Pamphlet no 16

MARXISM-LENINISM,
THE REVOLUTIONARY SCIENCE
OF THE PROLETARIAT
The general crisis of capitalism and imperialism which we witness today is having increasingly disastrous effects on the world. This crisis results in the deterioration of the living and working conditions of the peoples of all the countries still subject to capitalist exploitation. But the struggles of the workers of all these countries are forever becoming more determined and more numerous. In Canada, the wave of resistance of the proletariat and of the masses has attained an unprecedented high since the 2nd World War. This movement is attaining new heights to resist the bourgeois State's organized offensive against workers' wages.

However the struggles of the Canadian proletariat are taking place without any guidance, or rather, without any revolutionary guidance. They are led by the reformist and collaborating trade union bosses. They are often taken over by bourgeois parties, such as the PQ, the NDP, the "Communist" Party of Canada ("CPC") and other reformists of this kind. Despite its growing militancy, the Canadian workers' movement is undergoing a great deal of difficulty in finding its way out of the dead-end tunnel into which the资本主义 exploitation has forced it. And what's more, the reformist and revisionist guiding lights that the workers' movement finds along its way, lead them blindly into some unknown, suffocating, dead-end twist of the tunnel. What the workers' movement needs is a strong beacon light to unfailingly guide it, as rapidly as possible, towards the exit of this tunnel of capitalist exploitation and oppression and into free, clean air. This strong beacon light is Marxism-Leninism.

V. Lenin (1870-1924), for his part, developed the study of capitalism, with the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. Before capitalism, humanity went through three precise historical periods: primitive communal, slave, feudal, each period being characterized by a different method of production of the goods of society and by a different organization of the society itself. When the factory (where a certain number of workers work for a boss in exchange for a salary) replaced the feudal-type workshops (where the artisans owned their means of production), the bourgeoisie and the proletariat were born, and with them, capitalism. With the expansion of the markets and the development of the means of communication and exchange in the 19th century, the factory gave way to big modern industry where industrial millionaires govern armies of workers who were at their service. These armies of workers, living in misery, were forced, in order to survive, to sell their labor-power at a pitiful price to the bourgeoisie, who owned the factories and controlled all the society.

Marxism was only able to appear with the development of capitalism, with the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. Before capitalism, humanity went through three precise historical periods: primitive communal, slave, feudal, each period being characterized by a different method of production of the goods of society and by a different organization of the society itself. Marx and Engels taught us to see reality not only with a materialist point of view, but also with a dialectical point of view. They taught us to see things in relationship one to another, to see them in their historical transformation. They gave us a method to analyse and plan our way out of the dead-end tunnel into which the capitalist exploitation has forced us.

Marx and F. Engels (1820-1895), (a companion of Marx who collaborated with him in some of his works and who continued his work after Marx's death), opposed idealism with the materialist conception of the world. They showed that nature is an objective reality which exists independently of our conscience and of our thought, and that thoughts are the products of the material world. They showed that the opposition between man and his ability to act upon nature is a new product useful to society. It is, therefore, by starting with matter that man can understand and transform man. They founded the science of materialist dialectical sciences, Marx and Engels showed that they are based on a process which by constantly renewing itself, develops the knowledge of man and his ability to act upon nature.

The dialectical method of knowledge consists in examining changes, not as being principally determined by causes external to objects and phenomena, but rather by what characterized the very essence of the objects. Take for example two different objects, an egg and a stone, which possess specific internal differences, such as being living in an external factor, an equal quantity of heat for example. In one case, we will get a new object, a chicken, in the other it will remain with the same object, a rock. Therefore, what is decisive in the process of change, in the transformation of an object into a new object, are the internal conditions of that object itself. Moreover, all...
transformations are a passage of quantity to quality. Thus, in our example, it is the increasing penetration of heat into the egg that, at a certain degree and after a certain amount of time, causes it to hatch and produce a chick.

But what characterized the internal conditions of things themselves, of natural, as well as social phenomena, which conditions constitute the basis of all change? It is the law of the inherent contradiction of things. In other words, it is the unity and the struggle of the contradictory aspects that make up a thing or a phenomenon. For example, what characterized capitalist society? On one hand, it is the unity of the 2 contradictory aspects of capitalist society, the unity of bourgeoisie and proletariat; for without a bourgeoisie, there can be no proletariat, and without a proletariat, there can be no bourgeoisie. But this unity, always relative, exists in the precise relationship of the 2 aspects of the contradiction; a relationship in which the bourgeois aspect dominates the proletarian aspect. On the other hand, what characterized capitalist society is the struggle between these 2 contradictory aspects, the struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. And at a certain level of development of this struggle, there comes a time when the two aspects of the contradiction, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, are overthrown and produce, by the same doing, a new society, the socialist society where the proletarian aspect dominates the bourgeois aspect. Therefore, it is the inherent contradiction of objects or of phenomena, or the law of oppositions, which explains precisely what brings about every natural or social change. This is the fundamental law of dialectical materialism.

Contrary to the metaphysical theories that see the world in a static way, in a fixed state, Marxism teaches us to observe it in "a state of motion and of perpetual changes, where there is always something being born and developing, and something disappearing and disappearing" (1). Contrary to the bourgeoisie and its idealist and conservative thinkers who, in order to camouflage and maintain their system of exploitation, declare that bourgeoisie "democracy" is the spearhead of the progress of humanity, Marxism teaches us that the fall of capitalism, the revolutionary transformation of the capitalist society into a socialist society, and then into a communist society is an objective law of history.

Thus, by getting rid of the idealist and metaphysical conceptions and of prejudicial ideas in philosophy, Marx and Engels united into a coherent whole the most advanced elements of classical German philosophy up until the 19th century. This coherent whole is dialectical materialism, that is, the only scientific method to study and understand the world that surrounds us.

Historical materialism: a proletarian conception of the history of society

Just like Marxism-Leninism supplies us with a method to study and understand natural phenomena, it also teaches us how to study and understand the universal history of the world and of our own society. By applying the method of scientific analysis to the study of history and of society, the great leaders of the international Marxist-Leninist movement taught us that:

1. The economic system, that is the manner by which men are organized to produce the goods of the society, constitutes the basis of every society. "The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political, and intellectual life-process in general. It's not the consciousness of men which determines their being, but on the contrary, it is their social being that determines their consciousness." (2)

2. "Since the dissolution of the common ownership of land in primitive society, the whole history of mankind has been a history of class struggle, of struggles between exploiting and exploited classes." (3)

3. Master and slave during the period of slavery, seigneurs and serfs under feudalism, bourgeoisie and proletariat ever since the beginning of capitalism. Capitalist society has not abolished class antagonisms, it has simply substituted new classes to the former ones. On the one hand, there is the bourgeoisie, a minority class which owns the factories, the means of communication, the banks, and which in power controls the entire society; on the other hand, there is the proletariat, a majority class which owns nothing but its labor-power, and which is forced to sell it to the bourgeoisie in order to survive, and which produces all the social wealth.

Who are the theoreticians of scientific socialism?

If left on its own, would the workers' movement have been capable of elaborating this science of the proletarian revolution? Along with Lenin and Stalin (1879-1953)(a Bolshevik leader who, after the death of Lenin, struggled ceaselessly to consolidate and enlarge the dictatorship of the proletariat and to establish socialism in the USSR), we must reply no to this question. For, to elaborate on scientific socialism, it is necessary to be at the head of science, it is necessary to be armed with scientific knowledge and to know how to apply in depth the laws of historical development, to know that the ruling class, as long as it remains the working class, doesn't have the power to place itself at the head of science, to make it progress and to analyses scientifically the historical laws: the working class has neither the time nor the means to do this. Scientific knowledge can only arise on the basis of profound scientific knowledge..." says K. Kautsky (5). The vehicle of science is not the proletariat, but the bourgeoisie (intellectuals K. Kautsky's Italics). It was in the minds of individual members of that stratum that modern socialism originated, and it was they who communicated it to the more intellectually developed proletarians..." (6)
To use Marxism-Leninism as a guide to create the proletarian Party

Marxist-Leninist theory with the greatest ease. If they aren't able to elaborate this science, it's very simply that by being a class which is exploited and oppressed by the bourgeoisie, the working class is without the means of knowledge and the necessary conditions to do it.

If scientific socialism has been able to become the theory and the program of the international workers' movement, it is because the revolutionary intellectuals that elaborated it, such as Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao Tse-tung, and the others understood that their historical role did not consist only in elaborating on scientific socialism, but consisted also, and especially, in introducing it into the working class and, in particular, into its vanguard, so that scientific socialism would truly become an efficient weapon in the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. If scientific socialism has become this forever more efficient weapon in the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, it is because, as a revolutionary theory, it is verified in the very practice of mass struggles and is constantly being enriched by new experiences.

Thus, Marx and Engels actively participated in the "Communist League" and drafted, at its request, in 1847, the famous Communist Manifesto, which became the revolutionary program of the international proletariat. Thus they founded, in 1864, the first "International Association of Workers", gathering together and uniting the workers' movement of various countries with the aim of forging a unique revolutionary tactic for the working class of all these countries.

In the same way, Lenin was the soul of the Bolshevik revolution. Not only did he lead practically all the stages of the Russian revolution, but he fought relentlessly the erroneous theories within the workers' movement and the Russian revolution. In particular, he struggled against the "economists" who bowed before the spontaneous movement of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. If scientific socialism has become this forever more efficient weapon in the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, it is because, as a revolutionary theory, it is verified in the very practice of mass struggles and is constantly being enriched by new experiences.

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Struggle to unite Marxism-Leninism and the Canadian working-class movement

The Canadian proletariat, which is ferociously resisting the attacks of the bourgeoisie, is nevertheless cut from revolutionary theory and dominated by the reformist solutions of the bourgeoisie, such as bourgeois nationalism, social-democracy, revisionism. This is of course the result of the long domination of bourgeois and anti-communist ideas within the working class movement. But it is also the result of the historical treason of the "Communist" Party of Canada ("CPC") which was once a revolutionary party, a proletarian party, but which has since completely abandoned its role of vanguard of the Canadian proletariat. Today, it is nothing more than a bourgeois reformist party, which even goes so far as to advocate, like its master thinkers in Moscow, "the peaceful passage to socialism."

What can we do in such a situation, or if you like, what is the central task of the Canadian Marxist-Leninist movement? It is to work at merging Marxism-Leninism, or scientific socialism, and the working-class movement, so that the Canadian proletariat and its theory constitute a coherent whole, and invincible material force which will take the form of the vanguard party, the Marxist-Leninist Party of the Canadian proletariat.

"What is scientific socialism without the working-class movement? A compass without a compass which will reach
the other shore in any case, but would reach it much sooner and with less danger if it had a compass. Combine the two and you will get a splendid vessel, which will speed straight towards the other shore and reach its haven unharmed. Combine the working-class movement with socialism and you will get a Social-Democratic (communist today, ed. note) movement which will speed straight towards the "promised land". 

And how can we succeed in merging scientific socialism, Marxism-Leninism, and the Canadian workers movement if not by unfurling a vast activity of communist propaganda and agitation among the working masses with the aim of rallying the advanced elements to the only true solution for the Canadian proletariat and the people as a whole? It is to the success of this task that IN STRUGGLE! devotes all its energies.

Comrade workers!

The bourgeoisie tells us over and over again in barely veiled words that "workers aren't made to think"! It is the bosses who must do that! Workers must be content to obey the orders and follow the policies of the bosses. All that is cover-up and lies. We aren't machines! We are human beings! And what's more, human beings enmoured with justice and fraternity. Human beings burning with a profound desire to abolish the exploitation of man by man, to change this world where a bourgeois minority dominates and crushes a majority of exploited and oppressed.

Just like the carpenter is unable to build objects for our daily use without his toolbox, so the proletariat cannot go without its theory to accomplish the socialist revolution and to build a society rid of exploitation of man by man.

But where do we begin? We must first of all look at the tool that we are to use, learn how to use it, learn how to make it work every time we struggle against the exploiters, against their machine of repression, the bourgeois State, against their reformist parties, against their agent in the workers' and trade union movement. To secure this tool, Marxism-Leninism, IN STRUGGLE! has started to set up circles to give a Marxist-Leninist education to workers who want it.

Take hold of our revolutionary theory! Join the circles of IN STRUGGLE! Build the revolutionary Party of the Canadian proletariat, the Communist Marxist-Leninist Party!

1) J. Stalin, *Dialectical and Historical Materialism*, p. 7
2) K. Marx, Preface and Introduction to a Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, p. 58-60
5) Karl Kautsky (1854-1939), one of the leaders and theoreticians of the German Communist Movement and of the 2nd International. Later, he joined the opportunists and became an enemy of the Russian Revolution and of the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Stalin.
7) See the Special Issue/August 1978 of IN STRUGGLE! and IN STRUGGLE! no 48 (vol. 3, no. 7), 6 Nov. 1975, (only in French).
8) Stalin, *Briefly About...*, p. 104