Marxism-Leninism: vehicle of capitalism

Jack Grancharoff

Spring 1979

Rosa Luxemburg, referring to the Russian Marxists, stated: "It is interesting to observe that Russian Marxists are developing more strongly into ideological champions of capitalism.[1]" Her prophecy has been verified by the events that followed. When in power, Marxist-Leninists in historical and pragmatic terms, have proven the veracity of Luxemburg's statement. It is equally applicable to non-Russian Marxists, such as Euro-Communists and Social Democrats who, without scruples, are also openly assuming the role of champions of capitalism.

Naturally some Marxist scholars will question and even object to the truth of the foregoing statements, despite the fact that "Russian society, like Eastern European societies, China etc. is an asymmetrical and antagonistically divided society – or, in traditional terms, a 'class society'[2]." These objections are based on the ahistoricity of the historical method of social analysis. Used as a tool to dissect bourgeois reality and thus prove its bankruptcy, it is denied the same status in relation to Marxist-Leninist historical reality, which, in socialist terms, is the greatest ideological fraud perpetrated in the 20th century.

On the other hand, it may be justly argued, that the socialist scholars, bearers of the classless order, have a vested interest as a new class in obscuring and manipulating issues, in falsifying history, suppressing evidence and deceiving for their own benefit. To err is human, but when this is combined with the vanguardist role, the spirit of elitism and the urge to dominate, it becomes a conspiracy of scholars, conscious or unconscious, to minimize the evils of Marxist-Leninist bureaucratic capitalism and to present it as an attractive alternative to western style capitalism.

Whatever the case, Marxism-Leninism is a capitalist orientated movement. "The enslavement of the workers at the workplace is not merely an important or secondary 'defect' of the system, nor merely a deplorable and inhuman trait. Both, on the most concrete as well as on the philosophical level, it denounces alienation as the essence of the Russian regime. Strictly in rems of the labour process, the Russian working class is just as subject to a 'wage' relation as any other working class. The workers have control of neither the means not the product of their labour, nor of their own activity as workers. The 'sell' their time, their vital forces and their life to the bureaucracy, which disposes of them according to its interests. The constant effort of the bureau-

[1] Georg Lucacs, History of Class Consciousness, London, 1971. P.26

[2] Conrelius Castoriadis, The Social Regime in Russia, in Telos 38, 1978–79, Washington University, St Lois. U.S.A. p.32

cracy is time decreasing its remunerations – and this by the same methods used in the West.[3]" This is true of the Soviet Union as well as China and other communist countries.

What makes Marxism-Leninism a bourgeois movement? Many factors but basically they can be reduced to three: 1) acceptance of the State – a bourgeois institution – as a vehicle of social transformation; 2) emphasis on centralization at all possible levels: economic, political and social and 3) related to the first and second, the hierarchical mode of organization and its preservation as a social reality.

The State is the acme of the concentration of political power. The centralization of political power in the hands of the State is a bourgeois theory. The bourgeois economists, such as Turgel, Quesney, Letronne and others, saw in the State an institution whose function was to mold the spirit of citizens and to provide ideas and sentiments useful and necessary for the society, the bourgeois society. At the same time the State has to fight against and suppress all ideas and sentiments contrary to its essence and its reality. A bourgeois dream turned into a nightmare by Marxist-Leninists.

The socialist State is superior to the bourgeois State. It is another form of bureaucratic capitalism. "The Russian regime is an integral part of the world system of contemporary domination. With the United States and China, it is one of the three pillars. In collaboration with the others, it controls and guarantees the preservation of the status quo on a global scale.[4]" Thus, to look at the socialist State as a threat to capitalism is to sound a false alarm. Socialism enthroned in power is capitalism. In the Marxist-Leninist society, the managers of capital are converted into socialist managers, the technologists and intellectuals into bureaucrats and apparatchiks, the trade unions into appendages of the State and the workers into slaves without rights and voice but a lot of duties. Once the means of production and distribution are a State monopoly, slavery is absolute. There are no alternatives.

Centralization, one of the many streams in Marxist thought, follows from the theory of the polarization of class struggle. "Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat.[5]" The Proletariat, according to the Marxist pattern of thinking, inevitably, necessary and in the final analysis, will become the dominant class. In power, the Proletariat will continue the bourgeois process of centralization and production, reversing it to its own benefit. "The proletariat will use its political supremacy, to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralize all instruments of production into the hands of the State i.e. of the proletariat organized as the ruling class, and to increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible.[6]" In practical terms the outcome of this economic interpretation of history ended in the modern monstrosity: State bureaucratic capitalism. "From the organization of production and the concentration of capital, entail the elimination of 'independent' individual capitalists and the emergence of a bureaucratic stratum that organizes the labour of thousands of workers into gigantic enterprises, assumes the effective management of these enterprises and controls the incessant modifications of the means and methods of production.[7]"

[3] Ibid, pp. 33–34

[4] Ibid p. 38

[5] K. Marx and F. Engels, Mainfesto of the Communist Party, London 1948, p. 61

[6] Ibid p. 79

[7] Cornelius Castoriadis, Op. Cit. p. 40

Since each mode of production corresponds to definite social relations within the fram work of capitalism. Marxist-Leninists distinguish various stages of capitalist development. Some of them are laissez-faire capitalism, monopoly capitalism and imperialism. The latter according to Lenin, "is the eve of Social Revolution of the proletariat,[8]" and definitely proves "the truth of the teaching of Karl Marx in concentration.[9]" It proves the truth of the concentration of power and capital in the socialist State but it does not prove the advent of socialism and the classless society. On the contrary, the concentration of capital and the centralization of power in the hands of the Marxist-Leninists State proves the greatest victory of monopoly capitalism; a prelude to socialist imperialism. But socialist imperialism is not a step nearer to socialism and classless society. "Thus what they retain of Marx is only the metaphysical and deterministic account of history: there is supposed to be a predetermined stage in history of mankind, socialism, as the necessary sequel to capitalism. But socialism is not a necessary stage of history, It is the historical project of a new institution of society whose content is direct self-government, collective management and direction by all humans of all aspects of their social life, and explicit self-institution of society.[10]" Economic concentration and centralization of power lead to a heavy bureaucratizations of life and a rigid hierarchically structured society. Hierarchy is the matrix of the authoritarian social order. It divides people into categories: masters and slaves, order-giving and order-obeying, husbands and wives, parents and children, intellectuals and workers, apparatchiks and citizens etc. Divided, atomized, alienated and unable to communicate with each other, people are easily manipulated and governed. The old adage of the Roman ruling class "divide and rule", summarizes the function of hierarchy. Cleverly used by the bourgeoisie, it has been perfected as a weapon by the Marxist-Leninist society based on sado-masochistic relationships which are necessary prerequisites for political, economic and personal enslavements.

Being rigid hierarchy, Marxist-Leninist society is definitely a class society: "Deprived of political, civil and union rights, forced into 'unions' that are mere appendages of the State, the Party, and the K.G.B, subject to a regime of internal passports and work papers under permanent police control and surveillance in the workplace and outside it: constantly harassed by omnipresent official propaganda, the Russian working class is subjected to totalitarian oppression and control, mental and physical expropriation that very clearly outdoes fascist and Nazi models and has not been surpassed anywhere expect Maoist China.[11]" Thus, Marxist-Leninist society is but an extension of the bourgeoisie into irs infra-red form. This bourgeoisie, despite the fact that it does not own the means of production, rips off the surplus value. It is in its interest to preserve, by all means, the capitalist mode of production and to save capitalism. This is true not only within socialist countries but in western capitalism too.

In the uprising in France as well as in Czechoslovakia who "favored and produced the return to normality in the factories and in the streets? Well, in both cases the communists: in Paris thanks to the unions, in Prague thanks to the Red Army.[12]" In Italy, in the Hot Autumn of 1969–70, when capitalism was seriously challenged by the workers, the communist party stood up for the State and the status quo.

[8] V.I. Lenin, Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism, Pekin, 1970. P. 10

[9] Ibid, p. 16

[10] Cornelius Castoriadis, Op. Cit. p. 40

[11] Ibid, p. 34

[12] Censor, Rapporto Veridico, Milano, Italy, 1975. P. 51.

Marxist-Leninism is the state's stage of monopoly capitalism. Monopoly capitalism, the Leninist will argue, "has grown out of colonial policy.[13]" Yet, paradoxically as it may sound, state socialism has grown out of colonial policy. In the first place, the party is the colonizer of the workers – the colonies; in the second the biggest state absorbs and economically exploits the small ones, e.g. Russia and its Satellites. The order is colonial too: the summit, the center, the bureaucracy are essential structural features to which the subalterns are workers, peasants and provinces, The socialist monopoly can be represented as an octopus whose head is in Moscow, or for that matter in Peking, while its tentacles are in the factories, in the fields, in the provinces, in the small states sapping the energy of the workers and peoples and suffocating any attempts at self-determination, self-assertion and independence. This makes the Marxist-Leninist State the zenith of monopoly capitalism, because the unity of economic exploitation and political enslavement is achieved. The words Lenin uttered against monopoly capitalism: "striving for domination instead of striving for liberty[14]", are a proper description of socialist capitalism. Once monopoly capitalism and the state merge into state monopoly capitalism, capitalism becomes more virulent, aggressive and expansionary and reaches the final stage, imperialism, which is "the exploitation of small nations but a handful of the richest and most powerful nations.[15]" What an ironical indictment of Lenin is the state Lenin has created.

Now, if Marxist-Leninist Statist monopoly capitalism is a perfection over its bourgeois counterpart then, it follows, Leninist imperialism is a rather more perfect and atrocious form of oppression and exploitation. It is not accidental that the multi-nationals find it profitable to pump millions of dollars into socialist economic system to ensure its blood circulation. State socialist economies are reliable and pay secure dividends.

In conclusion, it may be stated that Marxism-Leninism, far from being a revolutionary science, is a reaction against revolution and especially against the Social Revolution, leveler of all class distinctions and privileges. The success of Marxism lies in its ability to create illusions in the heads of its followers, which affirm rather than refute its bourgeois essence as a movement. Marxism-Leninism does not make the world safe for socialism but it definitely makes it safe for capitalism. Not only is Marxism-Leninism a vehicle of capitalism, it is the savior of capitalism, it is capitalism par excellence. It does not engender revolution, it sprinkles rose oil for smooth capitalist exploitation.

[13] V.I. Lenin, Op. Cit. p. 149

[14] Ibid, p. 150

[15] Ibid p. 150

Jack Grancharoff
Marxism-Leninism: vehicle of capitalism
Spring 1979

Retrieved on 6th December 2020 from libcom.org
Red and Black: An Anarchist Journal, No. 9 Spring 1979

theanarchistlibrary.org