

# October Revolution and the Struggle against Right Opportunism and Left Deviation

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1. Along with other basic features of the Bolshevik's struggle, the great October Revolution could materialize because of the uncompromising struggle against the right and left deviations in the communist movement. It was the ideological struggle waged by revolutionary Marxism against revisionism and left deviation, against Mensheviks and Narodniks, which provided the prelude to this great victory..
2. As Lenin explained, right from the beginning Marxism fought against these hostile theories. By the 1890s first phase of this victory was, in the main completed. Even in Latin countries, where the traditions of Proudhonism held their ground longest, the workers' parties could build their programs and tactics on Marxist foundations. The Second International (SI) through periodical international congresses developed Marxist standpoints. But, then the doctrines hostile to it began to seek other channels. The forms and contents changed, but the struggle continued.
3. As capitalism based on free competition started transforming to monopoly capitalism, or imperialism, and as this transformation and the territorial division of the world among the imperialist powers were becoming faster by the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, erroneous concepts about evaluating these changes started emerging. Through concepts like *ultra imperialism*, the reformists within the SI led by leaders of the German social democratic party tried to dilute the barbarous nature of the emerging imperialist system. They compromised with it during the First World War, leading to the liquidation of the SI.
4. Unlike anarchists, the Marxists recognize the importance of the struggle for reforms, i.e., struggles for measures that improve the living conditions of the working people. At the same time, they wage resolute struggle against the reformists, who restrict aims and activities of the working class only to the winning of reforms. Reformism is bourgeois deception of the workers. The bigger the reformist influence among them, the weaker they become; the greater their dependence on the bourgeoisie, it makes easier for the bourgeoisie to nullify the existing reforms. The more independent the working-class movement, the deeper and broader its aims become; the freer it is from the reformist narrowness, the easier it is for them to retain and develop these achievements. With the emergence of class collaborationist tendencies based on erroneous evaluation of the nature of the imperialist system, reformist tendencies strengthened; revisionism became the main hindrance to the growth of class struggle. In practice, revisionism tried to revise the foundation of Marxism, namely, the doctrine of class struggle.

5. Explaining this growth of revisionism in the revolutionary working class movement, Lenin pointed out how economic distinctions are not mitigated, but aggravated and intensified under the freedom of "democratic" capitalism. According to him, parliamentarism does not eliminate, but lays bare the innate character even of the most democratic, bourgeois republics as organs of class oppression. The Mensheviks by refusing to recognize the inevitable inner dialectics of parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy, become incapable to conduct propaganda and agitation for preparing the working-class masses for revolution. On the other hand, by rejecting the need for economic struggle and utilization of all forms of struggle including parliamentary struggle, the left deviation, like the Narodniks, also weaken the communist movement.
6. It is by developing the revolutionary approach towards imperialism, by developing Marxist theory and practice according to the new situation, and uncompromisingly struggling against Mensheviks and Narodniks, Lenin succeeded to lead the October Revolution to victory. This led to the formation of Soviet Union, initiating socialist construction there and to the launching of the Communist International (CI). These epochal developments led to the upsurge of the communist movement all over the world.
7. The basic features of present international and national situation is that, during the last few decades, especially after the Second World War, the intensification of neo-colonial aggressive policies by the crises ridden imperialist system through barbarous means have led to serious setbacks to the ICM. Though, from the beginning of the new century various forms of resistance against the imperialist system and against the comprador ruling system in the countries under neocolonial domination were getting strengthened, utilizing all forms of divisive policies in order to ideologically disarm them, the imperialists have succeeded to beat them back. For this revanchist, religious fundamentalist, racist, caste forces are utilized and fascist tendencies are unleashed. After the 2008 global crisis these attacks are further intensified, leading to growth of ultra rightist, fascist forces everywhere.
8. Why are the popular resistances against these not getting strengthened? Primarily because of the absence of powerful revolutionary communist parties capable of leading these movements. Overcoming this weakness is the challenge before the working class and oppressed peoples today.
9. The severe setbacks suffered by the ICM from the heights reached by 1950s was primarily because of its failure to make concrete analyses of the very fast changes taking place, especially during and after the Second World War. Evaluation of the past setbacks should also include evaluating the degeneration of the erstwhile socialist countries from the socialist path, and the weaknesses of 'socialism which was put in actual practice'.
10. The setbacks suffered by the ICM, at least since the time the Soviet Union started deviating to the capitalist path, becoming a social imperialist super power and later its disintegration, calls for serious studies. Though the CPC waged ideological struggle against this deviation through the *Great Debate*, soon it also started deviating from rightist to ultra left positions, and finally to the capitalist path.

11. Though the communist revolutionaries (CR) in India, for example, tried to critique the reformism of CPI-CPI (M) and put forward the questions of agrarian revolution and seizure of political power, this ideological struggle did not focus on issues like the transformation of imperialism from colonial to neocolonial phase, or make an analysis of the vast changes taking place after 1947 or questions like the caste system specific to India. All of them adopted the *Chinese Path* including its '*semi-colonial, semi-feudal analysis of India and people's war as the path of revolution*'. The attempt to evolve an Indian path still eluded them. If CPI+CPI(M) were mechanically copying the *Soviet Path*, the CPI(ML) mechanically copied the *Chinese Path* put forward by the Lin Biaoists.
12. The CRs faced disintegration by 1971 due to weaknesses in their line and due to state suppression. Party reorganization efforts by different sections from then onwards called for addressing the problems which led the CPI-CPI (M) to a reformist line and the CRs to left adventurist line. Though many of them rejected the 'line of annihilation' and adopted a mass line in form, they did not try to settle accounts with the *Chinese Path*. In spite of superficial changes in their documents, most of the ML groups were still clinging to the 'semi-colonial, semi-feudal, people's war' line. Soon, most of these sections deviated to the rightist path. On the other extreme, the CPI(Maoist), pursued the path of 'armed struggle as the only form of struggle', a left adventurist line. Mao Tsetung had repeatedly explained that 'people's war' was a strategy adopted in the unique conditions of China. What the CPI (Maoist) is pursuing during the last few decades is nothing but present form of Narodnism
13. After the Second World War, when the US came to leadership of the imperialist camp, it initiated the transformation of Imperialism to its neo-colonial phase, a new style of colonial domination through transfer of power to comprador classes and control through finance capital, markets, technology and military domination. Wherever necessary military blocs were created and resorted to military intervention. As explained by the CPC in the *Apologists of Neo-colonialism*: "This neo-colonialism is a more pernicious and sinister form of colonialism". A new world order dominated through IMF and World Bank, and later WTO, through UNO, the political tool of imperialism, and through the military blocs like NATO. It was the failure to recognize these changes and to develop strategy and tactics to combat them led to the setbacks suffered by socialist countries and caused immense damage to the communist movement.
14. Another trend emerged in the late 70s with the characterization of countries like India as capitalist, and stage of revolution as socialist. Nobody can deny that the mode of production is fast changing in these countries. But the imperialist domination has also increased in new forms. The comprador character of the big bourgeoisie has not changed. Present relations with the IMF- World Bank-WTO, increasing domination of MNCs, increasing role of the FDIs, increasing import of technology and numerous other features point out that these countries have not gone beyond the phase of junior partners of the imperialist system, especially of US imperialism.
15. The experience at the international level and within India show that without uncompromisingly struggling against these modern Menshevik and Narodnik lines, developing Marxist theory and practice according to present conditions, the communist

parties capable of leading People's Democratic Revolutions in the neo-colonially dependent countries and socialist revolution in the imperialist countries cannot be built and revolution carried forward. Let us learn from the contributions of October Revolution, and struggling against the right opportunist and left adventurist deviations strive to advance the World Proletarian Socialist Revolution forward.