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23 June 1960

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THE LENINIST THEORY OF SOCIALIST REVOLUTION AND CONTEMPORARY REVISIONISM

- USSR -

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THE LENINIST THEORY OF THE SOCIALIST STATE, AND MODERN TIMES

- USSR -

[The following is a translation of an article by V.V. Platkovskiy in Voprosy Filosofii (Problems of Philosophy), Vol. XIV, No. 4, Moscow 1960, pages 14-29.]

His teachings on the dictatorship of the proletariat and on the socialist state are of major importance in the extremely rich and all-embracing ideological heritage which Lenin has left us.

V.I. Lenin considered the concept of the state extremely significant. He viewed it as "the focal center for all political problems and controversy of a current nature." The problem of the state concerned Lenin not for its own sake, but in connection with the tasks of the proletarian class struggle and revolution. The sharper and more acute the class struggle, indicating the approach of a revolutionary crisis, the more it attracted his close attention.

On the eve of the October Socialist Revolution, when the concept of the state had become of vital practical significance, Lenin composed his brilliant work "The State and Revolution" under the difficult conditions imposed by the need for secrecy. After the revolution, he devoted himself entirely to the construction of the first socialist state to exist in the world. During this period all of his major works and almost all of his other articles, reports and speeches dealt with problems of theory and practice in proletarian dictatorship and the creation of a new, socialist state organization.

Not only did Lenin clarify the teachings of K. Marx and F. Engels on the origin and nature of the state, the dictatorship of the proletariat and its decisive importance in the transition from socialism to communism, correcting opportunistic distortions and restating them as originally intended, but he also made an exhaustive and thorough study of the Paris Commune and the three Russian revolutions. He made a theoretical summarization of experience gained in the building of the state as acquired in the early years of the Soviet regime, and developed a complete and consistent view of the socialist state on this basis.

The Communist Party is carefully preserving these inspired teachings as its greatest ideological heritage, and adamantly defends its purity against all revisionistic and dogmatic attacks upon it. The Party is also developing it creatively in accordance with more recent experience.

V. I. Lenin's theories on the socialist state are the sharpest tools available to the working class in capitalist countries for their battle to gain control of the political management of their countries and to effect radical democratic and socialist changes. Enriched by the experience gained in the building of a state in the USSR, these teachings provide an accurate guide to the fulfillment of current tasks in socialist construction in the people's democracies. Following Lenin's precepts, our Party is successfully resolving the problems in the construction of communism. The theoretical conclusions adopted by the Twenty-first Congress of the KPSS (CPSU, Communist Party of the Soviet Union) on the political organization of society, state structure and administration during the period of transition from socialism to communism serve as an excellent example of the creative application and further development of Lenin's teachings on the socialist state.

* * *

In developing the concepts of Marx and Engels on the state and making them more specific, Lenin posed a precise and evident question. Historical development inevitably leads to the demise of capitalism and a transition to communism. What, then, is the fate of the state? To this question he provided a clear and systematic reply, in terms of the basic historical stages. First of all, in a capitalist society there exists a state, in the proper sense of the term - that required by the bourgeoisie; secondly, in the period of transition from capitalism to communism, the state endures because it is needed by the proletariat. However, this state is of a special, temporary nature, and is "not a state in the true sense of the word". In the third stage, when a communist society exists, the state is no longer needed, and therefore disappears.

The transition from a bourgeois state to a proletarian state can only take place through the agency of a socialist revolution. It is the new state which develops after the revolution that can disappear, being so constituted that it is capable of dissolution. "In concrete revolutionary dialectics," wrote Lenin, "Transition from dictatorship by one class to dictatorship by another is differentiated from transition from a democratic-proletarian state to the absence of a state (disappearance of the state)." (Works, Vol. XXVIII, page 300).

The Marxist law as to the need to abolish the bourgeois state led to anarchistic interpretations of it implying a need for immediate "elimination" of any sort of state, including that under proletarian dictatorship, and the immediate destruction of any sort of national administration. Lenin pointed out the anarchists' error, demonstrating that the purpose of proletarian revolution is not by any means the general destruction of the state. He further showed that not everything in bourgeois society merits annihilation: the point is the smashing of the military-bureaucratic apparatus created by the bourgeoisie. Lenin reiterated Marx' words: "In lieu of the bourgeois dictatorship, the workers establish their own revolutionary dictatorship.....giving the state a revolutionary and temporary character rather than abandoning their arms and eliminating it entirely." (Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Works, Vol. XV, pages 88-91).

Conscientious workers violently reject anarchistic theories. They understand that after overthrowing the bourgeoisie and destroying the bourgeois state, the revolutionary proletariat cannot immediately discard the state as an institution. The principal reason for this is that society is incapable of the immediate replacement of the state organization: the working people have no social-political organization which qualifies as a universal state organ and could fulfill its functions. Without such an all-embracing organization with the authority of a government, society would inevitably sink into a state of anarchy. This in turn would result in the restoration of the overthrown exploiters' regime.

The historical necessity for a proletarian state arises from the fact that the seizure of the regime by the working classes constitutes only the beginning of socialist revolution, rather than its completion. In order to complete the revolution - to create a classless society - the proletariat must have its own state organization.

Modern revisionists, forty years after the need for the creation of a socialist state was clearly and systematically demonstrated, are again raising the question of whether the proletariat requires a state organization. They accuse Leninist communists of "idol worshiping", "A superstitious faith in the state", etc., and argue that the dictatorship the proletariat requires is not a state and should not be turned into one, and that dictatorship is a political rather than a governmental concept which should be evidenced not in a state organ but in the "unquestioned leading role of the proletariat". And all of this absurd gibberish the revisionists claim to base on quotations from, no less, Lenin!

These "shrewd" theoreticians seem unaware of the precarious position in which they place themselves. Firstly, political organization in any given case is governmental organization. Secondly, how could "the unquestioned leading role of the proletariat" be implemented apart from state leadership? The proletariat carries out its leading role (hegemony) as regards the peasantry and other strata of the working people during the various stages of the revolution in differing forms. State leadership, i.e. the dictatorship of the proletariat, is the highest expression of the leading role of the proletariat in connection with society. Thirdly, and most important, what are the aims of the revisionists in desiring the dictatorship of the proletariat to abandon a state organization?

In point of fact, what form should the dictatorship of the proletariat take, what will a proletarian regime be, if it does not have the form of a state? It is generally known that as early as 1918 German opportunists proclaimed the slogan "Independence from the state for the workers' class." During that same year, as most are also aware, K. Kautskiy, in his brochure "The Dictatorship of the Proletariat", argued that a class can only "dominate" but cannot "govern". For this reason, the Russian Soviets should not constitute government organs. Basically, it is this same idea which modern revisionists are promoting.

Lenin rose indignantly to refute Kautskiy, terming his views at complete variance with Marxism and socialism, an agreement with the bourgeoisie, which "would permit anything to its own advantage, but never the conversion of the organizations of the class it oppresses into state organs." (Works, Vol. XXVIII, page 239). Lenin demonstrated that opposition to workers' organizations as state organs actually represents either a general denial of the validity of the state or an admission of the possibility that the workers' class might utilize the old state machine.

The founders of Marxism-Leninism never envisaged that the dictatorship of the proletariat might be an amorphous, diffuse or unorganized phenomenon. They constantly emphasized the fact that the dictatorship of the proletariat is a governmental concept. As early as the "Communist Manifesto", Marx and Engels described the dictatorship of the proletariat as a state, i.e., the proletariat organized as a dominating class. In "Criticism of the Gotha Program" Karl Marx wrote: "There is between capitalist and communist society a period of revolutionary transformation from the one to the other. There is a transitory political period which corresponds to it, and during it the state can be no other than the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat." (Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Works, Vol. XV,

page 283). This indicates that Marx unreservedly considered the dictatorship of the proletariat a state.

The concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat as a state organization was promoted systematically by Lenin. He constantly stressed the importance of the organization and specifically governmental strength of the dictatorship, and insisted that the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat should not be perverted by comparing it with any more amorphous authority. He repeatedly emphasized the fact that the dictatorship of the proletariat is a governmental concept. "The dictatorship of the proletariat, the proletarian state, is not a 'form of government'," he wrote, "But a state of a different type." (Works, Vol. XXVIII, page 88). He further asserted that the dictatorship of the proletariat "is a new type of state organization." (Works, Vol. XXIX, page 345). These and many other references by Lenin make it completely clear, despite revisionist assertions, that the concepts of the socialist state and the dictatorship of the proletariat need not be contradictory. Thus Lenin could assert that the Soviet state means the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The revisionists claim that the state organization can instantaneously be replaced by various kinds of nongovernmental organizations, such as trade unions, for example. It was just such notions that Lenin battled so vehemently, referring to them as anarch-syndicalist in nature. These very ideas were his subject in April of 1917 when he spoke to the Petersburg All-City Conference of the RSDRP (b) (RSDWP (b), Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party (Bolshevik)): "The Soviet of Workers' Deputies is not a professional organization, as the bourgeoisie would have it be. The people have a better and more accurate view - they see in it the authority.....This is the type of state through which progress toward socialism can be made." (Works, Vol. XXIV, page 119).

In the final accounting, historical development leads to the replacement of the state organization by self-administration on the part of society. However, this does not come about in a short time, but only when communism has been fully established. The desire to replace the state immediately with various forms of public organization or self-administration means a denial of the validity of the state - the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The revisionists, in their fierce attacks upon the socialist state, use an argument borrowed from the bourgeoisie - they claim that it is incompatible with democracy. As long as the state exists, they assert, there can be no real democracy, and therefore the latter should replace the former. This belief is the basis for the revisionists' belief in the immediate "withering away" of the state.

However, their viewpoint is, to say the least, absurd. Lenin stated that "Democracy implies a state. Consequently, democracy will disappear when the state withers away." (Works, Vol. XXV, page 369).

Calling to mind Engels' words on the abolishment of the state, and with it democracy, under communism, Lenin pointed out that the opportunists "continue to ignore the fact that the elimination of the state implies the end of democracy as well, and that the withering away of the former means the dying out of the latter." (Ibid, page 428).

Historically, democracy is a transitional phenomenon. Over the course of thousands of years, beginning with its embryo in antiquity, the forms of democracy have altered as one dominating class replaced another. In his "Marxism and the State" Lenin wrote: "The dialectics (procedure) of development is as follows: from absolutism to bourgeois democracy; from bourgeois democracy to proletarian democracy; from proletarian democracy to the absence of democracy." (V.I. Lenin, "Marxism and the State", 1958, page 43). This concise formulation indicates with precision and clarity the path of the development of democratic forms, the principal transitional stages from bourgeois democracy through proletarian democracy and thence to the social structure under communism.

Thus democracy is a form of state, and hence could neither destroy nor replace the state, as the revisionists would have us believe. On the contrary, concurrently with the withering away of the state, democracy too will fade out. Therefore, it is but a question of the general and ever fuller development of socialist democracy as a preparation for the political conditions which will result in the withering away of the state. It was exactly this interpretation which N. S. Khrushchev voiced in his report to the Twenty-first Congress of the CPSU - he stated that the principal aim in the development of the socialist state is the general expansion of democracy on all fronts, the enlistment of the broadest possible range of strata in the population in the administration of all of the country's affairs, and the promotion of the participation of all citizens in the management of economic and cultural construction.

The principal thesis, the current preoccupation, of modern revisionists, is the immediate dissolution of the state, specifically the socialist state. Whenever the state is under discussion, they reduce all problems to the issue of its withering away, and attempt to demonstrate that the struggle to promote this dissolution is the primary, major and most urgent task of socialist countries. A rather strange picture then emerges. The modern bourgeois state is generously praised by the revision-

ists as "above class" in nature, and as a tool for the "transformation of capitalism to socialism", and is therefore interpreted as advantageous to the workers' class. Logically, then, such a state should strengthen. However, the moment a socialist state is mentioned, the revisionists express indescribable horror at the very thought of its advancement. They desire its immediate dissolution.

What are the arguments advanced by the revisionists in favor of this development? They take as their foundation statements made by Marx and Lenin to the effect that the proletariat turns the state into a "transitional", i.e. temporary organ, and that "the proletariat has need of the state for a limited time only." But how long, and until what point is reached, will the proletariat need it? At this point the arguments of the revisionists collapse. From the Marxist-Leninist law as to the temporary and transitional nature of the proletarian state, they draw the nasty conclusion that it is "but the initial form of the workers' class' struggle toward socialism," and is needed only in the first stage of revolution, and not even in all countries. They assume it to be necessary only in the most backward nations, and believe that in any case the state should wither away during the transition to socialism, rather than under communism.

The revisionists cannot be ignorant of the fact that this matter has long since been clarified in Marxist theory. In his notes on Bakunin's "State Organization and Anarchy" (1873), K. Marx refuted the author's assertion that "dictatorship will be a transitional and short-lived phenomenon." Marx replied: "Non, mon cher!" ("No, dear sir!"). "Class domination by the workers over the old world strata which oppose them will have to continue until the moment when the economic foundations of the existence of classes have been destroyed." (K. Marx and F. Engels, Works, Vol. XV, page 192). These words make explicit the fact that the dictatorship (state) of the proletariat is a necessity not only for a brief time or during the initial stage in the struggle toward socialism, but for a longer period - the entirety of the transition from a class society to a classless one, from capitalism to communism.

Lenin, too, in complete accord with Marx, set forth the view that the dictatorship of the proletariat will of necessity last a long time. "The nature of Marxist teachings on the state," he wrote, "Has been mastered only by those who comprehend that the dictatorship of one class is necessary not only for the duration of a class society, and for the proletariat which has overthrown the bourgeoisie, but for the entire historical period which divides capitalism from a "classless society" - from communism." (Works, Vol. XXV, pages 384-385). It is this aspect of the very

nature of Marxism which modern revisionists fail to understand and do not wish to understand. Donning sheepskins, these wolves attempt to persuade us that they do not dispute the statements made by the classicists of Marxism-Leninism. The dictatorship of the proletariat may be of long duration, but the state - this, they say, is a different matter.....But we have already discussed this trick practiced by the deceivers who oppose the socialist state during the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In an effort to justify themselves, the revisionists even quote Lenin's "The State and Revolution", particularly those sections which refer to the proletariat's temporary need for a state and which state ".....the proletariat needs only a withering state, i.e. one so constituted that it will immediately begin to fade away and cannot but disappear." (Ibid, page 374). But in this same work Lenin made it clear that "there is no possibility of determining the moment of the future 'withering away', especially since this is a lengthy process." (Ibid, page 429). "Only communism can create the possibility for a complete lack of need for the state", and "Until the 'higher' stage of communism comes about, socialists need the strictest social and state control of the volume of labor and that of consumption....." (Ibid, page 441). This is clear proof of the shameless manipulation and falsification practiced by the revisionists. Lenin asserted that the state is required by the proletariat for a temporary period, but that it is impossible to predetermine the moment of its disappearance as it is known to be a lengthy process. However, the revisionists interpret these statements as an appeal for the immediate abolishment of the state.

Vaunting themselves as dialecticians and "creative Marxists", the revisionists interpret the withering away of the state not as a dialectical, but as a metaphysical process, as a mechanical process of doing away with the state. But the withering away of the state is a gradual and lengthy process during which the state alters slowly. Its functions and organizational forms change in accordance with the contemporary stages in the socialist revolution and the construction of communism. "Temporary stages in the revolution," wrote Lenin, "Are followed by 'temporary stages' in the gradual withering away of the proletarian state....." (Works, Vol. XXVIII, page 300).

The Marxist dialectical method demands the exact and thorough examination of the concrete historical conditions for the existence of the socialist state and its tasks and functions deriving from them. As the socialist revolution progresses and as the conditions characteristic of the various stages of the construction of socialism alter, the basic tasks and functions of the socialist state change. There is no doubt

that in the process of gradual transition from socialism to communism the concrete historical situation will undergo change, other "temporary" phases will be experienced, and the functions of the state will advance and alter.

In any case, however, it is a certainty that the proletariat has need of this socialist state until such time as its world historical task of constructing communism has been completed. Lenin stressed the fact that "the workers' class needs a state regime, a centralized organization of authority." (Works, Vol. XXV, page 376). It is in this way that the role of the socialist state as the broadest and most general centralized organ of the strength of the working people is implemented. It is in the very quality of such a central organ of strength that the socialist state finds its main tool for the building of socialism and communism.

* * *

Theoretical problems in scientific communism, including the question of the concept of the state, have in this country taken on particular contemporary significance in view of the expanded construction of socialist society. What is the role played by the socialist state in the creation of the material-technical foundation for communism, in the communist education of the working people, and in the building of communism in general? How do its basic functions alter during the transition toward communism? What direction will the political forms of society's organization, the organs of state administration and public organizations take? What paths and practical steps lead toward the withering away of the state under communism? All of these questions are of vital importance and practical significance. Their proper theoretical solution is a necessity if in life we are to successfully implement the program for the construction of communism developed by our Party. It is this very scientific Marxist-Leninist solution to all of these problems which is embodied in the report made by N. S. Khrushchev to the Twenty-first Congress of the CPSU and in the resolutions adopted by that Congress.

However, it should be pointed out that our press has unfortunately carried on occasion a somewhat limited and oversimplified interpretation of the problem of development of state administration during the transition toward communism as a simple question of the state's withering away. The Twenty-first Congress by no means reduced the matter to this one aspect. The report by Khrushchev and the resolutions of the Congress set forth the problem of the state broadly and generally as a ques-

tion of the development of the socialist state organization in the new phase of communist construction, the role of the socialist state in the building of communism, the development of the political organization of society, and the state organization and administration, which will be completed by the final withering away of the state and the transition to a communist and self-administered society.

The question of whether our state is already withering away or not is sometimes posed. Khrushchev emphasized the fact that it is impossible to set forth a simplified concept of the process of disappearance of state organs. As when autumn leaves fall one by one from the trees, the time will come when only a bare skeleton remains. The process is a lengthy one when depends not upon the desires of individuals or organizations, but upon objective conditions. These include the development of socialist society itself, and the nature of the socialist state. In reply to a question put to him by an American correspondent, Khrushchev stated "This process, properly speaking, is under way. As the Soviet state develops, the functions of its administrations alter, and certain organs of enforcement are changed." ("For Lasting Peace and Peaceful Coexistence", 1958, page 246). Khrushchev has always stressed the fact that the withering away process is a lengthy and gradual one, and that in this connection haste and pressure are out of order, while on the other hand, it is a process which cannot be delayed.

As is well-known, Engels, in speaking of the withering away of the state, used the word "burial" to suggest the lengthy and gradual nature of the process. This concept is also found in Engels' introduction to K. Marx' work "The Civil War in France". "Only a generation raised under the new, free social conditions..... will be ready to discard all this state rubbish." Viewing the state's disappearance as an objective and systematic process, the founders of scientific communism specifically denounced haste, arbitrary measures, and pressure in this connection. Lenin wrote: "We do indeed speak of the inevitable withering away of the state, and of the length of this process and its relationship to the speed of development of the higher stage of communism, but we leave unstated the time and concrete form of its disappearance, as there is no data which can provide us with this information." (Works, Vol. XV, page 440).

The basis for a proper understanding of the process of the state's disappearance is the Marxist-Leninist law as to the special nature of the socialist state and its basic difference from exploiter states. A basic requirement in Marxism-Leninism is the strict differentiation between the inherently contradictory socialist and bourgeois states.

It is here, in regard to this major and essential precept, that the revisionists and reformists distort Marxism. They cite and insist upon only those elements in the socialist state in which it resembles other types of states, and which would seem to justify calling it simply a state. They make every effort to overlook and minimize the socialist nature of this state, and the characteristics and aspects which radically differentiate it from exploiter states and make it a "nonstate" in the specific sense of the word. This revisionist and reformist view is entirely alien to Marxism-Leninism and to the workers' class. It relies on the assumption that the working masses can be won over and prevented from realizing that their attitude toward the socialist state must be completely different from that toward a bourgeois state.

In its class nature, purposes, tasks and functions, the socialist state is one of a special type. Such a state was termed "not altogether a state" by Marx, Engels and Lenin. "It is not a state in the full sense of the word," they asserted, "But a semi-state, or a transitory form between state and non-state, i.e. one form of the withering away of the state." However, the socialist state retains some characteristics similar to those of any other type of state, and this is what justifies calling it a state. The dialectics of development are seen in the fact that as society advances toward communism, all such traits will gradually die out and disappear, whereas the nonstate characteristics, and its resemblance to a political organization of society will develop increasingly.

Let us proceed further. A proper understanding of the process of withering away demands that we constantly bear in mind that the socialist state never remains stationary, and that during the construction of a communist society, its tasks and functions alter gradually but constantly.

The basic task of the socialist state in the earliest days of the socialist revolution is an economic one - that of constructing a socialist economy. Thus, immediately after the socialist revolution, the Soviet state took on an economic-organizational and a cultural-educational aspect. From the time the holdings of the bourgeoisie and industry, transportation, land, banks, etc. were nationalized, the socialist state was the owner of the basic means of production, and the organizer and leader of the economic life of the country. However, during the time of the civil war and the battle against foreign intervention, these activities could not be carried on properly. Later, during the period of peaceful socialist construction, as economic power grew and the scale of economic construction expanded, this aspect of the functions of the socialist state was extended and

developed increasingly. Today, under the conditions provided by expanded communist construction, when the important task is the creation of the material-technical foundation for communism and the education of thoroughly developed individuals, the economic-organizational and cultural-educational activities of the socialist state are vastly more extensive.

One of the basic domestic functions of the Soviet state as of the first weeks following the socialist revolution was that of suppressing the exploiters. However, Russian communists, from the very beginning, clearly understood that this was a temporary necessity which would endure only as long as such classes existed. Indeed, as a result of the victory of socialism and the elimination of all exploiter classes and the causes for the exploitation of man by man, this function disappeared in accordance with Lenin's theories.

Along with the suppression of the resistance of the exploiter classes early in its existence, the socialist state also served as the guardian of socialist property and the supervisor of the implementation of the socialist principle of distribution. Safeguarding socialist property as the sacred and inviolable foundation for the new social regime, supervising labor and consumption, the socialist state fought adamantly against slack and parasitic elements on the principle "He who does not work does not eat." This is a "form of compulsion," wrote Lenin. "Those who do not work will receive no food." ("Marxism and the State", page 59). Such a form of compulsion is necessary to effect the gradual education of all members of society to the voluntary fulfillment of social duty - work according to capacity. It is completely clear that the functions of safeguarding socialist property and supervision of labor and consumption will obtain in the socialist state not only under socialism but up to the very triumph of full communism.

The task of safeguarding socialist order and the rights and lawful interests of the working people, as performed by the socialist state, stems from the very nature of such a state. This function, which existed as of "the day following the revolution" is constantly developing and will be perfected to the point at which all the people will voluntarily observe the elementary rules of social behavior. The socialist state has performed this function from the very beginning, not only through the organs charged with keeping order, but with the help of public organizations, and the working people themselves. This cooperation will further increase in the future, and will achieve greater importance.

The same is the case with the domestic functions of the socialist state. It can be seen that these are neither eternal nor static. They develop and change with the achievements in

communist construction. On this basis, there is a gradual growth from state administration to selfadministration by a communist society.

The external functions of a socialist state are of a different nature. As long as there is an imperialist bloc constantly threatening military invasion, the socialist state must decisively strengthen the defense capacity of the country - its army and intelligence, struggle adamantly to safeguard peace, and promote the peaceful coexistence of countries having differing regimes. It will only be after the danger of military attack has disappeared that the socialist countries will be able to disperse their armies, and only then that the function of military defense will dissolve.

It should be stressed that the external activities of a socialist state are not limited to defense against external attack. Since the day socialism spread beyond the boundaries of a single country and a world camp emerged, a new external function of socialist states has existed. It is the coordination of activities and promotion of close brotherly cooperation between the country it serves and all other socialist nations. Quite evidently this activity will not be a short term one, but will last well past the victory of communism.

Thus the tasks of the socialist state, its activities, its domestic and external functions develop and change constantly in accordance with the concrete historical conditions prevailing during the various stages of communist construction. It is this law which guides the development of a socialist state which the revisionists are unable to or do not wish to comprehend.

The alterations and changes in the functions of socialist society follow an important trend - toward constant improvement in the state structure, and an increase in the role played by the state in communist construction. This is an objective, systematic pattern in the development of socialist society, and leads to the disappearance of the state. In life, no form disappears until it has thoroughly run its course. This is entirely true of the state as well.

It is this very Marxist-Leninist law as to the need for a total strengthening of the socialist regime which throws the revisionists into the greatest panic. They term it "Stalinist revisionism of Marxism" and attempt to demonstrate that the route toward the disappearance of the state depends upon its weakening.

Why? Because, they say, the preservation and strengthening of the socialist state will inevitably lead to bureaucracy, to its establishment of authority over society, and the

enslavement of the latter.....In order to avert this threat, they assert, the state should hastily be eliminated and measures taken to assure its demise.

But what will the strengthening and bolstering of a socialist society really mean?

Its strength and force of a socialist state reposes in the economic power of the country. Reinforcing a socialist society is principally to effect a further upsurge in industry, agriculture, and all other branches of the people's economy, and to promote an uninterrupted rise in the cultural and living standards of all the working people.

The granite foundation of a socialist state is the union between the workers and the peasants. To strengthen the state is to strengthen this union, to increase the importance of the leading role of the workers' class in regard to the peasantry, and society as a whole.

The solid foundation of the socialist state, the source of its strength and vitality, is the friendship and brotherly collaboration between the peoples of the USSR. To strengthen the multi-national socialist state is to strengthen the friendship among peoples, to further their mutual trust and respect for each other, to expand economic and cultural cooperation, and to educate all the Soviet peoples in a spirit of proletarian internationalism and Soviet patriotism.

To strengthen the socialist state is to develop socialist democracy in all its aspects, to observe the law strictly and maintain order, to combat capitalist remnants in the minds of the people, to oppose antisocial behavior on the part of individual citizens, to establish a socialist attitude toward labor, and to reinforce state discipline.

This is what the communists and all the working people in our country understand the strengthening of the socialist state to mean. The strange outcry of the revisionists against the strengthening of the state and their childlike enthusiasm at the least indication of its withering away are incomprehensible. Why? Is this state of ours foreign and alien to us, not our own? On what grounds should we fear its strength? We believe that the socialist state will in time wither away, while the revisionists are impatient. They demand that immediate measures be taken to promote this development. And for what reason? What is the need for such haste? Is this state yet valueless or "diseased"? After all, this is our own state, one which is essential to the implementation of the tremendous tasks involved in communist construction.

The social origins of the revisionists' demands for its immediate abolishment are evident. The labor under a petit

bourgeois prejudice inherited from the past. During the many centuries of oppression, its victims saw the state as a foreign and alien body, and they became imbued with hatred for it. This was right and proper, for the state was the oppressor, and the enemy of the working people. Later, however, when that state was abolished, and the workers and peasants themselves created their own, hatred for the state organism carried over as a petit bourgeois prejudice on the part of those who had learned to regard it as evil and were incapable of understanding the difference between the new socialist state and the old regime of exploitation.

Abandoning the Marxist class view in the evaluation of the state and confusing the socialist and bourgeois states, the revisionists have fiercely opposed the strengthening of the former and advocate its immediate elimination. Yet they present their concepts as Marxist theory. This is not Marxism, but anarchism, and it shows the petit bourgeois character of the revisionists, their lack of discipline, organization and self-restraint, and their unwillingness to take into account the objective laws governing socialist revolution and the construction of communism. It is in the strengthening rather than the weakening of the socialist state that Marxism-Leninism sees the only proper means of preparing the conditions requiring the withering away of the state and putting into operation the objective law governing the transition from state to nonstate.

Another important factor which our ideological opponents who would cloak themselves in Marxist garb constantly ignore is the prerequisites and conditions necessary for the withering away of the state.

Lenin pled for the serious and thorough consideration of the internal and external prerequisites in this connection. In his brilliant work "The State and Revolution" he devoted an entire chapter to an analysis of the economic basis of the disappearance of the state. It was these very factors which he considered the decisive requirements preceding this phenomenon, without which it would be an impossibility.

Under socialism, the production forces have not as yet developed sufficiently, and society must effect the distribution of produce on the basis of "no food for those who do not work", and "equal produce for equal labor." Actually, this principle still cannot eliminate inequality in distribution, since all persons are not equal in capacity: some are stronger and some weaker; some have many dependents, and others have none. Therefore, inequality in ownership must still exist, but the exploitation of man by man is impossible. Until society can implement the principle "From each according to his abilities, and

to each according to his needs", there will be need for a state which can guarantee fairness in distribution and equality in labor, and will safeguard the public ownership of the means of production.

The economic foundation for the disappearance of the state involves such a high degree of development in production forces that total abundance of material wealth is created and the communist principle of distribution, "From each according to his capacity and to each according to his needs", can be implemented. This situation will come about as a result of modern achievements in science and technology, the many-faceted development of the people, the transformation of labor into the primary vital necessity, and the achievement of higher labor productivity than that under capitalism. "The state," wrote Lenin, "Can only wither away altogether when society can apply the principle "From each according to his capacity and to each according to his needs," i.e. when the people are so accustomed to the observance of the basic rules of social living and their labor is so productive that they will voluntarily work to the limit of their capacities." (Works, Vol. XXV, page 440).

The development of the economic basis for communism leads to profound social changes: the elimination of the major differentiation between mental and physical labor and between cities and villages, and the gradual disappearance of class distinctions between various members of society. The elimination of these differentiations, which are the basis of social inequality, creates the social prerequisites of the disappearance of the state.

This phenomenon also involves political prerequisites. These include well-developed democracy. Lenin stated that the development of socialist democracy is an essential condition to the withering away of the state (see Works, Vol. XXVII, page 242). Only when the people have gradually become accustomed to observing the rules of communal living voluntarily and without enforcement will there be no need for a state enforcement apparatus. The disappearance of the state is brought about in practice "only by Soviet or proletarian democracy, which, by leading mass organizations of the working people into close and constant cooperation in the administration of the state, begins the preparation for the complete withering away of the state as a whole," according to Lenin. (Works, Vol. XXVIII, page 444).

His remarks on Bukharin's brochure "The Economy of the Transitional Period" are of exceptional significance in connection with the proper comprehension of the process of the disappearance of the state. Bukharin, as is generally known, claimed that the "curve of growth in the proletarian state drops off sharply - first the army and the navy disappear, as the ma-

for organs of compulsion, followed by penal and enforcement institutions, and finally organizations supervising obligatory labor, etc." In the margins of the pages of this brochure Lenin queried, "Should this not be reversed? First the 'finally', then the 'followed by', and finally, the 'first'." What is the meaning of his question?

The revisionists have their own interpretation. They assert that the "curve of growth" in the should begin to drop off the moment the economic functions of the state have been eliminated. The works of revisionist theoreticians quote this comment by Lenin. They use it to "expose" Soviet communists who, they claim, are ignoring Lenin's instructions and are engaging in "bureaucratic revision" of Marxism. But either they do not properly understand his meaning or they are deliberately misrepresenting it. In either case we see the usual revisionist procedure of distortion and falsification of the classic idea of the Marxist-Leninists whom they quote.

Actually, what Lenin meant by this comment was something else entirely. He stressed the importance of the economic prerequisites as the essential factor in the withering away of the state. It begins, he states, not with the abolishment of the organs of compulsion, but by the transformation of labor into a habit - a voluntary process free of compulsion. This requires economic conditions favorable to it. Lenin stressed that ".... without assuming a utopia, we cannot believe that once capitalism is overthrown the people will instantaneously go to work in a society lacking legal norms. The economic prerequisites for such a change will not instantaneously emerge upon the abolition of capitalism." (Works, Vol. XXV, page 439).

What are these essential economic conditions? The revisionists believe the economic prerequisite for the disappearance of the state to be its decreasing participation in the economic life of society. But this is to begin at the final stage. By necessary economic conditions Lenin meant just the reverse: the achievement of a level in material goods production such that the need for normed labor and distribution of produce is unnecessary. Only when labor becomes the basic primary necessity and society is capable of distributing produce on the basis of the reasonable requirements of each of its members will the need for supervision of labor and consumption volume disappear, and the special state apparatus for such control admit of abolition. But in order to establish these economic prerequisites, the economic functions of the state must be maintained and strengthened rather than weakened and eliminated.

The socialist state itself must play an important role in creating the conditions essential to the withering away of the state. The enormous tasks involved in the creation of the mate-

rial and technological foundation of communism and cultural construction on the basis of state plans set forth by the Party for implementation in the next fifteen years and during the current Seven-Year Plan are indicative of the broad scope, previously unthought of, of the activities to be undertaken by the socialist state, and of the significance of its role in the construction of communism.

The total disappearance of the state will be possible only under full communism, and on condition that the danger of threats from outside military forces has disappeared. For this reason the decisions of the Twenty-first Congress of the CPSU placed emphasis on the further strengthening of our state, its economic potential and defensive power as the conditions most essential to success in the implementation of the great program of communist construction. The greater the activity of the masses, and the greater the tasks in communist construction, the more extensive the organizational activities of the socialist state must be, and the greater the role it plays in the construction of communism.

* * *

Communism will involve a stateless society. This is generally known. But the petit bourgeois theoreticians attempt to present this fact such as to suggest that after the disappearance of the state there will be no remaining organizations within the social structure, and anarchy will ensue. The view of a communist society as an amorphous, disorganized and anarchistic mass of humanity is both philistine and unscientific. If each member of society were to do as he pleased, disregarding the interests of others, if egotism and anarchy reigned, society would inevitably collapse. But a communist society, on the contrary, will be a highly organized and coordinated concord of the working people.

The high level of productional development and of scientific and technological accomplishment under communism will be made possible by the organized and systematic distribution of labor by branch of production, public regulation of working hours in accordance with the special nature of the various production processes. The distribution of material and cultural goods according to need, the public education of children, and numerous other social functions will require of communism specific forms of public organization. But those established to administer public affairs will have no political or "state" characteristics. They will be social organizations.

Thus the withering away of the state does not imply the abolition of all social organizations. From the state, the

progression of society is not to nothingness, but to statelessness, i.e. an organization without a political aspect. What does this involve? What organization will there be in communist society in the future, and how will it differ from the state?

In describing the communist society of the future, Marx, in his "Critique of the Gotha Program", posed the following questions: What will statehood become in a communist society? In other words, what social functions paralleling those of the former state will still exist? There can only be a scientific answer to this....." (Works, Vol. XV, page 283). Marx also discusses the development of communist society, and in this connection deals with the disappearance of state organization. He explains the transformation which the state will undergo and the path it will follow in withering away. In so doing he remained faithful to his dialectical method. Rather than imagining or guessing at the future forms of the social organizations which will replace the state, he takes up the problem in a strictly scientific manner. What social functions similar to the previous state functions will still exist under communism, he asks. In other words, he indicates that the functions of the former state will disappear, but similar social functions will still be performed. What will they be? How will they differ from the state functions? Marx set forth the answers to these questions only in general terms of a theoretical-principial nature, leaving them to specific determination in the future when practical experience in this regard will have been acquired.

In the classic works of Marxism-Leninism we find theoretical explanations of the basic nature of the transformation which the state administration will undergo in a communist society. In the Communist Party Manifesto Marx and Engels stated that the public, i.e. state, regime, will lose its political characteristics. What does this mean? In his book "AntiDüring" Engels gives a specific explanation of this matter. After the means of production have been concentrated in the hands of the state, he writes, and the latter has become the true representative of society, "The interference of the state authority in public relationships will gradually become unnecessary and will cease of its own accord. Rather than ruling, individuals will supervise work and production processes." ("AntiDüring", 1957, page 265). In his article "On Authority", Engels deals with this question. He states that "....public functions will lose their political aspect, becoming simple administrative processes of protecting the true interests of society." (K. Marx and F. Engels, Selected Works, Vol. I, page 591). Developing this concept further, Lenin wrote: "The withering away of the state will produce what might be called a nonpolitical state, at a certain

stage in its disappearance." (Works, Vol. XXV, page 410).

Thus a state is a political organization or regime which regulates social relationships. Under communism, political authority will die out, and the state will no longer intervene in public relationships. Social life will be regulated by high moral principles, the conscientiousness and collective interests of the people, and by their activity participation in administering public affairs, rather than by legal state norms. The state will lose its political characteristics, and the specific organs of a state authority which maintain public order and regulate relationships between the citizens will simultaneously disappear. Social order will be maintained by voluntary observance of the rules of social existence, which will have become a habit, by selfdiscipline and by a high level of popular organization. However, there will still be in society such functions, similar to the former state functions, as the management of production processes, the education of children, the ensuring of public order, etc. But this does not constitute state administration. It is rather public, or self, administration.

Thus the withering away of the state is a dialectical process of transition from state to nonstate, and of development of a socialist state administration into a communist social selfadministration. In his speech at the Thirteenth Komsomol Congress, Comrade N. S. Khrushchev stated: "We say that under communism the state will wither away. What organs will remain? Public organs! Whether they be called Komsomols, trade unions, or something else, they will be social organizations through which society will regulate its relationships. We must now clear the path toward this accomplishment, training the people such that they will develop habits suitable to this kind of life."

This will be the overall task in the development of political organizations and state administration in the transition towards communism.

However, the revisionists attack these basic laws governing the disappearance of the state. They say the Soviet Marxists ignore the question of the state apparatus as a result of their "bureaucrat outlook as regards the state." The revisionists confuse the terms 'state' and 'apparatus', regarding the elimination of the latter as their major goal. But their confusion lies in their failure to distinguish between various types of state. The bourgeois state, like all others which are exploiters, is really in essence a military-bureaucratic apparatus. In describing the various types of exploiter states, Lenin stated that "The state is an apparatus for administration which is re-

moved from human society." (Works, Vol. XXIX, page 437). The socialist state is something entirely different. In terms of its nature, tasks and responsibilities it is not nor could it be merely an administrative apparatus. It is a vastly more extensive state system for administration.

The political organization of society under socialism - the dictatorship of the proletariat - is a profoundly thought out and streamlined organized system of state and nonstate establishments and organizations tested over the many years of experience acquired and covering every aspect of life in Soviet society. Such a "mechanism" for the political organization of society has the following basic links: first, the organs of the state regime - the soviets - which constitute the mass and all-embracing political organization of all the working people; secondly, the organs of state administration - the state apparatus itself. They include the executive and administrative organs of the state authority and the state administration of the economy and cultural construction. Thirdly, the mass public organizations of the working people - trade unions, cooperatives, youth unions and other organizations rally the Soviet citizens in various branches of production, culture, science, sports and other activities. The leading and guiding strength of all state and public organizations is the Communist Party of the Soviet Union - the front troops of the working people in our country.

Each of the links in the political organization of Soviet society has specific tasks to perform and plays an important part in the life of society. The question is reduced to one of what directions these links and elements of political organization and administration will take in future development during the transition to communist social selfadministration.

Our life provides rich experience, and the Party has accumulated such a full background of knowledge in the construction of the state as to make it possible to answer this question cogently. The resolutions adopted at the Twenty-first Congress of the CPSU emphasize the fact that "under present conditions, the principal task in the development of the socialist state is the many-sided development of democracy and the encouraging of all citizens to participate in the management of economic and cultural undertakings and public affairs. It is necessary that the soviets play a more important role as mass organizations of the working people. Many functions currently being performed by state organizations must gradually become the responsibility of public organizations."

Thus the general major path of development for political organizations in society lies through the many-faceted promotion

of socialist democracy, especially by means of increasing the importance of the role played by the soviets as mass organizations of the working people, and that of public organizations in the administration of state affairs. As regards the governmental administrative apparatus, it too will undergo changes during the process of the development of socialist society toward communism. To a certain extent, depending upon specific internal and external conditions, enforcement organs will disappear. The organs for the administration of the people's economy will remain, but will no longer be state organs. They will be social, selfadministrative bodies.

It is important to stress in this connection the fact that a communist society does not come ready-made, nor can it exist in a static condition. Metaphysical imaginings to the effect that the moment communism is achieved the state and all its attributes will overnight be a thing of the past are erroneous. A communist society is a living, constantly mutable thing, and its basic principles continually alter and improve. As this occurs, various aspects, functions, norms, etc. of the state organization will disappear. When the process will be completed it is impossible to say at present. In any case, it will not be at the moment the higher stage of communism begins. For these reasons, we must not suppose that the present political organization will die and immediately be replaced with public selfadministration. The social organizations which will in the future replace the state and its organs will not spring up ready for immediate service, even under communism. It is evident that this must be a gradual and lengthy process during which the present administrative and public organizations alter and develop, and during which new public organs and organizations will appear, progressively taking over the functions of the state organs.

Lenin stated that "no form is final until total communism has been achieved." (Works, Vol. XXVIII, page 195). The point is that in the process of development the socialist society will create the most efficient forms of administration in terms of the needs of the moment in order to fulfill the increasing complex and extensive economic and cultural tasks confronting it, or it will reorganize, alter and perfect the existing administrative forms. However, the essential principal trend is clear - the current political organization of Soviet society with all its structural elements and links will gradually be transformed into public communist selfadministration.