

Marxism-Leninism-Maoism

Maoism — A New Stage in the Development of the Proletariat's Science of Revolution

By the Organisation of Revolutionary Communists of Afghanistan

The following are excerpts from the founding document of the Organisation of Revolutionary Communists of Afghanistan (ORCA), a participant in the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) formed through the recent merger of the Revolutionary Cell of Afghan Communists and the Union of Marxist-Leninists of Afghanistan (Mao Tsetung Thought). —AWTW

The international proletariat's science of revolution has been applied, strengthened and further developed during one and a half centuries of class struggle since the publication of the *Communist Manifesto*. Marx discovered this science and established its basic foundations. Lenin raised it to a new level, and then Mao developed it to a still higher level. Thus the science of revolution of the international proletariat has advanced and become more developed through three qualitative stages: 1) Marxism, 2) Leninism, and 3) Maoism.

In today's situation it is vital to stress Mao Tsetung's contributions to this science and his qualitative development of it. This emphasis separates the ranks of proletarian revolutionaries from those of various revisionists who have betrayed proletarian revolution and revised the basic foundations of the science of revolution of the international proletariat. As the *Declaration of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement* states:

"Upholding Mao Tsetung's qualitative development of the science of Marxism-Leninism represents a particularly important and pressing question in the international movement and among the class conscious workers and other revolutionary-minded people in the world today. The principle involved is nothing less than whether or not to uphold and build upon the decisive contributions to the proletarian revolution and the science of Marxism-Leninism made by Mao Tsetung. It is therefore nothing less than a question of whether or not to

uphold Marxism-Leninism itself...

"...We affirm that Mao Tsetung Thought is a new stage in the development of Marxism-Leninism. Without upholding and building on Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought it is not possible to defeat revisionism, imperialism and reaction in general."

Advent of Maoism

Maoism was born in the midst of sharp class struggle. After eight years of revolutionary war against the Kuomintang, Mao Tsetung was chosen as the leader of the Communist Party of China by the Tsunyi conference. This meant the victory of Mao Tsetung's line, after years of struggle against "left" and right lines that had dealt fatal blows to the Chinese revolution in the preceding years. Ten years after this meeting, the Seventh Congress of the CPC, held in 1945 following the epic Long March and the war of resistance against Japanese imperialism, emphasised that: "The Chinese Communist Party is guided by Marxism-Leninism and the Thought of Mao Tsetung."

Even though at the Eighth Congress of the CPC the phrase "Mao Tsetung Thought" was eliminated, the struggle continued. In the 1950s, after the victory of the Chinese revolution, Mao's ideas began to gain influence in other countries, and in China itself the application of these ideas was displayed in the stormy mass struggles of the Great Leap Forward and the building of the people's communes. The struggle against Khrushchevite revisionism gave a new dimension to Mao Tsetung Thought and expanded its influence on a world scale. But it was with the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR) that Mao Tsetung Thought emerged as a new level in the development of Marxism-Leninism and Chairman Mao was established as the leader of the world revolution. On this basis, summing up the GPCR, the Ninth Congress of the CPC in 1969

declared, "The CPC is guided by Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought."

Many of the world's communist parties and organisations that had arisen against Khrushchevite revisionism and Soviet social-imperialism adhered to Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. In 1973, the Tenth Congress of the CPC threw away the Lin Biao-ist reference to the "era of the total collapse of imperialism" and let the science of proletarian revolution shine brighter.

The setback of the revolution in China and the usurpation of power by the Chinese revisionists was the beginning of new attacks on Mao Tsetung's contributions which were to cause serious confusion in the ranks of the international communist movement. But the line struggle around Marxism-Leninism-Maoism continued on a world scale. This struggle was expressed in the autumn of 1980 with the First International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organisations and its Communique and took on international prominence with the second conference of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought (Maoist) parties and organisations that led to the formation of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement.

The RIM *Declaration* considers "Mao Tsetung Thought" a development of Marxism-Leninism, saying, "we emphasise that Mao Tsetung Thought is a new stage in the development of Marxism-Leninism...." It points out that the most important principle of Mao Tsetung Thought, the "theory of the continuation of the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat", is the line of demarcation between Marxism and revisionism: "...Only he is a Marxist who extends the recognition of class struggle to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat and to the recognition of the objective existence of classes, antagonistic class contradictions and of the continuation of the class strug-

gle under the dictatorship of the proletariat throughout the whole period of socialism until communism."

The term "Maoism" was first used by the Communist Party of Peru. The PCP have used this expression in numerous documents which have also been published by RIM since its formation. It was also adopted at the eighth plenary session of the second Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA in 1988. The term Maoism has not yet been established among the forces of RIM, who still refer to Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought.

Maoism correctly shows that Mao's contributions are as precious as and on the same level as those of Marx and Lenin; it clears up any incorrect understanding or underestimation regarding Mao's contributions and thus indicates more clearly than the term "Mao Tsetung Thought" the third stage in the development of the proletariat's science of revolution. So we consider it correct to use Maoism rather than Mao Tsetung Thought. Maoism, in our opinion, will sooner or later become generalised among the participants and supporters of RIM, replacing Mao Tsetung Thought.

Contributions of Mao Tsetung to the Development of Marxism-Leninism

As we know, Marxism consists of three component parts: philosophy, political economy and scientific socialism.

The qualitative development of these three parts results in the qualitative development of Marxism as a whole to a higher level. Mao's contributions have meant qualitative leaps in all three parts of Marxism, raising this science to a higher level than Marx and Lenin. We will take up this question in three sections.

Philosophy

1) Mao Tsetung indicated that the law of contradiction is the fundamental law of dialectics in nature, society and human knowledge, and he developed the understanding that this is the essence of dialectical materialism. He deeply analysed the law of contradiction and in that light explained the meaning of the principal contradiction as the leading contradiction in any particular stage of development of a process, separating it from the fundamental contradiction which is

the basis for the existence of a process from beginning to end.

2) He masterfully applied dialectical materialism in politics, using the law of contradiction to analyse events and political struggle.

3) Mao Tsetung developed and deepened the dialectical materialist theory of knowledge by deeply studying the two leaps: from practice to theory and then from theory back to practice, emphasising practice as the main aspect.

4) Mao Tsetung succeeded in taking philosophy to the masses. In doing so, he pulled philosophy out of books and libraries, snatched it away from the monopoly of philosophers, and turned it into an active material force.

5) Dialectically analyzing the relation between the base and the superstructure, he countered the metaphysical, one-sided conception of the relation between base and superstructure, waged struggle against economist interpretations of Marxism and countered the revisionist theory of the development of the productive forces. He said that while the base affects the superstructure and determines its nature, and this is the principal aspect, the superstructure also affects the base and at times determines its character. On this basis, he developed Lenin's view that "politics is the concentrated expression of economics" and emphasised that revolutionary politics must dominate all fields. Thus Mao Tsetung gave revolutionary consciousness its proper place in regard to the revolutionary transformation of the world and developed Lenin's slogan, "without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement."

Political Economy

1) Mao Tsetung further developed the political economy of socialism. He developed and implemented the economic policy of socialist construction in China through criticising some aspects of Soviet economic policy in socialist construction. The central point in this is arousing the initiative of the masses based on a correct line and promoting production through popularising economic policies and not through bureaucratic commands. In this context he settled the relation between revolution and economic development and formulated the famous slogan, "grasp revolution, promote production".

2) His three basic points with regard to the economic policies of New Democracy are:

a) Uprooting feudalism on the basis of applying the policy of "land to the tiller".

b) Expropriating all foreign and domestic economic institutions that are "monopoly in nature" or whose scope is beyond private management.

c) Leading, controlling and limiting private capital so that "it would not be able to take control over the livelihood of the people."

This economic policy was implemented during the long process of the New Democratic revolution in China from the establishment of the first revolutionary base area (1927) until the socialist revolution and prepared the ground for socialist construction in China.

3) Mao Tsetung pointed to bureaucrat capitalism as a form of capitalism created by imperialism in the oppressed countries as a lever of domination. This question is of vital importance. The bureaucrat bourgeoisie must be reckoned with and expropriated; otherwise it will be impossible to overthrow imperialism in the dominated countries. Also, its expropriation is a vital necessity in laying the foundations for socialist construction.

Scientific Socialism

1) New Democratic revolution — in this era, revolution in the dominated countries is one of the two components of the world proletarian revolution, along with revolution in the imperialist countries. As opposed to the imperialist countries, revolution in the dominated countries does not have an immediately socialist character, but rather a national-democratic character which under proletarian leadership takes a socialist orientation. Mao Tsetung charted the strategy of New Democratic revolution in the process of the revolutionary struggle in China and established the path of revolution in the dominated countries by leading the Chinese revolution to victory. New Democratic revolution is based on the communist party providing leadership for the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal struggles of the popular classes through the national united front in the course of protracted people's war.

2) Mao led the protracted armed struggle of the CPC to victory and even more importantly for the first

time provided the international proletariat with a fully developed military line. Mao's theory of people's war is not merely a military strategy; it is the expression of proletarian revolutionary violence in class struggle to lead the revolution to victory. "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun" is its concentrated expression.

3) He developed further the theory of classes and class struggle in different economic, political and ideological aspects and advanced the theory of the continuation of the class struggle in the whole period of socialist construction until communism. Summing up the bitter experience of the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union, he noted that the struggle between the proletariat and bourgeoisie under socialism is very complex and protracted. He formulated the method to struggle against capitalist restoration in socialist society and led the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China. Thus by developing the theory of the "continuation of the revolution under the dictatorship of proletariat", he made an enormous contribution to the international proletariat's science of revolution and raised the Marxist theory of classes and class struggle, which is the essence of scientific socialism, to a completely new and higher level.

Now once again we note the *Declaration's* emphasis. "Lenin said: 'Only he is a Marxist who extends the recognition of class struggle to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat.' In the light of invaluable lessons and advances achieved through the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution led by Mao Tsetung, this criterion put forward by Lenin has further sharpened. Now it can be stated that only he is a Marxist who extends the recognition of class struggle to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat and to the recognition of the objective existence of classes, antagonistic class contradictions and of the continuation of the class struggle under the dictatorship of the proletariat throughout the whole period of socialism until communism. And as Mao so powerfully stated, 'Lack of clarity on this question will lead to revisionism.'"

The Three Component Parts of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism

Considering Mao Tsetung's great

contributions to the science of revolution of the international proletariat and his qualitative development of this science after Marx and Lenin, we enumerate the fundamentals of the science of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism in its three component parts of philosophy, political economy and scientific socialism.

Philosophy

The philosophy of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is dialectical materialism. It explains the basic truth that the whole of reality and existence is made up of matter in motion, in different forms. All knowledge springs from it and is dependent on it. All the different forms of matter in motion exist only in the form of a unity of opposites. The law of contradiction, that is, the law of the unity and struggle of opposites, is the fundamental law of the development of nature, society and thought. Unity or identity is temporary and relative in all phenomena, whereas the struggle of mutually exclusive opposites is permanent and absolute and this is the cause for leaps and the emergence of new qualities and phenomena. Belief in permanent equilibrium, permanent order or the eternal or divine is incorrect and reactionary.

Dialectical materialism considers practice to be the source and final criterion of truth and relies on revolutionary practice more than anything else. On this basis, dialectical materialism is a philosophy in the service of the revolutionary transformation of the world.

Historical materialism is the application of dialectical materialism to human society and its development. It emphasises the fundamental role of two things:

1) Production and the fundamental contradiction between the productive forces and the relations of production.

2) The interrelation between production and the political and ideological superstructure of society. The coming into being of social life was accompanied by the social production process and its survival depends on it. But the productive forces can only exist and develop when people enter into certain relations of production. The contradiction between the productive forces and the relations of production will become openly antagonistic at a certain stage of the development of the productive

forces. The need to develop the productive forces makes it necessary for there to be radical and revolutionary change in society and for new relations of production to replace the old ones. This radical and revolutionary change starts in the political and ideological superstructure and is concentrated around the class struggle for political power. If the material conditions are not ripe, ideology and politics cannot create revolution, but as they ripen, the superstructure (ideology and politics) becomes the decisive battleground of different classes and political forces and a qualitative change in the superstructure becomes the principal requirement for the development of society.

Political Economy

The theory of surplus value is the central point of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist political economy in analysing the economy of capitalism. The source and reason for the existence and growth of capital is the production of surplus value which through the market mechanism materialises as profit. In the capitalist mode of production, profit is both the initiator and final goal of production, and it is accumulated through the appropriation of the surplus value created by the collective labour of the workers. So capitalism is a mode of production whose characteristic is the transformation of human labour into a commodity.

The contradiction between socialised production and private appropriation is the fundamental contradiction of capitalism and it carries in its womb the anarchy of production and gives rise to numerous capitalist crises. In the process of the continuous expansion and development of capital which is accompanied by the impoverishment of the workers, collision occurs between different capitals. This gives rise to rivalry between the different capitalists and finally results in monopoly. The growth and expansion of monopolies in different dimensions compels them to overflow national boundaries, and the export of capital begins. All this gives rise to imperialism and its specific character: it plunders the oppressed peoples and nations as well as exploiting the workers of its own country. In the era of imperialism, the contradiction between socialised production and private appropriation takes on global dimen-

sions. The contradiction between imperialism and the oppressed peoples emerges and the rivalry among different capitalist powers rises to the level of a contradiction on a world scale. Along with this, the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is heightened daily.

Socialist revolution, by expropriating capitalism, takes an important qualitative step towards solving the fundamental contradiction of capitalism. But this is not enough. The new socialist state, as the representative of society, expropriates the means of production, but this is not yet a real and thorough socialisation of the means of production. Socialist revolution, to lead to communism, must turn this partial and formal socialisation of the means of production into a thorough and real one. This is a question of basic orientation and decides the real nature of society.

Moreover, there are some points of fundamental importance for the economic construction of socialism that must be taken into account in relation to the complete resolution of the fundamental contradiction: controlling and restricting the function of the law of value and restricting bourgeois right, overthrowing profit from its commanding position in production, and continuous struggle to resolve the contradiction between mental and manual labour, between city and countryside, and between worker and peasant. In socialist production, human labour and the means of production are not considered commodities. But a socialist economy is an economy in transition from capitalism to communism and is qualitatively different from a communist economy.

Scientific Socialism

Scientific socialism consists basically of the theory of classes and class struggle; that class struggle leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat; the continuation of revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat; and that states and parties are generated from classes and will wither away with their disappearance.

From the emergence of classes and class society until the advent of the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution all revolutions have replaced one exploiting class by another and one exploiting system by another (in this context the Paris Commune is an exception). The capitalist system, which is the last

exploitative system, has laid the material foundations for building a society free from exploitation and has given birth to the only class in whose interest it is to build such a society, the proletariat. The fundamental contradiction of capitalist society will be resolved through proletarian revolution, the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the construction of socialism and leading revolution towards communism under the dictatorship of the proletariat and finally reaching communism.

The imperialist stage of the capitalist system is a world system, and the proletariat is a worldwide class. Thus the revolutionary proletarian movement is by nature an international movement and proletarian internationalism is its foundation. The proletariat should lead its struggle on a world level and, while carrying out struggle in a particular country, emphasise that the international arena is the most decisive in deciding the outcome of the struggle, and the general interest of the world proletariat is the most important in carrying out the struggle.

The world today is divided into the imperialist countries and the countries dominated by imperialism. The world proletarian revolution is carried forward by the proletariat, the oppressed and the people in both types of countries. The revolutions in these two types of countries are different. Revolution in the imperialist countries has an immediately socialist character. The October Revolution is a victorious example of political struggle carried out to prepare insurrection in the cities and then general civil war. Revolution in the oppressed countries, however, does not have an immediate socialist character, but is a New Democratic revolution under the leadership of the proletariat which prepares the ground for socialist revolution by overthrowing imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucrat and comprador capitalism. The Chinese revolution is a victorious example of this kind of revolution. On the basis of the strategy of protracted people's war, by relying on rural base areas and surrounding the cities, the revolution gathers enough forces to capture the cities and establish country-wide revolutionary political power. Even though revolution in different countries will take different forms according to the particularities of each situation, in general all revolutions belong to one or the other of these paths. The general principle for

both paths is the use of revolutionary violence and armed struggle as the highest form of political struggle to seize power.

The proletarian revolution does not end with the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The revolution must continue under the dictatorship of the proletariat during the whole period of socialism until communism. The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China under the leadership of Mao Tsetung represents the most advanced achievement of the international proletariat in the revolutionary march to communism. This revolution has shown how and by what means the masses can be mobilised and relied on to prevent capitalist restoration in socialist society and advance to communism. The central point in this achievement was paying attention to the nature of the revolutionary proletarian party after the seizure of political power. The revolutionary proletarian party, as the vanguard of the proletariat, leads the revolution and the struggle to achieve communism. But when the party takes over the leadership of the socialist state, contradictions between the party and the people crystallise the contradictions of the transitional, socialist society. The party should lead the march towards world revolution and the final resolution of the fundamental contradiction of capitalism. Those in the party, especially those in positions of leadership who don't want to move in this direction and ultimately try to restore capitalism, are the headquarters of the bourgeoisie inside the party and state and become the targets of the revolution. Such headquarters arise continuously. In struggling against them, the party must rely on the masses to overthrow them, continuously advance the process of increasingly revolutionising the party at all levels, and lead the steady march towards communism. This does not at all mean that one country on its own can complete this struggle and reach the stage of communism. The victory of communism cannot be achieved without the victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie in the international struggle. So it should be emphasised that the continuation of the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat is not limited to the continuation of the revolution in one country but takes place on a world level. □