

**MAO TSE-TUNG
ON THE
CHINESE REVOLUTION**

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I. MAO TSE-TUNG IS THE MOST OUTSTANDING EXPONENT OF MARXISM-LENINISM IN CHINA

In his article *On the People's Democratic Dictatorship* Mao Tse-tung states:

The salvoes of the October Revolution brought us Marxism-Leninism. The October Revolution helped progressives in China, as throughout the world, to adopt the proletarian world outlook as the instrument for studying a nation's destiny and considering anew their own problems. Follow the path of the Russians — that was their conclusion.¹

As is widely known, Mao Tse-tung is the most outstanding representative of such progressives in China.

His greatest contribution to the Chinese revolution is that he has integrated the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism with the concrete practice of the Chinese revolution, and solved the numerous problems which arose during the revolution, in a correct and brilliant manner. He has developed the science of Marxism-Leninism further by applying it to conditions in China and in the East, thereby leading the Chinese people's revolution to victory.

¹ Mao Tse-tung, *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1961, Vol. IV, p. 413.

Mao Tse-tung says, "The theory of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin is a universally applicable theory."¹ However, to apply this theory to China correctly and transform it into the invincible power of the masses, it is essential to constantly clear away ideological obstacles and wage ideological battles, and fierce ones at that. For thirty years Mao Tse-tung has waged uncompromising struggles against various reactionary ideological trends outside the Party and against different forms of opportunism within. These include the struggles against the *Etatistes*,² the Right wing and the compromisers within the Kuomintang, *Chen Tu-hsiu-ism*,³ Trotskyism, the various reformist illusions about the counter-revolutionary Kuomintang rule harboured by the Right wing of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie, the "Left" adventurism which held sway in the Party on several occasions, and the repetition of the mistakes of *Chen Tu-hsiu-ism*.

¹ Mao Tse-tung, *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1954, Vol. II, p. 259.

² A group of unscrupulous fascist-minded politicians who formed the Chinese *Etatiste* Youth League, later renamed the Chinese Youth Party. Subsidized by the imperialists and the reactionary cliques in power, these counter-revolutionaries made a career out of opposing the Communist Party and the Soviet Union.

³ In the last period of the First Revolutionary Civil War (1924-27), the Right deviation in the Chinese Communist Party, as represented by Chen Tu-hsiu, developed into a line of capitulation. In co-operating with the Kuomintang, the capitulators relinquished the Party's leadership among the peasants, the urban petty bourgeoisie, the middle bourgeoisie and especially among the armed forces, thus causing the defeat of that revolution. At an emergency conference of the Party's Central Committee in August 1927 Chen Tu-hsiu was removed from the position of General Secretary of the Party. Later, because he took a counter-revolutionary stand and collaborated with the Trotskyites, he was expelled from the Party.

In the course of this series of struggles, Mao Tse-tung proved himself a great master in propagating and applying the revolutionary theory of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. The struggles which he conducted strengthened and consolidated the Communist Party of China.

The unity of theory and practice is a special feature of Marxism-Leninism. In revolutionary China, following in the footsteps of the great masters Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, Mao Tse-tung pays the utmost attention to the great creative power of the revolutionary masses. He has never separated his theoretical study of Marxism-Leninism from the revolutionary movement of the masses. Under all circumstances and at all times, he links Marxist-Leninist theory with the practice of the Chinese revolution and "uses the basic Marxist viewpoint — the method of class analysis", as Mao Tse-tung often speaks of it himself, to study, absorb and synthesize the experiences of the Chinese revolution. By so doing he has further proved the correctness of Marxism-Leninism and demonstrated its boundless, dynamic, revolutionary power.

It was precisely by basing himself on the creative power of the revolutionary masses in China and on the many-sided, complex experiences of the Chinese revolution that Mao Tse-tung developed Marxism-Leninism and exposed before the masses every kind of distortion aimed at vitiating or perverting Marxism-Leninism.

In his famous article *On the Significance of Militant Materialism* published in 1922, Lenin said:

... the dialectics which Marx . . . applied so successfully that now every day of the awakening to life and struggle of new classes in the East (Japan, India and China) — i.e., the hundreds of millions of human

beings who form the greater part of the population of the world and whose historical passivity and historical torpor have hitherto been conditions responsible for stagnation and decay in many advanced European countries — every day of the awakening to life of new peoples and new classes serves as a fresh confirmation of Marxism.¹

Without doubt, the awakening to life and struggle of the Chinese people under the leadership of the working class and the great victory they have recently won is a fresh confirmation of the large-scale, outstanding victory of Marxism-Leninism in the East. It is a confirmation of the fact that the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin are an all-powerful science applicable everywhere, and a confirmation that Mao Tse-tung, the leader of the Communist Party of China, has applied this science to the particular conditions of China and developed it with brilliant success.

II. MODERN CHINA WAS THE FOCAL POINT OF THE NUMEROUS CONTRADICTIONS IN THE EAST

For a hundred years, and especially after the end of the 19th century, China was the focal point of the numerous contradictions in the East.

In the first place, China was a semi-colony of the imperialist powers of the world, all of which fell upon

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Marx, Engels, Marxism*, Eng. ed., Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1951, pp. 559-60.

China, regarding it as the biggest and meatiest bone of contention between them.

In 1916 in *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* Lenin pointed out:

It is natural that the struggle for these semi-dependent countries should have become particularly bitter during the period of finance capital, when the rest of the world had already been divided up¹. . . .

The partition of China is only beginning, and the struggle between Japan, U.S.A., etc., in connection therewith is continually gaining in intensity.²

Stalin pointed out in 1927:

China is a nationally compact country with a population of several hundred million, and constitutes one of the most important markets and fields for capital export in the world. . . . imperialism has to strike at the living body of national China, cutting it to pieces and severing whole provinces from it, in order to preserve its old positions, or at least to retain some of them.³

Because the imperialist powers regarded China as their field of exploitation, on many occasions they formed a united front to oppose the Chinese revolution. For example, in 1900 the allied forces of eight imperialist powers invaded Peking and massacred the patriotic masses, the Yi Ho Tuan. In 1927 the imperialist coun-

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Eng. ed., International Publishers, New York, 1942, Vol. XIX, p. 153.

² *Ibid.*, p. 167.

³ J. V. Stalin, *Works*, Eng. ed., Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1954, Vol. IX, p. 262.

tries jointly opposed China's Great Revolution.¹ At other times, they worked in collusion to partition China. However, the ambition of these imperialist powers to seize a lion's share, or gain exclusive control of China, led to profound contradictions among them. It resulted, as Mao Tse-tung has stated, in "conflicts between the imperialists in China".

This meant that, as a result of the contradictions between the imperialist countries in their desire to partition China, their forces in the country were often divided rather than united.

Secondly, the contradictions and struggles between the imperialist countries had the effect of aggravating and sharpening the contradictions and struggles within the old ruling classes of China—the feudal landlords and compradors—leading to endless wars among the warlords.

Mao Tse-tung said in 1928:

A characteristic of semi-colonial China is that, since the first year of the Republic (1912—*Translator.*), the various cliques of old and new warlords, supported by imperialism from abroad and by the comprador class and the landed gentry at home, have waged incessant wars against one another. . . .

Two things account for its occurrence, namely, localised agricultural economy (instead of unified capitalist economy) and the imperialist policy of division and exploitation by marking off spheres of influence.²

That is to say, because the Chinese feudal and comprador classes served different imperialist powers and

¹ 1924-27. See footnote on p. 19.

² Mao Tse-tung, *Selected Works*, London, Vol. I, p. 65.

represented the interests of different local feudal forces, the ranks of this ruling camp were also divided rather than united.

Thirdly, joint oppression by imperialism and feudalism caused the Chinese people severe suffering. Ever since the Opium War of 1840, however, they have waged repeated and uncompromising struggles against imperialism and feudalism. If there were any pauses in these struggles they were of short duration. Moreover, inasmuch as China is a big country with a huge population, the number of people mobilized in each of these struggles was colossal.

The Chinese people fought against each and every one of the imperialist powers that invaded China and refused to submit to any of the counter-revolutionary regimes. China has been engaged in a long drawn-out revolution.

That is to say, the contradictions between the Chinese people on the one hand and imperialism and feudalism on the other were irreconcilable. In the course of their struggle against imperialism and feudalism, the Chinese people gradually became an extremely powerful, united force.

From what has been stated above, it can be seen that when we say modern China was the focal point of the contradictions in the East, we mean briefly that China was, first of all, the centre of the fierce struggle between the imperialist countries, and secondly, the centre of the fierce struggle between revolution and counter-revolution.

Obviously, only the victory of the Chinese people's revolution could resolve these contradictions and, beginning with China, break the chains of imperialism in the

East. The Chinese people had the strength to do this. However, it was only under the leadership of the proletariat that they could be organized into a force strong enough to achieve victory.

The remarkable militancy displayed by the Chinese working class was due chiefly to three reasons. First, the Chinese working class was subjected to the three ruthless forces of oppression, those of foreign imperialism, domestic feudalism and capitalism. Secondly, it was highly concentrated. Although Chinese industries were under-developed, they were concentrated, a large portion of industrial workers being engaged in modern enterprises each employing more than five hundred workers. Thirdly, although the industrial workers were in a minority in relation to the total population, the number of proletarians and semi-proletarians of various kinds was colossal. If the semi-proletarians in the countryside — the poor peasants — were included, the proletarians and semi-proletarians together constituted far more than half the total population. The oppression to which they were subjected was extremely cruel. For these reasons, the working class in revolutionary China developed into a powerful fighting force, formed its own strong, political party, the Communist Party, and became the leader of all the revolutionary classes in the country.

China, a large country engaged in protracted revolution, had a resolute, powerful, revolutionary working class which succeeded in becoming the leader of the vast mass of extremely militant peasants, indeed of all revolutionary forces. Also, because internationally it was the epoch of proletarian revolution, the epoch when socialism first triumphed in Russia, the Chinese revolution received excellent international help. These things ex-

plain why the victory of the Chinese people's revolution, the defeat of imperialism and its lackeys, the feudal and comprador classes, was inevitable.

Stalin pointed out in 1927:

... in China the struggle against imperialism is bound to assume a profoundly popular and distinctly national character and is bound to deepen step by step, developing into desperate clashes with imperialism and shaking the very foundations of imperialism throughout the world.¹

That is the course events have taken.

Naturally it should not be supposed that the victory of the revolution could have been won easily in such a vast country, which was the bone of contention between the various imperialist countries and where feudalism had been in existence for centuries. No, there was no easy way forward. In an article written in August 1949, Mao Tse-tung described the process of winning this victory as follows:

They fought, failed, fought again, failed again and fought again and accumulated 109 years of experience, accumulated the experience of hundreds of struggles, great and small, military and political, economic and cultural, with bloodshed and without bloodshed — and only then won today's basic victory.²

The process of the Chinese revolution has been an extremely ruthless, intricate and circuitous one. Yet it was this that enabled the Chinese working class and the peo-

¹ J. V. Stalin, *op. cit.*, pp. 262-63.

² Mao Tse-tung, *Selected Works*, Peking, Vol. IV, p. 426.

ple to become thoroughly steeled, and also enabled the party of the Chinese working class — the Communist Party of China — to become thoroughly steeled. Moreover, the rich experiences of the revolution have become the treasure of the Chinese working class and the Chinese people, and have inevitably enriched Marxist-Leninist theory.

China's rich revolutionary experiences are crystallized in the thinking and works of Mao Tse-tung.

In November 1919, Lenin pointed out to the Communists in the East:

Here you are confronted with a task which until now did not confront the Communists anywhere in the world: relying upon the general theory and practice of communism, you must adapt yourselves to peculiar conditions which do not exist in the European countries and be able to apply that theory and practice to conditions in which the bulk of the population are peasants, and in which the task is the waging of a struggle not against capitalism, but against medieval survivals.¹

And again:

You must find specific forms for this alliance of the foremost proletarians of the world with the toiling and exploited masses of the East whose conditions are in many cases medieval.²

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Address to the Second All-Russian Congress of Communist Organizations of the Peoples of the East*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1954, p. 24.

² *Ibid.*, p. 25.

Lenin also pointed out:

The task is to arouse the toiling masses to revolutionary activity, to independent action and organization, regardless of the level on which they may happen to be; to translate the true communist doctrine, which was intended for the Communists of the more advanced countries, into the language of every people; to carry out those practical tasks which must be carried out immediately, and to merge with the proletarians of other countries in a common struggle.

That is a problem the solution of which you will not find in any communist book, but which you will find in the common struggle that Russia has begun. You will have to tackle that problem and solve it by your own independent experience.¹

As is widely known, by their writings, Lenin and Stalin had solved the basic principles of the above-mentioned problem posed by Lenin. Stalin also made outstanding theoretical contributions on the Chinese question.

The task of Mao Tse-tung, leader of the Communist Party of China, has been to continue the work of Lenin and Stalin, to study Chinese experience unceasingly, to integrate the general theory and practice of communism with the concrete practice of the Chinese revolution. He has translated the true communist doctrine, which was intended for the Communists of the more advanced countries, into the language of the Chinese people, supplemented that doctrine in the light of conditions in China, and transformed it into the theory and practice of the Chinese revolution. By so doing, he inspired hun-

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

dreds of millions of people to join the world-wide struggle against imperialism, to ally themselves with the U.S.S.R., with the working class and progressive people in other countries, and with the oppressed nations throughout the world. With the fulfilment of this task, the rule of imperialism and its lackeys in the great land of China was overthrown.

III. THE CHINESE REVOLUTION IS PART OF THE WORLD REVOLUTION

Lenin and Stalin regarded the liberation movements of the oppressed nations as part of the world proletarian-socialist revolution.

Adhering to this theory of Lenin and Stalin, Mao Tse-tung never regarded the Chinese revolution as an isolated problem, but viewed it in the light of the world proletarian revolution and of the struggle against imperialism as a whole.

This is because we are living in the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolution, the epoch when socialism has triumphed first in the Soviet Union, a new epoch of Marxism, or the epoch of Leninism. This is because the Chinese revolution is, above all, a revolution against imperialism.

In denouncing the *Tai Chi-tao-ism* of the Kuomintang in March 1926, in an article entitled *Analysis of the Classes in Chinese Society*, Mao Tse-tung analysed the situation arising from the division of the world into two big camps:

... the present world situation is one in which the two major forces, revolution and counter-revolution, are locked in final struggle. Each has hoisted a huge banner: one is the red banner of revolution held aloft by the Third International as the rallying point for all the oppressed classes of the world, the other is the white banner of counter-revolution held aloft by the League of Nations as the rallying point for all the counter-revolutionaries of the world. The intermediate classes are bound to disintegrate quickly, some sections turning left to join the revolution, others turning right to join the counter-revolution; there is no room for them to remain "independent."¹

Mao Tse-tung's meaning is quite clear. Since the October Socialist Revolution, the world has been divided into two opposing camps, namely, the anti-imperialist camp led by the general world proletarian-socialist revolutionary movement, and the imperialist camp to which all counter-revolutionary forces rally. The Tai Chi-tao clique of the Kuomintang, representing the Right wing of the bourgeoisie at that time, actually served as Chiang Kai-shek's mouthpiece, preparing the way for his betrayal of the revolution. This clique opposed the theory of class struggle, disapproved of the Kuomintang allying itself with Russia and the Communist Party, and vainly hoped that they would remain "independent" of both the two big camps and establish a state under the exclusive rule of the bourgeoisie. Mao Tse-tung pointed out that their attempts were doomed to total failure because the intermediate classes were bound to disintegrate. The

¹ Mao Tse-tung, *Analysis of the Classes in Chinese Society*, Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1962, pp. 2-3.

national bourgeoisie had either to turn left and ally itself with Russia and the Communist Party, accept the leadership of the proletariat and join hands with the worldwide general struggle against imperialism; or it had to turn right to oppose Russia and the Communist Party, oppose the proletarian revolutions in other countries and become a lackey of imperialism. The national bourgeoisie had a choice of either of these two alternatives, but no chance of "independence". In practice, the Right wing of the national bourgeoisie soon followed Chiang Kai-shek in his betrayal of the revolution and went over to the side of imperialism.

During the War of Resistance Against Japan (1937-45), on the initiative of our Party, a broad national united front was re-established. The Kuomintang die-hards, however, returned once again to their shop-worn theme of a bourgeois dictatorship, which aimed actually at camouflaging and preserving the dictatorship of the big landlords and bureaucrat-capitalists represented by Chiang Kai-shek, the "one-party dictatorship" of the Kuomintang, or, as described by Mao Tse-tung, the semi-colonial and semi-feudal dictatorship. At the same time, inside our Party, once again a form of Right opportunism appeared, which attempted to turn the proletariat into an appendage of the big bourgeoisie. In order to lay bare the fallacious views of the Kuomintang die-hards, smash Right opportunism in the Party, and thus ensure that the Chinese proletariat, the broad masses of the Chinese people and our Party did not lose their bearings in the complex situation of the new national united front, Mao Tse-tung wrote an important work, *On New Democracy*.

In this militant work, Mao Tse-tung developed, more concretely and most profoundly, the above-mentioned

theory of Lenin and Stalin concerning revolution in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. He quoted from the writings of Stalin and, on the basis of the long experiences accumulated in the Chinese revolution, once again raised and dealt in detail with the question of the basic direction, or the basic line, of the Chinese revolution.

He explained:

... the first victorious socialist revolution, the October Revolution, have changed the historical direction of the whole world and marked a new historical era of the whole world.¹

He continued:

In an era when the world capitalist front has collapsed in one corner of the globe (a corner which forms one-sixth of the world), while in other parts it has fully revealed its decadence; when the remaining parts of capitalism cannot survive without relying more than ever on the colonies and semi-colonies; when a socialist state has been established and has declared that it is willing to fight in support of the liberation movement of all colonies and semi-colonies; when the proletariat of the capitalist countries is freeing itself day by day from the social-imperialist influence of the Social-Democratic Parties, and has also declared itself in support of the liberation movement of the colonies and semi-colonies — in such an era, any revolution that takes place in a colony or semi-colony against imperialism, *i.e.*, against the international bourgeoisie and international capitalism, belongs no longer to the old

¹ Mao Tse-tung, *Selected Works*, London, Vol. III, p. 111.