

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!



J. STALIN

PROBLEMS OF LENINISM



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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

This translation of J. V. Stalin's *Problems of Leninism* has been made from the latest, eleventh, Russian edition (Gospolitizdat, Moscow 1952).

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE TO THE RUSSIAN EDITION

The present, eleventh, edition of *Problems of Leninism* differs from the tenth edition in that it includes a number of more recent works which are, relatively, of greater importance at the present moment, namely:

1) Address to the Graduates from the Red Army Academies (delivered in the Kremlin, May 4, 1935).

2) Speech at the First All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites (November 17, 1935).

3) On the Draft Constitution of the U.S.S.R. (Report delivered at the Extraordinary Eighth Congress of Soviets of the U.S.S.R., November 25, 1936).

4) Dialectical and Historical Materialism (written by Comrade Stalin for the *History of the C.P.S.U.(B.)—Short Course* in September 1938).

5) Report to the Eighteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) on the work of the Central Committee (delivered March 10, 1939).

In order not to unduly increase the size of the book, the present edition omits the "Interview with the First American Labour Delegation," the "Report of the Central Committee to the Sixteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.)," and the "Interview with the English Author H. G. Wells," which appeared in the tenth edition.

These changes were made with the consent of the author.

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**PROBLEMS
OF LENINISM**

THE FOUNDATIONS OF LENINISM

Lectures Delivered at the Sverdlov University

DEDICATED TO THE RECRUITS
OF THE LENIN ENROLMENT

J. STALIN

The foundations of Leninism is a big subject. To exhaust it a whole volume would be required. Indeed, a number of volumes would be required. Naturally, therefore, my lectures cannot pretend to be an exhaustive exposition of Leninism; at best they can offer but a concise synopsis of the foundations of Leninism. Nevertheless, I consider it useful to give this synopsis, in order to lay down some basic points of departure necessary for the successful study of Leninism.

Expounding the foundations of Leninism does not yet mean expounding the basis of Lenin's world outlook. Lenin's world outlook and the foundations of Leninism are not conterminous. Lenin was a Marxist, and Marxism is, of course, the basis of his world outlook. But from this it does not at all follow that an exposition of Leninism ought to begin with an exposition of the foundations of Marxism. To expound Leninism means to expound the distinctive and new in the works of Lenin that Lenin contributed to the general treasury of Marxism and that is naturally connected with his name. Only in this sense will I speak in my lectures of the foundations of Leninism.

And so, what is Leninism?

Some say that Leninism is the application of Marxism to the conditions that are peculiar to the situation in Russia. This definition contains a particle of truth, but not the whole truth by any means. Lenin, indeed, applied Marxism to Russian conditions, and applied it in a masterly way. But if Leninism were only the application of Marxism to the conditions that are peculiar to Russia it would be a purely national and only a national, a purely Russian and only a Russian, phenomenon. We know, however,

that Leninism is not merely a Russian, but an international phenomenon rooted in the whole of international development. That is why I think this definition suffers from one-sidedness.

Others say that Leninism is the revival of the revolutionary elements of Marxism of the forties of the nineteenth century, as distinct from the Marxism of subsequent years, when, it is alleged, it became moderate, nonrevolutionary. If we disregard this foolish and vulgar division of the teachings of Marx into two parts, revolutionary and moderate, we must admit that even this totally inadequate and unsatisfactory definition contains a particle of truth. That particle of truth is that Lenin did indeed restore the revolutionary content of Marxism, which had been immured by the opportunists of the Second International. Still, that is but a particle of the truth. The whole truth about Leninism is that Leninism not only restored Marxism, but also took a step forward, developing Marxism further under the new conditions of capitalism and of the class struggle of the proletariat.

What, then, in the last analysis, is Leninism?

Leninism is Marxism of the era of imperialism and of the proletarian revolution. To be more exact, Leninism is the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution in general, the theory and tactics of the dictatorship of the proletariat in particular. Marx and Engels pursued their activities in the prerevolutionary period (we have the proletarian revolution in mind), when developed imperialism did not yet exist, in the period of the proletarians' preparation for revolution, in the period when the proletarian revolution was not yet an immediate practical inevitability. But Lenin, the disciple of Marx and Engels, pursued his activities in the period of developed imperialism, in the period of the unfolding proletarian revolution, when the proletarian revolution had already triumphed in one country, had smashed bourgeois democracy and had ushered in the era of proletarian democracy, the era of the Soviets.

That is why Leninism is the further development of Marxism.

It is usual to point to the exceptionally militant and exceptionally revolutionary character of Leninism. This is quite cor-

rect. But this feature of Leninism is due to two causes: firstly, to the fact that Leninism emerged from the proletarian revolution, the imprint of which it cannot but bear; secondly, to the fact that it grew and became strong in contests with the opportunism of the Second International, the fight against which was and remains an essential preliminary condition for a successful fight against capitalism. It must not be forgotten that between Marx and Engels, on the one hand, and Lenin, on the other, there lies a whole period of undivided domination of the opportunism of the Second International, and the ruthless struggle against this opportunism could not but constitute one of the most important tasks of Leninism.

I

THE HISTORICAL ROOTS OF LENINISM

Leninism grew up and took shape under the conditions of imperialism, when the contradictions of capitalism had reached their extreme, when the proletarian revolution had become an immediate practical question, when the old period of preparation of the working class for the revolution had culminated in a new period, the period of direct assault upon capitalism.

Lenin called imperialism "moribund capitalism." Why? Because imperialism carries the contradictions of capitalism to their last bounds, to the extreme limit, beyond which revolution begins. Of these contradictions, there are three which must be regarded as the most important.

The *first contradiction* is the contradiction between labour and capital. Imperialism is the omnipotence of the monopolist trusts and syndicates, of the banks and the financial oligarchy, in the industrial countries. In the fight against this omnipotence, the customary methods of the working class—trade unions and cooperative organizations, parliamentary parties and the parliamentary struggle—have proved to be totally inadequate. Either place yourself at the mercy of capital, eke out a wretched existence as of old and sink lower and lower, or adopt a new weapon—