SOME QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE INTERNATIONAL TASKS OF OUR PARTY

SPEECH AT THE NINTH PLENUM OF THE THIRD CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE VIET NAM WORKERS' PARTY

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The present plenum of the Central Committee is called in order to make decisions on some most important questions. During the past fortnight we have made detailed and serious studies and discussions. These discussions prove the complete and profound unanimity of the Central Committee of our Party. The international situation is very complicated, the more so when differences exist in the international communist movement, in particular, between the two biggest Parties commanding the highest prestige. For the present plenum of our Central Committee to reach this unanimity in such a situation is indeed a most important victory for our Party. We have achieved this victory because our Party has a firm and revolutionary tradition which is the crystallization of the uninterrupted revolution of our people during the past thirty years, and because every one of us attending the meeting has taken a correct and fully responsible attitude—adhering to the truth, distinguishing right from wrong, and concerning ourselves with internal and international unity, in particular, the unity with the Soviet Union and China.

Before Comrade Truong Chinh sums up the discussions and puts before the plenum a draft resolution for voting, I would like to express some opinions which I hope will bring out certain aspects of the basic points mentioned in the report submitted by the Political Bureau.

Some comrades among our Party members, though very few in number and mostly coming from the intelligentsia, hold that ours is a small Party which was
bred in a former colony with a backward agriculture and low cultural level, and consequently could comprehend very little of the science of Marxism-Leninism and understand very little of complicated international questions. How should we assess this opinion? It is correct that we must be modest. Modesty is a virtue of revolutionaries and of people with a scientific spirit. Nevertheless we must also see that as the revolutionary cause of our people cannot at any time be separated from the revolutionary cause of the people of the world, our Party, when mapping out the revolutionary line for Viet Nam, always starts from the concrete conditions in our country and bases itself on Marxist-Leninist principles, and always analyses the international situation and the tasks of the international communist movement. The victories won by our Party in its revolutionary struggles, such as the success of the August Revolution, the victory of the protracted resistance against the French and U.S. interventionists, the achievements of the socialist revolution in the north and the victory of the revolutionary struggles of our southern compatriots, have all demonstrated the correctness of the revolutionary line for Viet Nam mapped out by our Party. The correctness of our Party’s line means that our Party has not only been able to understand accurately the concrete situation and its development in our country, but also to master the science of Marxism-Leninism, analyse correctly the concrete world situation and its development, and understand correctly the various questions concerning the international communist movement.

Marxism-Leninism is unlike other doctrines in that it not only explains the world but also remodels it. To master the essence of Marxism-Leninism, one must
acquire revolutionary knowledge and possess oneself of a firm resolve to remould the world, that is, a thoroughgoing revolutionary spirit. No one can comprehend Marxism-Leninism and accurately understand the development of society no matter how many books he may have read or how many academic titles he may have acquired if he lacks the firm resolve to remould the world and lacks abundant revolutionary verve. Why did Kautsky and Plekhanov who were highly intellectual, and were respected by Lenin as teachers, finally bog down in the quagmire of opportunism? Because they finally lost their revolutionary verve, and as a result their knowledge became useless or even dangerous. What was the question around which the great debate concerning the character of the Party proceeded between Lenin and the Mensheviks? The Mensheviks advocated the building of the Party on the basis of their scholastic understanding of Marxism while Lenin held that the revolutionary spirit was the basis for building the Party. Anyone who adopts the Menshevik attitude towards Marxism-Leninism will sooner or later embark upon the opportunist road. There are in our Party as well as in other fraternal Parties some members and cadres who for one reason or another fail to keep up their fighting will and revolutionary spirit, and consequently they cannot recognize correctly and see clearly the boundless prospects of revolution held out before the world, even if they have read volumes of Marxist-Leninist classics. We, therefore, may well say that the series of differences existing in the present international communist movement reflect none other than the two different attitudes towards such questions as whether or not to make revolution, whether or not to struggle for the labouring
people and the oppressed and exploited masses, and whether or not resolutely to annihilate imperialism and capitalism.

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Another outstanding reason giving rise to the mistaken revisionist viewpoints on international questions is that the developing process of the Marxist-Leninist theory of revolution, in particular that of recent decades, has not been fully understood.

Marxism-Leninism is not a static science but one which is continuously developed and enriched by new conclusions drawn from the practice of the vigorous revolutionary struggles launched by millions upon millions of the masses.

When Marx and Engels wrote the Manifesto of the Communist Party, they drew the following logical conclusion only through the study of the laws of development of human society, in particular, the laws of development of capitalist society: The proletariat is bound to be the grave-digger of capitalism and the builder of a new social system, i.e., communism; and to fulfil this historical mission the proletariat must carry out a revolution to overthrow the bourgeois rule and establish a government of its own. As to how the proletariat is to bring this revolution into effect and seize political power, Marx could not and would not then state his views. Being an out-and-out dialectical and historical materialist, Marx was looking forward to the masses to carry on creative practical activities and then draw conclusions from them.

The Paris Commune marked the first proletarian revolution in history. From the Commune Marx drew the conclusion that the proletariat must smash the machine
of violence of the bourgeoisie and establish the dicta
torship of the proletariat and launch offensives against
the enemy. At the same time Marx also maintained that
the proletarian revolution must have “popular character”.
In other words, in order to win victory the proletarian
revolution must draw in not only the proletariat but also
the peasantry, because in none of the capitalist countries
on the European continent during the 1870s did the
proletariat constitute the majority of the population. As
a matter of fact, Marx’s idea on the necessity of com-
bining the proletarian revolution with the revolutionary
movement of the peasantry had already taken shape
during the 1850s. The famous dictum written by Marx
in 1856 in a letter to Engels says: “The whole thing in
Germany will depend on the possibility of covering the
rear of the proletarian revolution by a second edition of
the Peasants’ War.”¹ It was precisely in the spirit of
combining proletarian revolution with the revolutionary
movement of the peasantry that Marx advanced the
theory of uninterrupted revolution. It was also on the
basis of the theory of uninterrupted revolution and the
observation of the European revolutionary practice that
Marx put forward the proposition that the centre of rev-
olution was shifting itself from England to Germany.
As we know, Marx and Engels at first held that the pro-
letarian revolution was to burst forth first in the most
developed capitalist countries. Later, however, Marx
believed that revolution would first occur in Germany
and after Germany in France and England, in spite of
the fact that both France and England had already com-

¹“Marx to Engels, London, 16 April, 1856”, Selected Cor-
pleted their bourgeois revolution at a time while Germany was still “on the eve of a bourgeois revolution”.¹ Marx maintained that should the bourgeois revolution burst forth in Germany, it would be possible for it to develop incessantly and turn into a proletarian revolution and henceforth to abolish the capitalist system, provided the proletarian revolution was assisted by “a second edition of the Peasants’ War”. Marx further elaborated the idea mentioned above and predicted that revolution will start from the East which has served for a long time as a firm base and reserve force for the counter-revolutionary side.

The birth of Leninism signifies a great and new development of the theory of proletarian revolution. How did Lenin develop this theory? He drew the conclusion from the Paris Commune that the Commune failed because it did not win the support of the peasantry. He developed and created the great theory on the role of the peasantry in the socialist revolution and on the worker-peasant alliance led by the working class, and took it as the highest principle of proletarian dictatorship. Proceeding from the characteristics of capitalism in the imperialist era, Lenin advanced the idea anew that the question of proletarian revolution was precisely the demand brought about by the ripening of the entire system of world capitalism, and took the proletarian revolution and the ripening of world capitalism as two parts of an integral whole. He also put forward the theory of the uneven ripening of the revolution in the different countries and of the possibility of the proletariat winning victory in one country. He refuted the dogmatic view-

point advocated by the revisionists of the Second International which held that proletarian revolution would occur and win victory only in highly developed capitalist countries where the broad working class was concentrated and organized and constituted the overwhelming majority of the population. As for those countries where capitalism was underdeveloped and the working class formed the minority of the population, the revisionists held that the proletariat had to wait for capitalism to develop. Lenin, however, taught us that because of the combination of internal and external causes which give rise to a direct revolutionary situation, revolution can occur first in an economically backward country if that country formed the weakest link in the imperialist chain. And this is possible under the conditions of imperialism. In such a country revolution not only can burst forth but can win victory, because even if the working class is small the broad masses of peasantry make up an important revolutionary force. A very powerful revolutionary force able to overthrow any reactionary rule will appear if the proletarian leadership of the peasantry is ensured and a worker-peasant alliance realized. Lenin further taught us that in the imperialist countries where capitalism is highly developed, there exist many factors which make it more difficult for the revolution to burst forth than in the backward countries which are oppressed and exploited by imperialist countries. This explains why it was so much easier for the proletarian revolution to burst forth in Russia than in Germany, France or Britain. “... Instead of the absolute preponderance of workers, that is, of proletarians in the population, and a high degree of organisation among them, the important factor of victory in Russia was the support the proletarians re-
ceived from the poorest and quickly pauperised peasantry.” Lenin created the great theory on the inseparable relationship between the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the socialist revolution in the imperialist epoch. Lenin taught us that in countries where the bourgeois revolution has not yet taken place, the proletariat must not allow the bourgeoisie to assume leadership over the peasantry in the bourgeois revolution, but must take the leadership into its own hands, so as to carry out together with the peasantry the bourgeois-democratic revolution to overthrow the feudal rule. He also taught that after the overthrow of the feudal rule the proletariat must not stop the revolution midway, awaiting the peaceful development of capitalism and separating the bourgeois-democratic revolution from the socialist revolution by an impenetrable wall, but must push the revolutionary movement further and wage a socialist revolution together with the impoverished peasantry.

Lenin said that apart from its domestic ally, the broad masses of the peasantry, the proletariat must unite with another great ally in the anti-imperialist common front, the oppressed colonial and semi-colonial nations, in each of which the peasantry makes up the most important part. Lenin highly appraised the revolutionary movement of the oppressed nations, taking it as a component part of the world proletarian revolution. He said:

The revolutionary movement in the advanced countries would indeed be a mere deception if complete and close unity did not exist between the workers

fighting against capital in Europe and America and
the hundreds and hundreds of millions of "colonial"
slaves who are oppressed by that capital.¹

Lenin predicted:

... In the impending decisive battles in the world revolution, the movement of the majority of the population of the globe, which at first is directed towards national liberation, will turn against capitalism and imperialism and will, perhaps, play a much more revolutionary part than we expect.²

In analysing the perspective of the world proletarian revolution and the victory of the Russian Soviet communist construction, Lenin said:

In the last analysis, the outcome of the struggle will be determined by the fact that Russia, India, China, etc., account for the overwhelming majority of the population of the globe. And it is precisely this majority that, during the past few years, has been drawn into the struggle for emancipation with extraordinary rapidity, so that in this respect there cannot be the slightest shadow of doubt what the final outcome of the world struggle will be.³

The great creations of Lenin's—the theories on the role of the peasantry in the proletarian revolution, on

the relationship between the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the socialist revolution, and on the part played by the national-liberation revolution in the proletarian revolution — refuted the theory of the Trotskyites, which advocated the overthrow of the Tsar and the establishment of a workers' state-power exclusive of the peasantry — the great ally of the working class. Lenin's great creations defeated the absurd theory of the Mensheviks which held that the Russian bourgeois-democratic revolution was the exclusive concern of the Russian bourgeoisie and that that class alone was capable of leading the revolution, while the proletariat could only play a minor part in the revolution and should not form an alliance with the peasantry. Lenin's creations also tore to shreds the traitorous viewpoints of the leaders of the Second International which denied the possibility of a revolution in the colonies and dependent countries, and thereupon brought about the burgeoning of the national-democratic revolutionary movement in the colonial countries. The afore-mentioned great creations of Lenin's not only demonstrated his revolutionary genius, but also his firm determination to annihilate imperialism, capitalism, and other reactionary forces, as well as his firm belief in the great strength of the united workers, peasants and oppressed nations. It is because of these creations of Lenin's that the October Socialist Revolution won victory in one-sixth of the globe, that the reactionary rule of the Tsar was overthrown, that a link in the imperialist chain was torn and a new epoch for progressive mankind emerged. The dream of a new system which man had cherished for thousands of years, a system without the exploitation of man by man, had at long last been realized. This new system shook the
world and provided an illustrious example for the millions upon millions of oppressed and exploited, arousing them to stand up and seek their emancipation.

Why could not the leaders of the Second International have done likewise and created the afore-mentioned theories on the proletarian revolution? There are many reasons behind this. The most fundamental, however, is ideological and that is that these people lacked a resolve for revolution. And therefore they lacked the resolve to seek for allies to defeat the enemy, and on the contrary, exerted all their energies to concoct a theory which served to curry favour and make compromise with the enemy, in order to realize their absurd illusions.

Stalin in theory and practice faithfully put into effect and developed the afore-mentioned ideas of Lenin's. He specially concerned himself with and fully supported the revolutionary movement of the oppressed nations, and highly appraised the role played by the national-liberation revolution in defeating imperialism and winning victory for socialism in the world as a whole. Stalin put forward the celebrated proposition that the national question is essentially the peasant question and the peasant question is a basic and decisive factor in the anti-imperialist front of the national-liberation revolution. Stalin made great contributions to the Chinese revolution. He indicated that the chief direction of the Chinese revolution was to establish the leading role of the working class in relation to the peasantry, mobilize the millions upon millions of peasants, and arm the workers and peasants so as to fight armed counter-revolution with armed revolution. At the 19th Congress of the C.P.S.U., Stalin made a profound summing-up of the revolutionary movement of the time and called on the
Communists to “uphold the banner of national-democratic revolution and march ahead”—a bugle-call summoning us to the battle front.

The Chinese revolution marks a new stage of development in the Marxist-Leninist theory of proletarian revolution. Lenin once urged the Communists to give the theoretical grounds for the proposition that it was possible for the economically backward countries to take the non-capitalist road of development.\(^1\) He also urged the Communists to develop and try to elucidate Marxism-Leninism so as to adapt it to the situation in the colonies and dependent countries where the peasantry constitutes the overwhelming majority of the population.\(^2\) It is precisely the Chinese Communist Party headed by Comrade Mao Tse-tung which most brilliantly put into effect these teachings of the great Lenin. The most outstanding development and creation made by the Chinese Communist Party and Comrade Mao Tse-tung to the Marxist-Leninist theory of proletarian revolution is the theory of the revolution which has the peasantry as its main force and is led by the proletariat in a country where agriculture is the dominant sector of the national economy and where a bourgeois-democratic revolution is being waged to realize national liberation and democracy, so as to pass directly on to socialism. In this country the peasantry is not only seen as the greatest ally of the proletariat and the greatest reserve in the proletarian


revolution, but the main force of the revolution. Here exists not only the question of revolutionary forces but a series of questions concerning the revolutionary line and methods, such as the question of uprisings in the rural areas; the relying on the rural areas, the establishment of rural bases, the encirclement of cities by villages; and questions concerning the mobilization of peasants, the protracted armed struggles, the building of a strong Marxist-Leninist political party, of a workers' and peasants' revolutionary army and of a broad anti-imperialist and anti-feudal national united front with the workers and peasants as its basis, and so on. Some genuine Marxists, both past and contemporary, doubted the truth of these theories, thinking that they smacked of Narodism just as the opportunists had thought that Leninism contained certain peasant characteristics. Nevertheless, these theories have become tried and tested truths, thanks to the victory of the Chinese revolution. The great value of these theories lies first of all in the fact that they guided one-fourth of mankind onto the road of proletarian dictatorship. These theories are no longer limited to the country of China, but have become theories of international significance. Learning and creatively applying these theories, we Vietnamese Communists have guided the revolutionary cause of our country to victory. If Lenin pointed out that the Russian revolutionary tactics were exemplary tactics for all Communists in the world, then we may say that the Chinese revolutionary tactics are at present exemplary tactics for many Communists in Asia, Africa and Latin America. It is by no means accidental that the Chinese Communist Party is the first to develop and create these
theories. It is a creation of a protracted revolution in a big country with a population of over 600 million.

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What do we find if we try to analyse the present world situation by applying our theoretical knowledge of the proletarian revolution as mentioned above with whole-hearted revolutionary enthusiasm? (First of all, we should not forget that it is almost twenty years since the end of World War II. Although twenty years is only a brief period in history, it is long enough for many great changes to have taken place in the present world. There was only a span of a little more than twenty years between the end of World War I and the outbreak of World War II.)

Although we do not forget that in terms of fundamental principle the world today is still divided into two systems, socialism and capitalism, we can, on the other hand, see that, judging from the economic, social and political characteristics, there are three kinds of countries in the world concentrated in three different areas. They are 1) the socialist countries; 2) the imperialist or well-developed capitalist countries; and 3) nationalist countries which have attained varying degrees of independence but are still oppressed and exploited by imperialism and colonialism; and a small number of countries still under direct imperialist and colonial rule. Geographically, most of the countries of the third category are in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, with a few in Oceania. For the sake of convenience, we often call them the Asian, African, and Latin American countries.

Each area of the world is characterized by its own law of development.
There is no doubt at all that the socialist camp is now more powerful than the imperialist camp and is becoming the decisive factor in the development of human society. This strength is jointly built up as a result of the all-sided, uninterrupted development of all socialist countries in the economic, political, military, scientific and technological fields. The question which must be made clear is: What constitute the main factors which enable the strength of the socialist camp to play the decisive role in the development of human society? In my opinion, they are the political line, the revolutionary line and the line for building a new socio-economic structure represented by the socialist camp.

In the first place, the socialist camp at present embraces more than 1,000 million people who have entered into socialism from different levels of economic development and different social systems. Among the socialist countries, the Soviet Union was formerly an imperialist country where capitalism was comparatively well developed; China and Cuba were former semi-colonial and semi-dependent countries; Viet Nam and Korea were former colonial countries with a backward agricultural economy... That is to say that more than 1,000 million people have found the political and revolutionary line leading to socialism, which conforms with the law of social development and is suitable for all nations in the present world no matter what their political and social system, and no matter what their level of economic development. As a result, the people of all countries, not only the people of the imperialist and highly developed capitalist countries in western Europe and northern America, but particularly the millions upon millions of people of the economically backward and under-
developed Asian, African and Latin American countries, have come into possession of a tested revolutionary line for liberation by dint of their own strength—a most effective and incisive weapon for shattering and destroying the fortress of imperialism and eliminating the world capitalist system. This amounts to the most powerful offensive against the imperialist rule.

Secondly, proceeding from the nature of its economy, the socialist camp consistently upholds the line for safeguarding world peace, constantly raises high the banner of peace, and resolutely opposes the plots and manoeuvres for war of the imperialists headed by the United States. This line for safeguarding peace plays a role of organizing and encouraging millions upon millions of working people and other peace-loving people to rise in struggle and resolutely smash the policy of war—the most fundamental policy which the imperialists headed by the United States are pursuing at present. This is also a powerful offensive against imperialism.

Thirdly, at a time when the economy of the capitalist countries is constantly in a state of sickness and decay and weakened by cyclical crises and the frequent standstill of many departments of production, the socialist relations of production of the socialist countries which are characterized by two forms of ownership of the means of production, ownership by the whole people and collective ownership, have opened the path for a constant high-speed growth of the productive forces. The fact that the socialist countries are successfully carrying out construction and developing their economy proves that the proletariat and the peasants, formed into an alliance, not only can overthrow the rule of imperialism and other exploiting classes, but also can transform the old econ-
omy and build up a sound new economy of proportionate development. The people of the socialist countries, regardless of the condition of their economy, can also build their own independent economy by relying mainly on their own efforts combined with the internationalist help from the fraternal countries of the socialist camp and, on this basis, co-operate with the fraternal socialist countries on the principles of complete equality, free-will, mutual respect of sovereignty, mutual benefit and comradely mutual assistance. This example of the socialist camp has further encouraged the people of the countries under the capitalist system to rise in a revolution to smash the rule of imperialism and other reactionary forces, set up a new society and build a free, happy and prosperous life far better than that under the capitalist system. This is another powerful offensive against imperialism.

This means that the socialist camp has increasingly become the centre for rallying and guiding all revolutionary forces and all forces of peace and democracy in the world which are against the imperialists and other reactionaries. The socialist camp is the bulwark of world revolution and as well as one of world peace. By closely combining the vigorous effort for increasing the strength of the socialist camp in every field with the all-out support for the revolutionary movement of the people of the various countries, by closely combining the two main revolutionary tides of our times—the struggle for socialism and the struggle for national liberation, and by closely combining the revolutionary struggle for overthrowing the rule of imperialism with the struggle for defending world peace, the socialist camp, the working class, the working people of the
various countries, the oppressed nations and the forces of peace and democracy will be able to defeat the plots of the imperialists for launching a world war, safeguard world peace, and at the same time repulse imperialism in every area. Obviously, our camp's offensive against the imperialist camp finds expression chiefly in its political line, in the efforts to bring it to and closely link it with the millions upon millions of people in the countries under the capitalist system, to bring into full play their great revolutionary creative initiative and to accelerate the process of disintegration of imperialism in accordance with the laws of historical development, so that the socialist camp can play its decisive role in the historical development of mankind. As Marx said, when the revolutionary line of the proletariat has gone deep in the midst of the masses, it will become a great force turning the whole capitalist world upside down.

Many people hold that the chief factor which has enabled our camp to grow strong and play a decisive role in the progress of human society is the superiority we have attained in nuclear weapons and their vehicles of delivery. True, the superiority that the Soviet Union has gained in nuclear weapons and in the vehicles for delivering them to their destinations has deprived imperialism headed by the United States of its monopoly of a terrible weapon of mass slaughter with which it has threatened the people of the world, and thus prevented it from venturing on a nuclear war. The people of the world deeply admire and are extremely grateful to the people of the Soviet Union for the tremendous sacrifices they have sustained and the great wisdom and ability they have displayed in gaining nuclear superiority. Nevertheless, nuclear weapons in the hands of the socialist
camp are a means for defending peace. To us they are not for offence, but chiefly for self-defence. The capacity for self-defence is of course tantamount to the capacity for offence. But the power to attack and destroy imperialism lies not in nuclear weapons, but in the revolutionary actions taken by the masses who, under the guidance of a correct political and revolutionary line, rise resolutely to smash all the fetters of the slaves. It was by dint of a correct political and revolutionary line that the revolutions in China and Viet Nam obtained victory at a time when atomic weapons were still monopolized by U.S. imperialism. It was again by dint of a correct political line, and not because of the possession of nuclear weapons, that the revolutionary movement in the various continents has been surging forward like an angry, irrepressible torrent in the past twenty years. However great a superiority the socialist camp may establish in nuclear weapons, imperialism cannot be destroyed and human society cannot move a step forward towards the era of world-wide transition from capitalism to socialism if there is not a correct political line to guide the people of the various countries to carry forward the revolution or if this revolutionary movement is not guided by a correct political line for winning victory. It is therefore obvious that the socialist camp has become the decisive factor in the progress of human society not because of its superior nuclear technology. Consequently, if we were to build our strength chiefly on the basis of nuclear weapons and base our strategy on them, the logical result would be that we can only take a defensive position. Even the imperialists have realized that by basing their policies on nuclear weapons they have landed themselves in a passive position. To
extricate themselves from this passive position, they have, in the military aspect alone, replaced the strategy of “massive retaliation” and “massive suppression” with the strategy of “flexible response”, which combines three kinds of wars—global war, local war and “special warfare” based on nuclear as well as conventional weapons. If we Communists follow a strategic line with nuclear weapons as its mainstay, the logical result can only be a defensive strategy. At a time when the balance of the world forces has changed in favour of socialism and peace (a situation fundamentally different from that when the Soviet Union first came into being and existed as the only socialist country surrounded by imperialism) and when the surging revolutionary tide of the people all over the world is continuously dashing against imperialism with an irresistible force, to adopt such a defensive strategy is the same as to repudiate revolution both objectively and subjectively.

We have also heard some people say that the chief factor which enables the socialist camp to play its decisive role is economic construction. These people maintain that it is necessary to strive for a period of relaxation of tension for the socialist camp to develop its economy, so that it can greatly surpass the capitalist camp in gross output and per capita industrial and agricultural output, by then the conditions will be ripe for the socialist revolution to gain world-wide victory. We believe that nobody among us Communists will deny that the economic construction of the socialist countries is of particular importance to the revolutions of our own countries and the world, for economy is the foundation of society and the foundation of the material strength of the socialist camp. How to better manage and build the
economy of their own countries and at the same time contribute to the strengthening of the whole socialist camp is a question which constantly occupies the greatest attention of the parties in power in the socialist countries. But the point is this. Is it necessary to wait until the socialist camp has surpassed the capitalist camp in industrial and agricultural output before carrying the revolution forward to eradicate imperialism? Marxist-Leninist theories teach us that the development of the basic contradictions within the imperialist system creates the conditions for its destruction. Has not the revolutionary practice of the past decades proved the ripening of the world revolution? Revolution develops unevenly in different countries. The law of uneven development shows why revolution breaks out and achieves victory in one country, but not in another, when the conditions for revolution are generally ripe under the imperialist system as a whole. The difference in the degree of development between the socialist and capitalist camps cannot be taken to explain the conditions under which revolution does not break out and achieve victory in this or that country. In an era when the storms of revolution are everywhere destroying imperialism, some people speak yet about reaching a détente with imperialism so as to carry out economic construction, and place this desire above everything else. Whether you like it or not, the outcome will only be to hamper the development of revolution.

I believe the socialist camp does not have to wait until it outstrips the imperialist camp in *per capita* output before it can demonstrate its superiority over the capitalist camp and before the people of the various countries under the capitalist system can decide on their choice.
between socialism and capitalism. In my opinion, it is an incorrect approach to the question. The socialist system has already demonstrated its superiority over the capitalist system in the past forty years and more. Did not the working people of the world already decide that the Soviet state power was a thousand times superior to the bourgeois regime even at the time when the Russian Soviets were first established, when the workers and peasants in Russia still did not have enough to eat and wear, and when there was a shortage of all consumer goods? The high-speed growth of the national economy is a concrete manifestation of the superiority of socialism. The amazing progress made by the Soviet Union in forty-five years and by the other fraternal socialist countries in less than twenty years has distinctly reduced the disparity between the socialist and capitalist camps in the level of economic development. Despite the devastation of two world wars, the Soviet Union with its Soviet system not only healed its serious war wounds, but also surpassed the advanced capitalist countries four, five or sixfold in the rate of average annual industrial growth. From a country whose industry was only one-seventh that of the United States or one-sixth that of West Germany, the Soviet Union today has become the second biggest industrial country in the world. The national economy of the other fraternal countries in the socialist camp has also grown at a speed never known before. In the last ten years, the average annual growth of the socialist camp was almost as high as 14 per cent, while that of the capitalist system generally did not exceed 5 per cent. The rapid economic growth of the socialist camp which I have just mentioned is the material foundation upon which the well-being of the working people
has been continuously improved, science and technology, including military science and technology developed, and the invincible strength of national defence of the socialist camp fortified. Another very important question is the existence in the socialist countries of the socialist relations of production. Despite the fact that the socialist countries are still behind the advanced capitalist countries in production capacity and absolute amount of output, these socialist relations of production enable the socialist countries to enforce a most fair and reasonable system of distribution, so that they can guarantee work for every working man, ensure a constant improvement of the livelihood of the working people, and completely eliminate unemployment and other social disasters. The socialist system is a system without the exploitation of man by man, a system of genuine democracy and genuine freedom where labour power is no longer regarded as a cheap unsalable commodity as in the capitalist world, and where not only the material life of the people is ensured, but human personality is respected and the finest and healthiest human sentiments are steadily developed. The characteristic of world progress is that all countries which have embarked on the road of socialism were established on an economic foundation far less developed than that of the imperialist countries. It is therefore understandable to the people of the world if there is at present still a certain disparity between the socialist and imperialist camps in the level of growth of production. Today, when the socialist economy is in its initial stage of development, we should not use the per capita output of industrial and agricultural products and the per capita food quota as the yardstick for measuring the superiority of socialism over capitalism, and much less should we use these as
the yardstick to evaluate the character of the people of the socialist countries who, inspired by lofty ideals, have become the true masters of their destiny and are working for the happiness of their own nations and for mankind as a whole.

We should give wide publicity to the inherent merits of the socialist system among the oppressed people of the world, explain to them the historical reasons why the level of economic development of the socialist countries is for the time being still lower than that of some capitalist countries, and point out to them the road of revolutionary struggle for overthrowing imperialism, burying capitalism and winning national and class liberation. If we lay lop-sided emphasis on the relatively low level of economic development of the socialist countries and take it as a weakness of the socialist system, if we assume that the world-wide triumph of the socialist revolution depends on the victory of the socialist camp in the economic competition between the two systems, we will be under-rating the position and role of the socialist camp in the cause of peace, national independence, democracy and socialism, abandoning the offensive against the enemy and landing ourselves in a position of passively biding our time, thus inflicting no small losses on the world revolutionary movement.

In a word, in analysing the decisive role of the socialist camp, we must proceed from the standpoint of class struggle and be guided by the thesis on the present epoch defined in the 1960 Moscow Statement that ours is a time of transition on a world-wide scale from capitalism to socialism, a time of struggle between the two social systems, a time of socialist revolutions and national liberation revolutions, and a time of the breakdown of
imperialism and triumph of socialism and communism on a world-wide scale. We must proceed from the standpoint of historical materialism, looking upon the masses as the motive force of historical development, and must have long-range, fundamental, strategic viewpoints, ardent revolutionary enthusiasm and rich revolutionary knowledge. Only in this way can we make a correct analysis.

The revolutionary tides have risen highest in Asia, Africa and Latin America since the end of the World War II. Why?

In the first place, the working people in these areas, the overwhelming majority of whom are peasants, are victims of intense and merciless exploitation and oppression at the hands of imperialism, feudal forces and comprador bourgeoisie, victims of economic exploitation as well as barbarous national and class oppression and colour discrimination. Imperialism preserves the extreme backwardness of the colonies and dependent countries, where the working people, leading a life no better than that of slaves, are suffering from hunger and shortage of clothing and are constantly threatened by unemployment. The national bourgeoisie which has emerged in many countries since World War I want to develop their national capitalist economy, but are fettered by the feudal forces and crowded out by imperialism. The situation is crying out for revolution in order to attain national liberation and free the productive forces from the shackles of imperialism, feudal forces and comprador bourgeoisie. The slogans of national independence, land to the tillers, democracy and freedom are voicing the most urgent demands, and national and democratic ideals have become strong and most heart-stirring sentiments. These slogans
can mobilize and rally the various classes and strata of people who make up the overwhelming majority of a nation, including the workers, peasants, petty bourgeoisie, intellectuals, national bourgeoisie and other patriotic and democratic people, into a mighty revolutionary force, with the peasants forming the bulk of it. Under the impact of the Great October Revolution in Russia, this powerful revolutionary force has turned Asia, Africa and Latin America into new storm-centres of revolution. The Soviet Red Army's glorious victory over the German and Japanese fascists in World War II, the great victory of the Chinese revolution and the emergence and growth of the socialist camp (which includes a number of former colonies and dependent countries) are the external factors which have daily added force to this revolutionary storm. The working people, particularly the worker and peasant masses, have risen in a towering rage. They demand not only the liberation of the productive forces, but also the emancipation of the labouring masses from all class oppression and exploitation; they not only demand national liberation and democratic reforms, but also wish to embark on the path of socialism. The present revolutionary current in Asia, Africa and Latin America is, in nature, one of bourgeois-democratic revolution with national and democratic contents. But since it has taken place in the period of the world proletarian revolution and when more than 1,000 million people have achieved victory in the proletarian revolution, this bourgeois-democratic revolutionary current can very possibly become an uninterrupted revolution and join the tide of the socialist revolution, by-passing the stage of capitalist development. It was in this spirit that Lenin posed the question when he spoke about the new
storm-centres of revolution, about “the East in 1905”, and about the connections between the future of the world socialist revolution and the revolutions in China and India. Imperialism is seized with terror in the face of the furious onrush of the national-liberation movement and the inevitable trend of the national-democratic revolutionary current heading towards socialism under the ever-increasing influence of the socialist camp. In an attempt to save colonialism from its doom and to thwart the revolutionary movement of the masses of workers and peasants and to ward off the influence of the socialist camp, imperialism has hastened to come to a compromise with the national bourgeoisie, its reactionary members in particular, and has declared concession of partial independence to a number of colonies and dependent countries. But in reality it is doing everything possible to preserve its colonial interests in a new form. This gives the lie to the baseless claim made by certain people that the emergence of a number of nationalist countries enjoying sovereignty in varying degrees is the result of struggles by peaceful means and of peaceful co-existence between the two opposing social systems. Imperialism will under no circumstances abandon colonialism, one of the foundations upon which it exists and rules. At a time when capitalism is confronted with a new general crisis, imperialism is riddled with more acute contradictions than ever before. This makes it all the more necessary for imperialism to push ahead with neo-colonialism and to grasp at it as a life-saving mystic charm. In order to suppress the resistance of the people, imperialism is resorting to all ways and means at its disposal, such as direct investment of capital, economic and military “aid”, military alliances, fostering new social strata as tools,
buying over those in power, instigating *coup d'état* and subversive activities, and when necessary, not even hesitating to launch wars of aggression, "special warfare" and local wars—all these are aimed at dominating Asia, Africa and Latin America economically, politically and militarily. The national bourgeoisie, confronted with the ever-growing revolutionary movement of the masses, particularly the worker and peasant masses, and threatened, hoodwinked and subjected to bribery by imperialism, is rapidly disintegrating. Its anti-imperialist section wishes to develop an independent economy and pursue a foreign policy of peace and neutrality. It therefore has a progressive side, and its policy has a positive aspect advantageous to the national-democratic revolution of its own country and the common world front against imperialism. Another section of the bourgeoisie, generally the big bourgeoisie who control the political and economic life lines of certain nationalist countries, is increasingly coming into compromise with imperialism, carrying out a reactionary domestic and foreign policy, betraying the national interests and opposing the revolutionary movement of the worker and peasant masses, in order to maintain its own rights and position. The members of this section of the bourgeoisie dare not propose bourgeois democracy, because they are afraid that the worker and peasant masses will use the right to democracy and freedom to overthrow them. This is why in the nationalist countries where the reactionary section of the national bourgeoisie is in power, democratic reforms, particularly land reform, cannot be realized or fully realized, few of the important economic departments owned by imperialism have been nationalized, and the imperialists' investment of capital and "aid" are ever