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PREFACE

Once again, certain criticisms are being made anew on the role of J.V. Stalin in the Soviet Union during the period of socialist construction in the thirties and forties, and the anti-fascist war of 1941-45. Various divergent opinions are being expressed in this debate in the Soviet Press and outside the Soviet Union.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) had made its stand clear on the question of the role of Stalin at the outset of its formation in 1964. It had upheld the stand of the united Communist Party of India which had adopted a resolution by the Central Committee in its meeting held in July, 1956, entitled: "Struggle against the cult of the individual in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union." It further upheld the two articles written by the Communist Party of China in April and December, 1956, entitled, "On the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" and "More on the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat". These two articles dealt comprehensively with the experience of building of socialism in the U.S.S.R, and provided a balanced Marxist-Leninist assessment of the role of Stalin. The CPSU also reprinted these articles in the Soviet Press at that time.

The CPI(M) has decided to reprint these above mentioned documents in this booklet with which it is in agreement regarding the role of the CPSU and the situation in the Soviet Union when Stalin was at the head of the Party and the State.

Along with these documents, the booklet also contains an excerpt from "A Short History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union" (Moscow, 1970 edition) which contains a brief evaluation of the role of Stalin.

The repeated "reviews" of the role of the CPSU and Stalin in the years 1922-53, we are afraid, tend to sow confusion and disorient the younger generation of Marxist-Leninists. We hope these materials will help our Party ranks to have a proper assessment of this important chapter in the history of the international communist movement.

**RESOLUTION OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE,
COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA**

(Adopted at the meeting held in New Delhi from
1st July to 12th July, 1956)

**1. STRUGGLE AGAINST THE CULT OF THE
INDIVIDUAL IN THE COMMUNIST PARTY
OF THE SOVIET UNION**

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India has considered the situation arising out of the publication by the State Department of the United States of America of a document which purports to be the text of the Report delivered by Comrade Khrushchov at a special session of the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU.

The Central Committee has also studied the resolution passed by the Central Committee of the CPSU on June 30.

The facts mentioned in the report have come as a great shock to communists and to millions of progressive people all over the world. They reveal that together with great successes in the building of socialism in the USSR there also occurred during the latter part of the life of Comrade J.V. Stalin instances of distortion of Soviet democracy, infringement of socialist legality by excesses and arbitrary acts and violation of norms of inner-Party life.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India considers that in view of the seriousness of the mistakes committed by them it was necessary to take resolute measures to rectify the mistakes and undo the damage done. It was necessary to wage a determined struggle against the cult of personality, a cult alien to the spirit of Marxism-Leninism, whose growth played a big part in creating the conditions in which these mistakes occurred. The cult of the individual belittled the role of the masses and the Party, came in the way of the growth

of their initiative. By undertaking these tasks, the CPSU leadership has rendered a great service to the cause of socialism.

The Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has analysed the historical and social conditions that contributed to the development of the cult of Stalin. Historical circumstances of hostile capitalist encirclement, rise of fascism, and the threat of attack on the Soviet Union necessitated iron discipline, centralisation of leadership and also some justifiable limitations on democracy. It was under these conditions that certain negative traits of Comrade Stalin began to develop, which gradually led to the cult of the individual and lack of collective leadership with harmful consequences.

It is evident that Comrade Stalin was mainly responsible for the distortions of Soviet democracy and for the violation of inner-Party norms. It is also incontestable that in the later period of his life, the cult of the individual assumed enormous proportions. While fully recognising the negative features and grave defects that developed in Stalin's methods of leadership, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India considers that a one-sided appraisal of his role during the last twenty years of his life, years of mighty developments in the USSR and the world communist movement, causes bewilderment among the masses and can be utilised by enemies of communism to confuse them. The Central Committee, therefore, is of the opinion that an objective assessment of Comrade Stalin's life and work in their entirety, Comrade Stalin's great achievements and serious shortcomings, is essential for successfully fighting the cult of the individual and for effectively combating the prevailing confusion.

The Central Committee considers that the excessive glorification of Comrade Stalin's person and role which became a marked phenomenon during his life-time requires adequate explanation. It is also necessary to undertake a fuller analysis of the causes which led to the arbitrary acts and excesses. It is only then that a correct appraisal of the growth of the cult of the individual can be made. To ascribe all shortcomings and arbitrariness to the defects of an individual falls short of Marxist-Leninist standards of historic objectivity.

The revelations made in the report of Comrade Khrushchov have been seized by the imperialists and other enemies of the working people to denounce the Soviet Union and undermine the confidence of the people in the socialist system. The resolution of the Central Committee of the CPSU passed on June 30, has correctly exposed the machinations of these enemies and stressed the need for loyalty to the scientific ideology of Marxism-Leninism and to the cause of proletarian internationalism.

The enemies of the working class are at pains to make out that the violations of Soviet democracy and the excesses committed are inherent in the Soviet system. There is serious danger of many honest and progressive elements being influenced by this propaganda, which the Communist Party of India considers it imperative to expose and combat.

Less than forty years have passed since the triumph of the proletarian revolution in Russia. During this period, the Soviet Union has transformed itself from a backward country into one of the most advanced countries in the world, from a country of fascist autocracy to a country of victorious socialism. During this period, one-third of humanity has been freed from the yoke of capitalism, and socialism has emerged as a world system. While the capitalist world is in the midst of ever-deepening crisis which dooms hundreds of millions of people to conditions of misery, unemployment and cultural backwardness, the socialist world has registered gigantic progress in every sphere. The example set by the socialist world and the positive measures taken by it have profoundly influenced the entire course of human history. If today the possibility has arisen for prevention of war, for peaceful transition to socialism in a number of states, if new opportunities have opened out before the countries of the former colonial world for independent economic development, the decisive factor in all these is the growing economic-political and moral might of the Soviet Union and other socialist states and the policies adopted by them. It would be no exaggeration to say that never in human history has so much been achieved over such vast areas in such a short period.

It is evident that a system in which such violations and distortions were inherent could not have unleashed the creative

energies of hundreds of millions on a scale never known before and brought about such unprecedented social transformations.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India is confident that the detractors of socialism and slanderers of the Soviet Union, though they may sow some temporary confusion, cannot prevent the growing popularity of the ideas of socialism in our country, nor can they weaken the bond of Indo-Soviet friendship.

The Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, on the basis of the gigantic achievements of the past and guided by the all-conquering ideas of Marxism-Leninism, has charted out the path for further advance. The decisions of the Congress and the measures following from them have already had powerful impact on the whole world and have considerably strengthened the movement for peace, democracy and socialism.

The mistakes and excesses that occurred in the USSR were not due to the principles of Marxism-Leninism or the Soviet system but to deviations from them in practice in several respects. These deviations occurred in the background of great victories of socialist reconstruction carried out in an extremely difficult period. There can be no doubt that with the measures that are being adopted to combat and eliminate the defects that crept in during this period and with further measures based on a thorough analysis of the developments of the past, the Soviet society will advance further in every sphere and ensure continuous expansion of socialist democracy.

It is the enemies of socialism that have propagated that socialism is founded on regimentation in thought and constitutes a denial of that freedom of spirit which is the source of individual initiative. The socialist society is in a position to guarantee full freedom of conscience and liberty to individuals because it abolishes exploitation of man by man and creates conditions in which such individual freedom can constantly flourish. The successes of socialist transformation in the economic life should make it all the more possible to enlarge the field of individual liberty and create effective guarantees against its violation.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India considers it necessary to state emphatically that

of socialism, it is indispensable to adhere firmly to the tenets of socialist democracy, and to expand it continuously. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India attaches fundamental importance to the safeguarding and development of individual freedom and liberty under socialism. The Central Committee is confident that the world communist movement will profit by the experiences of the USSR and take effective measures for the defence and extension of democracy in every sphere.

While socialism has become the common goal of all progressive mankind in our present epoch, each country will, however, proceed to this goal in its own way. Firmly adhering to the principles of Marxism-Leninism, the Communist Party of India seeks to achieve its goal of socialism by basing itself on the national traditions and specific features of our own country.

Loyalty to the principles of Marxism-Leninism, the common goal of socialism and the struggle for peace, democracy and the defence of national freedom, constitute today the basis of proletarian internationalism and fraternal cooperation among Communist and Workers' Parties. This cooperation which is based on exchange and pooling of common experience, freedom of criticism and self-criticism and independence of national parties is indispensable for the socialist movement. The Communist Party of India will do everything to promote and strengthen this common bond of proletarian internationalism.

ON THE HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT¹

The 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union summed up the fresh experience gained both in international relations and domestic construction. It took a series of momentous decisions on the steadfast implementation of Lenin's policy in regard to the possibility of peaceful co-existence between countries with different social systems, on the development of Soviet democracy, on the thorough observance of the Party's principle of collective leadership, on the criticism of shortcomings within the Party, and on the Sixth Five-Year Plan for the development of the national economy.

The question of combatting the cult of the individual occupied an important place in the discussions of the 20th Congress. The Congress very sharply exposed the prevalence of the cult of the individual which, for a long time in Soviet life, had given rise to many errors in work and had led to ill consequences. This courageous self-criticism of its past errors by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union demonstrated the high level of principle in inner-Party life and the great vitality of Marxism-Leninism.

In history and in all the capitalist countries of today, no governing political party or bloc in the service of the exploiting classes has ever dared to expose its serious errors conscientiously before the mass of its own members and the people. With the parties of the working class things are entirely different. The parties of the working class serve

1. This article was written by the Editorial Department of *Renmin Ribao* (People's Daily) on the basis of a discussion at an enlarged meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. It was published in *Renmin Ribao* on April 5, 1956.

the broad masses of the people ; by self-criticism by such parties lose nothing except their errors, they gain the support of the broad masses of the people.

For more than a month now, reactionaries throughout the world have been crowing happily over self-criticism by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union with regard to this cult of the individual. They say : Fine ! The Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the first to establish a socialist order, made appalling mistakes, and, what is more, it was Stalin himself, that widely renowned and honoured leader, who made them! The reactionaries think they have got hold of something with which to discredit the Communist Parties of the Soviet Union and other countries. But they will get nothing for all their pains. Has any leading Marxist ever written that we could never commit mistakes or that it is absolutely impossible for a given Communist to commit mistakes ? Isn't it precisely because we Marxist-Leninists deny the existence of a "demigod" who never makes big or small mistakes that we Communists use criticism and self-criticism in our inner-Party life? Moreover, how could it be conceivable that a socialist state which was the first in the world to put the dictatorship of the proletariat into practice, which did not have the benefit of any precedent, should make no mistakes of one kind or another? Lenin said in October 1921:

Let the curs and swines of the moribund bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeois democrats who trail behind it, heap imprecations, abuse and derision upon our heads for our reverses and mistakes in the work of building up our Soviet system. We do not forget for a moment that we have committed and are committing numerous mistakes and are suffering numerous reverses. How can reverses and mistakes be avoided in a matter so new in the history of the world as the erection of a state edifice of an unprecedented type ! We shall struggle unremittingly to set our reverses and mistakes right and to improve our practical application of Soviet principles, which is still very, very far from perfect.¹

1. V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. II, Part 2, Moscow, 1952, p. 597.

It is also inconceivable that certain mistakes made earlier should for ever preclude the possibility of making other mistakes later or of repeating past mistakes to a greater or lesser degree. Since its division into classes with conflicting interests, human society has passed through several thousand years of dictatorships—of slave-owners, of feudal lords and of the bourgeoisie ; but it was not until the victory of the October Revolution that mankind began to see the dictatorship of the proletariat in action. The first three kinds of dictatorship are all dictatorships of the exploiting classes, though the dictatorship of feudal lords was more progressive than that of slave-owners, and that of the bourgeoisie more progressive than that of feudal lords. These exploiting classes, which once played a certain progressive role in the history of social development, invariably accumulated experience in their rule through making innumerable mistakes of historic import over long periods of time and through repeating these mistakes again and again. Nevertheless, with the sharpening of the contradiction between the relations of production which they represented, and the productive forces of society, still they inevitably committed mistakes, bigger and more, precipitating a massive revolt of the oppressed classes and disintegration within their own ranks, and thus eventually bringing about their destruction. The dictatorship of the proletariat is fundamentally different in its nature from any of the previous kinds of dictatorship, which were dictatorships by the exploiting classes. It is a dictatorship of the exploited classes, a dictatorship of the majority over the minority, a dictatorship for the purpose of creating a socialist society in which there is no exploitation and poverty, and it is the most progressive and the last dictatorship in the history of mankind. But, since this dictatorship undertakes the greatest and the most difficult tasks and is confronted with a struggle which is the most complicated and tortuous in history, therefore, many mistakes, as Lenin has said, are bound to be made in its operation. If some communists indulge in self-exaltation and self-complacency and develop a rigid way of thinking, they may even repeat their own mistakes or those of others. We communists must take full account of this. To defeat powerful enemies, the dictatorship of the proletariat requires a high degree of centralisation

of power. This highly centralised power must be combined with a high level of democracy. When there is an undue emphasis on centralisation, many mistakes are bound to occur. This is quite understandable. But whatever the mistakes, the dictatorship of the proletariat is, for the popular masses, always far superior to all dictatorships of the exploiting classes, to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Lenin was right when he said :

If our enemies reproach us and say that Lenin himself admits that the Bolsheviks have done a host of foolish things, I want to reply by saying : yes, but do you know that the foolish things we have done are entirely different from those you have done ?

The exploiting classes, out for plunder, have all hoped to perpetuate their dictatorship generation after generation, and have therefore resorted to every possible means to grind down the people. Their mistakes are irremediable. On the other hand, the proletariat, which strives for the material and spiritual emancipation of the people, uses its dictatorship to bring about communism, to bring about harmony and equality among mankind, and lets its dictatorship gradually wither away. That is why it does its utmost to bring into full play the initiative and the positive role of the masses. The fact that, under the dictatorship of the proletariat, it is possible to bring into play without limit the initiative and the positive role of the masses also makes it possible to correct any mistakes committed during the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Leaders of Communist Parties and socialist states in various fields are duty bound to do their utmost to reduce mistakes, avoid serious ones, endeavour to learn lessons from isolated, local and temporary mistakes and make every effort to prevent them from developing into mistakes of a nation-wide or prolonged nature. To do this, every leader must be most prudent and modest, keep close to the masses, consult them on all matters, investigate and study the actual situation again and again, and constantly engage in criticism and self-criticism appropriate to the situation and well measured. It was precisely because of his failure to do this that Stalin, as the chief leader of the Party and the state, made certain serious mistakes in the later years of his work. He became conceited and imprudent.

subjectivism and one-sidedness developed in his thinking and he made erroneous decisions on certain important questions, which led to serious consequences.

With the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution, the people and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, under the leadership of Lenin, established the first socialist state on one-sixth of the earth. The Soviet Union speedily carried out socialist industrialisation and collectivisation of agriculture, developed socialist science and culture, established a solid union of many nationalities in the form of a union of the Soviets, and the formerly backward nationalities in the Soviet Union became socialist nationalities. During the Second World War, the Soviet Union was the main force in defeating fascism and saving European civilisation. It also helped the peoples in the East to defeat Japanese militarism. All these glorious achievements pointed out to all mankind its bright future—socialism and communism, seriously shook the rule of imperialism and made the Soviet Union the first and strong bulwark in the world struggle for lasting peace. The Soviet Union has encouraged and supported all other socialist countries in their construction, and it has been an inspiration to the world socialist movement, the anti-colonialist movement and every other movement for the progress of mankind. These are the great achievements made by the people and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in the history of mankind. The man who showed the Soviet people and the Communist Party the way to these great achievements was Lenin. In the struggle to carry out Lenin's principles, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, for its vigorous leadership, earned its credit, in which Stalin had an ineffaceable share.

After Lenin's death Stalin, as the chief leader of the Party and the state, creatively applied and developed Marxism-Leninism. In the struggle to defend the legacy of Leninism and against its enemies—the Trotskyites, Zinovievites and other bourgeois agents—Stalin expressed the will and wishes of the people and proved himself to be an outstanding Marxist-Leninist fighter. The reason why Stalin won the support of the Soviet people and played an important role in history was primarily because he, together with the other leaders of the

Communist Party of the Soviet Union, defended Lenin's line on the industrialisation of the Soviet state and the collectivisation of agriculture. By pursuing this line, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union brought about the triumph of socialism in the Soviet Union and created the conditions for the victory of the Soviet Union in the war against Hitler ; these victories of the Soviet people conformed to the interests of the working class of the world and all progressive mankind. It was therefore quite natural for the name of Stalin to be greatly honoured throughout the world. But, having won such high honour among the people, both at home and abroad, by his correct application of the Leninist line, Stalin erroneously exaggerated his own role and counterposed his individual authority to the collective leadership, and as a result certain of his actions were opposed to certain fundamental Marxist-Leninist concepts which he himself had propagated. On the one hand, he recognised that the masses were the makers of history, that the Party must keep in constant touch with the people and that inner-Party democracy and self-criticism and criticism from below must be developed. On the other hand, he accepted and fostered the cult of the individual, and indulged in arbitrary individual actions. Thus Stalin found himself in a contradiction on this question during the later part of his life, with a discrepancy between his theory and practice.

Marxist-Leninists hold that leaders play a big role in history. The people and their parties need forerunners who are able to represent the interests and will of the people, stand in the forefront of their historic struggles and serve as their leaders. It is utterly wrong to deny the role of the individual, the role of forerunners and leaders. But when any leader of the Party or the state places himself over and above the Party and the masses instead of in their midst, when he alienates himself from the masses, he ceases to have an all-round, penetrating insight into the affairs of the state. As long as this was the case, even so outstanding a personality as Stalin could not avoid making unrealistic and erroneous decisions on certain important matters. Stalin failed to draw lessons from isolated, local and temporary mistakes on certain issues and so failed to prevent them from becoming serious mistakes of a nation-wide or prolonged nature.

During the later part of his life, Stalin took more and more pleasure in this cult of the individual, and violated the Party's system of democratic centralism and the principle of combining collective leadership with individual responsibility. As a result he made some serious mistakes such as the following : he broadened the scope of the suppression of counter-revolution ; he lacked the necessary vigilance on the eve of the anti-fascist war ; he failed to pay proper attention to the further development of agriculture and the material welfare of the peasantry ; he gave certain wrong advice on the international communist movement, and, in particular, made a wrong decision on the question of Yugoslavia. On these issues, Stalin fell victim to subjectivism and one-sidedness, and divorced himself from objective reality and from the masses.

The cult of the individual is a foul carry-over from the long history of mankind. The cult of the individual is rooted not only in the exploiting classes but also in the small producer. As is well known, patriarchy is a product of small-producer economy. After the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, even when the exploiting classes are eliminated, when small-producer economy has been replaced by a collective economy and a socialist society has been founded, certain rotten, poisonous ideological survivals of the old society may still remain in people's minds for a very long time. "The force of habit of millions and tens of millions is a most terrible force" (Lenin). The cult of the individual is just one such force of habit of millions and tens of millions. Since this force of habit still exists in society, it can influence many government functionaries, and even such a leader as Stalin was also affected by it. The cult of the individual is a reflection in man's mind of a social phenomenon, and when leaders of the Party and state, such as Stalin, succumb to the influence of this backward ideology, they will in turn influence society, bringing losses to the cause and hampering the initiative and creativeness of the masses of the people.

The socialist productive forces, the economic and political system of socialism and the Party life, as they develop, are increasingly coming into contradiction and conflict with such a state of mind as the cult of the individual. The struggle against

the cult of the individual which was launched by the 20th Congress is a great and courageous fight by the communists and the people of the Soviet Union to clear away the ideological obstacles in the way of their advance.

Some naive ideas seem to suggest that contradictions no longer exist in a socialist society. To deny the existence of contradictions is to deny dialectics. The contradictions in various societies differ in character as do the forms of their solution, but society at all times develops through continual contradictions. Socialist society also develops through contradictions between the productive forces and the relations of production. In a socialist or communist society, technical innovations and improvement in the social system inevitably continue to take place; otherwise the development of society would come to a standstill and society could no longer advance. Humanity is still in its youth. The road it has yet to traverse will be no one knows how many times longer than the road it has already travelled. Contradictions, as between progress and conservatism, between the advanced and the backward, between the positive and the negative, will constantly occur under varying conditions and different circumstances. Things will keep on like this: one contradiction will lead to another; and when old contradictions are solved new ones will arise. It is obviously incorrect to maintain, as some people do, that the contradiction between idealism and materialism can be eliminated in a socialist or communist society. As long as contradictions exist between the subjective and the objective, between the advanced and the backward, and between the productive forces and the relations of production, the contradiction between materialism and idealism will continue in a socialist or communist society, and will manifest itself in various forms. Since man lives in society, he reflects, in different circumstances and to varying degrees, the contradictions existing in each form of society. Therefore, not everybody will be perfect, even when a communist society is established. By then there will still be contradictions among people, and there will still be good people and bad, people whose thinking is relatively correct and others whose thinking is relatively incorrect. Hence there will still be

different from those in class societies. Viewed in this light, the existence of contradictions between the individual and the collective in the socialist society is nothing strange. And if any leader of the Party or state isolates himself from collective leadership, from the masses of the people and from real life, he will inevitably fall into rigid ways of thinking and consequently make grave mistakes. What we must guard against is that some people, because the Party and the state have achieved many successes in work and won the great trust of the masses, may take advantage of the trust to abuse their authority and so commit some mistakes.

The Chinese Communist Party congratulates the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on its great achievements in this historic struggle against the cult of the individual. The experience of the Chinese revolution, too, testifies that it is only by relying on the wisdom of the masses of the people, on democratic centralism and on the system of combining collective leadership with individual responsibility that our Party can score great victories and do great things in times of revolution and in times of national construction. The Chinese Communist Party, in its revolutionary ranks has incessantly fought against elevation of oneself and against individualist heroism, both of which mean isolation from the masses. Undoubtedly, such things will exist for a long time to come. Even when overcome, they re-emerge. They are found sometimes in one person, sometimes in another. When attention is paid to the role of the individual, the role of the masses and the collective is often ignored. That is why some people easily fall into the mistake of self-conceit or blind faith in themselves or blind worship of others. We must therefore give unremitting attention to opposing elevation of oneself, individualist heroism and the cult of the individual.

To counter subjectivist methods of leadership, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China adopted a resolution in June 1943 on methods of leadership. In discussing now the question of collective leadership in the Party, it is still worthwhile for all members of the Chinese Communist Party and all its leading personnel to refer to this resolution, which declared:

In all the practical work of our Party, correct leadership can only be developed on the principle of "from the masses, to the masses." This means summing up (i.e., coordinating and systematising after careful study) the views of the masses (i.e., views scattered and unsystematic), then taking the resulting ideas back to the masses, explaining and popularising them until the masses embrace the ideas as their own, stand up for them and translate them into action by way of testing their correctness. Then it is necessary once more to sum up the views of the masses, and once again take the resulting ideas back to the masses so that the masses give them their whole-hearted support . . . and so on, over and over again, so that each time these ideas emerge with greater correctness and become more vital and meaningful. This is what the Marxist theory of knowledge teaches us.

For a long time, this method of leadership has been described in our Party by the popular term "the mass line." The whole history of our work teaches us that whenever this line is followed, the work is always good, or relatively good, and even if there are mistakes they are easy to rectify; but whenever this line is departed from, the work is always marred by setbacks. This is the Marxist-Leninist method of leadership, the Marxist-Leninist line of work. After the victory of the revolution, when the working class and the Communist Party have become the leading class and party in the state, the leading personnel of the Party and state, beset by bureaucratism from many sides, face the great danger of using the machinery of state to take arbitrary action, alienating themselves from the masses and collective leadership, resorting to commandism, and violating Party and state democracy. Therefore, if we want to avoid falling into such a quagmire, we must pay fuller attention to the use of the mass line method of leadership, not permitting the slightest negligence. To this end, it is necessary for us to establish certain systems, so as to ensure the thorough implementation of the mass line and collective leadership, to avoid elevation of oneself and individualist heroism, both of which mean divorce from the masses, and to reduce to a minimum subjectivism and one-sidedness in our work which represent a departure from objective reality.

We must also learn from the struggle of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union against the cult of the individual and continue our fight against doctrinairism.

The working class and the masses of the people, guided by Marxism-Leninism, won the revolution and took state power into their hands, while the victory of the revolution and the establishment of the revolutionary regime opened up boundless vistas for the development of Marxism-Leninism. Yet because Marxism, since the victory of the revolution, has been generally recognised as the guiding ideology in the whole country, it often happens that not a few of our propagandists rely only on administrative power and the prestige of the Party to instil into the minds of the masses Marxism-Leninism in the form of dogma, instead of working hard, marshalling a wealth of data, employing Marxist-Leninist methods of analysis and using the people's own language to explain convincingly the integration of the universal truths of Marxism-Leninism with the actual situation in China. We have, over the year, made some advances in research in philosophy, economics, history and literary criticism, but, on the whole, many unhealthy elements still exist. Not a few of our research workers still retain their doctrinaire habit, put their minds in a noose, lack the ability to think independently, lack the creative spirit, and in certain respects are influenced by the cult of Stalin. In this connection it must be pointed out that Stalin's works should, as before, still be seriously studied and that we should accept, as an important historical legacy, all that is of value in them, especially those many works in which he defended Leninism and correctly summarised the experience of building up the Soviet Union. Not to do so would be a mistake. But there are two ways of studying them—the Marxist way and the doctrinaire way. Some people treat Stalin's writings in a doctrinaire manner, with the result that they cannot analyse and see what is correct and what is not correct—and even what is correct they treat as a panacea and apply indiscriminately; inevitably they make mistakes. For instance, Stalin put forward a formula that in different revolutionary periods, the main blow should be so directed as to isolate the middle-of-the-road social and political forces of the time. This formula of Stalin's should be treated according

to circumstances and form a critical, Marxist point of view. In certain circumstances it may be correct to isolate the middle-forces, but it is not correct to isolate them under all circumstances. Our experience teaches us that the main blow of the revolution should be directed at the chief enemy to isolate him, while as for the middle forces, a policy of both uniting with them and struggling against them should be adopted, so that they are at least neutralised; and, as circumstances permit, efforts should be made to shift them from their position of neutrality to one of alliance with us, for the purpose of facilitating the development of the revolution. But there was a time—the ten years of civil war from 1927 to 1936—when some of our comrades crudely applied this formula of Stalin's to China's revolution by turning their main attack on the middle forces, singling them out as the most dangerous enemy; the result was that, instead of isolating the real enemy, we isolated ourselves, and suffered losses to the advantage of the real enemy. In the light of this doctrinaire error, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, during the period of the anti-Japanese war, formulated a policy of "developing the progressive forces, winning over the middle-of-the-roaders, and isolating the die-hards" for the purpose of defeating the Japanese aggressors. The progressive forces in question consisted of the workers, peasants and revolutionary intellectuals led by, or open to the influence of the Communist Party. The middle forces in question consisted of the national bourgeoisie, the democratic parties and groups, and democrats without party affiliation. The die-hards referred to were the comprador-feudal forces headed by Chiang Kai-shek, who were passive in resisting the Japanese and active in fighting the Communists. Experience, gained through practice, proved that this policy of the Communist Party suited the circumstances of China's revolution and was correct.

The invariable fact is: doctrinairism is appreciated only by the mentally lazy; it brings nothing but harm to the revolution, and to the people, and to Marxism-Leninism. To enhance the initiative of the masses, to stimulate their dynamic creative spirit, and to promote rapid development of practical and theoretical work, it is still necessary, right now, to destroy blind faith in dogma.

The dictatorship of the proletariat (in China it is a people's democratic dictatorship led by the working class) has won great victories in countries inhabited by nine hundred million people. Each of them, whether it is the Soviet Union, or China or any other People's Democracy, has its own experience of success as well as its own experience of mistakes. We must keep on summing up such experience. We must be alive to the possibility that we may still commit mistakes in the future. The important lesson to learn is that the leading organs of our Party should limit errors to those of an isolated, local, temporary nature, and permit no isolated, local, initial mistakes to develop into mistakes of a nation-wide or prolonged nature.

The history of the Communist Party of China records the making of serious mistakes on several occasions. In the revolutionary period from 1924 to 1927, there appeared in our Party the wrong line represented by Chen Tu-hsiu, a line of Right opportunism. Then, during the revolutionary period from 1927 to 1936, the erroneous line of "Left" opportunism appeared in our Party on three occasions. The lines pursued by Li-Li-san in 1930 and by Wang Ming in 1931-1934, were particularly serious, while the Wang Ming line was the most damaging to the revolution. In this same period the erroneous, anti-Party Chang Kuo-tao line of Right opportunism in opposition to the Party's Central Committee, appeared in a key revolutionary base, doing serious damage to a vital section of the revolutionary forces. The errors committed in these two periods were nation-wide, except for that caused by Chang Kuo-tao's line which was confined to one important revolutionary base. Once again there emerged in our Party during the war of resistance to Japanese aggression a wrong line, represented by Comrade Wang Ming, which was of Right opportunist nature. However, since our Party had drawn lessons from what had happened during the previous two periods of the revolution, this wrong line was not allowed to develop, but was corrected by the Central Committee of our Party in a comparatively short time. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, there appeared in our Party in 1953, the anti-Party bloc of Kao Kang and Jao Shu-shih. This anti-Party bloc represented the forces of

reaction at home and abroad, and its aim was to undermine the revolution. Had the Central Committee not discovered it quickly and smashed it in time, incalculable damage would have been done to the Party and to the revolution.

From this it will be seen that the historical experience of our Party testifies that our Party too has been tempered through struggles against various wrong lines of policy, thus winning great victories in the revolution and in construction. As to local and isolated mistakes, they often occurred in our work, and it was only by relying on the collective wisdom of the Party and the wisdom of the masses of the people, and by exposing and correcting these mistakes in time, that they were nipped in the bud before they became mistakes of a nation-wide or prolonged nature, doing harm to the people.

Communists must adopt an analytical attitude to errors made in the communist movement. Some people consider that Stalin was wrong in everything; this is a grave misconception. Stalin was a great Marxist-Leninist, yet at the same time a Marxist-Leninist who committed several gross errors without realising that they were errors. We should view Stalin from an historical standpoint, make a proper and all-round analysis to see where he was right and where he was wrong, and draw useful lessons therefrom. Both the things he did right and the things he did wrong were phenomena of the international communist movement and bore the imprint of the times. Taken as a whole, the international communist movement is only a little over a hundred years old and it is only 39 years since the victory of the October Revolution; experience in many fields of revolutionary work is still inadequate. Great achievements have been made, but there are still shortcomings and mistakes. Just as one achievement is followed by another, so one defect or mistake, once overcome, may be followed by another which in turn must be overcome. However, the achievements always exceed the defects, the things which are right always outnumber those which are wrong, and the defects and mistakes are always overcome in the end.

The mark of a good leader is not so much that he makes no mistakes, but that he takes his mistakes seriously. There has never been a man in the world completely free from mistakes.

Lenin said :

Frankly admitting a mistake, ascertaining the reasons for it, analysing the conditions which led to it, and thoroughly discussing the means of correcting it—that is the earmark of a serious party : that is the way it should perform its duties, that is the way it should educate and train the *class*, and then the *masses*.

True to the behest of Lenin, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union is dealing in a serious way both with certain mistakes of a grave nature committed by Stalin in directing the work of building socialism and with the surviving effects of such mistakes. Because of the seriousness of the effects, it is necessary for the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, while affirming the great contributions of Stalin, to sharply expose the essence of his mistakes, to call upon the whole Party to take them as a warning, and to work resolutely to remove their ill consequences.

We Chinese communists are firmly convinced that as a result of the sharp criticisms made at the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, all those positive factors which were seriously suppressed in the past as a result of certain mistaken policies will inevitably spring everywhere into life, and the Party and the people of the Soviet Union will become still more firmly united in the struggle to build a great communist society, such as mankind has never yet seen, and win a lasting world peace.

Reactionary forces the world over are pouring ridicule on this event ; they jeer at the fact that we are overcoming mistakes in our camp. But what will come of all this ridicule ? There is not the slightest doubt that these scoffers will find themselves facing a still more powerful, forever invincible, great camp of peace and socialism, headed by the Soviet Union, while the murderous, blood-sucking enterprises of these scoffers will be in a pretty fix.

MORE ON THE HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT¹

In April 1956, we discussed the historical experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat in connection with the question of Stalin. Since then, a further train of events in the international communist movement has caused concern to the people of our country. The publication in Chinese newspapers of Comrade Tito's speech of November 11, and the comments on that speech by various Communist Parties, have led people again to raise many questions which call for an answer. In the present article we shall centre our discussion on the following questions: first, an appraisal of the fundamental course taken by the Soviet Union in its revolution and construction; second, an appraisal of Stalin's merits and faults; third, the struggle against doctrinairism and revisionism; and fourth, the international solidarity of the proletariat of all countries.

In examining modern international questions, we must proceed first of all from the most fundamental fact, the antagonism between the imperialist bloc of aggression and the popular forces in the world. The Chinese people, who have suffered enough from imperialist aggression, can never forget that imperialism has always opposed the liberation of all peoples and the independence of all oppressed nations, that it has always regarded the communist movement, which stands most resolutely for the people's interests, as a thorn in its flesh. Since the birth of the first socialist state, the Soviet Union, imperialism has tried by every means to wreck it. Following the establishment of a

1. This article was written by the Editorial Department of *Renmin Ribao* on the basis of a discussion at an enlarged meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. It was published in *Renmin Ribao* on December 29, 1956.

whole group of socialist states, the hostility of the imperialist camp to the socialist camp, and its flagrant acts of sabotage against the latter, have become a still more pronounced feature of world politics. The leader of the imperialist camp, the United States, has been especially vicious and shameless in its interference in the domestic affairs of socialist countries ; for many years it has been obstructing China's liberation of its own territory, Taiwan, and for many years it has openly adopted as its official policy the subversion of the East European countries.

The activities of the imperialists in the Hungarian affair of October 1956, marked the gravest attack launched by them against the socialist camp since the war of aggression they had carried on in Korea. Just as the resolution adopted by the meeting of the Provisional Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party pointed out, the Hungarian affair was the result of various causes, both internal and external ; and while any one-sided explanation is incorrect, among the causes international imperialism "played the main and decisive part". Following the defeat of their plot for a counter-revolutionary come-back in Hungary, the imperialist powers headed by the United States have manoeuvred the United Nations into adopting resolutions directed against the Soviet Union and interfering in Hungary's internal affairs. At the same time, they stirred up a hysterical anti-communist wave throughout the Western world. Although U.S. imperialism is taking advantage of the fiasco of the Anglo-French war of aggression against Egypt to grab British and French interests in the Middle East and North Africa in every way possible, it has pledged itself to eliminate its "misunderstanding" with Britain and France and to seek "closer and more intimate understanding" with them to repair their united front against communism, against the Asian and African peoples and against the peace-loving people of the world. To oppose communism, the people and peace, the imperialist countries should unite—this is the gist of Dulles' statement at the NATO council meeting on the so-called "need for a philosophy for living and acting at this critical point in world history." Somewhat intoxicated by his own illusions, Dulles asserted : "The Soviet communist structure is in a deteriorating condition (2)

with the power of the rulers disintegrating (?). . . .Facing this situation, the free nations must maintain moral pressures which are helping to undermine the Soviet-Chinese communist system and maintain military strength and resolution." He called on the NATO countries "to disrupt the powerful Soviet despotism (?) based upon militaristic (?) and atheistic concepts." He also expressed the view that "a change of character of that [communist] world now seems to be within the realm of possibility (!)."

We have always considered our enemies our best teachers, and now Dulles is letting us have another lesson. He may slander us a thousand times and curse us ten thousand times, there is nothing new in this at all. But when Dulles, putting the matter on a "philosophic" plane, urges the imperialist countries to place their contradiction with communism above all other contradictions, to bend all their efforts towards bringing about "a change of character of that [communist] world," and towards "undermining" and "disrupting" the socialist system headed by the Soviet Union, this is a lesson that is extremely helpful to us, though such efforts will certainly come to naught. Although we have consistently held and still hold that the socialist and capitalist countries should co-exist in peace and carry out peaceful competition, the imperialists are always bent on destroying us. We must therefore never forget the stern struggle with the enemy, i.e., the class struggle on a world scale.

There are before us two types of contradictions which are different in nature. The first type consists of contradictions between our enemy and ourselves (contradictions between the camp of imperialism and that of socialism, contradictions between imperialism and the people and oppressed nations of the whole world, contradictions between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in the imperialist countries, etc.). This is the fundamental type of contradiction, based on the clash of interests between antagonistic classes. The second type consists of contradictions within the ranks of the people (contradictions between different sections of the people, between comrades within the Communist Party, contradictions between the government and the people in socialist countries, contradictions between socialist countries and contradictions between Communist Parties, etc.). This type of

contradiction is not basic ; it is not the result of a fundamental clash of interests between classes, but of conflicts between right and wrong opinions or of a partial contradiction of interests. It is a type of contradiction whose solution must, first and foremost, be subordinated to the over-all interests of the struggle against the enemy. Contradictions among the people themselves can and ought to be resolved, proceeding from the desire for solidarity, through criticism or struggle, thus achieving a new solidarity under new conditions. Of course, real life is complicated. Sometimes, it is possible that classes whose interests are in fundamental conflict unite to cope with their main common enemy. On the other hand, under specific conditions, a certain contradiction among the people may be gradually transformed into an antagonistic contradiction when one side of it gradually goes over to the enemy. Finally, the nature of such a contradiction may change completely so that it no longer belongs to the category of contradictions among the people themselves but becomes a component part of the contradiction between ourselves and the enemy. Such a phenomenon did come about in the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and of the Communist Party of China. In a word, anyone who adopts the standpoint of the people should not equate the contradictions among the people with contradictions between the enemy and ourselves, or confuse these two types of contradiction, let alone place the contradictions among the people above the contradictions between the enemy and ourselves. Those who deny the class struggle and do not distinguish between the enemy and ourselves are definitely not communists or Marxist-Leninists.

We think it necessary to settle this question of fundamental standpoint first, before proceeding to the questions to be discussed. Otherwise, we are bound to lose our bearings, and will be unable to explain correctly international events.

I

The attacks by the imperialists on the international communist movement have long been concentrated mainly on the Soviet Union. Recent controversies in the international communist movement, for the most part, have also involved the question of one's understanding of the Soviet Union. Therefore,

the problem of correctly assessing the fundamental course taken by the Soviet Union in its revolution and construction is an important one which Marxist-Leninists must solve.

The Marxist theory of proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat is a scientific summing-up of the experience of the working-class movement. However, with the exception of the Paris Commune which lasted only 72 days, Marx and Engels did not live to see for themselves the realisation of the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat for which they had striven throughout their lives. In 1917, led by Lenin and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Russian proletariat carried the proletarian revolution to victory and established the dictatorship of the proletariat ; it then successfully built up a socialist society. From this time on, scientific socialism was transformed from a theory and ideal into a living reality. And so, the Russian October Revolution of 1917 ushered in a new era, not only in the history of the communist movement but also in the history of mankind.

The Soviet Union has achieved tremendous successes in the 39 years since the revolution. Having eliminated the system of exploitation, the Soviet Union put an end to anarchy, crisis and unemployment in its economic life. Soviet economy and culture have advanced at a pace beyond the reach of capitalist countries. Soviet industrial output in 1956 is 30 times what it was in 1913, the peak year before the revolution. A country which before the revolution was industrially backward and had a high rate of illiteracy has now become the world's second greatest industrial power, possessing scientific and technical forces which are advanced by any standards, and a highly developed socialist culture. The working people of the Soviet Union, who were oppressed before the revolution, have become masters of their own country and society ; they have displayed great enthusiasm and creativeness in revolutionary struggle and in construction, and a fundamental change has taken place in their material and cultural life. While before the October Revolution Russia was a prison of nations, after the October Revolution these nations achieved equality in the Soviet Union and developed rapidly into advanced socialist nations.

The development of the Soviet Union has not been plain

sailing. During 1918-1920, the country was attacked by 14 capitalist powers. In its early years, the Soviet Union went through severe ordeals such as civil war, famine, economic difficulties, and factional splitting activities within the Party. In a decisive period of the Second World War, before the Western countries opened the second front, the Soviet Union, single-handed, met and defeated the attacks of millions of troops of Hitler and his partners. These stern trials failed to crush the Soviet Union or stop its progress.

The existence of the Soviet Union has shaken imperialist rule to its very foundations and brought unbounded hope, confidence and courage to all revolutionary movements of the workers, liberation movements of the oppressed nations. The working people of all countries have helped the Soviet Union, and the Soviet Union has also helped them. It has carried on a foreign policy that guards world peace, recognizes the equality of all nations, and opposes imperialist aggression. The Soviet Union was the main force in defeating fascist aggression throughout the world. The heroic armies of the Soviet Union liberated the East European countries, part of Central Europe, north-east China and the northern part of Korea in co-operation with the popular forces of these countries. The Soviet Union has established friendly relations with the People's Democracies, aided them in economic construction and, together with them, formed a mighty bulwark of world peace—the camp of socialism. The Soviet Union has also given powerful support to the independence movements of the oppressed nations, to the peace movement of the people of the world and to the many peaceable new states in Asia and Africa established since the Second World War.

These are incontrovertible facts that people have known for a long time. Why is it necessary then to bring them up again? It is because, while the enemies of communism have naturally always denied all this, certain Communists at the present time, in examining Soviet experience, often focus their attention on the secondary aspects of the matter and neglect the main aspects.

There are different aspects to Soviet experience in revolution and construction as far as its international significance is concerned. Of the successful experience of the Soviet Union, one part is fundamental and of universal significance at the present

stage of human history. This is the most important and fundamental phase of Soviet experience. The other part is not of universal significance. In addition, the Soviet Union has also had its mistakes and failures. No country can ever avoid these entirely, though they may vary in form and degree. And it was even more difficult for the Soviet Union to avoid them, because it was the first socialist country and had no successful experience of others to go by. Such mistakes and failures, however, provide extremely useful lessons for all communists. That is why all Soviet experience, including certain mistakes and failures, deserves careful study while the fundamental part of the successful Soviet experience is of particular importance. The very fact of the advance of the Soviet Union is proof that the fundamental experience of the Soviet Union in revolution and construction is a great accomplishment, the first paean of victory of Marxism-Leninism in the history of mankind.

What is the fundamental experience of the Soviet Union in revolution and construction? In our opinion, the following, at the very least, should be considered fundamental:

(1) The advanced members of the proletariat organise themselves into a Communist Party which takes Marxism-Leninism as its guide to action, builds itself up along the lines of democratic centralism, establishes close links with the masses, strives to become the core of the labouring masses and educates its Party members and the masses of people in Marxism-Leninism.

(2) The proletariat, under the leadership of the Communist Party, rallying all the labouring people, takes state power from the bourgeoisie by means of revolutionary struggle.

(3) After the victory of the revolution, the proletariat, under the leadership of the Communist Party, rallying the broad mass of the people on the basis of a worker peasant alliance, establishes a dictatorship of the proletariat over the landlord and capitalist classes, crushes the resistance of the counter-revolutionaries, and carries out the nationalisation of industry and the step-by-step collectivisation of agriculture, thereby eliminating the system of exploitation, private ownership of the means of production and classes.

(4) The state, led by the proletariat and the Communist

Party, leads the people in the planned development of socialist economy and culture, and on this basis gradually raises the people's living standards and actively prepares and works for the transition to communist society.

(5) The state, led by the proletariat and the Communist Party, resolutely opposes imperialist aggression, recognises the equality of all nations and defends world peace ; firmly adheres to the principles of proletarian internationalism, strives to win the help of the labouring people of all countries, and at the same time strives to help them and all oppressed nations.

What we commonly refer to as the path of the October Revolution means precisely these basic things, leaving aside the specific form it took at that particular time and place. These basic things are all universally applicable truths of Marxism-Leninism.

In the course of revolution and construction in different countries there are, besides aspects common to all, aspects which are different. In this sense, each country has its own specific path of development. We shall discuss this question further on. But as far as basic theory is concerned, the road of the October Revolution reflects the general laws of revolution and construction at a particular stage in the long course of the development of human society. It is not only the broad road for the proletariat of the Soviet Union, but also the broad road which the proletariat of all countries must travel to gain victory. Precisely for this reason the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China stated in its Political Report to the Party's Eighth National Congress : "Despite the fact that the revolution in our country has many characteristics of its own, Chinese communists regard the cause for which they work as a continuation of the Great October Revolution."

In the present international situation, it is of particularly great significance to defend this Marxist-Leninist path opened by the October Revolution. When the imperialists proclaim that they want to bring about "a change of character of the communist world," it is precisely this revolutionary path which they want to change. For decades, the views put forward by all the revisionists to revise Marxism-Leninism, and the Right-opportunist ideas which they spread, have been aimed precisely at evading

this road, the road which the proletariat must take for its liberation. It is the task of all Communists to unite the proletariat and the masses of the people to beat back resolutely the savage onslaught of the imperialists against the socialist world, and to march forward resolutely along the path blazed by the October Revolution.

II

People ask : Since the basic path of the Soviet Union in revolution and construction was correct, how did Stalin's mistakes happen ?

We discussed this question in our article published in April this year. But as a result of recent events in Eastern Europe and other related developments, the question of correctly understanding and dealing with Stalin's mistakes has become a matter of importance affecting developments within the Communist Parties of many countries, unity between Communist Parties, and the common struggle of the communist forces of the world against imperialism. So it is necessary to further expound our views on this question.

Stalin made a great contribution to the progress of the Soviet Union and to the development of the international communist movement. In "On the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" we wrote :

After Lenin's death Stalin, as the chief leader of the Party and the state, creatively applied and developed Marxism-Leninism. In the struggle to defend the legacy of Leninism against its enemies—the Trotskyites, Zinovievites and other bourgeois agents—Stalin expressed the will and wishes of the people and proved himself to be an outstanding Marxist-Leninist fighter. The reason why Stalin won the support of the Soviet people and played an important role in history was primarily because he, together with the other leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, defended Lenin's line on the industrialisation of the Soviet state and the collectivization of agriculture. By pursuing this line, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union brought about the triumph of socialism in the Soviet Union and created the conditions for the victory of the Soviet Union in the war

against Hitler; these victories of the Soviet people conformed to the interests of the working class of the world and all progressive mankind. It was therefore quite natural for the name of Stalin to be greatly honoured throughout the world. But Stalin made some serious mistakes in regard to the domestic and foreign policies of the Soviet Union. His arbitrary method of work impaired to a certain extent the principle of democratic centralism both in the life of the Party and in the state system of the Soviet Union, and led to a partial disruption of socialist legality. Because in many fields of work Stalin estranged himself from the masses to a serious extent, and made personal, arbitrary decisions concerning many important policies, it was inevitable that he should have made grave mistakes. These mistakes stood out most conspicuously in the suppression of counter-revolution and in relations with certain foreign countries. In suppressing counter-revolutionaries, Stalin, on the one hand, punished many counter-revolutionaries whom it was necessary to punish and, in the main, accomplished the tasks on this front ; but on the other hand, he wronged many loyal communists and honest citizens, and this caused serious losses. On the whole, in relations with brother countries and parties, Stalin took an internationalist stand and helped the struggles of other peoples and the growth of the socialist camp ; but in tackling certain concrete questions, he showed a tendency towards great-nation chauvinism and himself lacked a spirit of equality, let alone educating the mass of cadres to be modest. Sometimes he even intervened mistakenly, with many grave consequences, in the internal affairs of certain brother countries and parties.

How are these serious mistakes of Stalin's to be explained ? What is the connection between these mistakes and the socialist system of the Soviet Union ?

The science of Marxist-Leninist dialectics teaches us that all types of relations of production, as well as the superstructures built up on their basis, have their own course of emergence, development, and extinction. When the old relations of production on the whole no longer correspond to the productive forces, the latter having reached a certain stage of development, and when the old superstructure on the whole no longer corresponds

to the economic basis, the latter having reached a certain stage of development, then changes of a fundamental nature must inevitably occur ; whoever tries to resist such changes is discarded by history. This law is applicable through different forms to all types of society. That is to say, it also applies to socialist society of today and communist society of tomorrow.

Were Stalin's mistakes due to the fact that the socialist economic and political system of the Soviet Union had become outmoded and no longer suited the needs of the development of the Soviet Union ? Certainly not. Soviet socialist society is still young ; it is not even 40 years old. The fact that the Soviet Union has made rapid progress economically proves that its economic system is, in the main, suited to the development of its productive forces ; and that its political system is also, in the main, suited to the needs of its economic basis. Stalin's mistakes did not originate in the socialist system ; it therefore follows that it is not necessary to "correct" the socialist system in order to correct these mistakes. The bourgeoisie of the West has not a leg to stand on when it tries to use Stalin's errors to prove that the socialist system is a "mistake". Unconvincing too are the arguments of others who trace Stalin's mistakes to the administration of economic affairs by the socialist state power, and assert that once the government takes charge of economic affairs it is bound to become a "bureaucratic machine" hindering the development of the socialist forces. No one can deny that the tremendous upsurge of Soviet economy is the result precisely of the planned administration of economic affairs by the state of the working people, while the main mistakes committed by Stalin had very little to do with shortcomings of the state organs administering economic affairs.

But even where the basic system corresponds to the need, there are still certain contradictions between the relations of production and the productive forces, between the superstructure and the economic basis. These contradictions find expression in defects in certain links of the economic and political systems. Though it is not necessary to effect fundamental changes in order to solve these contradictions, readjustments must be made in good time.

Can we guarantee that mistakes will not happen once we

have a basic system which corresponds to the need and have adjusted ordinary contradictions in the system (to use the language of dialectics, contradictions at the stage of "quantitative change")? The matter is not that simple. Systems are of decisive importance, but systems themselves are not all-powerful. No system, however excellent, is in itself a guarantee against serious mistakes in our work. Once we have the right system, the main question is whether we can make the right use of it; whether we have the right policies, and right methods and style of work. Without all this, even under a good system it is still possible for people to commit serious mistakes and to use a good state apparatus to do evil things.

To solve the problems mentioned above, we must rely on the accumulation of experience and the test of practice; we cannot expect results overnight. What is more, with conditions constantly changing, new problems arise as old ones are solved, and there is no solution which holds good for all times. Viewed from this angle, it is not surprising to find that even in socialist countries which have been established on a firm basis there are still defects in certain links of their relations of production and superstructure, and deviations of one kind or another in the policies and methods and style of work of the Party and the state.

In the socialist countries, the task of the Party and the state is, by relying on the strength of the masses and the collective, to make timely readjustments in the various links of the economic and political systems, and to discover and correct mistakes in their work in good time. Naturally, it is not possible for the subjective views of the leading personnel of the Party and the state to conform completely to objective reality. Isolated, local and temporary mistakes in their work are therefore unavoidable. But so long as the principles of the dialectical materialist science of Marxism-Leninism are strictly observed and efforts are made to develop them, so long as the principle of democratic centralism of the Party and the state is thoroughly observed, and so long as we really rely on the masses, persistent and serious mistakes affecting the whole country can be avoided.

The reason why some of the mistakes made by Stalin during the later years of his life became serious, nationwide and persis-

tent, and were not corrected in time, was precisely that in certain fields and to a certain degree, he became isolated from the masses and the collective and violated the principle of democratic centralism of the Party and the state. The reason for certain infractions of democratic centralism lay in certain social and historical conditions: the Party lacked experience in leading the state; the new system was not sufficiently consolidated to be able to resist every encroachment of the influence of the old era (the consolidation of a new system and the dying away of the old influences do not operate in a straight forward fashion but often assume the form of an undulating movement at turning points in history); there was the constricting effect which acute internal and external struggles had on certain aspects of the development of democracy, etc. Nevertheless, these objective conditions alone would not have been enough to transform the possibility of making mistakes into their actual commission. Lenin, working under conditions which were much more complicated and difficult than those encountered by Stalin, did not make the mistakes that Stalin made. Here, the decisive factor is man's ideological condition. A series of victories and the eulogies which Stalin received in the later part of his life turned his head. He deviated partly, but grossly, from the dialectical materialist way of thinking and fell into subjectivism. He began to put blind faith in personal wisdom and authority; he would not investigate and study complicated conditions seriously or listen carefully to the opinions of his comrades and the voice of the masses. As a result, some of the policies and measures he adopted were often at variance with objective reality. He often stubbornly persisted in carrying out these mistaken measures over long periods and was unable to correct his mistakes in time.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union has already taken measures to correct Stalin's mistakes and eliminate their consequences. These measures are beginning to bear fruit. The 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union showed great determination and courage in doing away with blind faith in Stalin, in exposing the gravity of Stalin's mistakes and in eliminating their effects. Marxist-Leninists throughout the world, and all those who sympathise with the communist cause, support

the efforts of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to correct mistakes, and hope that the efforts of the Soviet comrades will meet with complete success. It is obvious that since Stalin's mistakes were not of short duration, their thorough correction cannot be achieved overnight, but demands fairly protracted efforts and thoroughgoing ideological education. We believe that the great Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which has already overcome countless difficulties, will triumph over these difficulties and achieve its purpose.

It was not to be expected, of course, that this effort of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to correct mistakes would get any support from the bourgeoisie and the Right-wing Social-Democrats of the West. Eager to take advantage of the opportunity to erase what was correct in Stalin's work as well as the past immense achievements of the Soviet Union and the whole socialist camp, and to create confusion and division in the communist ranks, the Western bourgeoisie and Right-wing Social-Democrats have deliberately labelled the correction of Stalin's mistakes "de-Stalinization" and described it as a struggle waged by "anti-Stalinist elements" against "Stalinist elements." Their vicious intent is evident enough. Unfortunately similar views of this kind have also gained ground among some communists. We consider it extremely harmful for communists to hold such views.

As is well known, although Stalin committed some grave mistakes in his later years, his was nevertheless the life of a great Marxist-Leninist revolutionary. In his youth, Stalin fought against the tsarist system and for the spread of Marxism-Leninism. After he joined the central leading organ of the Party, he took part in the struggle to pave the way for the revolution of 1917. After the October Revolution, he fought to defend its fruits. In the nearly 30 years after Lenin's death, he worked to build socialism, defend the socialist fatherland and advance the world communist movement. All in all, Stalin always stood at the head of historical developments and guided the struggle; he was an implacable foe of imperialism. His tragedy was that even when he made the mistakes, he believed that what he did was necessary for the defence of the interests of the working people against encroachments by the enemy. Stalin's mistakes did harm

to the Soviet Union, which could have been avoided. Nonetheless, the Socialist Soviet Union made tremendous progress during the period of Stalin's leadership. This undeniable fact not only testifies to the strength of the socialist system but also shows that Stalin was after all a staunch communist. Therefore, in summing up Stalin's thoughts and activities, we must consider both his positive and negative sides, both his achievements and his mistakes. As long as we examine the matter in an all-round way, then, even if people must speak of "Stalinism", this can only mean, in the first place, communism and Marxism-Leninism, which is the main aspect; and secondarily it contains certain extremely serious mistakes which go against Marxism-Leninism and must be thoroughly corrected. Even though at times it is necessary to stress these mistakes in order to correct them, it is also necessary to set them in their proper place so as to make a correct appraisal and avoid misleading people. In our opinion Stalin's mistakes take second place to his achievements.

Only by adopting an objective and analytical attitude can we correctly appraise Stalin and all those comrades who made similar mistakes under his influence, and only so can we correctly deal with their mistakes. Since these mistakes were made by communists in the course of their work, what is involved is a question of right versus wrong within communist ranks, not an issue of ourselves versus the enemy in the class struggle. We should therefore adopt a comradely attitude towards these people and not treat them as enemies. We should defend what is correct in their work while criticising their mistakes, and not blankly denounce everything they did. Their mistakes have a social and historical background and can be attributed especially to their ideology and understanding. In just the same way, such mistakes may also occur in the work of other comrades. That is why, having recognized the mistakes and undertaken their correction, it is necessary that we regard them as a grave lesson, as an asset that can be used for heightening the political consciousness of all communists, thus preventing the recurrence of such mistakes and advancing the cause of communism. If, on the contrary, one takes a completely negative attitude towards those who made mistakes, treats them with

hostility and discriminates against them by labelling them this or that kind of element, it will not help our comrades learn the lesson they should learn. Moreover, since this means confusing the two entirely different types of contradiction—that of right versus wrong within our own ranks and that of ourselves versus the enemy—it will only help the enemy in his attacks on the communist ranks and in his attempts at disintegrating the communist position.

The attitude taken by Comrade Tito and other leading comrades of the Yugoslav League of Communists towards Stalin's mistakes and other related questions, as their recently stated views indicate, cannot be regarded by us as well-balanced or objective. It is understandable that the Yugoslav comrades bear a particular resentment against Stalin's mistakes. In the past, they made worthy efforts to stick to socialism under difficult conditions. Their experiments in the democratic management of economic enterprises and other social organisations have also attracted attention. The Chinese people welcome the reconciliation between the Soviet Union and other socialist countries on the one hand, and Yugoslavia on the other, as well as the establishment and development of friendly relations between China and Yugoslavia. Like the Yugoslav people, the Chinese people hope that Yugoslavia will become ever more prosperous and powerful on the way to socialism. We also agree with some of the points in Comrade Tito's speech, for instance, his condemnation of the Hungarian counter-revolutionaries, his support for the Worker-Peasant Revolutionary Government of Hungary, his condemnation of Britain, France and Israel for their aggression against Egypt, and his condemnation of the French Socialist Party for adopting a policy of aggression. But we are amazed that, in his speech, he attacked almost all the socialist countries and many of the Communist Parties. Comrade Tito made assertions about "those hard-bitten Stalinist elements who in various Parties have managed still to maintain themselves in their posts and who would again wish to consolidate their rule and impose those Stalinist tendencies upon their people, and even others". Therefore, he declared, "Together with the Polish comrades we shall have to fight such tendencies which crop up in various other Parties, whether in

the Eastern countries or in the West." We have not come across any statement put forward by leading comrades of the Polish United Workers' Party saying that it was necessary to adopt such a hostile attitude towards brother parties. We feel it necessary to say in connection with these views of Comrade Tito's that he took up a wrong attitude when he set up the so-called "Stalinism," "Stalinist elements," etc., as objects of attack and maintained that the question now was whether the course "begun in Yugoslavia" or the so-called "Stalinist course" would win out. This can only lead to a split in the communist movement.

Comrade Tito correctly pointed out that "viewing the current development in Hungary from the perspective—socialism or counter-revolution—we must defend Kadar's present government, we must help it." But help to and defence of the Hungarian Government can hardly be said to be the sense of the long speech on the Hungarian question made before the National Assembly of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia by Comrade Kardelj, Vice-President of the Federal Executive Council of Yugoslavia. In the interpretation of the Hungarian incident he gave in his speech, Comrade Kardelj not only made no distinction whatsoever between ourselves and the enemy, but also told the Hungarian comrades that "a thorough change is necessary in the (Hungarian—Ed.) political system." He also called on them to turn over state power wholly to the Budapest and other regional workers' councils, "no matter what the workers' councils have become," and declared that they "need not waste their efforts on trying to restore the Communist Party." "The reason," he said, "was because to the masses the Party was the personification of bureaucratic despotism." Such is the blue-print of the "anti-Stalinist course" which Comrade Kardelj has designed for brother countries. The comrades in Hungary rejected this proposal of Comrade Kardelj's. They dissolved the Budapest and other regional workers' councils which were controlled by counter-revolutionaries and persisted in building up the Socialist Workers' Party. We consider that it was entirely right for the Hungarian comrades to act in this way, because otherwise Hungary's future would belong not to socialism but to counter-revolution.

Clearly, the Yugoslav comrades are going too far. Even if some part of their criticism of brother parties is reasonable, the basic stand and the method they have adopted infringed the principles of comradely discussion. We have no wish to interfere in the internal affairs of Yugoslavia, but the matters mentioned above are by no means internal. For the sake of consolidating the unity of the internal communist ranks and avoiding the creation of conditions which the enemy can use to cause confusion and division in our own ranks, we cannot but offer our brotherly advice to the Yugoslav comrades.

III

One of the grave consequences of Stalin's mistakes was the growth of doctrinairism. While criticizing Stalin's mistakes, the Communist Parties of various countries have been waging a struggle against doctrinairism among their ranks. This struggle is entirely necessary. But by adopting a negative attitude towards everything connected with Stalin, and by putting up the erroneous slogan of "de-Stalinization," some communists have helped to foster a revisionist trend against Marxism-Leninism. This revisionist trend is undoubtedly of help to the imperialist attack against the communist movement, and the imperialists are in fact making active use of it. While resolutely opposing doctrinairism, we must at the same time resolutely oppose revisionism.

Marxism-Leninism holds that there are common, fundamental laws in the development of human society, but that in various nations there are strongly differentiated features. Thus all nations pass through the class struggle, and will eventually arrive at communism, by roads that are the same in essence but different in specific form. The cause of the proletariat in a given country will triumph only if the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism is properly applied in the light of its special national features. And so long as this is done, the proletariat will accumulate new experience, thus making its contribution to the cause of other nations and to the general treasury of Marxism-Leninism. Doctrinaires do not understand that the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism manifests itself concretely and becomes operative in real life only through the medium of

specific national characteristics. They are not willing to make a careful study of the social and historical features of their own countries and nations or to apply in a practical way the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism in the light of these features. Consequently they cannot lead the proletarian cause to victory.

Since Marxism-Leninism is the scientific summing-up of the experience of the working-class movement of various countries, it follows that it must attach importance to the question of applying the experience of advanced countries. Lenin wrote in his book *What Is To Be Done?* :

The Social-Democratic movement is in its very essence an international movement. This means not only that we must combat national chauvinism, but also that a movement that is starting in a young country can be successful only if it implements the experience of other countries.¹ What Lenin meant here was that it was necessary for the Russian working-class movement, which was just beginning, to utilise the experience of the working-class movement in Western Europe. His view applies, likewise, to the use of Soviet experience by younger socialist countries.

But there must be a proper method of learning. All the experience of the Soviet Union, including its fundamental experience, is bound up with definite national characteristics, and no other country should copy it mechanically. Moreover, as has been pointed out above, part of Soviet experience is that derived from mistakes and failures. For those who know how best to learn from others this whole body of experience, both of success and failure, is an invaluable asset, because it can help them avoid roundabout ways in their progress and reduce their losses. On the other hand, indiscriminate and mechanical copying of experience that has been successful in the Soviet Union—let alone that which was unsuccessful there—may lead to failures in another country. Lenin wrote in the passage immediately following the one quoted above :

And in order to implement this experience, it is not enough merely to be acquainted with it, or simply to trans-

1. V. I. Lenin. *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Part 1, Moscow, 1952, P. 227.

cribe the latest resolutions. What it requires is the ability to treat this experience critically and to test it independently. Anybody who realises how enormously the modern working-class movement has grown and branched out will understand what a reserve of theoretical forces and political (as well as revolutionary) experience is required to fulfil this task.¹

Obviously, in countries where the proletariat has gained power, the problem is many times more complex than that referred to by Lenin here.

In the history of the Communist Party of China between 1931 and 1934, there were doctrinaires who refused to recognise China's specific characteristics, mechanically copied certain experiences of the Soviet Union, and caused serious reverses to the revolutionary forces of our country. These reverses were a profound lesson to our Party. In the period between the Tsunyi Conference of 1935 and the Party's Seventh National Congress held in 1945, our Party thoroughly examined and repudiated this extremely harmful doctrinaire line, united all its members, including those who had made mistakes, developed the people's forces and thus won victory for the revolution. If this had not been done, victory would have been impossible. It is only because we discarded the doctrinaire line that it has become possible for our Party to make fewer mistakes in learning from the experience of the Soviet Union and other brother countries. It is because of this too that we are able to understand fully how necessary and arduous it is for our Polish and Hungarian comrades to correct today the doctrinaire errors of the past.

Errors of doctrinairism, whenever and wherever they occur, must be set right. We shall continue our efforts to correct and prevent such errors in our work. But opposition to doctrinairism has nothing in common with tolerance of revisionism. Marxism-Leninism recognises that the communist movements of various countries necessarily have their own national characteristics. But this does not mean that they do not share certain basic features in common, or that they can depart from the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism. In the present antidoctrinaire tide, there are people both in our country

1. V. I. Lenin, *op. cit.* Vol. I, Part 1, pp. 227-28

of the masses to organise an armed revolt. This shows that Hungary had not yet made a serious enough effort to build up its dictatorship of the proletariat. Nevertheless, when Hungary was facing its crisis, when it lay between revolution and counter-revolution, between socialism and fascism, between peace and war, how did communist intellectuals in some countries see the problem? They not only did not raise the question of realizing a dictatorship of the proletariat but came out against the righteous action taken by the Soviet Union in aiding the socialist forces in Hungary. They came out with declarations that the counter-revolution in Hungary was a "revolution" and with demands that the Worker-Peasant Revolutionary Government extend "democracy" to the counter-revolutionaries! In certain socialist countries some newspapers, even to this day, are wantonly discrediting the revolutionary measures taken by the Hungarian communists who are fighting heroically under difficult conditions, while they have said hardly a word about the campaign launched by reactionaries all over the world against communism, against the people and against peace. What is the meaning of these strange facts? They mean that those "Socialists" who depart from the dictatorship of the proletariat to prate about "democracy", actually stand with the bourgeoisie in opposition to the proletariat; that they are in effect, asking for capitalism and opposing socialism, though many among them may themselves be unaware of that fact. Lenin pointed out time and again that the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat is the most essential part of Marxism; that acceptance or rejection of the dictatorship of the proletariat is "what constitutes the most profound difference between the Marxist and the ordinary petty (as well as big) bourgeois."¹ Lenin asked the Hungarian proletarian regime of 1919 to use "mercilessly rigorous, swift and resolute force" to suppress the counter-revolutionaries. "Whoever does not understand this," he said, "is not a revolutionary, and must be removed from the post of leader or adviser of the proletariat."² So if people reject the fundamental

1 V.I. Lenin, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, part 1, p. 233.

2 *Ibid.*, Vol. II, part 2, p. 209.

Marxist-Leninist principles regarding the dictatorship of the proletariat, if they slanderously dub these principles "Stalinism" and "doctrinairism" simply because they have perceived the mistakes committed by Stalin in the later part of his life and those made by the former Hungarian leaders, they will be taking the path that leads to betrayal of Marxism-Leninism and away from the cause of proletarian revolution.

Those who reject the dictatorship of the proletariat also deny the need for centralism in socialist democracy and the leading role played by the proletarian party in socialist countries. To Marxist-Leninists, of course, such ideas are nothing new. Engels pointed out long ago, when struggling against the anarchists, that as long as there is concerted action in any social organisation, there must be a certain degree of authority and subordination. The relation between authority and autonomy is relative and the scope of their application changes with different stages of the development of society. Engels said that 'it is absurd to speak of the principle of authority as being absolutely evil, and of the principle of autonomy as being absolutely good,'¹ and that for anyone to insist on such an absurdity was in fact to "serve the reaction."² In the struggle against the Mensheviks, Lenin brought out most clearly the decisive significance of the organised leadership of the Party for the proletarian cause. When criticizing "Left-wing" communism in Germany in 1920, Lenin stressed that to deny the leading role of the Party, to deny the part played by leaders and to reject discipline, "is tantamount to completely disarming the proletariat *in the interest of the bourgeoisie*. It is tantamount to that petty-bourgeois diffuseness, instability, incapacity for sustained effort, unity and organised action, which, if indulged in, must inevitably destroy every proletarian revolutionary movement."³ Have these principles become obsolete? Are they inapplicable to the specific conditions in certain countries? Will their application lead to the repetition of Stalin's mistakes? The answer is obviously "no." These principles of Marxism-Leninism have stood the test of

1. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1955, p. 637.

2. *Ibid*, Vol. I, p, 638.

3. V. I. Lenin, *Selected works*, Vol. II, Part 2, p. 366.

history in the development of the international communist movement and of the socialist countries, and not a single case that can be called an exception to them has been found so far. Stalin's mistakes did not lie in the practice of democratic centralism in state affairs, nor in putting leadership by the Party into effect; it lay precisely in the fact that, in certain fields and to a certain degree, he undermined democratic centralism and leadership by the Party. The correct practice of democratic centralism in state affairs and the proper strengthening of leadership by the Party in the socialist cause are the basic guarantees that the countries in the socialist camp will be able to unite their people, defeat their enemies, overcome their difficulties and grow vigorously. It is precisely for this reason that the imperialists and all counter-revolutionaries, bent on attacking our cause, have always demanded that we "liberalise," that they have always concentrated their forces on wrecking the leading bodies of our cause, and on destroying the Communist Party, the core of the proletariat. They have expressed great satisfaction at the current "instability" in certain socialist countries, which has resulted from the impairment of discipline in the Party and the state organs, and are taking advantage of this to intensify their acts of sabotage. These facts show of what great importance it is, in the basic interests of the masses of the people, to uphold the authority of democratic centralism and the leading role of the Party. There is no doubt that the centralism in the system of democratic centralism must rest on a broad basis of democracy, and that the Party leadership must maintain close ties with the masses. Any shortcomings in this respect must be firmly criticised and overcome. But such criticism should be made only for the purpose of consolidating democratic centralism and of strengthening the leadership of the Party. It should in no circumstances bring about disorganisation and confusion in the ranks of the proletariat, as our enemies desire.

Among those who are trying to revise Marxism-Leninism on the pretext of combating doctrinairism, some simply deny that there is a demarcation line between the proletarian and the bourgeois dictatorships, between the socialist and the capitalist systems and between the socialist and the imperialist camps. According to them, it is possible for certain bourgeois countries

to build socialism without going through a proletarian revolution led by the party of the proletariat and without setting up a state led by the party; they think that the state capitalism in those countries is in fact socialism, and that even human society as a whole is "growing" into socialism. But while these people are publicising such ideas, the imperialists are mobilising all available military, economic, diplomatic, espionage and "moral" forces, actively preparing to "undermine" and "disrupt" socialist countries which have been established for many years. The bourgeois counter-revolutionaries of these countries, whether hiding at home or living in exile, are still making every effort to stage a come-back. While the revisionist trend serves the interest of the imperialists, the actions of the imperialists do not benefit revisionism but point to its bankruptcy.

VI

It is one of the most urgent tasks of the proletariat of all countries in its fight against imperialist onslaughts to strengthen its international solidarity. The imperialists and reactionaries in various countries are trying in a thousand and one ways to make use of narrow nationalist sentiments and of certain national estrangement among the peoples to wreck this solidarity, thereby destroying the communist cause. Staunch proletarian revolutionaries firmly uphold this solidarity, which they regard as being in the common interest of the working class of all countries. Wavering elements have taken no firm, clear-cut stand on this question.

The communist movement has been an international movement from its very inception, because the workers of various countries can throw off joint oppression by the bourgeoisie of various countries and attain their common aim only by joint effort. This international solidarity of the communist movement has been of great help to the proletariat of various countries in developing their revolutionary cause.

The triumph of the Russian October Revolution gave enormous impetus to the fresh advances of the international proletarian revolutionary movement. In the 39 years since the October Revolution, the achievements of the international communist movement have been immense, and it has become a

powerful, world-wide political force. The world proletariat and all who long for emancipation place all their hopes for a bright future for mankind on the victory of this movement.

During the past 39 years the Soviet Union has been the centre of the international communist movement, owing to the fact that it is the first country where socialism triumphed, while after the appearance of the camp of socialism—the most powerful country in the camp, having the richest experience and the means to render the greatest assistance to other socialist countries and to the peoples of various countries in the capitalist world. This is not the result of anyone's arbitrary decision, but the natural outcome of historical conditions. In the interests of the common cause of the proletariat of different countries, of joint resistance to the attack on the socialist cause by the imperialist camp headed by the United States, and of the economic and cultural upsurge common to all socialist countries, we must continue to strengthen international proletarian solidarity with the Soviet Union as its centre.

The international solidarity of the Communist Parties is a type of relationship entirely new to human history. It is natural that its development cannot be free from difficulties. The Communist Parties of all countries must seek unity with each other as well as maintain their respective independence. Historical experience proves that mistakes are bound to occur if there is no proper integration of these two aspects, and one or the other is neglected. If the Communist Parties maintain relations of equality among themselves and reach common understanding and take concerted action through genuine, and not nominal, exchange of views, their unity will be strengthened. Conversely, if, in their mutual relations, one Party imposes its views upon others, or if the Parties use the method of interference in each other's internal affairs instead of comradely suggestions and criticism, their unity will be impaired.

In the socialist countries, the Communist Parties have assumed the responsibility of leadership in the affairs of the state, and relations between them often involve directly the relations between their respective countries and peoples, so the proper handling of such relations has become a problem demanding

even greater care.

Marxism-Leninism has always insisted upon combining proletarian internationalism with the patriotism of the people of each country. Each Communist Party must educate its members and the people in a spirit of internationalism, because the true national interests of all peoples call for friendly co-operation among nations. On the other hand, each Communist Party must represent the legitimate national interests and sentiments of its own people. Communists have always been true patriots, and they understand that it is only when they correctly represent the interests and sentiments of their nation can they really enjoy the trust and love of the broad mass of their own people, effectively educate them in internationalism and harmonise the national sentiments and interests of the peoples of different countries.

To strengthen the international solidarity of the socialist countries, the Communist Parties of these countries must respect the national interests and sentiments of other countries. This is of special importance for the Communist Party of a larger country in its relations with that of a smaller one. To avoid any resentment on the part of the smaller country, the Party of a larger country must constantly take care to maintain an attitude of equality. As Lenin rightly said, "It is . . . the duty of the class-conscious communist proletariat of all countries to treat with particular caution and attention the survivals of national sentiments among countries and nationalities which have been longest oppressed."¹

As we have already said, Stalin displayed certain great-nation chauvinist tendencies in relations with brother parties and countries. The essence of such tendencies lies in being unmindful of the independent and equal status of the Communist Parties of various lands and that of the socialist countries within the framework of the international bond of union. There are certain historical reasons for such tendencies. The time-worn habits of big countries in their relations with small countries continue to make their influence felt in certain ways, while a series of victories achieved by a Party or a country in its

¹ V. Lenin, *ibid.*, at the present moment, when a

revolutionary cause is apt to give rise to a sense of superiority.

For these reasons, systematic efforts are needed to overcome great-nation chauvinist tendencies. Great-nation chauvinism is not peculiar to any one country. For instance, country B may be small and backward compared to country A, but big and advanced compared to country C. Thus country B, while complaining of great-nation chauvinism on the part of country A, may often assume the airs of a great nation in relation to country C. What we Chinese especially must bear in mind is that China too was a big empire during the Han, Tang, Ming and Ching dynasties. Although it is true that in the hundred years after the middle of the 19th century, China became a victim of aggression and a semi-colony and although she is still economically and culturally backward today, nevertheless, under changed conditions, great-nation chauvinist tendencies will certainly become a serious danger if we do not take every precaution to guard against them. It should, furthermore, be pointed out that some signs of this danger have already begun to appear among some of our personnel. That was why emphasis on fighting the tendency towards great-nation chauvinism was laid both in the resolution of the Eighth National Congress of the Communist Party of China and the statement of the Government of the People's Republic of China issued on November, 1, 1956.

But it is not great-nation chauvinism alone that hinders international proletarian unity. In the course of history, big countries have shown disrespect for small countries and even oppressed them; and small countries have distrusted big ones and even become hostile to them. Both tendencies still exist to a greater or lesser extent among the people and even in the ranks of the proletariat of various countries. That is why, in order to strengthen the international solidarity of the proletariat apart from the primary task of overcoming great-nation chauvinist tendencies in bigger countries, it is also necessary to overcome nationalist tendencies in smaller countries. No matter whether their country is big or small, if communists counterpose the interests of their own country and nation to the general interest of the international proletarian movement, and if relations has become a pro-

they make national interests a pretext for opposing the general interest, and not really upholding international proletarian solidarity in actual practice but on the contrary damaging it, they will be committing a serious mistake of violating the principles of internationalism and Marxism-Leninism.

Stalin's mistakes aroused grave dissatisfaction among people in certain East European countries. But then neither is the attitude of some people in these countries towards the Soviet Union justified. Bourgeois nationalists try their best to exaggerate short comings of the Soviet Union and overlook the contributions it has made. They attempt to prevent the people from thinking how the imperialists would treat their countries and their peoples if the Soviet Union did not exist. We Chinese Communists are very glad to see that the Communist Parties of Poland and Hungary are already putting a firm check on the activities of evil elements that fabricate anti-Soviet rumours and stir up national antagonisms in relations with brother countries, and also that these Parties have set to work to dispel nationalist prejudices existing among some sections of the masses and even among some Party members. This is clearly one of the steps urgently needed to consolidate friendly relations among the socialist countries.

As we pointed out above, the foreign policy of the Soviet Union has, in the main, conformed to the interests of the international proletariat, the oppressed nations and the peoples of the world. In the past 39 years, the Soviet people have made tremendous efforts and heroic sacrifices in aiding the cause of the peoples of the various countries. Mistakes committed by Stalin certainly cannot detract from these historic achievements of the great Soviet people.

The Soviet Government's efforts to improve relations with Yugoslavia, its declaration of October 30, 1956, and its talks with Poland in November 1956 all manifest the determination of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet Government to thoroughly eliminate past mistakes in foreign relations. These steps by the Soviet Union are an important contribution to the strengthening of the international solidarity of the proletariat.

Obviously, at the present moment, when the imperialists are

launching frenzied attacks on the communist ranks in the various countries, it is necessary for the proletariat of all nations to strive to strengthen its solidarity. Faced as we are with powerful enemies, no word or deed which harms the solidarity of the international communist ranks, no matter what name it goes by can hope to receive any sympathy from the communists and working people of the various countries.

The strengthening of the international solidarity of the proletariat, with the Soviet Union as its core, is not only in the interests of the world proletariat but also in the interests of the independence movement of all oppressed nations and of world peace. Through their own experience, the broad masses of the people in Asia, Africa and Latin America find it easy to understand who are their enemies and who their friends. That is why the imperialist-instigated campaign against communism, against the people and against peace has evoked such a faint response and that from only a handful among the more than one thousand million people who inhabit these continents. Facts prove that the Soviet Union, China, the other socialist countries and the revolutionary proletariat in the imperialist countries are a staunch supporters of Egypt's struggle against aggression, and of the independence movement in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The socialist countries, the proletariat in the imperialist countries, and the countries striving for national independence—these three forces have bonds of common interest in their struggle against imperialism and their mutual support and assistance is of the greatest significance to the future of mankind and world peace. Recently the imperialist forces of aggression have again created a certain degree of tension in the international situation. But by the joint struggle of the three forces we have mentioned, plus the concerted efforts of all other peace-loving forces in the world, a new lessening of such tension can be achieved. The imperialist forces of aggression failed to gain anything from their invasion of Egypt; instead, they were dealt a telling blow. Furthermore, thanks to the help given by the Soviet troops to the Hungarian people, the imperialists were frustrated in their plan to build an outpost of war in Eastern Europe and to disrupt the solidarity of the socialist camp. T

socialist countries are persisting in their efforts for peaceful co-existence with the capitalist countries, to develop diplomatic, economic and cultural relations with them, to settle international disputes through peaceful negotiations, to oppose preparations for a new world war, to expand the peace area in the world, and to broaden the scope of application of the five principles of peaceful co-existence. All these efforts will certainly win ever more sympathy from the oppressed nations and the peace-loving people throughout the world. The strengthening of the international solidarity of the proletariat will make the warlike, imperialists think twice before embarking upon new adventures. Therefore, despite the fact that the imperialists are still trying to resist the efforts described above, the forces for peace will eventually triumph over the forces for war.

The international communist movement has a history of only 92 years, reckoning from the establishment of the First International in 1864. Despite many ups and downs, the progress of the movement as a whole has been very rapid. During the First World War, there appeared the Soviet Union, covering one-sixth of the earth. After the Second World War, there appeared the camp of socialism, which now has a third of the world's population. When the socialist states commit errors of one kind or another, our enemies are elated while some of our comrades and friends become dejected; a number of them even waver in their confidence as to the future of the communist cause. However, there is little ground for our enemies to rejoice or for our comrades and friends to feel dejected or to waver. The proletariat has begun to rule the state for the first time in history: in some countries this occurred only a few years ago, and in the oldest only a few decades ago. So how could anyone expect that no failures would be encountered? Temporary and partial failures have occurred, are still occurring, and may also occur in the future. But a person with foresight will not feel dejected and pessimistic because of them. Failure is the mother of success. It is precisely the recent temporary, partial failures that have enriched the political experience of the international proletariat and will help to pave the way for great successes in the years to come. Compared with the history of the bourgeois revolutions in Britain and France, the failures in our cause are

virtually of no account. The bourgeois revolution in Britain started in 1640. The defeat of the king was followed by Cromwell's dictatorship. Then came the restoration of the old royal house in 1660. It was not until 1688 when the bourgeois party staged a coup d'etat inviting to England a king who brought along with him troops and naval forces from the Netherlands that the British bourgeois dictatorship was consolidated. During the 86 years from the outbreak of the French revolution in 1789 to 1875 when the Third Republic was established, the bourgeois revolution in France went through a particularly stormy period, swinging in rapid succession between progress and reaction, republicanism and monarchy, revolutionary terror and counter-revolutionary terror, civil war and foreign war, the conquest of foreign lands and capitulation to foreign states. Although the socialist revolution faces the concerted opposition of the reactionaries throughout the world, its course as a whole is smooth and remarkably steady. This is a true reflection of the unparalleled vitality of the socialist system. Though the international communist movement met with some setbacks recently, we have learned many useful lessons from them. We have corrected, or are correcting, the mistakes in our own ranks which need to be rectified. When these errors are righted, we shall be stronger and more firmly united than ever before. Contrary to the expectation of our enemies, the cause of the proletariat will not be thrown back but will make ever more progress.

But the fate of imperialism is quite different. There, in the imperialist world, fundamental clashes of interest exist between imperialism and the oppressed nations, among the imperialist countries themselves, and between the government and the people of these imperialist countries. These clashes will grow more and more acute and there is no cure for them.

Of course, in many respects, the new-born system of proletarian dictatorship still faces many difficulties, and has many weaknesses. But, compared with the time when the Soviet Union was struggling alone, the situation is a good deal better. And what new birth is not attended with difficulties and weaknesses? The issue is the future. However many twists and turns may await us on our forward journey, humanity will eventually reach its bright destiny—communism. There is no force that can

**EXTRACT FROM "A SHORT HISTORY OF THE
COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION",
MOSCOW, 1970.**

The CPSU sees two aspects in Stalin's work : a positive aspect, which the Party values, and a negative aspect, which it criticises and denounces.

During the years Stalin was General Secretary of the CC (he was elected to this post in 1922), the Soviet people, led by the Communist Party and its Central Committee, carried out a task that was colossal for its importance and for the difficulties it involved—they built the world's first socialist society, turned an economically backward country into a leading industrial power. During the Great Patriotic War, under the leadership of the Party, the Soviet people accomplished an immortal feat—they defeated nazi Germany and her allies, upheld the great gains of socialism and saved mankind from the threat of enslavement by fascism. After the war, led by the Party, they quickly restored the country's economy and started the building of communism.

Along with other leaders of the Party and Government, Stalin, as a prominent organiser and theoretician, worked to carry through socialist reforms in the USSR, headed the struggle against the enemies of Leninism (Trotskyites, Right opportunists and bourgeois nationalists), exposed the intrigues of the capitalist encirclement and did much to enhance the Soviet Union's defence capability. Moreover, he did much to promote the world communist and the entire liberation movement. All this earned him considerable prestige and popularity,

But with time all the achievements of the Soviet people, led by the Party, began to be ascribed to him. The personality cult gradually took shape. Stalin overestimated his own contribution to the successes of the Party and the whole Soviet people, believed he was infallible and began to abuse the power placed

in his hand. This was furthered by some negative features of his character. He began to depart from the Leninist principles of collective leadership and the norms of Party life. He committed particularly grave errors in the last years of his life. There were unjustified limitations on democracy, flagrant violations of socialist legality and unfounded repressions.

The errors and distortions linked up with the personality cult damaged the cause of communist construction. But they neither changed nor could change the nature of socialist society, the genuinely people's nature of the Soviet system, and they could not shake or weaken the theoretical, political and organisational foundations of the CPSU's activity. The policy pursued by the Party expressed the basic interests of the Soviet people, always enjoyed their support and ensured the successful building of socialism and communism in the USSR.

and abroad who, on the pretext of opposing the mechanical copying of Soviet experience, try to deny the international significance of the fundamental experience of the Soviet Union, and, on the plea of creatively developing Marxism-Leninism, try to deny the significance of the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism.

Because Stalin and the former leaders in some other socialist countries committed the serious mistake of violating socialist democracy, some unstable people in the communist ranks, on the pretext of developing socialist democracy, attempt to weaken or renounce the dictatorship of the proletariat, the principles of democratic centralism of the socialist state, and the leading role of the Party.

There can be no doubt that in a proletarian dictatorship the dictatorship over the counter-revolutionary forces must be closely combined with the broadest scope of people's, that is, socialist, democracy. The dictatorship of the proletariat is mighty and can defeat powerful enemies within the country and outside it and undertake the majestic historic task of building socialism precisely because it is a dictatorship of the working masses over the exploiters, a dictatorship of the majority over the minority, because it gives the broad working masses a democracy which is unattainable under any bourgeois democracy. Failure to forge close links with the mass of the working people and to gain their enthusiastic support makes it impossible to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat, or at any rate impossible to consolidate it. The more acute the class struggle becomes, the more necessary it is for the proletariat to rely, most resolutely and completely, on the broad masses of the people and to bring into full play their revolutionary enthusiasm to defeat the counter-revolutionary forces. The experience of the stirring and seething mass struggles in the Soviet Union during the October Revolution and the ensuing civil war proved this truth to the full. It is from Soviet experience in that period that the "mass line" our Party so often talks about was derived. The acute struggles in the Soviet Union then depended mainly on direct action by the mass of the people, and naturally there was little possibility

tion of the exploiting classes and the wiping out in the main of the counter-revolutionary forces, it was still necessary for the dictatorship of the proletariat to deal with counter-revolutionary remnants—these could not be wiped out completely so long as imperialism existed—but by then its edge should have been mainly directed against the aggressive forces of foreign imperialism. In these circumstances, democratic procedures in the political life of the country should have been gradually developed and perfected; the socialist legal system perfected; supervision by the people over the state organs strengthened; democratic methods of administering the state and managing enterprises developed; links between the state organs and the bodies administering various enterprises on the one hand, and the broad masses on the other, made closer; hindrances impairing any of these links done away with and a firmer check put on bureaucratic tendencies. After the elimination of classes, the class struggle should not continue to be stressed as though it was being intensified, as was done by Stalin, with the result that the healthy development of socialist democracy was hampered. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union is completely right in firmly correcting Stalin's mistakes in this respect.

Socialist democracy should in no way be pitted against the dictatorship of the proletariat; nor should it be confused with bourgeois democracy. The sole aim of socialist democracy, in the political, economic and cultural fields alike, is to strengthen the socialist cause of the proletariat and all the working people, to give scope to their energy in the building of socialism and in the fight against all anti-socialist forces. If there is a kind of democracy that can be used for anti-socialist purposes and for weakening the cause of socialism, it certainly cannot be called socialist democracy.

Some people, however, do not see things that way. Their reaction to events in Hungary has revealed this most clearly. In the past the democratic rights and revolutionary enthusiasm of the Hungarian working people were impaired, while the counter-revolutionaries were not dealt the blow they deserved, with the result that it was fairly easy for the counter-revolutionaries in October 1956 to take advantage of the dis-