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**THE
WORKING CLASS
AND ITS ALLIES**

[In two sections entitled, "The Leading Role of
the Working Class" and "The Peasantry as the
Ally of the Working Class"]



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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

This is the second of a series of short and handy pamphlets which we intend to bring out, containing articles dealing with Marxist theoretical problems appearing in the Russian theoretical magazines and Press.

These articles are of immense value and assistance to students of politics, particularly, to those who are working in the mass organisations like the trade unions, peasant unions and others.

We are trying to price them as low as possible to enable the widest sections of people to buy and study them.

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I
THE LEADING ROLE OF THE
WORKING CLASS

THE Communists are flesh of the working class' flesh. The Communist Party is the vanguard of the working class. All its practical-organizational and theoretical activities are framed by the Communist Party in consideration of the general interests of the proletariat and of its historic mission—realization of the ideals of Communism.

In his interview with the British author, H. G. Wells, in 1934, the great theoretician and leader of the international Communist movement, J. V. Stalin, pointed out that the existence of a principal force, of a bulwark, of a revolutionary class is necessary in order to effect a great, serious social act, and that to the revolution this bulwark is the working class.

The proletariat is the most advanced, the most revolutionary class in modern society.

The history of human society shows that at different stages of its development, the oppressed classes have been and are conducting, an uncompromising struggle against their oppressors. Karl Marx pointed out that throughout history,

“freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended... in a revolutionary reconstitution of society...”

But the advent of the slave system after the primitive communal system, just as the victory of the bourgeoisie over feudalism, had not done away with class antagonisms in society. The old exploiting classes were succeeded by new ones. Under the capitalist system the class antagonisms acquired more distinct form and sharpened the relations between the two principal, irreconcilably hostile classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Only the vic-

tory of the socialist system frees mankind from the division of society into exploiters and exploited.

Under capitalism, the class struggle reaches the stage where,

"the exploited and oppressed class (the proletariat) can no longer emancipate itself from the class which exploits and oppresses it (the bourgeoisie), without at the same time forever freeing the whole of society from exploitation, oppression and class struggles." (F. Engels)

Marxism teaches us that of all the classes opposing the bourgeoisie, the proletariat is the most advanced and most consistent revolutionary class, since all the other classes of society degrade with the development of big capitalist industry whereas the proletariat called to life by it, is growing uninterruptedly.

If the middle classes of society—the petty manufacturer, petty tradesman, handicraftsman and peasant—became revolutionary in the struggle against the big bourgeoisie, it is only to the extent that, and at the time when by force of the laws of capitalist development, they adopt the viewpoint of the proletariat and take their place under the banner of the working class, thus defending in this struggle the interests of all the working people.

As distinct from the other social classes and sections opposing the bourgeoisie, the proletariat owns no property, no instruments of production, and it has nothing to lose in the revolution but its chains. Marx showed that by force of the irrevocable laws governing the development of capitalism, the working class takes shape, grows, hardens and consolidates itself as the revolutionary leader of all the working people.

Marx emphasized the fact that under capitalism

"grows the mass of misery, oppression, slavery, degradation, exploitation; but with this too grows the revolt of the working class, a class always increasing in numbers, and disciplined, united, organised by the very mechanism of the process of capitalist production itself." (Capital, Eng. ed., Vol. I, p. 789).

It is a hard life that falls to the lot of the working class under capitalism, which dooms the working people to

frightful suffering. Especially unbearable are the conditions of the unemployed who in the USA, for example, already number more than 14 millions.

The unbearable impoverishment of the proletariat stirs up growing indignation against the magnates of capital, raises the class consciousness of the workers and prompts them to more energetic and self-sacrificing action in the struggle against imperialism. By facilitating the political development and organizational consolidation of the proletariat, the very conditions of labour in industry make it the most revolutionary class of society, the leader of all the working people.

The reason why precisely the proletariat plays the leading role in the revolutionary struggle is clearly evident from the heroic history of the Bolshevik Party. It is known that in the nineties of last century, the revolutionary Marxists in Russia were conducting a struggle against the Narodniks who voiced the interests of the kulaks. The Narodniks denied the leading role of the proletariat, and more than this, they regarded the birth of this class in Russia as a "historical misfortune". The revolutionary Marxists smashed these kulak views ideologically and proved convincingly that precisely the proletariat, despite its relative numerical weakness at that time, was the leading class of society, the class in which the true revolutionaries were to repose their hopes in the struggle for the liberation of human society from the rule of capital.

And the reason for this, said the Marxists, was "because the proletariat, although it was still numerically small, was a labouring class which was connected with the most advanced form of economy, largescale production, and which for this reason had a great future before it.

"Because the proletariat, as a class, was growing from year to year was developing politically, easily lent itself to organization owing to the conditions of labour prevailing in large-scale production, and was the most revolutionary class owing to its proletarian status, for it had nothing to lose in the revolution but its chains". (History of the CPSU (B), Short Course, Eng. ed., p. 13).

The fundamental outlines of the theory of the leading role of the proletariat (the hegemony of the proletariat) in the struggle against the capitalist system given by Marx and Engels were developed by Lenin and Stalin into a harmonious system of working-class leadership of the working masses of town and country in the struggle against tsarism, in the struggle for overthrowing the landlords and capitalists, and, lastly, in the building of the Socialist society.

Thanks to the Bolshevik Party, inspired by the genius of Lenin and Stalin, the idea of the hegemony of the working class was consistently carried into practice in the revolutionary movement of Russia. And the great service rendered by Leninism lay in that the Bolsheviks took into account the lessons of all the past experience of the revolutions in the West and avoided mistakes. Whereas in Britain, France and Germany, after the workers shed their blood on the barricades and deposed the despotic rule of the kings, power had been captured by the bourgeoisie which continued the exploitation of the workers, in Russia matters took a different turn. The striking force of the revolution in Russia, the working class, was the political leader of the exploited masses of town and country; it rallied these masses behind its revolutionary banner, tore them away from the bourgeoisie, isolated the bourgeoisie politically and achieved the world historic victory of October, 1917.

The lessons of three revolutions in Russia teach us that only the working class, which is the only consistently revolutionary class in modern society, can be the real leader (the hegemon) of all the people in its struggle against the oppressors, against the landlords and capitalists, against the instigators of a new war, in the struggle for peace, for a people's democracy and the victory of socialism.

This historically important experience of the Russian proletariat is used by the working class in the People's Democracies in the building of socialism, as well as by the working class in the capitalist countries of the West in the struggle against the rule of capital. This experience has brought victory to the working class of the great Chinese people and it is used in the daily struggle conducted by the working people of the colonial and dependent countries of the East against imperialism and its local agents.

II

THE PEASANTRY AS THE ALLY OF THE WORKING CLASS

The Communist Party of Russia which relied in all its activities upon the working class, had been constantly developing its class consciousness and educating it politically as the leader of all the working people. Therein lay one of the main sources of the epoch-making victories won by the Party of Lenin and Stalin in the struggle against the tsar, the landlords and the capitalists.

Lenin and Stalin teach us that one of the main conditions for the success of the struggle conducted by the working class against tsarism, against the landlords and the capitalists was the correct application in practice of the revolutionary alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry. Long before the first Russian Revolution, more than 55 years ago, in his book **What the 'Friends of the People' Are and How They Fight Against the Social-Democrats**, Lenin made the forecast that precisely in alliance with the peasantry would the proletariat of Russia overthrow the tsarist autocracy, whereupon the Russian proletariat, in alliance with the labouring and exploited masses, would, along with the proletariat of other countries, take the straight road of open political struggle to the victorious Communist revolution.

This remarkable prevision of the leading role of the working class as the leading revolutionary force of society and of the role of the peasantry as an ally of the working class, was corroborated by the entire experience of three Russian revolutions.

The Party of Lenin and Stalin has always devoted exceptional attention to the peasant problem, as the problem of the ally of the proletariat in its struggle for power. J. V. Stalin teaches us that the consolidation of the alliance of the working class and the peasantry is of serious and vital importance for the destiny of the proletarian revolution.

"It is known", says J. V. Stalin, "that the serious study of the peasant problem in the ranks of Russian Marxists began precisely on the eve of the first revolution (1905), when the question of overthrowing tsarism and of realizing the hegemony of the proletariat confronted the Party in its full scope, and when the question of the ally of the proletariat in the impending bourgeois revolution assumed immediate vital importance. It is also known that the peasant problem in Russia assumed a still more urgent character during the proletarian revolution, when the problem of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of achieving and maintaining it, led to the problem of allies for the proletariat in the impending proletarian revolution. And this was natural. Those who are marching towards and preparing to assume power cannot but be interested in the question of who are their real allies". (*Problems of Leninism*, Eng. ed., p. 39).

It is characteristic that the Mensheviks, the Trotskyites, had always regarded with disfavour the idea of an alliance between the working class and the peasantry. This is explained by the fact that these enemies of the working class had never even been thinking of leading the working class to victory over the bourgeoisie. They feared the revolution, and that is why they took an ironical attitude towards the peasant problem and underestimated the role of the peasantry as an ally of the proletariat.

Marxism-Leninism has always emphasized the necessity for the proletariat to utilize without fail the revolutionary capabilities existing in the ranks of the majority of the peasantry, thanks to which the peasantry becomes an ally of the working class, its reserve in the bourgeois-democratic revolution.

Graphic evidence of this is contained in the lessons of the first and second bourgeois-democratic revolutions in Russia, in 1905 and 1917, when their own experience had convinced the many millions of peasants that only the working class was really assisting the peasant masses to extricate themselves from enslavement by the landlords, to do away with the absolute rule and tyranny of the tsar, to

put an end to the devastating war which was ruining the peasant households. It was at that period that the peasants learned to judge the real worth of the words and deeds of the different political parties. And they arrived at the conclusion that the liberal-bourgeois party of the Constitutional-Democrats (the Cadet) was an enemy disguised by the mask of "people's freedom". They realised that although the Socialist-Revolutionary Party was boasting of its peasant programme, its promises of land and freedom were not worth a farthing. All these parties were fighting against the revolution, they were in the service of foreign capital. Only the proletarian Bolshevik Party, which based itself upon the heroic Russian working class, showed in practice its ability, self-sacrifice, strength and persistence in the struggle against the landlord-autocratic system. It was precisely therefore that already at that time the Russian peasantry realized "the necessity of submitting to the leadership of such a courageous leader of the revolution as the Russian proletariat". (J. V. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Eng. ed. p. 43).

The characteristic feature of the period immediately before the proletarian Socialist Revolution in Russia (February-October, 1917) was the further revolutionization of the working peasantry, and primarily of the farm labourers and poor peasants, their rallying directly around the proletariat as the only consistently revolutionary force capable of leading the country out of the imperialist war, of taking the land from the landlords and securing peace to the suffering people. The overwhelming majority of the working peasantry supported the working-class and its party, the Party of Lenin and Stalin, in the struggle for peace and for the establishment of Soviet Government. By fighting for the continuation of the imperialist war, the Socialist Revolutionary and Menshevik parties, which hitched themselves to the chariot of the bourgeois Cadet party, exposed themselves as agents of imperialism, and this drove the mass of the working peasants and soldiers, the working people of town and country, to rally around the working class and its Party.

By indomitably organizing and strengthening the powerful alliance of the proletariat and the working peasantry

in the course of the revolution, the Party of Lenin and Stalin secured to the battle-steeted working class leadership within this alliance. The Bolshevik Party knew that victory was impossible unless this alliance was strengthened, since the struggle of the proletariat, isolated from the working peasantry, is doomed to defeat as was the case at the time of the heroic Paris Commune.

On the other hand, the history of the revolutionary movement teaches us that an isolated peasant struggle against the tyranny of the feudal landlords must inevitably end in failure if it is not led by the working class. Without the leadership of the proletariat, the peasants were capable only of a spontaneous movement. The peasant revolts under the leadership of Yemeyan Pugachev and Stepan Razin in Russia were crushed because the peasants were not led (and could not have been led at that time) by the working class.

Consequently, without a strong alliance between the working class and the peasantry, the workers and peasants could not have defeated their enemies: the workers could not have smashed the capitalists without the support of the peasants, and the peasants could not have defeated the landlords without the leadership of the proletariat. This means that the alliance of the working class and the peasantry is, as J. V. Stalin teaches us, the first and basic mainstay of the Soviet State, for the victory of the working class of the USSR and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat are based on the granite foundation of this alliance, the alliance of the workers and peasants. And that is why one of the behests of the great Lenin calls for the utmost consolidation of the alliance between these two classes.

V. I. Lenin teaches us that the supreme principle of the victorious dictatorship of the proletariat is

"the maintenance of the alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry in order that the former may retain its leading role and its political power". (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russ. 3rd ed., Vol. XXVI, p. 460).

Guided by these tenets of Lenin and Stalin, the Communist and Workers' Parties of Bulgaria, Rumania, Czecho-

slovakia, Poland and other Peoples Democracies, attained remarkable successes in the struggle for the establishment and consolidation of the Peoples Democratic system.

It is known that the People's Democratic system, which in these countries performs the functions of the dictatorship of the proletariat, is indebted for its origin, consolidation and continuous victories to the fact that it rests firmly upon the Lenin-Stalin alliance between the working class and the working peasantry. This alliance, in which leadership belongs to the proletariat, imbues the People's Democracies with an invincible strength in the struggle against the intrigues and sabotage of the Anglo-American imperialists and their agents in these countries.

In their efforts to strengthen the alliance between the working class and the peasantry, the Communist Parties base themselves upon the extremely rich experience of the Communist Party of the USSR, on the idea of Lenin and Stalin that the composition of the peasantry is not homogeneous and that at different stages in the revolution, the allies of the working class undergo changes depending on the nature of the main enemy and the aims of the struggle. While in the struggle against the tsar and the feudal landlords, the working class of Russia acted in alliance with all the peasants, paralyzing the instability of the bourgeoisie, the distribution of the class forces was different at the time of the struggle for the victory of the Socialist revolution, and the proletariat acted against the bourgeoisie and against the village kulaks—the enemies of socialism—in particular, in alliance with the semi-proletarian elements of the population, with the poor peasants, paralyzing the instability of the middle peasantry. Lastly, after the capture and consolidation of power, the working class, backed by the poor peasantry, maintains a firm alliance with the middle peasants and builds the socialist economy.

"The proletariat", teaches V. I. Lenin, "must carry to completion the democratic revolution, by allying to itself the mass of the peasantry in order to crush by force the resistance of the autocracy and to paralyse the instability of the bourgeoisie. The proletariat must accomplish the Socialist revolution, by allying to itself

the mass of the semi-proletarian elements of the population in order to crush by force the resistance of the bourgeoisie and to paralyse the instability of the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie". (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russ. 4th ed., Vol. 9, p. 81).

In the colonial and dependent countries the question of allies of the working class is determined by the historic tasks of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat against imperialist and feudal oppression. In China, for example, the people's revolution won its world historic victory over the Kuomintang agents of American imperialism thanks to the firm alliance between the working class and all the peasantry, and the support of the petty bourgeoisie and the middle sections of the national bourgeoisie. At the present stage of development, every Chinese—whether he is a poor, middle, peasant or kulak, a petty businessman, tradesman or manufacturer — who supports in deed the programme of the People's Government of China, its agrarian reform and other undertakings designed to do away with the remnants of feudal reaction, everyone who assists in strengthening the united revolutionary front against imperialism, is an ally of the Chinese working class.

It is the prime duty of the Communists to exert constant effort in order to strengthen the alliance between the working class and the peasantry, to win over to the side of the workers the widest sections of the petty bourgeoisie in town and country, depending upon the conditions in the country and the tasks confronting the working class, for, upon the stability of the alliance between the working class and its allies depend the successes of the struggle of the working people against their oppressors, against the Anglo-American instigators of a new war, the struggle for the victory of the great cause of peace and democracy in the whole world.