

IDEOLOGICAL DEBATE SUMMED UP

(Reply to some of the issues which "ultras" in the CPI(M) raised, in course of the discussion on the Draft on "Ideological issues".)

INTRODUCTION

The Central Committee organised an inner-party discussion on the ideological issues and called a plenum to take a final decision not just to have some theoretical satisfaction but because a correct understanding of these issues has a vital bearing on the conduct of the revolutionary movement in each country including our own.

The understanding of the epoch is connected with the revolutionary possibilities of the world movement, the nearness of the success of the national liberation movements, and therefore with the immediate tactics of every Party in the world including its assessment of the growth of mass consciousness.

The policies pursued and propagated by the ruling parties of the socialist countries, their deeds and actions have again a vital bearing on helping the world revolutionary movement forward, of checkmating imperialism, the common foe. These countries are the base of world revolution and any weakness in them leads to sabotage of the world revolutionary movement.

Thus a wrong understanding of the policy of peaceful coexistence by a socialist state, extending it to class struggles in different countries or the national liberation struggles, leads to the direct sabotage of these struggles, to failure to oppose imperialism and liquidation of the revolutionary possibilities of the period.

Illusions that war can be prevented for all time even with imperialism in existence, leads to the disbandment of the struggles against imperialist war preparations, and fosters facile ideas about maintenance of peace, leads to exclusive stress on negotiations on the question of disarmament,

nuclear war, etc. With a socialist state spreading such illusions the struggle against American imperialism in a country like India gets disorganised. The capitalist press already praising America as a democracy, gets an added argument to confuse the masses and blunt the edge of opposition to the USA. Thus the weakness spreads from the base to the periphery and the people in the fighting line are either abandoned to their own fate or become captives of the illusion and withdraw their struggle.

Similarly the propagation of the idea that peaceful transition to socialism is the general law of the present epoch, one-sided emphasis on this possibility instead of recognising the truth that the ruling classes never relinquish power peacefully, once more disbands the revolutionary consciousness and spreads illusions about the parliamentary path to socialism. It is not accidental that following this revisionist conception promulgated at the 20th Congress of the CPSU the majority of the world's Communist Parties have accepted the parliamentary path and our own party—united party—had become its victim.

Again the assessment of Stalin has a vital bearing on the conduct and understanding of the Communist Parties in their struggle. His life was associated with the development of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the building of socialism in the USSR, with the assertion of Leninism as the Marxism of the present period, with the assertion of the Leninist concept of the Party, the relations of the national liberation movement with the proletarian movement, the problem of nationalities, etc. If this entire teaching is refuted, the parties will land themselves in the grossest type of revisionism and this is just what is happening because of the CPSU's denunciation of Stalin.

Similarly the CPSU's slogans about people's state, party of the whole people and profit incentives vitally undermine the base of world revolution—the socialist camp—leading to fears of counter-revolution if these are unchecked. These slogans arising out of an alien outlook associated with rise of such elements once more endanger the progress of the revolutionary movement.

And finally out of this arises the supreme necessity to fight for the principled unity of the international move-

ment, of restoring the unity of the socialist camp, and for taking all such steps as united action against the common foe. This is required of everyone if he is to remain loyal to the revolutionary movement and utilise the opportunities of the present epoch.

The C.C. document, therefore, refutes the revisionist concepts and policies on all these issues that form the subject-matter of international differences. We have nothing in common with the revisionists on any one of these issues.

1. We reassert the formulation in the 1960 Declaration:

“Our time, whose content is the transition from capitalism to socialism initiated by the Great October Socialist Revolution, is a time of struggle between two opposing social systems, a time of socialist revolutions and national-liberation revolutions, a time of the breakdown of imperialism, of the abolition of the colonial system, a time of transition of more peoples to the socialist path, of the triumph of socialism and communism on a worldwide scale.

“It is the principal characteristic of our time that the world socialist system is becoming the decisive factor in the development of society.

“Today it is the world socialist system and the forces fighting against imperialism, for a socialist transformation of society, that determine the main content, main trend and main features of the historical development of society. Whatsoever efforts imperialism makes, it cannot stop the advance of history. A reliable basis has been provided for further decisive victories for socialism. The complete triumph of socialism is inevitable.”

This is in complete contrast to the revisionist interpretation which paints “a picture as though colonialism is more or less dead, that imperialism, more or less, is rendered ineffective and a period of more or less peaceful transition to socialism has set in. The fact that imperialism, despite its immense weakening on a world scale, remains a formidable force to be reckoned with, that monopoly capitalist rule continues to exist in almost all traditionally developed capitalist states of the world such as the USA, Britain, France, West Germany, Japan, Italy and the like, that colossal and unheard-of militarisation of social life is taking

place and the fact that imperialism is waging its desperate, last-ditch battles to escape its destined doom, is deliberately underplayed by them.”

2. On contradictions, our document asserts that the contradiction between the camp of socialism and the camp of imperialism is the central one among the fundamental contradictions of our time. At the same time it states there exist four fundamental social contradictions in the present era : that between the camps of world socialism and imperialism ; between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the capitalist countries ; between the imperialist states and oppressed countries ; among the different imperialist states and among monopoly groups.

At the same time the document states that at any particular time or period in an era, a particular contradiction may come to the forefront, accentuating all other contradictions. In such a period this particular contradiction plays a tremendous role in accelerating the revolutionary developments and has to be taken note of and tactics adopted accordingly. During the first world war, it was the intra-imperialist contradiction leading to war among the imperialist powers that came to the forefront and drew the people into the vortex of revolutionary struggle.

Today the one between the imperialists and oppressed nations has got accentuated. That is why we say this has become at this stage of development of world history, the focus of all the contradictions of our time. This gives a proper understanding of the importance of the revolutionary liberation struggles bursting out in Asia, Africa and Latin America and calls upon all socialist countries and Communist Parties and the working class to attach highest importance to them as the present arena of revolutionary battle against the common foe.

It warns against a complacent attitude just because American imperialism is adopting manoeuvres of peace towards the socialist camp.

The modern revisionists reject this understanding and in effect only recognise one contradiction—that between the socialist camp and the camp of imperialism, spread illusion that it also will be solved through peaceful economic competition. Thus all revolutionary struggles are vir-

tually rendered superfluous; peaceful transition is advocated to solve the problems of class struggle and liberation movements; it is fondly believed that intra-imperialist contradictions can be eliminated by agreements and peaceful economic competition is advocated as the panacea for resolving all contradictions.

This is the revisionist programme of disbanding all class struggle, revolutionary activity and preaching class collaboration in the name of the epoch, asserting the socialist camp as the deciding factor.

3. The C.C. document takes its stand on the Leninist position regarding war. War arises out of the marauding needs of imperialism. As long as imperialism exists there will be soil for wars of aggression. The rise of the socialist camp, the powerful national liberation movement which is one of the vital peace forces, the forces fighting for peace, all create conditions for averting and postponing a particular war or a war with a particularly destructive technique and preserving the peace to that extent. But wars can be eliminated and lasting peace secured only when imperialism is eliminated.

Modern revisionists on the other hand assert that the Marxist-Leninist understanding that wars are inevitable as long as imperialism exists is outmoded and no longer valid since imperialism has ceased to be an all-embracing world system as it used to be and also because strong social and political forces which oppose war have emerged to compel the imperialists to renounce war. They argue that technological developments in warfare and possession of the most destructive nuclear weapons by the camp of imperialism and socialism decisively influence the thesis of Lenin on imperialism and war.

Thus they sow illusions about war being eliminated with imperialism in existence; argue as if imperialism has lost its aggressive character and develop illusions about peace under imperialism. They thus disband the anti-war and anti-imperialist struggle.

The document considers that it is the duty of the socialist camp to arm itself in face of the feverish piling up of armaments by the imperialists. It is also the duty of the world socialist forces to fight against the imperialist

arms expansion and war drive and raise the demand for general disarmament, while not forgetting that the imperialists would not agree to such a total and general disarmament since it would amount to voluntary liquidation of imperialism.

The modern revisionists, under the pretext of carrying out this line sow illusions, illusions that the imperialists have been weakened so much that they would be willing to accept general disarmament and abandon the arms drive and military build-up. They do not hesitate to make absurd statements such as that even the USA's escalation of war against Vietnam does not come in the way of continuation of talks for disarmament; they, instead of exposing the imperialists and their disarmament drive, tend to disarm the people ideologically and politically by dulling their vigilance against imperialism and its preparations for war. Instead of strengthening the socialist camp they rely on understanding with imperialism and believe that their collaboration with the Americans is a greater guarantee for the preservation of peace than the unity of the socialist camp.

Once again we find disbandment of the common struggle, disruption of the socialist camp and spreading of illusions about imperialism among peoples of all lands.

4. The document takes its stand on the Leninist concept of peaceful coexistence between countries belonging to different social systems. It is a concept of respite to be correctly utilised to consolidate the socialist state economically, politically, militarily so that imperialist aggression might be successfully met and the imperialists of the world vanquished. It is this correct policy which was made one of the important components of the foreign policy of the Soviet state by Lenin and implemented by Stalin. The principle does not extend to the class struggle in different countries or to the struggle of oppressed nations against imperialists. That is why every Marxist-Leninist combines peaceful coexistence with strengthening of the armed might of the socialist camp and concrete assistance by the camp to the revolutionary movement—economic, political and military.

But the modern revisionists distort the concept of peace-

ful coexistence describing it as the highest form of class struggle; they tend to reduce it to the opportunist meaning of "peacefully" putting up with the blatant aggressive actions of world imperialism when they extend it to relations between imperialists and their victims. The concept of peaceful coexistence between states belonging to different systems is reduced by them to mean that the chief struggle between the imperialist and socialist systems will take the shape of peaceful economic competition. They conceal the truth that the struggle between the two systems comprises every field—economic, political, ideological and military. They extend it to the class struggle in each country—thus preaching class-collaboration and sowing illusions that socialism could be achieved without class struggle. They also extend it to the national liberation movement disorganising the fight against imperialism and creating illusions that independence of enslaved countries can be achieved through negotiations.

Besides, the modern revisionists make peaceful coexistence the general line of the foreign policy of socialist countries. They forget that it is an essential part of the foreign policy of the socialist countries which includes mutual help to socialist countries, alliance with oppressed peoples and countries and rendering of direct aid to them in their fight for liberation, help to the revolutionary working class movement in capitalist countries and peaceful coexistence with countries of different social systems.

Thus they paralyse the socialist camp, deprive its foreign policy of all revolutionary content and disorganise the revolutionary struggle against imperialism.

5. The document asserts the Leninist idea that "these backward countries can, with the aid of the proletariat of the advanced countries, go over to the socialist system and through definite stages of development to communism without having to pass through the capitalist stage".

This concept is now distorted and vulgarised by the revisionists by proclaiming the non-capitalist path, and path of National Democracy—state of National Democracy for all the newly liberated countries of the world—without any reference to the degree of development of capitalist relations in them.

Instead of assisting the labouring masses of these countries, the modern revisionists concentrate their efforts on helping the building of capitalism in these countries calling it the non-capitalist path; instead of emphasising the need for proletarian hegemony and of a state of People's Democracy they advocate National Democracy in joint partnership with the capitalists; they abandon proletarian hegemony for the completion of the democratic revolution and dictatorship of the proletariat in the transition from capitalism to socialism. The anti-revolutionary consequences of this class collaborationist slogan are seen in India where the revisionist leadership dragged the Party into support of Nehru and the Congress Government, joined the anti-China front, agreed to take help from American imperialism and in internal policies covered the misdeeds of the Government on every issue converting the working class into a tail of the bourgeoisie—all in the name of National Democracy. The slogan of state of National Democracy for newly liberated countries is merely a projection of the revisionist class-collaborationist policies followed on a world plane.

Lenin visualised the Soviet power giving aid to the masses in backward countries holding power and enabling them to reach socialism without going through the stage of capitalism; the revisionists have substituted for this the giving of aid to the capitalist governments of newly liberated countries and describing it as the non-capitalist path to socialism.

6. The document totally rejects the concept of peaceful coexistence, peaceful economic competition and peaceful transition as interpreted and practised by the modern revisionists, which is being rendered into a fully worked out line of class collaboration and conciliation on a global plane. Since this line is being worked out by the leadership of the CPSU which is heading the first socialist state, it has produced devastating effects on the world struggle for peace, democracy and socialism.

While verbally accepting the U.S. imperialists as the chief aggressor and the enemy of the peoples of the world, the leaders of the CPSU are seeking amity and peace with the U.S., striving for cooperation and collaboration in the

maintenance of world peace, in the struggle for banning of nuclear weapons.

The sum total of this right opportunist line pursued by the Soviet leaders is that the danger to world peace, peaceful coexistence of states at the hands of the imperialists is daily growing and the revolutionary worldwide struggle against imperialism for peace, democracy, independence and socialism is disrupted.

Marxism-Leninism demands that these revisionist concepts are decisively rejected as concepts that substitute the class struggle by class conciliation and collaboration.

7. However, our criticism of the compromising and collaborationist policies pursued by the revisionist leadership of the CPSU does in no way imply the totally erroneous idea that the Soviet Union has become an ally of U.S. imperialism or is working for sharing world hegemony with American imperialism and for the division of spheres of influence in the world.

These erroneous formulations are to be found in some of the documents from China. If accepted, they mean that the Soviet Union is not a socialist country, that it is an imperialist country, that a counter-revolution has taken place in the USSR, that the world revolutionary forces have received a tremendous setback, imperialism has succeeded in conquering one-half of the socialist world and that the decisive strength of the socialist world which is the characteristic of the epoch, is no longer that. This is no longer an epoch of final collapse of imperialism but of its advance. Hence we reject this formulation that the USSR is an ally of imperialism. The revisionist leaders are collaborating, but the USSR is a socialist country. The revisionist leaders are endangering the existence of the socialist state but the people of the USSR can defeat them before their policies permanently liquidate the gains of socialism and restore a reactionary order.

8. To replace the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat by a state of the whole people is to negate the class essence of the Marxist-Leninist concept of state and the dictatorship of the proletariat; to negate the necessity for the prolonged existence of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the entire period of transition to socialism; to relax and

liquidate the dictatorship when it is necessary to protect the gains of socialism from enemies and lead the people to communism. To talk of relaxing it in the midst of imperialist conspiracies and feverish war preparations is to betray the proletariat and the socialist state.

The dictatorship of the proletariat is not replaced by a state of the whole people; it begins to wither away as society approaches communism.

It is not correct to maintain, as the revisionist leaders do, that the tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat for internal purposes have been fulfilled completely. Besides, what are the external tasks except the class tasks of the proletariat to fight the international bourgeoisie for the defence and completion of the world proletarian revolution? How can a state of the whole people, which is neither fish nor fowl, cope with strictly proletarian international tasks?

To indulge in this talk of transforming the dictatorship of the proletariat into a state of the whole people or in other words the abolition of the proletarian state, is betrayal of Marxism-Leninism.

Closely connected with the non-class revisionist concept of a people's state is the concept characterising the Communist Party of the Soviet Union as the "party of the whole people". It is needless to emphasise that the Communist Party as the revolutionary political organisation of the proletariat is indispensable for the victory of the socialist revolution and for the entire historical stage of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The document rejects both these concepts advanced by the CPSU leaders as anti-Marxist-Leninist and of dangerous consequences to the socialist state, bringing grist to the mill of the reactionaries.

9. The revisionist policies of the CPSU leadership do not stop at the distortion of the concept of the socialist state. They invade the economic sphere and are seen in the introduction of material incentives, profit incentives in production. The document rejects this dangerous anti-Marxist-Leninist policy and warns "the resort to capitalist incentives and ideas of personal profit, in the final analysis,

paves the way for the restoration of a new type of capitalism, and harms the cause of socialism and communism”.

10. It is necessary to examine the mistakes of Stalin only in the background of the mighty contribution that he made to the cause of building socialism in the Soviet Union, the cause of world revolution and maintaining the purity of the Marxist-Leninist doctrine. The revisionist leadership of the CPSU, in the name of fighting the cult of personality—a cult which of course is alien to Marxism-Leninism—has attempted to throw overboard the entire revolutionary achievement of a great period. The total negation of Stalin by the leaders of modern revisionism is closely linked with their assaults on a series of Marxist-Leninist theories and propositions on imperialism, on war and peace, on the concepts of proletarian hegemony and dictatorship of the proletariat, on the strategy and tactics of the revolutions in colonial and dependent countries, and on the nature, character and role of the Communist Party.

11. The document categorically endorses the formulation about Yugoslav revisionism made in the 1960 Moscow Declaration: “The Communist Parties have unanimously condemned the Yugoslav variety of international opportunism, a variety of modern revisionist ‘theories’ in a concentrated form”. The leadership of the CPSU has gone back on this understanding.

12. 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 hands 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 prole-

tarian revolutionaries in several countries are being butchered by the bourgeois police and military.

Our position 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.

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.

We reject this position. Our Programme therefore states that our Party strives to achieve socialist transformation through peaceful means. At the same time it points out that the ruling classes never relinquish their power voluntarily.

13. While rejecting all the revisionist fallacies and treacherous practices, the document shows awareness of the duty of our Party to work for the principled unity of the Communist movement, unity of the socialist camp and as a step towards it for united action against the common enemy, especially on the immediate question of Vietnam. Here our stand comes into conflict with the declared stand of the Communist Party of China which we consider to be wrong.

We take note of the fact that the revisionist leaders were following a hesitant, halting and compromising policy seeking to restore some kind of peace in Vietnam in compliance with the U.S. aggressors; that all this has created deep walls of suspicion, notwithstanding recent help by the

USSR to North Vietnam which has earned the praise of the latter.

Our Party takes note of the fact that united action in this case means military intervention, and therefore requires restoration of minimum confidence which is lacking today and for which the revisionists are responsible.

Before any such action becomes feasible a series of steps are necessary to restore confidence including bilateral talks between the two great socialist states.

At the same time, the document rejects the contention that no united action is possible between China and the Soviet Union because of the revisionist leaders or under the plea that the Soviet Union is an ally of imperialism.

This goes against the Marxist-Leninist tactics of united front against the common enemy, and is a refusal to rescue the masses from the revisionists. It is, besides, a complete abandonment of the responsibility towards bleeding Vietnam which almost single-handedly is fighting the onslaughts of the biggest imperialist power.

The struggle against revisionism cannot be separated from the struggle against imperialism. You cannot refuse to build a united front against imperialism when a socialist state is under attack under the specious plea that you do not want to have anything to do with the revisionists. This question is dealt with in detail in connection with the fight against left-sectarianism.

14. A working class party can play the role of revolutionary party only if it is firmly based on Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, only if it can, as correctly put by the CPC, "use its brains to think for itself and acquire an accurate knowledge of the trends of the different classes in its own country through serious investigation and study, and know how to apply the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism and integrate it with the concrete practice of its own country" and does not "parrot the words the others, copies foreign experience without analysis, runs hither and thither in response to the baton of certain persons abroad", and "becomes a hotch-potch of revisionism and dogmatism and everything but Marxist-Leninist principles".

Our Party notes with extreme regret, that this sound proletarian internationalist principle which should guide

the relation between parties is violated by big parties, of course, either under the pretext of some creative Marxism of theirs or under the totally erroneous notion that they alone can think, not only for themselves, but for all other parties of the world. The glaring example is the leadership of the CPSU, after its 20th Congress, which began to assert that its thesis is the programme for the entire world communist movement, and used and is using all its might to force it on every other party in the world. Another big Communist Party, the CPC, which correctly pointed out and fought against this dangerous tendency on the part of the CPSU leaders is also, sometimes found to disregard this principle. Our Party, while modest enough to learn from the achievements and mistakes of all other fraternal parties of the world, should guard itself against any such outside interference and jealously defend its independence and its independent political line. Any departure from this sound principle and practice would prove disastrous to the unity, growth and progress of our Party.

15. While the C.C. document deals with modern revisionism as the main danger in the international communist movement at the present juncture, our Party cannot be oblivious to the fact that there also exist certain dogmatic and left-sectarian trends in some parties on certain issues connected with the revolutionary movement of the proletariat. While fighting against modern revisionism as the main danger facing the world communist movement as well as our Party, it cannot but seriously warn itself against slipping into left-opportunism and sectarian errors.

While tracing and liquidating the hated legacies of reformism and revisionism in all its manifestations, a fight still far from complete in our Party and without the carrying out of which it becomes doubly difficult to fight the rising left-dogmatic trends, and while not minimising the possible recurrence of reformist mistakes in our united front tactics and in the running of the coalition ministries in some states, we cannot ignore or treat lightly certain sectarian, dogmatic and adventurist tendencies manifesting in some party circles. They express themselves in the form of challenging the Party Programme, in opposing the political-tactical line of the Party, in advancing infantile and adventurist forms of

struggle and, finally, in the open defiance of Party norms and forms, its discipline and democratic centralism. Some of the advocates of the sectarian line have even embarked upon slandering the Party's ideological-political line as a line of neo-revisionism, as another substitution for the "old revisionists" of the Dangeite school, and have hoisted the banner of revolt against our Party. Merciles exposure and ruthless fight against these tendencies and in defence of the Party's Programme, political line and organisation are the elementary duty of every conscious communist and the entire Party.