

PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE OF STATES WITH DIFFERENT SOCIAL SYSTEMS

The very concept of peaceful coexistence between the capitalist and socialist states arose only after the victory of the first socialist revolution in Russia. It is true that Lenin, as early as 1916, visualised the possibility of accomplishing the socialist revolution in one or several countries while in the rest of the countries, for a period, the rule of the bourgeoisie and other propertied classes would exist, and the world socialist revolution would not triumph, simultaneously, all at once, in all the countries. Life and history have confirmed the correctness of this proposition during the last half a century.

It is evident that the coming into existence of the first socialist state and its continued existence along with the capitalist states of the world are made possible through the arduous struggle against imperialism, a struggle covering all the economic, political, ideological and military aspects. The Soviet state, through its armed might, had to struggle to live in peace with the imperialist countries. There were

repeated trials of strength between the imperialist countries and the Soviet Union and as a result of it, the Soviet Union could impose the right to coexistence on the imperialists.

Lenin made it abundantly clear that "International imperialism. . . . could not under any circumstances, on any conditions live side by side with the Soviet Republic both because of its objective position and because of the economic interests of the capitalist class". "In this sphere the conflict is inevitable. Therein lies the greatest difficulty of the Russian revolution, its greatest historical problem: the necessity of solving international problems, the necessity of calling forth an international revolution, of effecting this transition from our strictly national revolution to the world revolution."

He also stated that "...the existence of the Soviet Republic side by side with imperialist states for a long time is unthinkable. One or the other must triumph in the end. And before that end supervenes, a series of frightful collisions between the Soviet Republic and the bourgeois states will be inevitable."

Further, answering the advocates of a revolutionary war with the aim of overthrowing the bourgeoisie in imperialist countries, he asserted, "however, we obviously cannot set ourselves this aim at the *given* moment", and "the interests of the international revolution demand that the Soviet power, having overthrown the bourgeoisie in our country, should *help* that revolution, but that it should choose a *form* of help which is commensurate with its own strength," while, of course, characterising the "Soviet Republic as a *detachment* of the world army of socialism".

Lenin made it clear that, "So long as capitalism and socialism remain, they cannot live at peace, in the long run either one or the other will be victorious, the funeral dirge will be sounded either over the Soviet Republic or over world capitalism. It will be a respite in the war".

Thus it is clear that Lenin's concept of peaceful coexistence is a fighting and revolutionary concept, a concept which permits no breeding of pacifist and utopian illusions about imperialism, a concept that has nothing in common with the concept of a status quo, i.e., imperialism and socialism living side by side peacefully. It is a concept of

'respite' to be correctly utilised to consolidate the socialist state economically, politically and militarily so that imperialist aggression might be successfully met and the imperialists of the world vanquished.

It is this correct policy that was made one of the important components of the foreign policy of the Soviet state by Lenin, and faithfully followed and implemented by Stalin, subsequent to Lenin's departure.

But the modern revisionists who embolden themselves to discard Lenin's thesis on imperialism and wars and also several others of his propositions, and revise them on the pretext that they were made decades ago when imperialism was all-powerful and the determining force, etc., shout from the housetops their alleged fidelity to the Leninist concept of peaceful coexistence while actually so distorting the entire concept as to deprive it of its revolutionary content. They lay exclusive emphasis on certain aspects of the concept of peaceful coexistence, while conveniently ignoring and suppressing the other equally, if not more, important aspects of the entire concept.

They go to the length of exaggerating the concept of peaceful coexistence describing it as the highest form of class struggle, and as one which forms the axis of the entire foreign policy of every proletarian state. They tend to reduce the concept of peaceful coexistence to the opportunist meaning of 'peacefully' putting up with the blatant aggressive actions of world imperialism when they shamelessly extend this concept to the relations between the inherently aggressive states of the imperialists and the victim states. Instead of boldly exposing how the world imperialists, particularly the U.S., through their frenzied drive for colonial and neo-colonial domination of the world, are making peace and peaceful coexistence on earth impossible, the revisionists tend to shield the imperialist aggressors as though they are reconciled to peace and peaceful coexistence. The absurd limits to which this well-known revolutionary concept of Lenin is reduced can be seen when the modern revisionists who, in words, agree that U.S. imperialism today has become 'the biggest international exploiter', 'the chief bulwark of world reaction', and 'international gendarme and the chief enemy of the

peoples of the world', in practice, treat the U.S. imperialist rulers as those with whom real and lasting peaceful coexistence is possible and with whom the socialist states can collaborate in the struggle for peace and amity among nations.

The interpretation of the concept of peaceful coexistence between the socialist and imperialist states is reduced by the revisionists to mean that the chief struggle between the two systems is in the main peaceful economic competition and thus conceal the truth that the struggle between the two systems comprises every field of economic, political, ideological and military nature.

No Marxist-Leninist can accept such an opportunist interpretation and practice of the concept of peaceful coexistence, since it seeks to conceal the constant imperialist aggression and to appease the aggressor, and it disarms the revolutionary proletariat of the world in its uncompromising fight against imperialism—economic, political, ideological and military.

The principle of peaceful coexistence which is obligatory to socialist states and which is strictly adhered to by them alone, is never acceptable to the imperialists as the striving for violence, aggression and subjugation of others is the inherent characteristic of monopoly capitalism. To the extent this principle is enforced in the relations between states with differing social systems, it is imposed upon the bourgeois states in bitter and frontal struggle against them. The struggle for enforcing the principle on capitalist states is a continuation of war against capitalism in different forms. To import any other non-class meaning into this concept means to monstrously distort it, with the facile notion of making it willingly acceptable to the imperialists and with the opportunist idea of purchasing peace with them, even at the cost of revolution, which, in the final analysis, would not defend peace or peaceful coexistence of states but would only invite disaster to both and the world revolution.

Peaceful coexistence is, of course, an essential part of the Leninist foreign policy obligatory to every socialist state. It helps them to mobilise all the forces of peace throughout the world and thus to isolate the war-mongers.

It becomes the rallying slogan around which all the forces of peace and freedom can be mobilised.

It is, however, idle to hope, as the modern revisionists want the people to do, that just because the imperialist powers mouth the slogan of peaceful coexistence, a new era of peace will dawn on the world. The reality is that behind the very slogan of peaceful coexistence which they are forced to subscribe to in words, the imperialists are hatching and executing new plans of aggression against the people; ever so many new forms of neo-colonialism are being imposed; and wherever the people are vigilant, united and strong enough, their revolutionary movements are sought to be drowned in blood.

That is why every real revolutionary, every Marxist-Leninist, has to combine the strictest and most loyal adherence to the principle of peaceful coexistence as between states having different social systems with (a) the perfection of such a united and vigilant armed force of the socialist camp that any aggressive act of the imperialists can be met with a devastating counter-blow; and (b) the rendering of such concrete assistance—economic, political and others—to the national revolutionary movements.