

A STATE OF THE WHOLE PEOPLE

A Collection
of Essays
by Soviet
Commentators

Soviet
Booklet
No. 86

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No. 86

London,
February, 1962

*The articles in this booklet have been written by
political commentators of the Novosti Press Agency
(A.P.N.).*

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All-round extension and perfection of socialist democracy, active participation of all citizens in the administration of the state, in the management of economic and cultural development, improvement of the government apparatus, and increased control over its activity by the people constitute the main direction in which socialist statehood develops in the period of the building of communism.

FROM THE PROGRAMME OF THE COMMUNIST
PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION

Everyone is Learning to Govern

BY

N. FARBEROV

THE construction of the higher stage of communist society already begun by the Soviet people signifies a new stage in the development of all spheres of life in our country, including the state.

The Soviet state appeared as a result of the Great October Socialist Revolution accomplished in Russia in 1917 by the working class in alliance with the toiling peasantry. Since its very inception the new state set itself the aim of building a social system under which all members of society would possess in common the land and all the wealth of the country. Under this system the causes giving rise to the exploitation of man by man and to class antagonisms would be removed and all the material values created by the labour of the people would belong to the people themselves.

To carry out this historic task, the working class took political power into its hands and established the dictatorship of the proletariat. This power ensured broad democracy for the working people and at the same time it provided an instrument of rule by the majority of the people, led by the proletariat, over the minority, i.e. the bourgeoisie. But coercion was not the main content of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Lenin pointed out that such a dictatorship "is not only coercion of the exploiters and even not mainly coercion. The economic basis of this revolutionary coercion, an earnest of its viability and success, is provided by the fact that the proletariat presents and realises a more advanced type of social organisation of labour as compared with capitalism".

The working class used its power to organise and rally the working people, to guide economic and cultural construction and defend the revolutionary gains of the people. Since the very outset the Soviet state has pursued creative purposes. And if at the first stage it exercised the functions of suppressing the class enemies within the country, it did so only to the degree to which it was forced by the forces of counter-revolution.

Overthrown by the revolution, the exploiters offered desperate resistance to the will of the majority, seeking to prevent the successful building

of socialism. They did everything to strangle Soviet power and restore their bygone rule. The young socialist state had to endure the civil war and intervention, conspiracies and subversion. That was when the Soviet state was compelled to resort to dictatorial, coercive methods in order to suppress the intrigues of hostile forces.

As the construction of socialism went on scoring ever new successes, the resistance of the vestiges of the hostile classes weakened and the relation of forces changed in favour of the working people. The function of the dictatorship of the proletariat changed accordingly. The need to use coercive measures diminished, especially when the exploiting classes had disappeared and the construction of socialism was achieved. Unfortunately the development of the cult of Stalin's personality, together with his incorrect theory that the class struggle would sharpen after achieving socialism, led to the arbitrary use of state power, serious violations of socialist legality and a period which witnessed what Khrushchov has referred to as "mass reprisals". These abuses were exposed by the Twentieth and Twenty-Second Congresses of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, in 1956 and 1961, and steps taken to ensure that such things never happened again.

The cult of Stalin's personality hindered the progress of Soviet society, the construction of socialism and the development of democracy, but it could not halt this process nor change the nature of the socialist system. The Soviet people remained, in spite of all, the creative force in the development of socialist society, and the energy and will of the people and the Party were able to sweep aside all obstacles to their further progress, including the cult of Stalin's personality. Sooner or later the Stalin cult was bound to have collapsed, since it was alien to the very spirit and essence of the socialist system. The very fact that the Communist Party itself exposed this serious blemish and boldly criticised it is convincing proof that the Party and the socialist system remained basically healthy despite the great harm inflicted on it during this period.

Even in the period of the cult of the individual, the Soviet state continued to carry out its important constructive work, developing the country's economy, improving the people's standard of living, raising their educational and cultural standards, and paving the way for the further progress of Soviet society. The socialist state entered a new stage, especially after the Twentieth Party Congress, and its main functions—administrative, organisational, cultural and educational—began to develop in more pronounced fashion. This was an important stage in the process of the growing of the state of the proletarian dictatorship into a nation-wide organisation of the working people.

The new Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union points out that the dictatorship of the proletariat, having brought about the final and complete victory of socialism, which is the first phase of communism, has fulfilled its historical mission and ceased to be indispensable in the U.S.S.R. from the point of view of the tasks of internal development.

Under the guidance of the Communist Party the Soviet people carried out the plan for building socialism mapped out by Lenin. The victory of socialism resulted in the abolition of private ownership of the instru-

ments and means of production and, together with it, the destruction of the economic basis for the existence of the exploiting classes and the ending of any kind of exploitation. Unchallenged domination of public ownership of the means of production was established.

In the period of socialist construction the nature of the working people in the U.S.S.R. also changed. The working class, having freed itself from exploitation and having consolidated its leading role in society, ceased to be a proletariat. It grew immeasurably, both politically and culturally, and became a more organised and cohesive force. Its numerical strength also soared, due to rapid industrialisation.

Having collectivised their small-scale private production, the peasants firmly marched along the road to socialism. Thus a new peasantry emerged, one freed from exploitation, and working the land on the basis of collective labour and modern farming methods.

A new, people's intelligentsia was created also—the sons and daughters of the working class and the peasantry.

Common interests provided the basis for the establishment and consolidation of the social, political and ideological unity of the workers, the collective-farm peasantry and the intelligentsia. Soviet society, which is free from class contradictions and conflicts, has become a society of free workers of town and country, and the Soviet state has become a state of the entire people, expressing the interests and will of the people as a whole.

But the accomplishment of its historical mission by the dictatorship of the proletariat and the conversion of the state into a nationwide organisation of all the people does not mean that the working class is no longer the guiding force of the Soviet society. The working class, as the most advanced and best organised social group, retains its leading role also in the period of full-scale construction of communism.

Why does the working class play this leading role? Firstly, because, by virtue of all the conditions of its historical development it most consistently expresses socialist ideology and communist morality, and is the most cohesive and organised class in Soviet society. And secondly, because it is directly connected with industry, which is publicly-owned property and constitutes the backbone of the national economy. Thus, the working class plays the leading role in material production, and, consequently, in the entire social and political life of the country. In this connection it would not be inappropriate to recall that the great movement of our time, the movement to work and live in a communist way, was initiated by the working class.

The leading role of the working class does not need any longer to be given legal form. It is realised by force of example, organisation, work, a high degree of political consciousness, and by political activity. The working class will complete the fulfilment of its function as the leader of society only with the construction of the higher phase of communism.

Thus, the dictatorship of the proletariat as an instrument of the revolutionary transformation of society has ceased to be necessary in the U.S.S.R. before the working class has completed the carrying out of its function as the leader of society. In other words, the chronological limits of the

dictatorship of the proletariat and the leading role of the working class do not coincide. The working class retains its role even after the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat has disappeared.

* * *

The dictatorship of the proletariat ceases to be necessary before the state withers away. The Programme of the C.P.S.U. stresses that the state as an organisation embracing the entire people will survive until the complete victory of communism.

The socialist state continues to work on the construction of communism, which was begun by the dictatorship of the proletariat. The state organises, above all, the building up of the material and technical basis of communism, and the transformation, on this basis, of socialist social relations into communist relations. It ensures also the improvement of the people's welfare, promotion of the cultural and ideological life of society, education of the people in the spirit of conscious discipline and a communist attitude to work.

In the period of full-scale construction of communism the socialist state is also called upon to exercise control over the measurement of work and of consumption, protect socialist property and socialist law and order as well as the rights and liberties of citizens.

Finally, the socialist state guarantees the defence and security of the country, promotes fraternal co-operation with other socialist countries, upholds peace and maintains normal relations with all states.

The state performs its domestic tasks chiefly by organisation and education. Coercion, which has never been dominant in the activities of the Soviet state, is used less and less. It still remains, however, but is applied, not against classes or definite social groups, but against individual elements from different sections of Soviet society who take to the road of plundering socialist property, sponging, hooliganism and other violations of the rules of socialist society. Coercion with respect to such individuals is applied now in the name of the whole people.

The main trend in the development of the socialist state is the all-round development and perfection of democracy, the drawing of citizens into the administration of the state and of the management of economic and cultural affairs, the improvement of the government apparatus, and increased public control over its working. Already the Soviets (elected councils), organs of state power, have more than 1,800,000 elected deputies. Besides, almost 3,500,000 citizens actively participate in the work of the permanent commissions of the Soviets. Thus, the Soviets already combine features of a government body and a public organisation.

Of significance in this regard is the inclusion in the new Programme of the C.P.S.U. of proposals that at least one-third of the total number of deputies to Soviets should be elected anew each time so that additional millions of working people are given the opportunity to learn how to govern; and that the principle should be adopted that leading officials

at all levels should not, as a rule, be elected to their office for more than three consecutive terms.

Along with involving more people in the work of government bodies, goes the enhancement of the role of public organisations in all aspects of the life of the country.

Both these trends pursue one aim, which is to encourage in every way the initiative of Soviet people, to develop and improve habits of administration, and to regulate public relations through the efforts of the public itself.

Many practical examples of this can be cited. For instance, the protection of public order and the rights and interests of citizens, and preventing deeds harmful to society is done by public volunteer squads and public courts of honour, alongside government bodies. Public organisations deal with questions of physical culture and sports and many aspects of the cultural and medical services. They also take part in deciding on applications for flats, and in supervising the work of catering establishments, shops and other public services.

Soviet trade unions which have some 63 million members, are responsible for running the state social insurance, for which the state places large sums at their disposal. Trade unions also supervise the observance of laws for labour protection, safety and industrial hygiene. Jointly with the state they decide on questions of labour and wages.

The Programme of the C.P.S.U. provides that in the very near future public organisations will also be entrusted with the management of places of entertainment, clubs, libraries and other cultural and educational services now run by the state.

The socialist state thus more and more relies on public organisations, which play an ever more versatile and important part in all aspects of the life of the people. This creates the necessary prerequisites for the gradual conversion of organs of state power into organs of public self-government. And when communism becomes an all-inclusive system of social relations on our planet, the state will completely wither away and public communist self-government will be fully established. By that time all people will have learned to run the affairs of society.

The Party is the brain, the honour and the conscience of our epoch, of the Soviet people, the people effecting great revolutionary transformations.

FROM THE PROGRAMME OF THE COMMUNIST
PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union

BY

V. MOSKOVSKY

ARCHIMEDES once said: "Give me a fulcrum and I will turn the world over." Paraphrasing Archimedes, Lenin, during the period of the creation of the Communist Party at the beginning of this century, said: "Give us an organisation of revolutionaries, and we will turn Russia over."

What was this organisation of revolutionaries which really turned over backward tsarist Russia and transformed it into a mighty socialist power? It was the Communist Party, which the famous Soviet poet Vladimir Mayakovsky said was "millions of shoulders pressed closely to each other".

The guiding principle of the organisational structure of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union is democratic centralism. What does this mean?

All the leading bodies of the C.P.S.U., from the lowest to the highest, are elected by Party members by secret vote. Each local Party organisation, at its general meeting, elects an executive body—the Party committee—which directs all the current Party work at the given enterprise or institution. It also elects delegates to the district Party conference, which in its turn elects the district Party committee. At each level in the region, union republic, and the Soviet Union as a whole, the elections are also carried out by the Communists elected for this at the previous stage. This is a manifestation of one of the most important principles of democratic centralism.

Democratic centralism also provides for periodical accounts to be rendered by the Party bodies to the Party organisations which elected them. Democratic centralism signifies strict Party discipline which is equally compulsory for all Communists, irrespective of their offices, and also subordination of the minority to the majority. One of the most important principles of democratic centralism is that the decisions of the higher Party bodies are unconditionally obligatory for all the lower bodies.

This organisational structure of our Party ensures its unity and monolithic nature, promotes purposeful, principled and efficient decisions of questions concerning the structure of the Party and the guidance of the life of the country.

This, however, does not at all mean that in our Party mechanical discipline, blind obedience reign, as it is sometimes portrayed in the

West. Nothing of the sort. At our meetings, conferences, congresses, on the pages of the Party press keen discussions take place, passions sometimes run high, different points of view clash. And this is natural for a Party whose members are thinking people, boldly progressing along unblazed paths.

We, Communists, have one world outlook, and we agree with the general line of our Party, which is based on the Party Programme. At the same time, we argue about questions of every-day policy and practical work, discuss how best and soonest to accomplish what the general line calls for. These debates are sometimes heated. Sometimes they take the form of a Party discussion in the press. In the course of this discussion every Communist freely expresses his viewpoint. But, once the discussion is closed, once all the "pros" and "cons" have been expressed and a decision taken, the Communists unitedly carry out the decision of the majority. And any minority which does not carry out the decision of the majority is naturally called to account and expected to toe the line.

In the Communist Party of the Soviet Union great importance is attached to inner-Party democracy. One of its most important manifestations is that all leading organs of the Party "from the lowest to the highest" are elected and must report periodically to their organisations.

We may take as an example the secretary of a city or regional Party committee. This is not a man appointed from above, not a "Party boss", endowed with privileges for life. He was elected by Communists, and if it appears that he works poorly in his Party post, is inattentive to the interests of Soviet people, violates the decisions of the Party, it may remove him without waiting for the next election. Of course, such cases are rare, because Communists carefully weigh all the "pros" and "cons" when nominating people for leading posts in the Party.

For more than fifty years the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has gone through difficult struggles, and gained great victories. Created by Lenin, its strength lies in its advanced revolutionary theory, its scientifically-substantiated policy, its close links with the people, and its organisation and discipline.

With what achievements have the Soviet people entered the year of 1962?

In the period 1956-1961, industrial output in the U.S.S.R. increased 80 per cent. Agriculture and all branches of the national economy, including food and light industry, are developing successfully on an up-to-date scientific and technical basis.

Between 1956-1961 state capital investments in the national economy were 156,000 million roubles, which is more than was invested in the forty-odd years from the birth of Soviet power in 1917 up to 1956.

Thanks to the cultivation of the virgin lands huge areas in the East are being entirely transformed. At present the virgin lands yield more than 40 per cent of all the grain purchased by the state.

The Seven-Year Plan for the Development of the National Economy (1959-1965) is being carried out successfully. As a result of the active role played by the people in the management of the economy, many production targets have already been exceeded, and consequently have

had to be increased. There is every ground to expect that the Seven-Year Plan as a whole will be fulfilled ahead of schedule.

But the Soviet people are not accustomed to rest on their laurels. The Communist Party has worked out measures for still fuller utilisation of the reserves of our socialist economy.

In the new stage in the life of our country the Communist Party also considers its main object to be to raise the welfare of the people still more, and to develop production in order to cater for the material and spiritual needs of Soviet people still more fully. On the basis of the successes already achieved, the Soviet Union now aims, in the shortest possible historical period, to outstrip the most advanced capitalist countries in production per head and to ensure the Soviet people the highest living standards in the world.

In the course of building up the new society large numbers of working people are acquiring the habit of regarding work not as a source of income but as a source of creative pleasure and a high moral duty. The Twenty-Second Congress of the C.P.S.U. equipped the Party and the Soviet people with a comprehensive plan for building Communist society, in which the great principle, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs", will be applied. The Soviet Union has three radical tasks to accomplish within the next twenty years:

- in the economic field, to create the material and technical basis of communism;
- in the political field, to establish communist social relations;
- in the ideological field, to educate the new man, the citizen of communist society.

These tasks, organically interconnected, have found expression in a concrete plan based on exact economic calculations, on a sober appraisal of all the potentialities of the Soviet Union. "Calculations show," said N. S. Khrushchov in his report on the Programme to the Twenty-Second Congress, "that in twenty years we shall build communist society in the main."

Communism, which was a remote dream for a long time, is already being built. The twenty-year programme outlined by the Party is being embodied in annual economic plans.

As previously, priority will be given to the development of heavy industry. Under the plan for 1962, the total volume of industrial output is to increase 8.1 per cent, with the means of production in the lead.

The chief branches of heavy industry—power engineering, metallurgy, chemistry, mechanical engineering and the fuel industry—will continue to grow at a high rate. In the fourth year of the seven-year period important tasks are to be solved in agriculture. Housing will be considerably developed, a sum of 5,100 million roubles being assigned for this purpose by the state in the new year. This means that the working people will be given another 1,000 million square feet of housing space.¹

A sum of 12,400 million roubles is being assigned for public education, for training personnel, and for science and culture. The health services and physical culture are allotted 5,000 million roubles, and state social maintenance 11,300 million roubles.

¹ About 2,500,000 flats.—*Ed.*

The role of social organisations increases in the period of the full-scale construction of communism. The trade unions acquire particular importance as schools of administration and economic management.

FROM THE PROGRAMME OF THE COMMUNIST
PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION

Soviet Trade Unions' Many-sided Activities

BY

FYODOR MEDVEDEV

OVER half a century ago the Russian working class began to realise that it was a great revolutionary force. The first revolution of 1905 gave rise to trade unions in Russia. They struggled for higher wages and shorter working hours. The Communist Party never tired of explaining its aims and tasks to the workers. It led the workers' organised struggle against the exploiters, and in so doing won their admiration and respect.

Lenin pointed out to the trade unions the correct way to struggle against capital. He called upon the workers to take up political tasks as well as economic ones. Only by political struggle could the workers' economic interests be securely defended. That struggle ultimately led to the October Socialist Revolution of 1917, which broke the bourgeois state machine and gave power to the proletariat.

The position of our trade unions was radically changed in October 1917. Whereas the bourgeois state was a political organisation of a handful of exploiters, the proletarian state which replaced it became a political organisation of the proletariat, that is, of the very same class of which trade unions are mass organisations. In that way, from an organisation of the oppressed class, as they used to be in tsarist Russia, the trade unions became an organisation of the ruling, dominating class after the October Revolution. That fact gave rise to a new type of relations between the trade unions and the state.

As mass organisations of the working class, set up for the protection of the interests of the working class, trade unions had no aims different from the principal aim of the proletarian state. From that time on the state of the working people and the trade unions have united their efforts, supporting each other in the field of economic and cultural development and in providing better conditions of life for the Soviet people.

This is a vast field of activity for our trade unions.

The task of enlisting the masses in the management of national economy has been solved. Working people who have gone through the great school of public life, including trade-union activities, are heading various organisations of the country at present.

During the period to be covered by the new Party Programme, the role of trade unions will increase immeasurably, and their duties and rights will be enhanced. These rights are recorded in Soviet law, and are referred to in the Party Programme.

Trade unions organise permanent production conferences at enterprises and direct them. These conferences are public bodies made up of production workers, office employees and intellectuals. The task of our production is to increase output to the maximum and to bring about abundance. Production conferences are helping to achieve this goal. Production conferences arose on the initiative of the workers, and are a successful form of drawing workers into economic management. They are truly mass public organs: there are 112,000 such conferences in the country, and four-and-a-half million people take part in their activities.

What, concretely, do the production conferences do? They control the activities of the management, discuss questions of production planning and capital construction, the organisation of work, and labour norms, watch over labour safety measures and safety engineering, and so on.

Another highly important aspect of trade union activity in the U.S.S.R. is that connected with collective agreements. These are concluded jointly by the factory trade union committees, and the management. The agreement points out exactly what the management must do to improve the working and living conditions of the workers at the given enterprise, and on their side the workers undertake to carry out the agreed production targets and plan of work. The trade union committee strictly watches how the management fulfils its obligations under the collective agreement.

Not a single measure of nation-wide importance is carried out in our country without the participation of trade unions. Let us take the question of the length of a working day, for example. Trade unions first made the proposal to transfer all workers to a seven-hour working day. Today the law on the six- and seven-hour working day is being applied. It is noteworthy, incidentally, that in accordance with the new C.P.S.U. Programme a six-hour working day with one day off a week (i.e. thirty-five-hour week) will be introduced for all workers in our country within the next ten years and a thirty-hour working week with two days off will be introduced by 1980.

Important problems of wage scales and production norms are decided only with the participation of trade unions.

Throughout Soviet society the trade unions enjoy considerable powers, right down to the factory level. No worker can be dismissed from his job except with the approval of his enterprise trade union committee. Trade union committees have the right to nominate people to the post of factory director, and the right to demand the dismissal of a director. Their safety inspectors can insist, with full legal backing, on measures being taken by factory managements to safeguard the health of the workers and to prevent accidents. In the case of disputes between workers and management, it is the trade union committee in the factory which has the final word—and the management can only appeal against its decision on the grounds of a breach of the law.

What other country, apart from the U.S.S.R., can boast of 1,500 sanatoria and holiday-homes for the working people? And it is the trade unions that decide on providing accommodation at these health and holiday centres. About 6 million Soviet people will have spent their holidays at sanatoria or rest-homes by the end of this year.

Social insurance of factory and office workers is one of the major

achievements of the Soviet system. The state spent 7,672 million roubles on insurance in 1961. And this, too, is in the hands of the trade unions.

Trade unions carry out extensive work in the field of culture and education. To have an idea of the scope of this work, it is sufficient to mention a few figures. More than 4 million lectures on science are arranged by trade unions every year. More than 14 million sportsmen belong to trade union sports societies. Functioning at Palaces of Culture and clubs are 317,000 various amateur art groups: drama, song, dance, music, opera, ballet and fine arts. Taking part in their activities are more than 6 million people. Amateur artists gave 952,000 performances to an audience of 200 million last year. Trade union libraries lend their books to 17 million readers. Given over to trade unions for cultural activities are 20,500 clubs, 30,000 libraries, 8,000 sports centres and 18,200 film projection units.

What is the basis for the relations between the state and the trade unions in the U.S.S.R., and why are they in agreement over the main lines of their activity? Simply that they are united by the great aim: "Everything for Man". Adherence to this principle by the Soviet state leads to a steady increase in wages, shorter working hours, free medical treatment, free education, the highest sick benefits, the lowest rents, the most accessible health-resort treatment.

These activities on behalf of their members make trade unions very popular in the U.S.S.R. Almost the entire working class of our country, 63 million people, are trade union members!

Soviet trade unions have made a big contribution to the struggle for peace, for strengthening working-class solidarity with workers in all continents. Soviet trade unions are steadily expanding their links with other countries, and in 1961 entertained delegations from seventy-three countries.

Soviet trade unions are among the most active supporters of the World Federation of Trade Unions.

The state, which arose as a state of the dictatorship of the proletariat, has become a state of the entire people, an organ expressing the interests and will of the people as a whole.

FROM THE PROGRAMME OF THE COMMUNIST
PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION

The People Govern, the People Control

BY

I. KONSTANTINOV

NOTICES inviting tenants to a meeting of the executive committee of the District Soviet of Working People's Deputies may often be seen posted in the vestibules of Moscow flats or on special notice-boards in the courtyards. Who knows better than the local residents where a new shop should be opened or a new kindergarten built? Who can give the local authorities a more competent view of their work than the residents of the district?

One of the executive committee sessions of the Bauman District Soviet of Moscow last summer discussed the degree to which the houses of the districts had been made ready for the winter. Responsible for repair of roofs, doors and windows, for the timely delivery of fuel to the boiler-rooms are the officials who work as house-managers, engineers, and technicians. But they were not the only ones to report to the executive committee session. Among the speakers were also local residents, including a radio technician, a nurse, a barber, and a pensioner who had formerly worked at a leather factory. They spoke as representatives of public organisations, and of house committees elected by the tenants themselves. Not a single question connected with improvements in the district is decided without the participation of members of these committees.

It has become customary for public representatives always to be found side by side with the officials charged with one or another department. Let us examine, for example, the way in which the supervision of state trading operates in the October District of the city of Sverdlovsk in the Urals.

The staff of the District Soviet Executive Committee has only one official dealing with trade problems. There are, of course, many scores of shops, cafés, restaurants and stalls in the district. One inspector could not possibly control the work of all of them. For this reason trade in the district is controlled by a public council consisting of twenty-five members. Ten of them are experienced trading workers, three are factory workers of the district and seven are pensioners. Three of the Council members are housewives; they are perhaps the most exacting and painstaking trade inspectors. Two members of the Council are book-keepers.

Two or three times a week after work members of the Council carry out assignments connected with supervising the work of the shops. They usually spend about twenty hours a month on this activity.

The reconstruction of a food store on Papanin Street is an example of the work they do. The shop is located at a busy street corner but is quite small. For this reason it used to get packed with people, especially after factory and office hours, and long queues developed. Members of the Council visited the best shops in the city, studied the organisation of business there and inspected the new equipment.

Today local residents can hardly recognise their former shop on Papanin Street. The internal layout of the shop has been changed, new equipment installed, and an entire self-service section for packaged, canned and bottled goods introduced.

There are also many other signs of the increased responsibilities being taken on by public organisations.

In the streets one often observes men and women with red bands on their sleeves. These are members of people's public order squads. Further, an increasing number of cases is being withdrawn from the ordinary courts and turned over to the comrades' courts where all participants—the accuser, the judges and the defender—are fellow-workers of the defendant. True, the penalties administered by these courts may seem too lenient. As a rule they boil down to a public reprimand and in the more severe cases to a small fine. But the trial itself, the participation of close acquaintances of the defendant, the severe public condemnation of his misdemeanour often produce a stronger effect than punishment.

Millions of Soviet families in the country are made to feel daily that it is they, the ordinary workers' and peasants' families, who are the true masters of the country. That is why each of these families does everything within its power to ensure that the socialist state is run in the most efficient manner. That is why more than 20 million citizens in the Soviet Union participate in the work of the various government bodies, why the whole of the population participates in the discussion of the most important government laws, why hundreds of thousands of letters with suggestions for improving the work of the state institutions and organisations are received daily, why the public renders constant assistance in every sphere, in every move made by the country.

The dictatorship of the proletariat, born of the socialist revolution, has played an epoch-making role by ensuring the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R.

FROM THE PROGRAMME OF THE COMMUNIST
PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION

Dictatorship or Democracy?

BY

V. FILIMONOV

THE assertion that the Soviet system rests entirely on force can still be heard in the West. The exponents of this opinion should at least ponder the following: this system is in its fifth decade of existence. It has been through many trials and would have collapsed more than once if that were the case. Actually, the Soviet system is going from strength to strength, which is recognised even by the enemies of socialism.

Similarly, one can sometimes hear in the West the argument that the Russian Revolution in October 1917 was a result of the "conspiracy" of a "handful" of Bolsheviks. Actually, no handful of conspirators can keep power for a long time. The revolution was a manifestation of an active, historical process involving millions. The peoples of Russia resolutely decided to put an end to the capitalist system in their country and build a socialist society promising them justice and welfare. Scores of thousands of workers and hundreds of thousands of peasants actively participated in the October Revolution. They faced, of their own free will, deprivations and sufferings for the sake of its triumph. Surely they would not have done it had they been just forced by a "handful of Bolshevik conspirators"?

Surely the Soviet system could not have survived during the Civil War in Russia (1918-1920) when the country was invaded by the armies of fourteen states, apart from the counter-revolutionaries armed to the teeth, if the Soviet system had not been supported by the people. Nor could the Soviet system have survived the years of economic chaos which followed the Civil War.

The Soviet system emerged victorious from the hardest war the peoples of Russia had ever experienced, the war against the Nazi invaders.

In that war the Soviet people displayed unsurpassed heroism and self-sacrifice to defend their socialist system because it was *theirs*, it represented their interests and expressed their aspirations.

The victory of the revolution in October 1917 led to the establishment in Russia of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Cold war propaganda in the West plays on people's fears of this word "dictatorship". Hitler and Mussolini were dictators, and people naturally are opposed to systems like theirs.

But the power, the domination of a dictator, of a handful of tyrants divorced from the people, or the power of big capitalists controlling the

state machinery has nothing to do with the *power of the people, the rule of the working people*, i.e., the overwhelming majority of a nation. And that is what is meant by the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is the state power of the people exercised by them through their representatives for their own benefit. A power based on the alliance of the working class and peasantry, with the *leading role played by the working class, the proletariat*. That's why it is called the dictatorship of the proletariat.

But some people might ask: "If there is a dictatorship in the Soviet Union, then that means you have no democracy?" This is a misunderstanding of terms.

For the Soviet working people, the overwhelming majority of the population, the dictatorship of the proletariat means genuine democracy of a kind they could not even dream of under capitalism. It means democratic power in the hands of the working people. From its very birth the Soviet government began to rely on the support of the working people. For the first time the workers and peasants became masters of factories and large estates, and the principal levers of the national economy were henceforth in their hands. Now they could build the life they wanted. And the principal organs through which they exercised their power were the Soviets, elected councils of the people.

These local organs of power settled all questions of local concern. The Soviets began to combine the functions of the organs of power and those of local self-government.

A question arises: against whom was the dictatorship of the proletariat aimed? The power of the people was spearheaded against the enemies of the revolution, the exploiters, and later on against the remnants of the exploiting classes clinging to the old system and trying to restore it by their own means or with help from outside. For them the dictatorship of the proletariat actually meant the "denial" of democracy. The Soviet power had to restrict the political rights of the exploiters, for that was the only way to uphold the revolution: its enemies did not want to reconcile themselves to their defeat and launched an open struggle against the people.

Such is the general outline of the system of Soviet democracy in the first decades of the existence of Soviet power.

Socialism triumphed. The exploiting classes were totally eliminated. The public ownership of the instruments and means of production became the foundation of the socialist system.

The social changes in the Soviet Union brought about a new extension of Soviet democracy. Democracy for the working people became the democracy for the entire people. There were no exploiters any longer and consequently no social groups whose political rights had to be restricted. If, prior to the victory of socialism, the very name of the Soviets emphasised their class character (the Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Men's Deputies), in the conditions of socialism they became organisations of the whole people (known at present as the Soviets of Working People's Deputies). The method of elections to the Soviets was changed, too, from voting by show of hands to universal elections by secret ballot.

The elections to the Soviets are controlled by the working people

themselves. Each election, held once in two years to the local Soviets and once in four years to the Supreme Soviet (or Parliament), testify to a high political activity of the people. From 96 to 100 per cent of the electorate participate in the elections.

The local Soviets include some two million deputies. These are representatives of workers, peasants and intellectuals. Besides, millions participate voluntarily in administrative work, sitting on different commissions set up by the Soviets.

Nation-wide discussion of the major government measures and Bills has become a tradition of Soviet democracy. The Soviet Government consults the people, and the people's wisdom helps to find the most expedient solutions.

More than 514,000 meetings were held at enterprises, construction sites, offices and collective farms in 1957, in the course of the discussion of the draft law on the further improvement in the management of industry and construction. Attending these meetings were forty-one million people; and more than two million of them took part in the discussions.

Having brought about the complete and final victory of socialism and entered the stage of commencing the comprehensive construction of communism, the dictatorship of the proletariat has fulfilled its historic mission and has ceased to be indispensable in the U.S.S.R. from the viewpoint of the tasks of internal development.

A state of the entire people has arisen. As socialist democracy develops further, the organs of state power will gradually be converted into organs of public self-government.



The opponents of socialism spend a great deal of time and effort on misrepresenting the activity of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. They claim that the existence in the U.S.S.R. of only one Party restricts democracy. Let us turn to history again.

A multi-party system once existed in Russia. Each of the political parties which existed then claimed that it served the people. For some time the people believed these parties. Yet historical events and the attitude of different social forces towards them showed that actually these parties, such as the Constitutional-Democrats, Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and others, were acting contrary to the interests of the people, helping their enemies to fight against the Soviet system and to try to rob the people of their victories. As a result, the people turned away from these parties. Previously a considerable portion of peasants supported the Socialist-Revolutionaries who promised land to them. Before long, however, the peasant masses realised that this Party was not going to fulfil its promises and so the Socialist-Revolutionaries lost the support of the peasants who turned to the Communist Party. Similarly, when the workers realised that the Mensheviks were supporting the employers and the foreign intervention, they turned their backs on this party and solidly backed the Communists.

History showed that only one Party expressed the interests of the people—the Communist Party—and the people gave it all their support. Having lost the support of the people, the other parties disintegrated. Thus, the one-party system in the U.S.S.R. originated naturally and

historically as a result of the growth of prestige of the Communist Party among the working people and the loss of it by the other parties who sided with the interventionists after the working people had taken power.

The "secret" of the great popularity of the C.P.S.U. among the Soviet people lies in its close ties with them.

As Lenin put it: "the cause of our victories: the direct appeal of our Party and Soviet power in the hands of the working people."

The Party and the people are inseparably connected by common interests and purposes. Throughout the entire period of the history of the Soviet state, the Party has served the people faithfully. Russia, once a backward illiterate country, has become an advanced industrial power, leading the world's scientific progress.

The Communists are the best sons and daughters of the people, keenly aware of their needs and interests. The new Programme of the C.P.S.U. puts it in this way: "The Party exists for the people, and it is in serving the people that it sees the purpose of its activity." This is why the Soviet people have such trust in this Party—and in this Party alone.

* * *

In the gloomy years of tsarism the Russian writer Maxim Gorky dreamt: "Russia will become the brightest democracy on earth." Today we can say: "has become."

The transition to communism means the fullest extension of personal freedom and the rights of Soviet citizens.

FROM THE PROGRAMME OF THE COMMUNIST
PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION

Communism and Personal Freedom

BY

L. GRIGORYAN, M.Sc.(Law)

MUCH is being said and written in the West about freedom, especially now when the Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has been made public. But some of the statements on this subject make one think that their authors, as the Japanese say, "look at the sky through a needle's eye."

The opponents of the Programme cannot deny the U.S.S.R.'s tremendous success in the development of economy, culture, science and engineering. It is impossible to witness space-flights of Gagarin and Titov and to deny the high level of the Soviet Union's development. But admitting this high level, some people in the West allege that there is no freedom in the U.S.S.R.

But what is meant by freedom? Is there any kind of "pure freedom", not connected with people's welfare or their spiritual wealth?

Can an unemployed man, beaten down by life and limiting the purpose of his existence to the thought of finding a means of livelihood be considered as free? Of course not, for the word "freedom" is a hollow sound for such a man, even if he hears assurances of his "complete freedom" every day.

Little Rock is known throughout the world. Racial discrimination is so bad in the United States that diplomats from African countries cannot feel safe even under the shade of the Statue of Liberty. And yet it is said in the West that the United States enjoys "freedom".

The Paris weekly *Express*—in no sense a pro-Communist journal—has published an article in which it said: "Liberty, equality, fraternity—these words become a hollow sound for 92 per cent of the French people, that is, workers and peasants, who from the moment of their birth find themselves outcast from a well-provided-for life."

In October 1917 the working people of Russia took power into their hands and transformed the country's wealth into the property of the whole people, ensuring in this way a just distribution of all wealth among those who work. The insignificant minority of the Russian population, those who used to live at the expense of the majority, were deprived of their freedom to plunder. But the remaining 90 per cent only gained.

Immediately after the Revolution the working people secured what the toilers of Russia and the world had never had before: *freedom to rule the country*. No one else but workers, peasants and working intellectuals set up the Soviets, sat in the Soviets and represented power in the country,

And this they still do. It was by their exercising this political power, this most important of democratic rights, that they laid the foundations for the further successes which are now guaranteed by the new C.P.S.U. Programme.

No one can deny that the participation of the people in the formation of state organs and in their activities, that is, in governing the country, is the most important manifestation of political freedom. Almost 134 million people, that is, the entire adult population of the country, voted in the 1959 local elections. (Only insane people are deprived of the right to vote.) The high poll is explained by the keen interest which Soviet citizens show in the activities of the Soviets. There are more than 1,800,000 deputies in all the Soviets. By social origin or present occupation they are all workers, peasants, administrative workers or members of the intelligentsia, just as those who elected them. Taking part in the activities of the Soviets together with the deputies are more than 3,500,000 volunteers, who freely devote their free hours to public affairs.

And what about the freedom of speech, press, assembly and meetings? Some people allege that these rights don't exist in the Soviet Union, that no one dares to criticise.

Let us take, by way of example, the issue of *Izvestia* of September 8, 1961. There is an item there sharply criticising the Deputy Minister of Trade of the Russian Federation for serious drawbacks in his work. In the same issue, under the heading "What Happened After *Izvestia* Had Taken This Problem Up", one can also see a report that the head of a railway section was punished for neglecting the lawful demands of the residents of the settlement of Mudyug. There were also reports on measures taken in connection with other instances of criticism made by the newspaper readers.

Soviet people have every opportunity to make free, truthful, business-like statements on any question in the press or elsewhere. They have at their disposal newsprint, printing works, radio, television, public buildings, streets, squares and stadiums.

All nations and nationalities, including those oppressed in tsarist Russia, are now equal citizens of the Soviet Union. They attend schools and colleges, read books and newspapers in their native languages. Nationalities, almost totally illiterate before the Revolution, who often did not have even an alphabet of their own, are now legitimately proud of their scientists, writers, composers and artists.

From the foregoing it is clear that the Soviet people enjoy freedoms in every political, social and economic sphere. They enjoy the freedom to rule their own country, freedom to take part in elections, to be elected, and to sit alongside elected personnel in the various public commissions helping to manage Soviet society. They enjoy freedom of speech, press, meeting, assembly and criticism—and freedom from national or racial oppression.

If we add to all this that Soviet people enjoy freedom of conscience, inviolability of person and home, privacy of correspondence and all guarantees of justice, the only conclusion will be: "communism and freedom are inseparable."

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