

Youth and Revolution

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One of the main features of today's revolutionary movement is the increasing participation and militancy of young people. The youth are challenging the system of exploitation, oppression, hateful racism and unjust and barbarous wars.

Young workers and students are carrying on battles for national liberation in Asia, Africa and Latin America. In this era of transition from capitalism to socialism, the ideas of national liberation are deepened and linked with those of social emancipation. In the metropolises of imperialism we are witnessing clashes between the repressive forces and the militant young people: France, West Germany and others. The most outstanding of these are the persistent struggles of the North American youth against the war in Indochina and against racism that victimizes the masses of Blacks, Mexicans, (Chicanos) and Puerto Ricans.

While it is true that the developing struggles — often bloody — have produced a higher level of understanding of the nature of imperialism, it is also true that ideas, organizations and programs emerging in the course of the social upheaval bear a multicolor character. There are large groups which are guided by the experiences and theories of the last fifty years, and others who, despite their anti-imperialist programs, vacillate and fall under influences alien and inimical to Marxism-Leninism. In the atmosphere of anti-communism and anti-labor ideas, a variety of the latter has emerged: anarchism, Trotskyism, Maoism, etc. Ideas are propagated to the effect that one can accept parts of Marxism-Leninism. This is expressed in the so-called rejection of "dogmatic Marxism," as if dogmatism were an integral part of Marxism. Some sectors of the anti-imperialist movement who profess adherence to socialism elaborate

their strategy and tactics, they say, "on the basis of the fundamental concepts of socialism," but declare themselves against "dogmatic Marxism." Often the term is used for the purpose of dissociating oneself from the Communist movement, alleging that it is "dogmatic."

Here we must ask: "What is dogmatic Marxism"? The writings of Marx, Engels and Lenin are full of polemics against dogmatism. The praxis has confirmed that Marxism and dogmatism are irreconcilable; they are antagonistic. Marxism-Leninism is the science that serves as a guide for socialist revolution and national liberation. It is a living and illuminating science, whereas dogmatism is anti-revolutionary, leads to opportunism, paralyzes mass actions with its divisiveness and narrowness of concepts and visions.

Dogmatism is a way of thinking based on unchangeable concepts and formulations; it rejects the specific conditions of a given historical moment, of changes which have been brought about by the new era of transition to socialism. The dogmatists treat laws as if they were immutable and use old tactics which do not correspond to the reality of today. For instance, the anarchism of yesterday and today propagates the destruction of the state and its replacement by "free communes"; it is against all authority, including that of the proletariat in power. This is a distortion of Marxism that teaches the withering away of the state after the radical transformation of society and the establishment of communism. Anarchism and its offshoots preach violence and disorganization per se as fundamental principles. Dogmatism rejects reality, the new emerging from the era of national liberation and socialism; it refuses to apply new tactics and methods of struggle.

Marxism is the mortal enemy of dogmatism which leads to defeat and reduces the movement to sects, separating the "movement" from the masses and primarily from the working class. Contrary to dogmatism, Marxism-Leninism is a living and creative science. Its strength lies in revolutionary practice. History teaches us that dogmatic ideas and actions never resulted in social changes, large or small. The Communist movement suffered hard blows whenever it displayed dogmatic tendencies. Marxism-Leninism triumphed in one third of the world in the struggle against dogmatism and right opportunism. It was Lenin who developed the theory and new tasks of this new epoch. He enriched Marxism with the theory of the possibility of building socialism in one country in defiance of Trotsky who was opposed to it.

Lenin foresaw the epoch of revolutions of national liberation on a world scale, adding to the theoretical arsenal of Marxism the possibility of by-passing the painful period of capitalist development in the underdeveloped countries. With the triumph of the revolution of 1917, the new era of world revolution began. This prospect became reality for the first time on our continent with the Cuban revolution. Lenin wrote: "Our theory, said Marx and Engels, is not a dogma but a guide to action."

In conclusion, the so-called partial acceptance of Marxism-Leninism is false. There is no such thing as "dogmatic Marxism," nor the partial acceptance of the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism. As a living and creative science, scientific socialism includes the entire philosophic-economic-social system based on dialectical materialism. To accept it "in part" means to reject it whole and to smuggle in ideas and concepts which are essentially contrary to Marxism-Leninism.