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## LONG LIVE LENINISM!

*In Commemoration of the 90th Anniversary of  
the Birth of Lenin*

By THE EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT  
OF "HONGQI"<sup>1</sup>

### I

April 22 of this year is the 90th anniversary of the birth of Lenin.

1871, the year after Lenin's birth, saw the heroic uprising of the Paris Commune. The Paris Commune was a great, epoch-making revolution, the first dress rehearsal of world-wide significance in the proletariat's attempt to overthrow the capitalist system. When the Commune was on the verge of defeat as a result of the counter-revolutionary attack from Versailles, Marx said:

If the Commune should be destroyed, the struggle would only be postponed. The principles of the Commune are eternal and indestructible; they will present themselves again and again until the working class is liberated.<sup>2</sup>

What is the most important principle of the Commune? According to Marx, it is that the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and use it for its

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<sup>1</sup>*Hongqi* (Red Flag) is the fortnightly magazine published by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party. This article appeared in its No. 8 issue, April 16, 1960—Tr.

<sup>2</sup>Speech by K. Marx on the Paris Commune.

own purposes. In other words, the proletariat should use revolutionary means to seize state power, smash the military-bureaucratic machine of the bourgeoisie and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat to replace the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Anyone familiar with the history of the struggle of the proletariat knows that it is precisely this fundamental question which forms the dividing line between Marxists on the one hand and opportunists and revisionists on the other, and that after the death of Marx and Engels it was none other than Lenin who waged a thoroughly uncompromising struggle against the opportunists and revisionists in order to safeguard the principles of the Commune.

The cause in which the Paris Commune did not succeed finally triumphed 46 years later in the Great October Revolution under Lenin's direct leadership. The experience of the Russian Soviets was a continuation and development of the experience of the Paris Commune. The principles of the Commune continually expounded by Marx and Engels and enriched by Lenin in the light of the new experience of the Russian revolution, first became a living reality on one-sixth of the earth. Marx was perfectly correct in saying that the principles of the Commune are eternal and indestructible.

In their attempt to strangle the new-born Soviet state, the imperialist jackals, acting in league with the counter-revolutionary forces in Russia at the time, carried out armed intervention against it. But the heroic Russian working class and the people of the various nationalities of the Soviet Union drove off the foreign bandits, put down the counter-revolutionary rebellion at home and thus consolidated the world's first great socialist republic.

Under the banner of Lenin, under the banner of the October Revolution, a new world revolution began, with the proletarian revolution playing the leading role, and a new era dawned in human history.

Through the October Revolution, the voice of Lenin quickly resounded throughout the world. The Chinese people's anti-

imperialist, anti-feudal May 4 Movement in 1919, as Comrade Mao Tse-tung put it, "came into being at the call of the world revolution of that time, of the Russian revolution and of Lenin."<sup>1</sup>

Lenin's call is powerful because it is correct. Under the historical conditions of the epoch of imperialism, Lenin revealed a series of irrefutable truths concerning the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Lenin pointed out that the oligarchy of finance capital in a small number of capitalist powers, that is, the imperialists, not only exploit the masses of people in their own countries, but oppress and plunder the whole world, turning most countries into their colonies and dependencies. Imperialist war is a continuation of imperialist politics. World wars are started by the imperialists because of their insatiable greed in scrambling for world markets, sources of raw materials and fields for investment, and because of their struggle to redivide the world. So long as capitalist-imperialism exists in the world, the source and possibility of war will remain. The proletariat should guide the masses of people to understand the source of war and to struggle for peace and against imperialism.

Lenin asserted that imperialism is monopolistic, parasitic or decaying, moribund capitalism, that it is the final stage in the development of capitalism and therefore is the eve of the proletarian revolution. The emancipation of the proletariat can be arrived at only by way of revolution, and certainly not by way of reformism. The liberation movements of the proletariat in the capitalist countries should ally themselves with the national liberation movements in the colonies and dependent countries; this alliance can smash the alliance of the imperialists with the feudal and comprador reactionary forces in the colonies and dependent countries,

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<sup>1</sup>*On New Democracy.*



and will therefore inevitably put a final end to the imperialist system throughout the world.

In the light of the law of the uneven economic and political development of capitalism, Lenin came to the conclusion that, because capitalism developed extremely unevenly in different countries, socialism would achieve victory first in one or several countries but could not achieve victory simultaneously in all countries. Therefore, in spite of the victory of socialism in one or several countries, other capitalist countries still exist, and this gives rise not only to friction but also to imperialist subversive activities against the socialist states. Hence the struggle will be protracted. The struggle between socialism and capitalism will embrace a whole historical epoch. The socialist countries should maintain constant vigilance against the danger of imperialist attack and do their best to avert this danger.

The fundamental question of all revolutions is the question of state power. Lenin showed in a comprehensive and penetrating way that the fundamental question of the proletarian revolution is the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The dictatorship of the proletariat, established by smashing the state machine of the bourgeois dictatorship by revolutionary means, is an alliance of a special type between the proletariat on the one hand and the peasantry and all other working people on the other; it is a continuation of the class struggle in another form under new conditions; it involves a persistent struggle, both sanguinary and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic, educational and administrative, against the resistance of the exploiting classes, against foreign aggression and against the forces and traditions of the old society. Without the dictatorship of the proletariat, without its full mobilization of the working people on these fronts to wage these unavoidable struggles stubbornly and persistently, there can be no socialism, nor can there be any victory for socialism.

Lenin considered it of prime importance for the proletariat to establish its own genuinely revolutionary political party which completely breaks with opportunism, that is, a Communist Party, if the proletarian revolution is to be carried through and the dictatorship of the proletariat established and consolidated. This political party is armed with the Marxist theory of dialectical materialism and historical materialism. Its programme is to organize the proletariat and all oppressed working people to carry on class struggle, to set up proletarian rule and passing through socialism to reach the final goal of communism. This political party must identify itself with the masses and attach great importance to their creative initiative in the making of history; it must closely rely on the masses in revolution as well as in socialist and communist construction.

These truths were constantly set forth by Lenin before and after the October Revolution. The world reactionaries and philistines of the time thought these truths revealed by Lenin terrifying. But we see these truths winning victory after victory in the actual life of the world.

## II

In the forty years and more since the October Revolution, tremendous new changes have taken place in the world.

Through its great achievements in socialist and communist construction, the Soviet Union has transformed itself from an economically and technically very backward country in the days of tsarist Russia into a country with the best and most advanced technology in the world. By its economic and technological leaps the Soviet Union has left the European capitalist countries far behind and left the United States behind, too, in technology.

The great victory of the anti-fascist war, in which the Soviet Union was the main force, broke the chain of imperialism in

Central and Eastern Europe. The great victory of the Chinese people's revolution broke the chain of imperialism on the Chinese mainland. A group of new socialist countries was born. The whole socialist camp headed by the Soviet Union has one quarter of the earth's land space and over one-third of the world's population. The socialist camp has now become an independent world economic system, standing opposed to the capitalist world economic system. The gross industrial output value of the socialist countries now accounts for nearly 40 per cent of the world's total, and it will not be long before it surpasses the gross industrial output value of all the capitalist countries put together.

The imperialist colonial system has been and is disintegrating. The struggle naturally has its twists and turns, but on the whole the storm of the national liberation movement is sweeping over Asia, Africa and Latin America on a daily broadening scale. Things are developing towards their opposites: there the imperialists are going step by step from strength to weakness, while the people are going step by step from weakness to strength.

The relative stability of capitalism, which existed for a time after World War I, ended long ago. With the formation of the socialist world economic system after World War II, the capitalist world market has greatly shrunk. The contradiction between the productive forces and relations of production in capitalist society has sharpened. The periodic economic crises of capitalism no longer occur as before once every ten years or so, but come almost every three or four years. Recently, some representatives of the U.S. bourgeoisie have admitted that the United States has suffered three "economic recessions" in ten years, and they now have premonitions of a new "economic recession" just after it has pulled through the one in 1957-58. The shortening of the interval between capitalist economic crises is a new phenomenon. It is a further sign that the world capitalist system is drawing nearer and nearer to its inevitable doom.

The unevenness in the development of the capitalist countries is worse than ever before. With the imperialists squeezed into their ever-shrinking domain, U.S. imperialism is constantly grabbing markets and spheres of influence away from the British, French and other imperialists. The imperialist countries headed by the United States have been expanding armaments and making war preparations for more than ten years, while West German and Japanese militarism, defeated in World War II, have risen again with the help of their former enemy — the U.S. imperialists. Imperialist West Germany and Japan have come out to join in the scramble for the capitalist world market, are now blabbing once again about their “traditional friendship” and are engaging in new activities for a so-called “Bonn-Tokyo axis with Washington as the starting point.” West German imperialism is looking brazenly around for military bases abroad. This aggravates the bitter conflicts within imperialism and at the same time heightens the threat to the socialist camp and all peace-loving countries. The present situation is very much like that after World War I when the U.S. and British imperialists fostered the resurgence of German militarism, and the outcome will again be their “picking up a rock only to drop it on their own feet.” The U.S. imperialists’ creation of world tension after World War II is a sign not of their strength but of their weakness and precisely reflects the unprecedented instability of the capitalist system.

The U.S. imperialists, in order to realize their ambition for world domination, not only avidly resort to all kinds of sabotage and subversion against the socialist countries, but also, under the pretext of opposing “the communist menace,” in their self-appointed role of world gendarme for suppressing the revolution in various countries, set up their military bases all around the world, seize the intermediate areas and carry out military provocations. Like a rat running across the street while everyone shouts “Throw something at it!” the U.S. imperialists run into bumps and bruises everywhere and, contrary to their

intentions, everywhere arouse a new upsurge of the people's revolutionary struggle. Now, even they themselves are becoming aware that, in contrast with the growing prosperity of the socialist world headed by the Soviet Union, "the influence of the United States as a world power is declining." In their country, one "can only see the decline and fall of ancient Rome."

The changes that have taken place in the world in the past forty years and more indicate that imperialism is rotting with each passing day while with socialism things are getting better and better. It is a great, new epoch that we are facing, and its main characteristic is that the forces of socialism have surpassed those of imperialism, and that the forces of the awakening peoples of the world have surpassed those of reaction.

The present world situation has obviously undergone tremendous changes since Lenin's lifetime; but all these changes, far from proving that Leninism is obsolete, have more and more clearly confirmed the truths revealed by Lenin and all the theories he advanced during the struggle to defend revolutionary Marxism and develop Marxism.

In the historical conditions of the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolution, Lenin carried Marxism forward to a new stage and showed all the oppressed classes and peoples the path along which they could really shake off capitalist-imperialist enslavement and poverty.

These forty years have been forty years of victory for Leninism in the world, forty years in which Leninism has found its way ever deeper into the hearts of the world's people. Leninism not only has won and will continue to win great victories in countries where the socialist system has been established, but is also constantly achieving new victories in the struggles of all oppressed peoples.

The victory of Leninism is acclaimed by the people of the whole world, and at the same time cannot but incur the enmity of the imperialists and all reactionaries. The im-

perialists, to weaken the influence of Leninism and paralyse the revolutionary will of the masses, have launched the most barbarous and despicable attacks and slanders against Leninism, and, moreover, bought up and utilized the vacillators and renegades within the workers' movement, directing them to distort and emasculate the teachings of Lenin. At the end of the nineteenth century when Marxism was putting various anti-Marxist trends to rout, spreading widely throughout the workers' movement and gaining a predominant position, the revisionists represented by Bernstein advanced their revisions of the teachings of Marx to meet the needs of the bourgeoisie. Now, when Leninism has won great victories in guiding the working class and all oppressed classes and nations of the world in onslaughts against imperialism and all kinds of reactionaries, the modern revisionists represented by Tito have advanced their revisions of the teachings of Lenin (that is, modern Marxist teachings), to meet the needs of the imperialists. As pointed out in the Declaration of the meeting of representatives of the Communist and Workers' Parties of the socialist countries held in Moscow in November 1957, "The existence of bourgeois influence is an internal source of revisionism, while surrender to imperialist pressure is its external source." While the old revisionism attempted to prove that Marxism was outmoded, modern revisionism attempts to prove that Leninism is outmoded. The Moscow Declaration said:

Modern revisionism seeks to smear the great teaching of Marxism-Leninism, declares that it is "outmoded" and alleges that it has lost its significance for social progress. The revisionists try to kill the revolutionary spirit of Marxism, to undermine faith in socialism among the working class and the working people in general.

This passage of the Declaration has put it correctly; such is exactly the situation.

Are the teachings of Marxism-Leninism now "outmoded"? Does the integrated whole of Lenin's teachings on imperialism, on proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, on war and peace, and on the building of socialism and communism still retain its full vitality? If it is still valid and does retain its full vitality, does this refer only to a certain portion of it or to the whole? We usually say that Leninism is Marxism of the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolution, Marxism of the epoch of the victory of socialism and communism. Does this statement remain correct? Can it be said that Lenin's original conclusions and our usual conception of Leninism have lost their validity and correctness, and that therefore we should turn back and accept those revisionist and opportunist conclusions which Lenin long ago smashed to smithereens and which have long since gone disgracefully bankrupt in actual life? These questions now confront us and must be answered. Marxist-Leninists must thoroughly expose the absurdities of the imperialists and modern revisionists on these questions, eradicate their influence among the masses, awaken those they have temporarily hoodwinked and further arouse the revolutionary will of the masses.

### III

The U.S. imperialists, the open representatives of the bourgeoisie in many countries, the modern revisionists represented by the Tito clique, and the right-wing social-democrats, in order to mislead the people of the world, do all they can to paint an utterly distorted picture of the contemporary world situation in an attempt to confirm their ravings that "Marxism is outmoded," and that "Leninism is outmoded too."

A speech by Tito at the end of last year referred repeatedly to what the modern revisionists call the "new epoch." He said, "Today the world has entered an epoch in which nations

can relax and tranquilly devote themselves to their internal construction tasks." Then he added, "We have entered an epoch when new questions are on the agenda, not questions of war and peace but questions of co-operation, economic and otherwise, and when economic co-operation is concerned, there is also the question of economic competition."<sup>1</sup> This renegade completely writes off the question of class contradictions and the class struggle in the world, in an attempt to negate the consistent interpretation of Marxist-Leninists that our epoch is the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolution, the epoch of the victory of socialism and communism.

But how do things really stand in the world?

Can the exploited and oppressed people in the imperialist countries "relax"? Can the peoples of all the colonies and semi-colonies still under imperialist oppression "relax"?

Has the armed intervention led by the U.S. imperialists in Asia, Africa and Latin America become "tranquil"? Is there "tranquillity" in our Taiwan Straits when the U.S. imperialists are still occupying our country's Taiwan? Is there "tranquillity" on the African continent when the people of Algeria and many other parts of Africa are subjected to armed repressions by the French, British and other imperialists? Is there "tranquillity" in Latin America when the U.S. imperialists are trying to wreck the people's revolution in Cuba by means of bombing, assassination and subversion?

What kind of "construction" is meant by saying "(nations) devote themselves to their internal construction tasks"? Everyone knows that there are different types of countries in the world today, and principally two types of countries with social systems fundamentally different in nature. One type belongs to the socialist world system, the other to the capitalist world system. Is Tito referring to the "internal construction" of the imperialists for the oppression of the peoples of their

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<sup>1</sup> Tito's speech in Zagreb, December 12, 1959.



own countries, the oppression of the whole world, and for armaments expansion, or to the "internal construction" carried out by socialism for the promotion of the people's happiness and in the pursuit of lasting world peace?

Is the question of war and peace no longer an issue? Is it that imperialism no longer exists, the system of exploitation no longer exists, and therefore the question of war no longer exists? Or is it that there can be no question of war even if imperialism and the system of exploitation are allowed to survive for ever? The fact is that since World War II there has been continuous and unbroken warfare. Do not the imperialist wars to suppress national liberation movements and the imperialist wars of armed intervention against revolutions in various countries count as wars? Even though these local wars do not develop into world wars, do they not still count as wars? Even though they are not fought with nuclear weapons, do wars using what are called conventional weapons not still count as wars? Does not the U.S. imperialists' allocation of nearly 60 per cent of their 1960 budget outlay to arms expansion and war preparations count as a bellicose policy on the part of U.S. imperialism? Will the revival of West German and Japanese militarism not confront mankind with the danger of a new world war?

What kind of "co-operation" is meant? Is it "co-operation" of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie to protect capitalism? Is it "co-operation" of the peoples in the colonies and semi-colonies with the imperialists to protect colonialism? Is it "co-operation" of socialist countries with capitalist countries to protect the imperialist system in its oppression of the peoples in the capitalist countries and its suppression of national liberation wars?

In a word, the assertions of the modern revisionists about the so-called "epoch" challenge Leninism on the foregoing issues. It is their aim to obliterate the contradiction between the masses of people and the monopoly capitalist class in the imperialist countries, the contradiction between the peoples in