

which makes the working class the leader of the revolution. The ancient slaves as well as the labouring peasants under feudalism were exploited people. Considering their standard of living and their right to live, their wretchedness was even worse than that of the working class in the capitalist society, but they could not play the leading role in the revolution nor hold power because they did not represent any mode of production. As for the lumpen proletariat, it may be involved in the revolutionary movement but "its conditions of life, however, prepare it far more for the part of a bribed tool of reactionary intrigue". *

Human history ever since the emergence of antagonistic classes is that of class struggle. But classes themselves and class struggle, as Engels analysed above, are determined by the modes of production and distribution, and therefore human history is none other than the development of society from one mode of production to another. That's why in a given society any class which represents the new, the most progressive, mode of production, is in a position to lead revolution, seize power, become the ruling class, and organize this new society.

This explains why class struggles have not always led to the seizure of power by the oppressed and exploited classes. Class struggle between the peasantry and feudalism has impelled to a certain extent the development of the feudal society; in essence, nevertheless, it has only resulted in a

* Ibid., p. 44.

change of dynasties and after the capitalist mode of production came into being under the feudal system, class struggle led to the transformation of this system into the capitalist one.

It is with the emergence and development of capitalism that class struggle between the working class and the bourgeoisie inevitably leads to the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, because the former, oppressed and heavily exploited by the latter, is not only resolved to liquidate the capitalist system, but also represents an advanced mode of production whose basic prerequisites already exist under capitalism — the socialist mode of production. This inevitability springs from economic factors. Failing to realize that class struggle is linked to the evolution of society from one mode of production to another, we cannot possibly understand the historical role of the working class.

Engels said that communism is the reflexion of the workers' movement. This assessment means that the overthrow of capitalism and the building of socialism, and of civilized communism, is the mission entrusted by history to the working class, that in human society, without the emergence of the working class there can be no revolutionary movement of the proletariat and, consequently, no socialism.

What we mean by socialism is scientific socialism founded by Marx and Engels — our great teachers — not utopian socialism built on charitable deeds or religious virtues.

Socialism could not exist centuries ago. It cannot be the offspring of a peasant movement, even in countries with an overwhelmingly peasant population; nor can it be the product of an intellectuals' movement, because in history and in the evolution of society, the peasantry and intelligentsia have never represented any mode of production under any social regime.

The historical mission of the working class expounded by Marx and Engels in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* and further enlightened by Lenin in his theses on proletarian revolution in the imperialist epoch, is a historical necessity. This is reasserted in the two statements issued by the Representatives of the Communist and Workers' Parties meeting in Moscow in 1957 and 1960.

With the coming into existence of Marxism, class struggle as is waged by the working class has markedly developed as to its contents. In the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* Marx and Engels put forward the slogan "*Proletarians of all lands, unite!*" This slogan starts from Marx's thesis that socialist revolution is the result of the class struggle opposing the working class and the bourgeoisie in developed capitalist countries where the contradiction between the productive forces and the relations of production has become acute and where economic development has brought to the fore class conflicts mainly between these two classes. The working class of all countries must unite to overthrow the capitalist system and embark upon proletarian revolution.

By the end of the 19th century capitalism has grown into imperialism. Since then the bourgeoisie in imperialist countries has been not only exploiting the working class at home, but also exploiting and oppressing the colonial and semi-colonial peoples all over the world. By their struggle for independence these peoples have become an ally of the working class in the world proletarian revolution, hence Lenin's slogan "*Proletarians of all lands and oppressed peoples, unite!*" This is a new step forward made by the working class in its struggle against the bourgeoisie on a world-wide scale. For the proletarian revolution to succeed, the working class must join forces with the national-liberation movement, and consider it an integral part of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat. This thesis runs counter to the erroneous tendency according to which proletarian revolution can only break out in developed capitalist countries but not in economically backward ones.

Later on, at the 19th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, comrade Stalin called on *the communists to march forward with the banner of national independence and democratic rights firm in their hands*. Stalin did not merely make an appeal, but summed up the world revolutionary movement and showed that only by holding firm this banner can the working class bring proletarian revolution to success.

Why so? The world is a whole, and each country forms a society with its own development. Moreover, the impact of the law of uneven development

of capitalism leads to the uneven development of proletarian revolution on a world-wide scale. Therefore, though the working class is internationalist in character, and its historic mission is to wage a world revolution, proletarian revolution has so far broken out mainly in separate countries. To bring this revolution to success, the working class in each country must hold firm and raise aloft the banner of national independence and democratic freedoms so as to unite the people and stir them up into struggle. Even during the ascending course of capitalism, Marx and Engels said: "Since the proletariat must first of all acquire political supremacy, must rise to be the leading class of the nation, must constitute itself *the* nation, it is, so far, itself national, though not in the bourgeois sense of the word." *

In history, the class problem and the national question are linked to each other. During the ascending course of capitalism the bourgeoisie represents the nation to a certain extent.

Ours is a transition epoch from capitalism to socialism, the epoch of struggle between two opposing social systems, of socialist and national-liberation revolutions, of the collapse of imperialism and liquidation of the colonial system, of the advance of more peoples along the socialist path and of success for socialism and communism all over the world. To assess the contents of our epoch

* Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, F.L.P.H. Moscow, 1958, Vol. I, p. 51.

in this way is to assert that the world is in a proletarian revolutionary high tide, that the fundamental problem nowadays, on a world scale and in each country, is: which—socialism or capitalism—will win? that the class problem and the national question have close relations with each other, and consequently the working class' leading role in the revolution must be enhanced. The history of human society has evolved to a stage when the working class is representative of the epoch, embodies the nation and democracy. The working class' world-wide struggle against the bourgeoisie is unfolding under the slogan "*Peace, national independence, democracy and socialism*".

Only by standing on the working class' position can one fully grasp the thoroughly revolutionary contents of the above slogan and clearly realize the organic relations between its four aspects. To separate these aspects or to oppose one to another is to strip it of its revolutionary contents, and therefore weaken the revolutionary movement of the proletariat.

It is obvious that after proletarian revolution on a world-wide scale has triumphed in a number of countries and the mighty socialist camp has become a world system, the national independence movement has risen up like a maelstrom. However, until now the newly-won national independence of a number of countries is not yet fully attained. Unless the movement for national independence is linked to the movement for socialism and develops along the non-capitalist path it cannot grow into

a truly revolutionary one. Should those countries be content with "national independence", they could not avoid falling into dependence on one or another imperialist power, or, at best, following the bourgeois reformist path. The non-capitalist path alone can allow them to achieve complete and real independence. To this end, it is absolutely necessary that they establish the leadership of the working class and set up a truly national and democratic power.

To assert the leading role of the working class is a vital problem for revolution in the world and in each country. At present, not all our comrades hold the same view on this point: some speak of classes and class struggle but do not proceed from the economic basis of the society, others alienate the class problem from the national question, or, while dealing with the relationship between class and nation they over-emphasize or belittle one or the other concept.

Born and grown up in a colonial and semi-feudal country, our working class, though younger and smaller in size as compared with that of the developed capitalist countries, plays a decisive role in the Vietnamese revolution.

It has all the qualities of the international working class. Under the colonial and feudal regime, and like the latter, it constitutes the most resolute revolutionary class, possessed of the highest sense of organization and discipline, and of peculiarities due to the process of their formation and development.

Our working class had come to maturity before the national bourgeoisie. It emerged not after the formation of the capitalist economic sector, but ever since foreign capitalists started exploring our country's resources.

In developed capitalist countries, the trade-unions often come into being before the working class' revolutionary party; there there exist trade-unions led by the bourgeoisie, which sow reformist tendencies among the workers. The monopolistic capitalists often use part of their sur-profit derived from their colonies to bribe or entertain a section of aristocratic workers that they have themselves created. Servants of the bourgeoisie, the latter are specialized in political activities among the workers to undermine their revolutionary movement.

In Viet Nam, soon after its emergence the working class had its own vanguard revolutionary party. The party founded trade-unions to organize, educate and carry out agitation among the workers who, therefore, have always been immune from political or organizational chasm.

Under the rule of colonial capitalists the workers' struggles just for the satisfaction of their economic claims more often than not took on a political coloration because the colonial regime always ruthlessly opposed whatever reform. That's why the trade-union organizations led by the imperialists' lackeys could not cheat and win over our working class.

Our working class, which has just been recruited from the labouring peasantry has very close connections with it and clearly realizes its aspirations.

The link between these two fraternal classes forms the basis for the building of a steady worker-peasant alliance as from the national-democratic revolution to the present day. The more the labouring peasantry is attached to the working class, the more the latter's leading role is guaranteed because the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie for leadership over the revolution in our country consists essentially in winning over the peasantry; the class which succeeds in gaining over the labouring peasantry by satisfying its requirements and aspirations, will win in this contest.

The afore said characteristics account for the strength of the Vietnamese working class and make it possible for it to secure a dominant position and the undivided leadership over the Vietnamese revolution since the failure of the Yen Bai insurrection* led by petty bourgeois elements holding bourgeois tendencies.

Moreover, the Vietnamese working class stepped into the political arena after the October Revolution had brilliantly triumphed, and the Russian working class had become the master of the Soviet State; the millenary dream of the suffering toiling classes had thus come true. On the other hand, in neighbouring China, the bourgeoisie had betrayed the national interests; the Chinese Communist Party—the party of the Chinese working class—had grasped the banner of national

* In 1930. (Pub.)

independence and democratic rights. This historical situation had further raised the political credit of the Vietnamese working class in the eyes of the entire Vietnamese people.

When we say that the working class leads the revolution in Viet Nam we mean that Viet Nam's revolutionary line is the political line of its working class and not of any another one. Since the founding of our Party, our working class has been leading the revolution through its own vanguard party. It is obvious that this leadership is not exercised exclusively in the organizational field; what is of a decisive importance is that *the Party's political line must be the revolutionary line of the working class, one which embodies the latter's stand and viewpoint*. If the Party deviates from this political stand and viewpoint the revolution is bound to fail.

Our Party — the former Indochinese Communist Party, the Viet Nam Workers' Party today — has soon assimilated Marxism-Leninism and applied it in our country in a creative fashion. It has realized that the Vietnamese revolution must go through two stages: first, to carry on the national-democratic revolution under the leadership of the working class in order to overthrow imperialism acting in collusion with feudalism — our two enemies, the two principal reactionary forces hindering the development of the Vietnamese society; then, after this task has been in the main fulfilled, to shift to the socialist revolution, more radical and profound in contents, so as to completely liberate the toilers,

root out class oppression and exploitation, and build socialism and communism.

Since its birth our Party has been resolutely holding aloft the anti-imperialist banner and adequately solved the national question and the problem of democratic rights in a colony.

Our Party is fully aware that the class problem, and the problems of national independence and democratic rights cannot be separated from one another. In a colony with an overwhelmingly peasant population the problem of democratic rights is, in essence, the land problem. Failing to solve it, we could not mobilize the labouring peasantry in the struggle against imperialism, for national independence. "National independence", and "land to the tillers" are two closely related mottos and the fundamental contents of the national-democratic revolution.

The national question encompasses not only the "land to the tillers" problem but also the vital one confronting the whole nation in the face of the imperialists' cruel domination, a life-and-death problem concerning every Vietnamese. Therefore, our Party has advocated the setting up of a National United Front to bring together the entire people against the imperialists. Without the leadership of the working class we would not be in a position to rally the labouring peasants, and achieve the worker-peasant alliance as the main force of the anti-imperialist and anti-feudalist revolution, and as the basis of the National United Front.

Speaking of the national question one must also mention the development of national economy, and the restoration and promotion of national culture. In our time, to impel forward the national economy and culture after gaining independence, there is no other alternative than to engage in the socialist path, and without proceeding toward socialism one cannot steadily make this independence genuine and complete. The leadership of the working class alone can secure a fine prospect for the development of national economy and culture.

The successes achieved by the Vietnamese revolution over the last thirty seven years have proved the soundness of our Party's line. This is the political line of the working class, the only class capable of leading the Vietnamese revolution, of which our Party is the staff, the brain-trust and the vanguard detachment. The Party owes its sound political line essentially to the fact that it proceeds from the stand and viewpoint of the working class, and to its loyalty to Marxism-Leninism, which is the working class' theory on class struggle and socialist construction. The said line reflects the objective law of development of the Vietnamese society.

In our national-democratic revolution, the working class is not only the leading class but also, together with the labouring peasantry, the main force.

Before our Party came into being the workers' struggles broke out in French colonialists' mines,

factories and plantations. From then on, these drives were better and better organized and ceaselessly developed both in depth and in scope.

In 1930, the Nghe-Tinh Soviet movement burst out first in the Truong Thi locomotive repairing workshop (Vinh) to spread all over the countryside of Nghe An and Ha Tinh provinces. When the *Front Populaire* came to power in France our Party timely agitated the broad masses of the working class and the labouring peasantry to stir them up against the colonial reactionaries, turning their struggle and that of the labouring population in the towns and cities into a multiform upsurge for democratic rights.

At the start of the Second World War, in order to oppose the Japanese fascists and the French colonialists, our Party, on the one hand, actively set up bases in rural and hill-forest areas, and built up armed forces; on the other, it maintained and developed the workers' and townspeople's movement so that when the opportunity occurred, it timely mobilized the masses for the insurrection and the seizure of power both in urban and rural areas, rapidly bringing the August Revolution to success throughout the country. The August Revolution is none other than an insurrection combining the workers' movement in towns with that of the peasants in the countryside, and the action of the political forces of the worker and peasant masses with that of the armed forces. Beginning with partial insurrections in the countryside in which the labouring peasantry acted as the main political

force the current revolution in South Viet Nam led by the National Front for Liberation, which is simultaneously coordinating political with armed struggle in the three strategic areas—rural, urban and hill-forest—is the application and development of the experiences gained in the Vietnamese revolution. The successes achieved since 1960 show once again that the workers and labouring peasants constitute the main forces of the national-democratic revolution in our country.

In our socialist revolution and socialist construction, it is natural that the working class forms the leading class; at the same time it is playing the role of the main force in the revolution.

Lenin said: "Socialism can only be built on the basis of large-scale industry."* Indeed, without large-scale industry we cannot possibly bring to completion the transformation of the other economic sectors, more particularly agricultural transformation along socialist lines. The working class is the main force directly involved in the building of the material and technical bases of socialism, and in the laying of the foundation of the socialist national economy; it also plays the preponderant role in the management of this economy.

While asserting the decisive role of the working class in our revolution, our Party has very highly rated the revolutionary part played by the labouring peasantry, the working class' natural and

* V.I. Lenin: **Collected Works**, Vol. 33, p. 298, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1966.

trustworthy ally. Its impoverishment by the French policy of colonial exploitation and the landlords' ruthless oppression and exploitation that it had undergone, made the peasantry boil with utmost indignation and hatred. Our ancestors' glorious traditions further reinforced its indomitable will. When the working class' party came into being and set forward the slogans "National independence" and "Land to the tillers" which accorded with its aspirations, the labouring peasantry has risen up with more impetus and sided with the working class to put up a resolute struggle for the overthrow of the imperialists and feudalists.

Though a very large revolutionary force, a component of the main force in the national-democratic revolution in Viet Nam, it cannot lead it. In the socialist revolution as well as in socialist construction at present, the peasantry is unable to assume the leading role: closely linked to the individual small-scale economy, the labouring peasantry, given its economic position, can only advance toward socialism under the leadership of the working class. In history, it has never been able to set up a social system of its own and even under the feudal regime when natural economy was essentially peasant in character, social relations remained feudal relations of production. Nguyen Hue himself, a hero of peasant stock, chose to ascend the throne and maintained the feudal system after staging a successful insurrection.

However, we must assert that our toiling peasantry constitutes an important motive force in

socialist construction owing to its very high revolutionary spirit and to the fact that it followed the working class in the national-democratic revolution during almost twenty-five years; when we shifted to socialist revolution, it embarked, of its own free will and with enthusiasm, upon the path of socialist cooperativization, regarding this as the only way to make it free from social injustice, poverty and misery. Moreover, to advance to socialism from a backward agriculture we have no other alternative than to start agricultural co-operativization and develop agriculture all-sidedly on which basis to boost industry, taking socialist industrialization as a lever to transform and impel forward the whole national economy.

It is after completing socialist industrialization that we can have a modern industry, a modern agriculture and an advanced culture and science, that we can proceed toward a classless society, toward the satisfaction of everybody's material and cultural needs, and toward the achievement of a really civilized life.

Socialist co-operativization of agriculture and socialist industrialization constitute two processes of transformation and construction, which are linked to and support each other, and embody the worker-peasant alliance in our socialist revolution and socialist construction. Socialist co-operativization of agriculture is not to be achieved by the peasants alone, but also by the working class. And likewise socialist industrialization is the doing of