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Lenin's writings:

A reason to think and to study

Lenin died 100 years ago. At that time, there was a world communist movement that was gaining strength. There was the socialist Soviet Union, which was under construction. And the proletarian movement in the West and the national, democratic liberation movements against colonialism and neo-colonialism in the East were experiencing an upswing. And today, in the year 2024?

World history also knows gigantic defeats of the proletarian movement. We remember 1914, when the great "Second International", when almost all socialist parties, including the SPD, became "defenders of the fatherland". Only in Russia was there a theoretically and politically clear struggle against the imperialist war under the leadership of Lenin, who drew the right conclusions from this world-historical defeat. The socialist Soviet Union grew stronger even after Lenin's death and - even die-hard "anti-Stalinists" cannot deny this - it also defeated Nazi fascism.

And nobody can deny that today either: The red Soviet Union, like later red China and other formerly red states, has changed color, come to terms with imperialism, become capitalist and increasingly reactionary. Today, Russia itself is a major imperialist power. China is ruled by a reactionary capitalist dictatorship. There are no longer any strong communist parties, only distortions of former communist parties and groups calling themselves communist, which are in reality pseudo-communist. What should we do? Rethink everything and start all over again.

One (certainly not the only) step, in view of the existence of pseudo-Leninist groups and the revival of the struggle against an alleged "neo-Leninism", is to engage for the first time or again with the basic study of the main texts of scientific communism.

We take the 100th anniversary of Comrade Lenin's death as an opportunity to provide an overview of his most important writings.

1. what to do? (1902)

"What is to be done?" was written by Lenin in 1902 in response to the current situation in order to provide answers to the most burning questions of the Russian revolutionary movement. Although the situation in which Lenin wrote "What is to be done?" cannot be compared in many respects with the situation in Germany today, "What is to be done?" has lost none of its topicality. For this writing elaborates the

"K-groups"? The nonsense of the "neo-Leninists" and the disgusting remnants of the DKP

In recent months, a number of groups masquerading as communist or even Leninist groups have made a name for themselves by supporting Hamas and its aggression against Israel. They are often referred to as K-groups - in reference to similar groups 50 years ago. "K-groups" does not mean "poop groups", although that would also be justified, but "K-groups" refers to the claim of such groups that describe themselves as "communist".

But let's leave the name aside. It is known which groups are meant, whether they call themselves "Communist Construction", "Communist Organization" or recently even megalomaniacally "Communist Party". For the most part, they are remnants from the generation of DKP and SDAJ supporters; they mostly come from the remnants of the DKP youth organization. The change of color of the former socialist countries in the mid-1950s is simply denied and the Soviet Union at the time of Brezhnev and the GDR at the time of Erich Honecker are glorified in a primitive manner and the police state character of these pseudo-socialist states is denied.

The outward sign is that they are now playing loudly on the streets, embarrassingly shouting in the limelight, but above all backing fascist groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah and spreading their propaganda here in Germany in a slightly modified form.

We have to admit that it is really difficult for anyone who has only joined a democratic-revolutionary movement in Germany in the last few years, who does anti-fascist work at grassroots level, to develop sympathy for communism and Lenin in the face of these groups. And yet it is actually quite simple: since when do people in political struggle believe that they are what they claim to be?

In any case, it is a very bad idea to fall into an anti-communist jargon, to attack or insult Lenin and Leninism, scientific communism by referring to such "K-groups", instead of really engaging with Lenin and scientific communism.

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fundamental theoretical, political and organizational tasks of the Communist Party and is therefore decisive for the struggle to build a Communist Party.

Chapter 1 reveals the **theoretical basis of revisionism, the denial of the principles of scientific communism.**

From this starting point of the struggle against international revisionism, the following chapters will now systematically develop that the fundamental interests of the proletariat must be asserted in all questions on a scientific basis, against all possible distractions, momentary and partial interests.

In **chapter 2**, the basic task of the Communist Party is elaborated against the opportunist theory that the communist forces should merely trot along behind the spontaneous movement: the Communist Party, as the bearer of scientific communism, must carry **socialist class consciousness** from outside into the proletariat in the struggle against the opportunists.

Chapter 3 concretizes what this means **politically**. Against the narrow opportunist limitation to the economic sphere, against the reformism of the opportunists, Lenin demands above all to lead the political struggle to overthrow the ruling classes

An indispensable task for this is the systematic organization of **all-round political revelations**. Above all, it is also indispensable to conduct the necessary democratic struggle in such a way that the **struggle for socialist revolution** remains the main issue and

that the **communist forces** become **"champions of democracy"**.

Chapter 4 shows the overall context of the **organizational tasks of the Communist Party** in the struggle against the prevailing localism and amateurish organizational action in the closest connection with the theoretical foundations and political goals of the Communist Party.

A party that wants to make the communist goals conscious and fight for them through violent socialist revolution and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat must have completely different structures than an organization of opportunists that only wants reforms. Lenin systematically develops and establishes these structures

Party building based on the principle of conspiracy, combining centralism with internal party democracy while taking illegality into account, creating a core of professional revolutionaries that must be linked with the most conscious forces, especially from the industrial enterprises, division of labor within the framework of an overall plan - to name the most important points.

Finally, in **Chapter 5**, Lenin attempts to make clear, as a direct practical consequence of all four previous chapters, the fundamental and concrete significance of the **creation of a central organ** as the **central link** in the struggle for the creation of a revolutionary Communist Party.

2. One step forward, two steps back (The crisis in our party) (1904)

The 1904 pamphlet "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back (The Crisis in Our Party)", in which Lenin analyzed the 2nd Party Congress of the nascent revolutionary party in Russia, deals with **the organizational foundations of the Communist Party**.

Building on the foundations of Marx and Engels, building on the principles of democratic centralism, Lenin developed guiding principles in this writing in the struggle against the opportunists, which became the basic organizational principles of the revolutionary Communist Party

In our opinion, three points are key for today:

1. in the struggle against the opportunist forces, Lenin emphasized only those who

- recognizes the party program and the statutes,
- regularly supports the Communist Party materially (with contributions),
- works in a party organization.

The opportunists (Mensheviks), on the other hand, considered participation in a party organization to be superfluous. Lenin shows that this view of the opportunist wing on the question of membership would lead to the Communist Party becoming a blurred, formless, disorganizing entity that would blur the boundary between the Communist Party and the proletarian class and thus drown it in the sea of sympathizers.

2. Lenin shows that **the party must be built "from the top down"**. Today we often hear the objection that building a party from the top down is undemocratic. It is democratic to proceed from the bottom up, from the grassroots. In contrast, it should first be made clear that building the party from the top down means first of all building the party from the party conference

Starting from the party conference means that the majority and not the minority decides

For the **party congress is the elected representation of the entire party, of all party members, its highest organ**, as Lenin makes clear. The members of the party elect as delegates to the those whom they consider to be the best and who have their trust. They are thus democratically, not on the basis of their positions of power, but on the basis of their commitment and energy, their experience and versatility, and above all their theoretical and political abilities. At the party conference, the delegates debate and ultimately make binding decisions on fundamental issues for the party, they determine the basic line through resolutions of the party conference and elect the leadership of the party.

Between the party congresses, the governing body (Central Committee) elected by the party congress is the highest party authority, the leading center. It is bound by the decisions of the party congress, implements these decisions of the majority and is accountable. But why is a centralized leadership of the party, which was

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It is typical of many a fight against alleged "neo-Leninism", as it is often called, that people are basically tilting at windmills. Lenin's falsifications are taken at face value and Lenin's theses are criticized where they do not exist. In short: Lenin is not studied and he is not really dealt with on the basis of his texts. Assertions are made that are not substantiated. It looks like this: Lenin's theory of imperialism inevitably contained hostility towards Jews - this is claimed without any evidence. Or that the struggle against national oppression automatically gives rise to reactionary nationalism, etc.

This debate could and should be a good incentive to study Lenin's original writings and not to fall for the self-descriptions of any groups, to fight windmills and spread anti-communist theses.

formed on the basis of basic democratic principles, necessary at all?

Lenin's answer is: Only a leading center in all questions, consisting of the best cadres of the Communist Party elected by the majority, who have proved this in theoretical and political struggle, can systematically improve the level of all members, can oversee and guide the entire work of the party to prepare and carry out the socialist revolution. Without such a leading center, organizational fragmentation and the decline of communist consciousness are inevitable, making such a great and difficult task as the victory over the ruling class and its state impossible.

3. One point that is particularly important for today should be emphasized, because it shows how Lenin fought against bureaucratism, for **inner-party democracy** and for **revolutionary publicity**:

Lenin emphasizes that the leading bodies of the Party Congress **accountable** to all Party members as well as to the revolutionary public for the internal Party debate in order to present an authentic and complete picture of the real situation of the political and ideological currents existing in the Party. To this end, the **party conference minutes** were made available to all members for independent study in order to obtain a realistic picture of all shades and their leading representatives in the Communist Party.

Through the study of this writing, in which Lenin describes a wealth of individual conflicts with the opportunists, the correct revolutionary methods crystallize in contrast to the false and opportunist **methods of the inner-party struggle**, which is a **law of life of the Communist Party**.

3. two tactics of Social Democracy in the democratic revolution (1905)

In which **situation of the revolutionary development in Russia** did Lenin write and publish his essay "Two Tactics of Social Democracy in the Democratic Revolution"? The revolutionary struggle that developed into the first **democratic revolution in Russia** began in January 1905, when

the Tsar had an unarmed demonstration of 140,000 people shot at. Over 1,000 workers were murdered in the process. Numerous strikes with over a hundred thousand strikers in the major cities, which developed into political strikes in the summer of 1905 and led to armed actions against the tsarist troops. These were supported in the villages by insurgent masses of the peasantry and the rural proletariat as well as by an uprising of the sailors of the Black Sea Fleet.

The essay "Two tactics of social democracy in the democratic revolution" follows on directly from "What to do?" and also from "One step forward, two steps back".

Lenin emphasizes the principle that the political line, strategy and tactics in particular must be determined and implemented in a principled manner. The Communist Party must have a plan based on principle and must fight

Lenin on characteristic features of opportunism

"When speaking of the fight against opportunism, one must never forget the characteristic trait of all modern opportunism in all areas without exception: its vagueness, vagueness and incomprehensibility. By his very nature, the opportunist always avoids a clear and irrevocable question; he seeks a resultant, meanders between points of view that are mutually exclusive, endeavors to 'agree' with one and the other, limits his differences of opinion to small suggestions for change, to doubts, to pious and innocent wishes, etc., etc."

(Lenin, V.I.: One Step Forward, Two Steps Back, 1904, Works Volume 7, p. 408)

against any policy of postponement. The central content of this document does not primarily deal with this or that partial question, but with the fundamental question: For or against the revolution? Revolutionary tactics or reformist tactics?

In our opinion, the **connection between three basic ideas** in Lenin's book "Two Tactics of Social Democracy in the Democratic Revolution" is decisive:

1. **hegemony of the proletariat** in the bourgeois-democratic revolution.

2. **armed uprising** for the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.

3. after the bourgeois-democratic revolution: **the socialist revolution!**

It is therefore obvious that the study and training of this work is central in terms of content wherever the **democratic stage** of the revolution is still pending, i.e. today in many countries that are dependent on imperialism and where pre-capitalist methods of exploitation and oppression still prevail or still prevail in part especially in the countryside

However, Lenin's writing is also important for tackling **the tasks of the democratic struggle in an imperialist country** like Germany, where the socialist revolution is imminent. Lenin shows that the sphere of democratic struggle must not be left to the bourgeoisie and its helpers, the opportunists. Under capitalism, democratic institutions have emerged and there are democratic demands among the masses. At the same time, imperialism means reaction all along the line. The communist forces must start right here and break the authority of the ruling class with its state apparatus in the questions of the democratic struggle. The Communist Party must reveal that the reactionary and criminal face of imperialist exploitation and oppression lies behind the appearance of the bourgeoisie's democratic pretensions.

4. materialism and Empirio-criticism (1909)

1909 was a situation in Russia in which the revolution of 1905 had really been almost completely crushed. Many revolutionaries had been hanged or shot. And revolutionary morale had also been massively undermined. The agitation against communism, the deep mistrust of the program, strategy and tactics of the Communist Party were stirred up - the failure brought together wavering and weak forces that liked to orient themselves towards the stronger ones. It was in this situation that one of Lenin's most difficult writings to study appeared: "Materialism and Empirio-Criticism". In addition to the subject-specific disputes with German and Russian philosophers, which hardly anyone still knows today, and so-called "religious Marxists" in the ranks of the Bolsheviks themselves, this writing was, in essence and under the conditions of the tsarist dictatorship, above all

an indictment of the emerging opportunism and revisionism. The bourgeois ideologues, "scientists" by profession, had set out to combat real science, scientific communism. This was not without effect. The decisive trick was - drawing on the German-Prussian state philosopher Kant - to deny science and scientific truth in general, objective truth, objective laws and thus also the possibility of a planned political struggle under the banner of "being critical".

And today? Defeatism, anti-communism and the idea of being able to advocate and fight for a "just world" with supposedly "new theories" in place of scientific communism are very widespread today. The struggle for communist theory as science, indeed the **struggle for the possibility and reality of scientific knowledge in history and society** in general, is once again and with great urgency on the agenda of all communist forces.

The task of the communist vis-à-vis the results of bourgeois research

is "to understand how to appropriate and assimilate the achievements made by these 'commies' (for example, if one wants to study the new economic phenomena, one cannot take a step without making use of the works of these commies), and to understand how to reject the reactionary tendency of these commies, follow one's own line and fight the whole line of the forces and classes hostile to us."

(Lenin, V.I.: Materialism and Empiriocriticism, Lenin Werke Volume 14, p. 347)

A core point of the scientific work of the Communist Party is to anchor **basic elements of scientific factual research and logical reasoning** in the consciousness of the Communist Party members as the basis of their own political action and, in this sense, to have an impact on all justified political and social struggles. Lenin's slogan "knowledge instead of faith" is pursued very comprehensively in his book, right down to the subtleties of the unscientific argumentation of Kant and his opportunist successors such as Eduard Bernstein. In fact, it is a fundamental question in all theoretical, political and also organizational issues: Knowledge or belief. And going even further, it is about the clear, self-

critical recognition of what has already been researched and "known" and what not yet been researched and is not yet "known".

Lenin and the communist forces are accused of that scientific communism has already researched everything, that they know everything and can plan everything in accordance with the brainwaves of bureaucrats. However, the opposite is the case: precisely in the awareness that not everything has yet been researched and not everything can be planned, precisely because a society is never at a standstill, those fundamental objective truths that have stability for a longer period of time must be recognized as such, characterized and tackled in a planned manner.

One example: since Marx and Engels, research into today's social order has clearly demonstrated and proven that the actual motor of social development is the profit principle, the maximization of surplus value, the intensified exploitation by the ruling class of capital owners. This certainly does not say everything, but it does provide a stable starting point for the programmatic and political struggle against capitalism.

However, Lenin was fully aware of the fact that bourgeois science brings to light facts and theories that are valuable and cannot be ignored, not only in the field of natural science, but also in individual areas of social research. And so Lenin concludes his important work on scientific theory and philosophy with a clear instruction and call the communist forces to critically examine the results of bourgeois science in an appropriate manner in order to advance their own scientific work.

5 Imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism capitalism (1916)

While the First World War was still raging and millions of people were being slaughtered on the battlefields for imperialist profits and the possession of colonies, Lenin set himself the task of analyzing the new stage of capitalism. When in August 1914 almost all the leading of the Second International "fell down", approved the war credits and called for support for their "own" imperialists in the war, it was an

indescribable shock for the proletarian movement, especially for the revolutionary-oriented sections of the proletarian class in the various belligerent states.

In the midst of the struggle against the social-chauvinists, who openly called for the "defense of the fatherland" in the imperialist war (like the SPD in Germany), or in the struggle against the disguised social-chauvinists, who covered up the true character of this war with conciliatory phrases, he wrote the book "Imperialism as the Highest Stage of Capitalism". It was completed in June 1916 and printed under the rule of Tsarism.

Building on the fundamental economic laws as analyzed by Marx in his three-volume work "Das Kapital", Lenin develops in his book the **basic features of imperialism as capitalism at its highest and final stage**.

In the first three chapters, Lenin analyzes the transition from pre-monopolistic to monopolistic capitalism. He shows how the concentration and centralization of capital and the fusion of industrial and banking capital gave rise to **monopolistic big capital**.

On the necessity of the dictatorship of the proletariat until communism

"The essence of Marx's doctrine of the state has only been grasped by those who have understood that the dictatorship of a class is not only necessary per se for every class society, not only for the *proletariat* that has overthrown the bourgeoisie, but also for the whole *historical period* that separates capitalism from the 'classless society', from communism. (...) The transition from capitalism to communism must of course produce an immense abundance and diversity of political forms, but the essential thing will necessarily be one thing: *the dictatorship of the proletariat*." (Lenin, "State and Revolution", 1917, Lenin Werke Vol. 25, p. 425, emphasis in original)

The main content of chapters 4 to 6 is the internationalization of capital: the export of capital gains a predominant role, the division of the world among the international monopolist capitalist associations is in full swing, while the division of the world among the largest capitalist states, among the imperialist great powers through the domination

of dependent countries and colonies, has been completed. Now begins the struggle for the redivision of the already divided world on the basis of the uneven development of the capitalist countries. This leads to the **inevitability of imperialist wars, even between imperialist superpowers.**

The highlight of chapters 7 to 10 is the criticism and exposure of opportunism. This does not arise by chance, but in the age of imperialism is based precisely on the enormous exploitation of dependent and colonial countries by a cluster of imperialist powers. This exploitation not only benefits the ruling class, but **the extra profits** can also be **used bribe an entire stratum of the proletariat, the so-called "labor aristocracy"**. This division of the proletarian movement generates and nourishes nationalism and opportunism on a large scale. This "rotting capitalism", as Lenin called it, is characterized in the political field by a turn from bourgeois democracy to reaction all along the line, by the **domination of the state apparatus by monopolistic big business**, combined with a system of political lies and deception of the working masses.

Imperialism means...

"Reaction all along the line, regardless of the political system..."

(Lenin, V.I.: Imperialism as the Highest Stage of Capitalism, 1916, Lenin Werke Volume 22, p. 302)

But imperialism also means "dying capitalism" in the long term, because **all the contradictions of capitalism are intensifying to the highest degree.** The resulting intensification of the struggles against imperialism, based on the "lowest strata", the militant sections of the proletariat and the oppressed sections of the population of the countries dependent on imperialism, increase the possibility of preparing and carrying out revolutionary liberation struggles in the dependent countries and the socialist revolution in the centers of the imperialist great powers and developed capitalist states. Lenin therefore concludes in his book that imperialism is the "eve" of the socialist revolution of the proletariat.

6. State and revolution (1917)

Lenin wrote the pamphlet in August 1917, after the bourgeois February Revolution in Russia in 1917, in the midst of the First World War. Internationally, the proletarian revolution was maturing, so that the theoretical question of the relationship of the proletarian revolution to the state had taken on immediate practical significance. In this situation, Lenin set himself the task of restoring **Marx and Engels' teaching on the state**, which had been distorted by the opportunists of the Second International.

In all this, Lenin repeatedly emphasizes that the teaching of Marx and Engels on the state and revolution is a synthesis of experience imbued with dialectical and historical materialism and a comprehensive knowledge of history. Not mere logical reasoning, but the analysis of actual events and class struggles, especially the experiences of revolutionary times, form the basis for the development of the teachings of scientific communism on the tasks of the proletariat vis-à-vis the state, on the necessity of smashing the bourgeois state and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat up to communism.

Lenin begins with an account of the experiences of the revolutionary years 1848 to 1851 and continues with Marx's analysis of the experiences of the Paris Commune of 1871 and a collection of Engels' supplementary statements from 1872 to 1891. On this basis, Lenin concludes by exposing the decisive distortions of Marxism by the opportunists of the time.

The cornerstones of the state question are emphasized:

1. the state is often presented by bourgeois state philosophers as something that is imperishable and will exist forever to regulate the "coexistence of humanity". The fact is, however, that in primitive communism, when there were no classes, there was no state. So the state has not always existed. It is certainly an important question as to why the state came into being at all. Because the answer to this question already contains the answer as to when and under what conditions the state will die. **The state only came into being when society was divided into classes**, into slave owners and slaves - or, generally speaking, into exploiters

and exploited. Only then did an apparatus for the systematic use of force, for the oppression of the exploited, become necessary

2. **the bourgeois state apparatus is the instrument of the bourgeoisie** to oppress the proletariat and the other exploited working people in order to be able to exploit them as smoothly as possible and to nip any resistance to this exploitative order in the bud. The bourgeoisie exercises its dictatorship mainly through the army, the police, the prisons, the judicial apparatus and not least by means of a huge army of civil servants.

(3) From the clarity about what the bourgeois state is, it immediately follows that **the bourgeois state apparatus must be smashed from top to bottom and from bottom to top by the violent proletarian revolution**, as a rule in the armed struggle of the masses of millions under the leadership of the proletariat and its Communist Party, so that the bourgeoisie can be overthrown and the dictatorship of the proletariat, the proletarian state, can be established. This, as Lenin points out, is the main teaching of Marxism on the tasks of the proletariat in the violent revolution against the bourgeois state.

(4) Lenin then points out that opportunism in recognizing the class struggle stops just before the main thing, before the period of transition from capitalism to communism, before the period of the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and its complete destruction:

The dictatorship of the proletariat, with the majority oppressing the minority, is by no means a period without class struggles **leading to communism, to a classless society.** For the former exploiters, the forces of counter-revolution, will not rest in recapturing their lost terrain, they will try to restore exploitative power, to restore the capitalist exploitative order, as they actually succeeded in doing, especially in the Soviet Union, with the rise to power of the Khrushchev-Brezhnev revisionists.

5 The real goal of the proletarian revolution is the classless society without exploitation and oppression, communism. It must be understood that the dictatorship of the proletariat must continue throughout the entire period leading up to communism. **The dictatorship of the proletariat must be strengthened to the maximum**, not through a bureaucratic swelling of the

state apparatus, but rather **through raising the consciousness and activity of the masses**, through the ever greater participation of the broad working masses in state power in more and more areas, through the maximum strengthening of socialist democracy.

Lenin emphasized the experiences from the struggles of the first proletarian revolution, the **Paris Commune** of 1871, which Marx had already evaluated. These showed that there **three essential measures** to secure and consolidate socialist democracy, its exercise and strengthening:

The elected representatives must be **able to be voted out of office at any time** - which is a real instrument of control for the working people. The elected representative body must be **both legislative and executive** - in direct contrast to the "bourgeois-democratic separation of powers". The forces entrusted with state and administrative tasks receive the remuneration **of a proletarian working person** - against careerism and post-hunting. (This will be introduced for the representative bodies of the proletariat immediately after the revolution, while bourgeois specialists under communist control will be temporarily paid more, depending on the situation).

If, as **Lenin demands**, every cook, **every working person, can lead the state** and is actively involved in its management, then it is clear how strong such a state must be. For it is the consciousness of the working masses that makes the state really strong.

Then it will also be clear that **the state's demise is maximally prepared** and its main functions will become or are superfluous, provided that the class enemy all over the world is crushed. For the complete withering away of the state, as Lenin writes, complete communism is needed.

7 The proletarian revolution and the renegade Kautsky (1918)

This text appeared at a time (1918) when - unlike today - the question of proletarian revolution was on the agenda in a whole series of countries. In Russia, the socialist October Revolution had triumphed in 1917. In Germany, Austria, Finland, Hungary and elsewhere, powerful strikes, troop rebellions and even uprisings

developed. Spurred on by the October Revolution, armed uprisings by revolutionary sections of the proletarian class took shape, particularly in Hungary (Soviet Republic) and Germany (November Revolution, Munich Councils publik).

The decisive question in this paper shows (despite the extremely different situations then and now as far as the state of the revolutionization of the masses is concerned) that the basic question is the same then as it is today. The whole concentrated charge of anti-communism that has accumulated and developed in Germany from then until today is contained in Kautsky's demagogic core lie that, in contrast to the Bolsheviks, he stood up for the allegedly "democratic method" in the revolution, while Lenin and the Bolsheviks were supporters and advocates of an allegedly undemocratic, "dictatorial method".

Kautsky's starting point is that the majority socialist-conscious and organized proletariat must also use "democratic", "peaceful" methods against the bourgeoisie and the counter-revolution and in any case remain within the framework of the legality of a parliamentary-democratic republic.

Lenin opposes this demagogy of Kautsky in two ways.

First. In doing so, Kautsky makes the decisive class point disappear: the necessity that, after the destruction of the old bourgeois state apparatus, **a new, socialist-democratic state apparatus** emerges, which at the same

time poses the question of property in a dictatorial manner economically by expropriating the ruling class and politically takes action by dictatorial means against the bourgeoisie and all reactionaries, against the activists of the counter-revolution, who will try everything to regain their lost "paradise".

Secondly. In contrast to bourgeois democracy, which constantly prevents the masses from making use of democratic rights through a thousand tricks and ploys, Lenin developed the idea that the soviets created in struggle facilitate the direct organization, the real exercise of power by the working and exploited masses to the maximum. It is precisely soviet democracy in the large enterprises that enables maximum control of the elected and de facto

the actual management of the new state by the proletarian class. **Socialist democracy is a democracy for the formerly exploited and oppressed**, who are not willing to be exploited and oppressed again.

Lenin's reminder that **in no other country in the world is there such a great "superstition in the state" as in Germany** is highly topical for us. This is a "disease" that is not without effect in the minds of large sections of the proletarian class. This faith in the state, according to the assessment that also applies to today's conditions, is intended to prevent any revolution from the outset or to quickly force possible revolutionary outbreaks back into the framework of the "constitutional state", into the framework of capitalism.

8 'Left-wing radicalism', the childhood disease of communism (1920)

Lenin's pamphlet "Left-Wing Radicalism, the Infantile Disorder of Communism" was published in 1920, initially with the subtitle "An Attempt at a Popular Exposition of Marxist Strategy and Tactics". Lenin wrote this pamphlet in a situation of revolutionary seething. At the time, there a huge wave of international sympathy for the October Revolution. This was by many people who had a lot of enthusiasm but very little practical experience of preparing for the revolution.

Lenin saw that the old, experienced revisionists, who had been washed in

The behavior of the Communist Party to its own mistakes

"The attitude of a political party to its mistakes is one of the most important and most certain criteria for the seriousness of a party and for the actual fulfillment of its duties towards its class and the working masses. Openly admitting a mistake, revealing its causes, analyzing the circumstances that brought it about, carefully examining the means to correct the mistake - that is the mark of a serious party, that is, fulfilling its duties, that is, educating and training the class and then also the masses (Lenin, "Left-Wing Radicalism, the Childhood Sickness of Communism", 1920, Lenin Werke Vol. 31, p. 42)

all waters, were provoking the young revolutionaries in the countries of Western Europe to make mistakes. Lenin therefore warned them in his paper not to into the traps of the counter-revolutionary revisionists around Kautsky.

First of all, it must be made clear that, despite its title "Left-wing radicalism, the childhood disease of communism", this pamphlet **is in fact a guide to revolutionary struggle directed primarily against right-wing opportunism**. We emphasize this against the many falsifications of this writing. The right opportunists read essentially make it appear as if Lenin was primarily concerned with fighting "left-wing radicals". On the contrary, his aim was precisely to help the left to defeat the right-wing opportunists.

In the usual presentations of this writing, it is emphasized with great fanfare that Lenin proved in great detail to the often still fragmented communist forces of the time why compromises are sometimes necessary, why cooperation in reactionary trade unions and other reactionary mass organizations and, under certain conditions, in bourgeois parliaments is necessary. In doing so, what is really at stake in all of this, what really matters to Lenin, is usually deliberately ignored:

The basic idea of this paper, from the first to the last line, is that the

communist forces of all countries must not only understand, but really learn, for what goals, by what means and with what methods the majority of the proletarian class can be won out of the domination of imperialist-capitalist ideology and reformist demagogues for socialist democracy, for the dictatorship of the proletariat over the counter-revolution.

Lenin's writing explains in principle and at the same time very concretely and vividly how the leadership of the party is connected with the **entire Communist Party**, how in turn **Communist Party, class and masses** must work together in order to really overthrow the power of capitalism and the counter-revolution and prevent their restoration.

This only works if the Communist Party constantly, comprehensively and at all levels practices **the principle of communist self-criticism** against anti-communist positions such as "the party is always right".

The basic doctrine is not to give in on any front, to fight both bloodily and bloodlessly, to expropriate some (the bourgeoisie, above all big capital), but to persuade others (the small producers in town and country) sometimes to go ahead, sometimes to withdraw. (the bourgeoisie, especially big capital), but to convince the others (the small producers in town and country) to sometimes advance, sometimes

retreat, just as the precisely analyzed and aptly characterized situation requires. But how is it possible to assess such a situation? It is not a matter of faith to determine how strong one's own forces are and how strong the enemy forces are. Lenin describes precisely - from the Party Congress to the Central Committee via the Communist Party's branches to the trade unions, which had four million members at the time, and to the role of the soviets at various levels, both local and central - that all this by no means just an "apparatus" for enforcing decisions. First and foremost, this is a democratic institution, a structure that makes it possible to assess the concrete situation as realistically as possible - from the bottom to the top.

Basically, Lenin's entire writing is a prerequisite for understanding how the great goals of communism, how the theoretical insights into the course of history and the proletarian revolution were carried down to the last detail in an infinite variety and painstaking detail work into every single factory, into the masses of the smallest villages; and this in the knowledge that the "all-round developed and all-round trained people" will only become a reality in decades, that today the revolution is being made by people who have grown up and been shaped under capitalism.

This text version is a rough translation from the German original and was created with the help of translation software.