of the tenets of Marxism-Leninism to consider the issue of socialist revolution or the national liberation revolution in isolation from the question of the state—and answering it themselves, they say: “Our answer should be clear and categorical that it is utterly un-Marxian to discuss the issue of revolution in isolation from the state.”

Well, let us now see what Marxist criteria these Madurai revolutionaries place before us in opposition to the un-Marxian criteria noted above. They say: 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.”

From the above it would appear that our Madurai-revolutionaries have been, of course according to their own claim, following the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, and have not rejected the Marxist theory of the state. And it is on this point, they would have us believe that they are different from the revisionists. If they emphasize the necessity for a

peaceful transition to socialism and strive for it, it is only because—“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 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.”

So it is clear that if these people have some complaint to make about the revisionists, it is certainly not because the revisionists stand for a peaceful transition to socialism. Oh, no! These people themselves are striving for such a peaceful transition, because, as they allege, were not Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin themselves ever eager to strive for such a transition? These cunning agents of the reactionary ruling classes chide the revisionists for an entirely different reason. They say to the revisionists: Why on earth do you have to present the theme of peaceful transition as a general rule? What prevents you from referring to the universal law of armed revolution and then go on canvassing the peaceful path? Look, how we have referred to the Marxist teaching that the state and revolution should never be considered in isolation from each other, and then proceeded to deal with them as separate questions—why can’t you follow our method, why do you need to avoid any reference to the question of the state? In other words, you have tried to revise Marxism by openly declaring that some of its basic theories have become out-moded and worthless with the passage of time—so, how can we help calling you revisionists and agents of the bourgeoisie? But we do not declare any Marxian theory as out-moded: on the contrary, we talk of applying them creatively in concrete circumstances and only then advocate the peaceful path. And look, how this simple trick has turned us into genuine Marxists and revolutionaries!

Following up, they say, “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."

So it transpires that the authors of the document have charted their course like this—they will talk of examining the question of transition to socialism in relation to the question of the state and the police-military apparatus of the state, and then will strive to establish people's democracy and pass over to socialism in a peaceful manner—and all this in the name of following the teachings and the practice of the great leaders of the proletariat. Their argument behind this seems to be—were not "the foremost thinkers, founders and leaders of Marxism-Leninism always eager" to take the peaceful path? If they could do it, why not we?

We may now study more closely how these henchmen of reaction try to advance their treacherous line. They present the entire practice of Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin in such a manner as to give the impression that these great revolutionaries always tried to adhere to the peaceful path although, in respect of social revolutions, they have taught us that the question of revolution cannot be considered in isolation from the question of the state. By this trick these henchmen want people to believe that merely a reference to the Marxist tenet that 'the question of social revolution cannot be considered in isolation from that of the state power' is about everything that Marxism teaches about the state and revolution. This is quite understandable, because a truthful presentation of the teachings of Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin in this regard would at once ruin their game and would clearly expose how they have presented the practice of those great leaders in a distorted manner. How long, do they imagine, genuine Marxist-Leninists are going to put up with this kind of knavery of theirs?

But in order to tear off the mask that these henchmen of reaction wear we must recall the essence of the basic teachings of Marxism regarding the state and revolution. Marxism teaches us that the state under capitalism is an organisation which protects the interests of the capitalists and landlords and, as such, it is essentially an organisation of armed power in the form

of police, military etc. That this armed power will be used to crush every attempt to overthrow the vested interests in capital and in land through a social revolution is axiomatic. That is why, whenever workers, or peasants or other exploited toiling people organise themselves as a class against the capitalist and landlord classes, whenever they want to advance along the path of class struggle in order to abolish classes, they will have to reckon invariably with this armed power at every step. So, in order to achieve victory in the social revolution, *i. e.*, in order to abolish old class relations and to advance, step by step, towards a classless society on the basis of new class relations, the exploited classes must be able to smash the state power of the vested class interests. Since the essence of state power is the armed forces, state power can only be smashed by employing armed might. This is exactly what is meant when we say that Marxism-Leninism teaches us to consider the question of revolution in relation to the question of state power.

This is what Marx meant when he said that force is the midwife of history. When Lenin said that the settlement of major issues in the life of a nation can only be done by force (*Two Tactics*) or when Engels said that his main job was to prove the necessity of a violent revolution (*in a letter written in 1846*), this was precisely what they meant. Stalin, while defending Leninism, repeatedly pointed to this. It was precisely this idea that Mao Tse-tung developed when he said, "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun," and "It is only by the power of the gun that the working class and the labouring masses can defeat the armed bourgeoisie and landlords; in this sense we may say that only with guns can the whole world be transformed."

Thus, it is evident that the foremost Marxist leaders of the world do not merely teach that the questions of state and revolution cannot be considered in isolation from each other, they go beyond this and call upon the people to smash the state power, which is armed power, with the help of the armed power of their own. This organic connection between the teachings and the practice of these great leaders, that is, the question of smashing

the bourgeois state apparatus, has been suppressed in the Madurai document deliberately. Otherwise, they would have been forced to repudiate openly this fundamental aspect of Marxism-Leninism on the issue of the state and revolution and to declare that state power, that is, the bureaucracy and the military, could be smashed peacefully and social revolution could be completed peacefully.

Even when their game is exposed, these people desperately try to cover up their treachery with phrases like "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", and hence, "the need to be ever vigilant and prepared to meet all such exigencies." By all this, they perhaps try to brush up their renegade faces and demonstrate that they are behind none in appreciating the real nature of state power since they talk about "the need to be ever vigilant and prepared to meet all such exigencies." Well, one may ask what kind of "preparedness" they are talking about. Does this "preparedness", by any chance, mean preparedness to smash the state apparatus,—preparedness to destroy the armed power of the police and the military, which is the essence of state power? Of course, it is not this kind of preparedness they are talking about. The 'vigilance' and 'preparedness' that the Madurai document flaunts have an altogether different meaning. It is the preparedness for avoiding the repressive measures of the bourgeois state. In other words, it is preparedness to seize power and advance to socialism through people's democracy in a manner approved by the laws and rules of the bourgeoisie! This line, the way of accomplishing revolution within the four walls of bourgeois laws which they advocate, is clearly indicated in a single sentence, "they [the bourgeoisie] seek to defy the will of the people and seek to reverse it by lawlessness and violence." By saying this, they want to peddle the theory that the laws of the exploiting classes in a class society adequately protect the interests of the exploited classes, and that the bourgeoisie by violating these legal guarantees act against the laws. To put it bluntly, this theory

claims that the laws of the exploiting classes in a class society are founded on the will of the exploited masses and that the ruling classes defy the will of the people when they violate these laws. The Madurai document asks us to remain prepared and vigilant to defend the laws of the exploiting classes and prevent any violation of the same by the bourgeoisie.

This is how the Madurai document smuggles in a theory that strikes at the very basis of the Marxist theory of the state and, in actual practice, tries to make the bourgeois state and the existing bourgeois laws appear as effective instruments for furthering the cause of the people. True to this 'theory' of theirs, they publicly advocate a line of action, a line that preaches that the class interests of the peasants can be safeguarded by setting up commissions or camp courts. They contend that this line of action is merely a temporary tactical measure which it is necessary to adopt as the time for revolutionary action has not yet matured and as the organisation is still lagging behind. But the Madurai document clearly shows that this contention is false. This line of action follows from their theory that in a class society laws do not protect the interests of particular classes but embody the interests of the exploiters and the exploited alike and it is the ruling and exploiting classes that violate these 'pure' laws by having recourse to violence. So, these people call upon us to remain vigilant and prepared and to see to it that no one dares break the existing laws and resort to violence. Their argument is quite simple: it is the bourgeoisie, the ruling class, that breaks the laws; people have never violated and will never violate the laws. The people must defend the bourgeois laws and thus deny the bourgeoisie any excuse for resorting to violence—this is the essence of their theory of peaceful seizure of power and peaceful path; this is the objective they try to attain by asking people to remain vigilant and prepared. This is by no means a question of tactics; this is an alien outlook, a fully-developed theory of class collaboration, garbed in Marxist-Leninist phrases, that the Madurai document places before us.

It should not be difficult to realise why these veteran lackeys

of reaction choose to refer to the Marxist tenet that the issue of revolution can never be considered in isolation from the question of state power and have even launched an attack on the revisionist position on this score and why they suppress the fundamental question of revolution and advocate the peaceful path in the name of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin. These people seem to be a bit too much exercised over the question of the form of transition. That's laudable indeed! But, say, what of the seizure of power, that obstinate reality, which, must precede any 'transition'? Understandably, these 'anti-revisionist' Galahads maintain a studied silence over this most vital issue in their document. They have, and again understandably, thought it wise not to raise this question of the seizure of power, that fundamental teaching of Marxism-Leninism, before the working class and the toiling people. They are wise enough to realise that they cannot afford the luxury of taking the people into confidence, of truthfully raising vital issues like that of revolutionary seizure of power before the workers and peasants, when such actions will almost certainly expose their true colours and harm the basic interests of their masters—the reactionary ruling classes.

They have been very careful in avoiding any reference to the question of seizure of state power and bring in issues like the form of transition to People's Democracy as a ruse in order to bypass the fundamental question of revolution. By this trick they wish to nullify completely the teachings of Marxism.

Mao Tse-tung, the greatest living Marxist-Leninist, has defined revolution in the simplest manner. He says that revolution is the overthrow of one class by another. That is, we can develop and advance the cause of revolution only by advancing along the path of class struggle, struggle of one class against another. That is why, Marxism says that the history of class society is the history of class struggle. It should not be difficult for one to realise why in a document that discusses such distant issues as the form of transition to socialism, fails to refer to class struggle. Any reference to class struggle would force the authors of the document to deal with the issue of seizure of

state power. The seizure of state power is a culmination of class struggle. To talk of revolution and yet to ignore this issue amount to an attempt to smuggle in a line of class collaboration.

Before we can make a revolution we must know the nature of the state power we have to capture and also the manner in which to capture. Karl Marx himself gave an answer to these questions. In the history of class struggles in France, Marx wrote, "The working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes." How then can they seize state power? To this, Marx answers—not merely the "transfer" of "the bureaucratic military machine from one hand to another, but to *smash* it, and that is a preliminary condition for every real people's revolution". Lenin says exactly the same thing; he says, "the proletarian revolution is impossible without the forcible destruction of the bourgeois state machine and the substitution for it of a *new one*."

Thus it is evident that seizure of state power does not mean laying hold on the ready-made state machinery; it means that the bourgeois state machine must be smashed and a state machine of the working class set up in its place. But what is a bourgeois state? It is the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie over the toiling people. And what is a dictatorship? According to Lenin, "Dictatorship is rule based directly upon force and unrestricted by any laws." As we have seen, bourgeois rule is only the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and dictatorship is rule based directly upon force and unrestricted by any laws. From this it follows: "The revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat is rule won and maintained by the use of violence by the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, rule that is unrestricted by any laws." [Lenin, *Proletarian Revolution and Renegade Kautsky*.]

The real significance of the Marxist theory that the question of the state and of revolution cannot be considered in isolation from each other, therefore, is that the proletariat must, in order to complete a social revolution, be able to smash the ready-made state machine of the bourgeoisie and to establish a new state of their own—a state that will be based directly on force, that is,

on armed power, and will be an unrestricted dictatorship of the proletariat. If the proletariat has to pass through an intermediate stage of People's Democracy before they can achieve socialism, they must necessarily establish a democratic dictatorship of the toiling people under the leadership of the proletariat and thence move forward. In other words, whatever be the stage of revolution, the proletariat must be able to establish dictatorship through class struggle. Only such a dictatorship can make it possible to pass over from the existing social system to a new and higher one. This transition from one social system to a new and higher one cannot be achieved in any other way. This is why, Marx, in a letter written to Joseph Weydemeyer on March 5, 1852, said: "No credit is due to me for discovering the existence of classes in modern society, nor yet the struggle between them. Long before me bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this class struggle and bourgeois economists, the economic anatomy of the classes. What I did that was new was to prove :.....2) that the class struggle necessarily leads to the *dictatorship of the proletariat*....." For the same reason Lenin, in course of his criticism of Kautsky, said in his *State and Revolution*: "Those who recognise *only* the class struggle are not yet Marxists :....Only he is a Marxist who *extends* the acceptance of the class struggle to the acceptance of the *dictatorship of the proletariat*."

Defining the state the Madurai document says: "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." So it is clear that these people do know the Marxist theory of the state. But their real game begins after this. If they have started their discussion about forms of transition with a reference to the Marxist definition of the state, they have done it solely for the purpose of covering up their anti-Marxist trickeries. Now we find that the above passage is immediately followed by another, which reads: "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." Anyone who is not conversant with the ways of our "Marxist" tricksters may feel inclined to conclude from the above that these people are following the path pointed out by Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao in this respect—the path of transition to socialism through the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The fact is, they are not. Look, what these people in the guise of Marxists say in the very next sentence: "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." With a skilful sleight of hand class struggle has been replaced by "relations of men" and a key problem of socialist revolution, namely, establishing the dictatorship after smashing the bourgeois state machine has been deliberately ignored and "the problem of how to meet this bourgeois violence" has been posed as the "key problem." By inducting the question "how", they artificially counterpose the non-peaceful and violent path to the peaceful one. And in posing to offer a solution of this 'problem' of their own creation, they say, "It is a fact that violence is alien to the Marxist-Leninist ideals." The role of violence as viewed from the standpoint of Marxist-Leninist ideals has been sufficiently discussed above and it is clear that the arguments of the Madurai document run counter to them; for, Marxism-Leninism puts class relations before relations between men. So, when Lenin says force and violence are alien to the ideal of socialism, he means that socialism abolishes exploitation of man by man and as such force is alien to it. But by this he never means that adherence to the ideals of socialism implies abandoning the use of force altogether and following the peaceful path in dealing with the class enemies. Precisely for this reason, Lenin, while criticising Kautsky's opportunism, said: "Socialism is opposed to violence against nations. That is indisputable. But Socialism is opposed to violence against men in general. Apart from

Christian-anarchists and Tolstoyans, however, no one has yet drawn the conclusion from this that Socialism is opposed to *revolutionary* violence. Hence, to talk about 'violence' in general, without examining the conditions which distinguish reactionary from revolutionary violence, means being a petty bourgeois who renounces revolution, or else it means simply deceiving oneself and others by sophistry." [Emphasis ours]

Every line of the Madurai document reeks with this stinking deception. The sly authors of this wretched document have avoided treading the beaten path of rejecting any Marxist theory in general as outmoded. Instead, they pick up instances when Marx and Lenin, in consideration of the concrete conditions prevailing at such times, advanced the call for a peaceful path, and thereby seek to justify their own advocacy of a peaceful path, which, they pretend and would have others believe, has been decided upon by them after consideration of the concrete conditions prevailing in India and not because the Marxist theory of armed revolution has become outmoded.

We should examine the instances they have cited. They have referred to what Marx and Engels thought in 1870-80, about peaceful transition in Britain and America and also to Lenin's comment on it. Lenin showed that if Marx and Engels thought of such possibilities, they considered them only as exceptions. Military-bureaucratic machines in Britain and America were not yet developed and this led Marx and Engels to believe that a peaceful transition in those countries was possible but that this would only be an exception. According to Lenin, with the establishment of the bureaucracy and the military apparatus, the basis of a capitalist state, any possibility of a peaceful transition in those countries was out of the question. The Madurai document also referred to this fact.

Alongside, the document refers to what Lenin said about the April-July period of 1917. That Lenin spoke of a peaceful transition because the primary condition for such a possibility, namely, arms in the hands of the people, was a reality at that time has also been noted in the document. By all this the authors seem to tell the revisionists, "Look, Marx and Lenin also spoke

of peaceful transition—not as a general rule, as you are doing in your folly, but only after analysing the concrete situation." This is precisely the attitude with which these crafty people try to hide their real face. Before quoting the above passage from Lenin, they quote from his article, *A Caricature of Marxism*, the following portion: "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."

Why, one may ask, should these people quote this passage from Lenin? The reason is, of course, to prove that it is quite in keeping with Lenin's teachings to advocate peaceful transition if only as an exception and under special conditions even while recognising armed revolution as the general programme or the general rule. What wrong is there then, if these Madurai-wallahs advocate peaceful transition in the name of special conditions? What, according to them, are the special conditions? They say: "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..." etc. What do these people want to prove by quoting the above-mentioned passage from Lenin and immediately following that up with these words of their own? Do they want to show that their treacherous formulations have behind them Lenin's sanction? Do they want to prove that the socialist victory in the anti-fascist war and "revolutionary changes...in the correlation of class forces in the world during the last half a century" are exactly the things that Lenin meant

when he said, ... "after the socialist revolution had been accomplished in a neighbouring country?"

A revolutionary change in the correlation of class forces can only mean that the relations between the classes in a class society have undergone a basic change and that the ownership of capital and land by the exploiting classes has been replaced by that of the exploited classes. These people cynically declare that the establishment of a socialist system in a third of the world has brought about a basic and revolutionary change in the correlation of class forces in the remaining parts of the world. Even Khrushchevism dared not revise Marxism so blatantly. This explains why they had to quote this passage from Lenin rather abruptly—well, they must somehow bring in Lenin to justify their deliberate betrayal of Marxism.

It is probable that when in a small country, neighbouring a big socialist country, the dictatorship of the proletariat, which is based directly on unrestricted force, has been established, that country may progress towards socialism without having to use that force. Under such conditions the bourgeoisie may give up resistance and voluntarily surrender their power, the power of capital.

When Lenin said these words he was discussing the problem of implementing the dictatorship of the proletariat. Even while discussing the probabilities he always stressed that the prime factor must nevertheless be the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. That is why, he never spoke of a voluntary and peaceful surrender of power by the state machine, that is, the bureaucracy and the military.

It is, however, ridiculous to argue in the name of Lenin that the bourgeoisie will ever surrender their armed power to the working class even when the working class has not seized state power or does not have its own armed power—merely because socialism has been established in a neighbouring big country. Only inveterate lackeys of the bourgeoisie can think of indulging in such clumsy falsifications of the teachings of Marxism-Leninism.

Let us conclude. These neo-revisionist lackeys of the bourgeoisie who produced this abominable perversion of revolutionary Marxist-Leninist teachings, namely, the Madurai document, are basically the same as the revisionists. The only difference between them is that while the revisionists have mostly given up their pretence of a Marxist facade, our neo-revisionists of the Madurai brand still think it to be advantageous to them to carry out their reactionary deeds behind the signboard of Marxism-Leninism.