

SOCIALISM AND DEMOCRACY

N. F. KEMAL



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Proletarians of all countries unite!

Socialism and Democracy

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Preface

In this article we will consider some fundamental aspects of the relationship between socialism and democracy. In one sense, this is the relationship between the communist party and democracy; in another, that between the proletarian dictatorship and democracy.

The relationship between socialism and democracy is essentially a straightforward, uncomplicated, relatively simple one. The dictatorship of the proletariat is the state which defends the interests of the majority and democracy is that form of the state which means rule by the majority. Socialism means, first and foremost, the abolition of private property in the means of production in the interests of the majority and in order to enable it to rule. In the long

term, the sole viable form of the proletarian dictatorship can only be democracy: if it is to be practised completely and consistently, democracy requires the proletarian dictatorship and socialism. The proletariat's dictatorship and its democracy, are essential if socialism is to live and advance to communism. Thus it is that the relationship between democracy and socialism involves no problem theoretically.

There was no problem in uniting the concepts of socialism and democracy in the period when the world working class and communist movement first came onto the scene in an organized manner. They were each considered as the most natural complementary part of the other.

Underlying this straightforward understanding were the economic, social and historical conditions which shaped the period. In that period democratic and socialist aims, the struggles for democracy and for socialism, had merged with each other in a very striking manner. Europe was going through its pre-imperialist stage. The bourgeoisie had siezed power and become reactionary. It had long forgotten the slogan of "liberty, fraternity, equality". At the same time, unable as yet to become imperialist, its problems had increased manyfold.

In this situation, the working class movement was at one and the same time fighting for the most general democratic rights (for example, trade union rights, equal and universal suffrage, elected government, human rights) and for social ownership of the means of production. And as the European bourgeoisie, unable to meet them, opposed these demands, democracy and socialism became completely merged in the working class mind.

There was no problem during the period when the

working class movement first appeared, nor is there one on the theoretical level. However, problems appear when we consider the actual experiences that came later. Now let us see where and for what reason these problems appear.

I. Where and why do the problems arise?

The relationship between the state and democracy, that is, between the essence and functional form of the state, appears extremely complicated in concrete situations. Every *concrete* state, even if its essence does not change, assumes various social contents in varying proportions according to the balance of power between the classes represented in it and the intensity and scale of the class struggle. For the same reasons, every *concrete* democracy too is wrapped in various constitutional and organisational forms and various legal frameworks. Two countries may both have bourgeois democracy. However, when one looks closely, one sees that their constitutional frameworks and legal systems are completely different. For this

reason, the relationship between the state, democracy and socialism assumes a specific form for every *concrete* country according to the complex of particular conditions we have mentioned. It is for this reason, because a state which is the same in essence can be organised in completely different forms, that the relationship between socialism and democracy, which creates no problem on the theoretical level, creates many and various practical problems when we come to the level of the *concrete*.

It is necessary to examine every particular form of organisation concretely. The easy way out for those who are reluctant to do so is to content themselves with advancing general truths, when it is a matter of a concrete form of organisation in a *concrete* country: "Bourgeois democracy is the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The dictatorship of the proletariat is a thousand times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois state". Finish! Such an attitude does not answer the question.

It is unfortunate that, from time to time, the attitude of answering every question with such general truths became very widespread in the world communist movement. It would be very interesting to hear what answer communists who have this habit would give to the following question: how is it that bourgeois democracy, the dictatorship of an exploiting minority, is able to maintain its dictatorship through general elections?

Various answers, some of a brain-washing kind, are given to this question. We have no intention of denying the important place held by bourgeois propaganda and bourgeois ideology, the ruling ideology of the society. However, we cannot really answer the question by reference to these. Indeed, how could people be fooled by these over such a long historical period? If we put it all

down to propaganda, then we are saying that people are sheep. This question brings us to the way in which that giant mechanism called the state rests on a social basis, the way in which it functions. And it can really be explained only by answering the question: "*How does the ruling class rule*"? We will not attempt to answer this question here, for it is not an integral part of our subject.

After this brief introduction, let us now see how the relationship between socialism and democracy has developed historically.

II. The evolution of the relationship between socialism and democracy

In order to facilitate our thoughts, I will divide the history of this relationship into several periods. However, one must not take this division into periods as an "organisational directive". Various other divisions could be made.

The *first stage* is the period in which Marx and Engels lived, that in which the working class movement was born; the period in which a struggle was waged for the most basic democratic rights. For this reason, a whole series of problems which appeared later had not yet done so. The relationship between socialism and democracy was one

which everyone could readily understand.

Living at such a time, Marx and Engels really took on the task of establishing scientific socialism, turning socialism into a science. At that time, life-expectancy was not more than 50-60 years and the tasks they set themselves were huge ones. For this reason, Marx and Engels dealt with the essence of the question rather than attempting to arrive at an all-inclusive framework on the subject of the state, democracy and socialist democracy. However, even the fact that they were able to deal with the essence of these problems illuminates our path today. The fact also that they planned a fourth volume of *Capital* to deal with the state shows that they indeed saw the unfinished aspects but did not live long enough to complete them.

The *second stage* is that in which European capitalism grew into imperialism. In this period, which followed on that of Marx and Engels, democratic practices in Europe grew to a certain extent both as a result of the working class struggle and due to the advantages provided by becoming imperialist. On the basis of this expansion of democratic rights, two main trends took shape in the working class movement. The first was that represented by the parties of the Second International. Their attachment to democracy gradually became attachment to the existing system and a brake on socialism.

Representing the second trend, Lenin and the Bolsheviks reestablished the concepts of the state, democracy and the dictatorship of the proletariat in a manner suited to Marxism or, more correctly, science, and life itself.

Lenin dealt with this question only in the context of the political struggle, and only to the extent required by it. Towards the end of his life, he planned to rewrite and

expand *The State and Revolution* and worked on the plan for the book, but again death prevented the fulfilment of this task.

The fact that in their last years both Marx and Lenin wanted to take up the question of the state in a definitive way, the fact that they pointed out the need to do so, indicated a task which should have been taken up by Marxist thinkers who lived later: to work up and develop Marxism's theory of the state. To this day, this task has not been fulfilled in a manner befitting Marxism. People behaved as if everything had been said on the question of the state. This attitude was the most important factor nourishing the tendency towards generalities and clichés frequently encountered on this question in the communist movement.

We may call the *third stage* the period of the Comintern parties. It was a period in which the gap between democracy and socialism which had opened in the previous period, grew. This period stretches from the death of Lenin to the rise of fascism. In the face of the rising working class revolution, democratic gains in the west suffered a set-back. However, there was now a socialist state as well and in it an authoritarian structure was being built up.

Confronted with these developments, the Comintern shifted to a wrong position. On the one hand, it contented itself with general truths on the subject of democracy: "Bourgeois democracy is a fraud." On the other hand, it conducted an apologetic defence of the more and more authoritarian system in the Soviet Union. In fact, under the existing difficult conditions, the situation in the Soviet Union was far from abnormal and could have been explained quite clearly to the workers of the world. The

Comintern's failure then and later to distinguish between those aspects of the restriction of democracy in the Soviet Union which were necessary, and those practices which had to be corrected, its approval of everything that was done, had a significant share in the consolidation and increasing rigidity of the system in the Soviet Union.

Because of the Comintern's tendency towards generalities and clichés, no one attempted to think about the now thoroughly enlarged gap between socialism and democracy. "Bourgeois democracy is a fraud, the dictatorship of the proletariat is wonderful". But this does not suffice. People see the widening gap and thus serious problems arise. The communist parties' failure to grapple sufficiently with these is one of the most important factors underlying their inability to develop. (Of course, there are also other factors, but I am trying in a sense to freeze these and explain things only from this point of view.) They were unable to become a genuine force as working class parties. The old social-democratic workers' parties continued to be the parties gathering the working class. This is an historical fact which we cannot change.

The *fourth stage* is the period of fascism which presented the chance of something very good emerging from a great calamity. In this period, life itself closed the gap which had opened between socialism and democracy. All at once, democratic tasks came to embrace everything so that, just as in the period of Marx, the communist parties began to struggle for the most fundamental rights. Consequently, socialism and democracy once again began to draw close together in the working class mind.

Life brought this about, but the communist parties adapted themselves to it very amateurishly. Having only very recently said, "bourgeois democracy is a fraud", all at

once they turned around and began to fight for bourgeois democracy. The Comintern effected a complete about-face and totally changed its line without once pausing to ask what was happening. Of course, it was necessary to wage a democratic struggle, but defending democracy is one thing, defending bourgeois democracy is another.

Citing the necessity to defend bourgeois democracy, the Comintern erred to the right, but the objective consequence of this error was to help close the gap which existed between socialism and democracy. Leaving aside the concrete mistakes which the parties made in this period, as well as those few communist parties working under exceptional conditions, the communist parties now became genuine mass parties for the first time. This point, which needs to be underlined, is one which historically emphasizes *the importance of the struggle for democracy in winning the heart of the working class*. Everything we have said up to this point, the characteristics of every stage, lead to this conclusion, but this stage presents it in a very striking manner.

The *fifth stage* is the period of the cold war. This period was a disastrous one for both democracy and socialism. A wall was raised between the working class of the socialist countries in the east and the working class in the west.

Since the cold war involved a strategy of trying to overthrow the socialist system and since it violently attacked the socialist system, the latter passed over to the defence. This, and the fact that the socialist states were consolidating themselves, involved a whole series of harsh measures being adopted one after the other. The reason for this was very objective and just, but yet another objective consequence was the cutting off of all prospects for the

democratisation of the Eastern European countries. The process of democratisation could not possibly proceed in such a situation.

The communist parties in the west lost a great deal of strength in the cold war period. One of the important causes of this was the parties' inability to provide a consistent answer to the question of the *daily* contradictions between democracy and socialism, a topic which the bourgeoisie, which economically and for various historical reasons was in a much stronger position, turned to the world working class and asked: "What kind of thing is this?", viciously twisting its knife into the gap which for various reasons had appeared between socialism and democracy. Confronted with this, the communist parties were unable to develop a consistent thesis.

On the other hand, alongside all its negative aspects, this period also contained the following objective truth: A world socialist system had appeared. Alongside the Soviet Union was an enormous China. The split between them had not yet emerged. The fact of these two powers opposing imperialism together, the fact of the socialist countries being able to achieve unprecedented increases in production despite all the difficulties, including a blockade, brought the cold war period to a compulsory end. Everyone began to see that the cold war was unable to yield the result that the imperialists wanted. It became clear that the aim of pushing socialism back as far as Moscow and then eliminating it altogether was unrealisable. Under these conditions, the cold war period melted slowly away.

The *sixth stage* is today's post cold-war period. The greatest fact of this period is the scientific and

technological revolution thanks to which the old world's imperialism found new opportunities. On the basis of these opportunities, and compelled by the working class struggle and the scientific and technological revolution, democratic practices in the countries of Western Europe and North America extended while, in the socialist countries, a rigid structure appeared rooted first and foremost in the requirements of those countries' economies.

III. The present-day relationship between socialism and democracy

The present period is one in which the relationship between socialism and democracy is really being discussed for the first time in the history of the working class movement. It is the first time a serious discussion has begun. The overriding reason for this is the following: While the practice of democracy is extending in the West, in the socialist countries, it is not extending to the degree demanded by socialism. This contradiction is being used as the most important ideological weapon in portraying communists throughout the world as being against democracy, in dividing the working classes of east and west, and in disrupting world working class unity.

As a result of this, the European communist parties

have come to such a point that, if they do not solve the problem of the relationship between democracy and socialism, not only their development, but their very *existence* will be in danger. *Communism in Europe is in danger*. If they are unable to explain the existing contradiction in an irrefutable manner, then there is no chance of communism surviving in the developed capitalist countries. Such is the power of this ideological weapon.

It is for this reason that the topic of democracy and socialism came onto the agenda for the first time in working class history under the auspices of the Euro-communist parties. We are not at all afraid to say it. It was under the auspices of the Italian, Spanish and French parties that the working class was compelled to enter into this discussion. Historically, this is their contribution.

For the first time, the theses being advanced on the question of the relationship between democracy and socialism began to be directed against both the bourgeoisie and the socialist countries. Criticism began to be directed against the socialist countries as well.

The fact that the Euro-communist parties brought the struggle for democracy onto the agenda has a great share in their ability to become such mass parties for the first time in the world communist movement. When looking at historical developments, the fact that the democratic struggle gained the communist parties great vitality at every stage is unlikely to be denied.

However, we do not forget either the following aspect of development: The Euro-communist parties have been robbing Peter to pay Paul. They have come to resemble the parties of the Second International. Let us see this mistake and struggle with it, not forgetting, however, the objective

benefit brought about by the debate on democracy. It is the first time since the death of Lenin that a discussion without the threat of "banishment" is taking place in the world communist movement. There are those who want to banish others, but they cannot do it; the balance of forces does not allow it.

We are of the view that both sides in this discussion are mistaken. However, the existence of such a discussion is very auspicious. The parties in the west must see one fact very clearly: If they are able to discuss in such a way, if they are able to continue the process of democratisation both within themselves and in their societies to this or that extent, this is due, among other factors, firstly to the existence of the world socialist system, of the Soviet Union, and the policy of detente it is pursuing. A world in which the Soviet Union no longer existed would be a completely different world. History truly advances in strange ways peculiar to itself! We are criticising the Soviet Union under a protective umbrella it provides itself. If Western communists fail to see the existence of that umbrella, they will be guilty of historical ingratitude. The Soviet Union is the world revolutionary centre. Here affection for the Soviet Union enters into the question.

It is the first time that such a broad discussion on this question is taking place in the world working class and communist movement. It is difficult to avoid extremes when the "ban" on a given topic has just been lifted. Certainly there will be extremes, but just as certainly a balance will be restored. Movements will also appear which will avoid extremes. This period in which the relationship between democracy and socialism has begun to be thought of seriously may lead to a period in which communism grasps the opportunity to win the hearts of

the workers of the advanced countries. If this problem is solved in a manner free of hypocrisy and deception, then we will have a real chance.

IV. What must be done?

In the time of Marx, today and tomorrow, those who defend human rights, from the most basic to the supreme, are the communists. However, now we see that a man named Sakharov goes on a hunger strike in order to send his daughter to America to get married. The girl will leave and settle in America. What of it? Let her go. Let her do whatever she wants. Is the enormous Soviet Union going to fret itself about this? But it does not allow her to go. Then, when one or two voices are raised in the west, it lets her go. When thousands of examples like this appear, they become a great obstacle. This is perhaps the greatest obstacle to communism's winning the hearts of the workers and working people. Without overcoming it, the

communist parties have no chance of winning success on a world scale. The struggle which was initiated by the Euro-communists, and which has also been taken to absurd lengths, has created the chance of solving this problem.

Under present-day conditions of development, at the present level of telecommunications and relations between people, simply shouting about democracy is not enough to raise the banner of democracy. It is absolutely essential to develop and put forward a *positive programme* of democracy as we understand it. Unlike in previous times, the people now ask: "That is what you say now, but what will you do when you come?" We are definitely obliged to develop the programme of what we will do when we come. Criticising democratic practices in the socialist countries and saying "ours will not be like that" is a start. This is how the first step will be taken. However, this does not solve much of anything since it is a *repudiation*.

We are definitely obliged to state what we understand on the subject of active mass democracy as the most suitable state form of the dictatorship of the proletariat. We must do this in a sincere manner, pointing out that "*The extent to which this programme can be applied at first depends on the conditions during and after the revolution.*" Whether or not we will be able to do what we want depends, not on us alone, but also on the forces opposed to us. Whether or not we will be able to apply this programme at the beginning, or the extent to which we will be able to apply it, depends on how events will develop during the process of coming to power, the situation after we have come to power, and the state of the class struggle. Perhaps we will be unable to apply our programme at all, but then we will have to go before the masses and say: this was our programme, but we cannot apply it today. We will have to

explain to the people why we cannot apply this programme and convince them of it. This itself would be a *very important* achievement. In this way, we will have at least taken a great step forward in our understanding of democracy and the leadership of society. Such an approach will in itself constitute a cornerstone in achieving the programme we want. It is like the wedge we place under the tires of a car to prevent it from rolling backwards. You cannot go too far backwards since you have published the programme. All right, now the conditions for it do not exist, but when they do, the people will ask.

Criticising democracy as it is practised in the socialist countries in order to develop the relationship between socialism and democracy in the sphere of concrete practice is necessary, beneficial and, moreover, *easy*. For example, what the Soviet Union and other socialist countries have done to the "dissidents" is not right. Leave aside socialism, psychiatric clinics and the like are not befitting to humanity. Throwing an intelligent man into an asylum saying, "If you can live under socialism and defend such an idea, you are crazy"; the lack of any atmosphere for discussion; the failure to accord any recognition to different views; even the meaninglessness of elections; many things could be enumerated.

Showing the shortcomings in the practice of democracy in the socialist countries is beneficial, necessary and easy. The really *difficult thing* is, firstly, not forgetting the objective basis of these developments. Yes, there are many mistakes, the party in the Soviet Union has committed many mistakes, but there is also the objective basis of these. Everyone knows how much ground the Soviet Union has covered. This must not be forgotten. The

first difficult point is not to give way to hostility.

The second difficult thing is to show, from our point of view, the concrete way in which the relationship between socialism and democracy functions, not negating the revolutionary essence of scientific socialism while doing so. The Euro-communists fail on both counts.

V. The relationship between form and essence

Before dealing with the concrete programme of democracy under the dictatorship of the proletariat, let us look briefly at one more point: the relationship between form and essence.

Dictatorship is the essence of the state, democracy is a form of the state. Every state is a dictatorship, but not every dictatorship is a democracy. The essence of the bourgeois state is the bourgeois dictatorship. This may take the form of democracy; it may also take the form of open dictatorship. The same applies to the proletariat's state. The proletariat's state too is in essence a proletarian dictatorship, but it may be either democracy or open dictatorship. The state in Poland is a dictatorship of the

proletariat, but there is no democracy in Poland today where martial law has been proclaimed. There is an open dictatorship.

According to the particular circumstances and mistakes in the line being pursued by the party, etc., there may be a greater or lesser discrepancy between form and essence. Such a discrepancy under socialism indicates a *bureaucratic deformation*.

The period of socialism is a period of revolutionary transformation which stretches from the revolution itself to communism. The determining characteristic of this period is the abolition of exploitation and of private property in the means of production, but the continued existence of the division between mental and manual labour. Consequently, the state bureaucracy is still a sphere of *expertise*. For this reason, the important struggle in this period of revolutionary transformation we call socialism is the struggle as to whether or not the state administration, still a sphere for experts, will become isolated from the people, whether or not it will be subordinated to the popular will. This is an important contradiction of the period that constitutes the first stage of communism. The existence of a ruling sector, a bureaucracy, is still mandatory. However, this state is a working class state. The problem is one of whether or not that sector of experts, the state, will be subjected to the will of the majority of the working class, and the extent to which it will be subjected.

The appearance of a discrepancy in this sphere between the dictatorship of the proletariat as essence and the application of democracy as form, implies that the state has escaped the initiative of the proletariat. It means that the state, remaining a sphere for the experts, is

functioning in a manner not sufficiently influenced by the proletariat. In its essence, the dictatorship of the proletariat represents the interests of the majority and democracy is the rule of the majority. When there is no participation of the majority in the affairs of the state, this means that the state has moved out of the reach of the majority. This is called *bureaucratic deformation*.

When this bureaucratic deformation is taken to its logical conclusion, the result is a return to capitalism via the strange ways peculiar to history. There is no law that says there can be no return from socialism to capitalism. The possibility of a return to capitalism remains until communism is achieved. The fact that the means of production are under social ownership does not present an obstacle to the emergence of a new capitalist class.

Let us consider a proletarian dictatorship in which the proletariat's control in the functioning of the state had gradually decreased. Since administering the state is still a matter for the experts, the administrative section, which already exists separate from the workers, breaks away completely. On paper, this section does not own the means of production. That is, it does not have any *legal* property rights but, in fact, *the right of usage* is in its hands. Under these conditions, the administrative section may gradually turn into a capitalist class.

If we establish an historical parallel and remember Ottoman society, neither the peasantry nor the fief-holders had any property rights in the land on paper, but they had the right of usage. In the process of reproduction, this gradually turned into a property right and finally entered into the law as such.

There could be a similar development under socialism if we take bureaucratic deformation to its logical

conclusion. We must avoid crude conclusions such as: "No one owns the means of production, therefore no exploiting class can emerge." The fact that there is a section separate from the working class, a section which rules it, means that, wherever the legal rights of ownership in the means of production may be, the rights of usage lie elsewhere. From this, a capitalist class may be born.

Because there is such a possibility, it is not quite correct to *look only at the essence* and say that the dictatorship of the proletariat defends the rights of the majority or, without feeling the need to *investigate the form*, to say that "The dictatorship of the proletariat is a thousand times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois state." We must absolutely consider these two *together*. Everywhere that Lenin said that the dictatorship of the proletariat is a thousand times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois state, he was considering these two together. He was showing that, at that time, the proletarian state was more democratic than any bourgeois state in both respects. One cannot arrive at a conclusion solely from the essence for, if the rule of the majority is not put into practice, this means that the essence of the proletarian dictatorship, which should protect the interests of the majority, is being poisoned. When we take this to its logical conclusion, it means that the dictatorship of the proletariat no longer exists. Lenin teaches this.

We distinguish between form and essence in order to facilitate our thinking, but we cannot separate them too much. The following logic would create only a caricature: "This is the dictatorship of the proletariat. Whatever it does is in the interests of the majority and what is in the interests of the majority is more democratic." Democratic

processes must definitely have a democratic form. In this historical period, because it has not yet reached the stage of abolishing the state and is compelled to retain a ruling section above itself, the working class must create the conditions which will enable it to control this ruling cadre.

Now let us ask the following question: *Where the form does not exist, what meaning does the essence have?* Where democratic practices do not exist, what meaning does the dictatorship of the proletariat have? It may have various meanings. In every concrete situation, one must look at the balance of class forces. Where the discrepancy between form and essence is not so great, there is a state which works to the benefit of the majority, but is authoritarian. Where this discrepancy is great, but "the dictatorship of the proletariat remains", there is a bureaucratic deformation. (When taken further, this means that the dictatorship of the proletariat no longer exists.) Both are dictatorships of the proletariat and both, in their essence, express a definite bureaucratic deformation. However, one still represents the people's interests and is able to win their voluntary support.

While a state which works to the benefit of the majority but without democratic procedures is not a desirable thing, it may still be useful and historically necessary. The period of war communism in the Soviet Union is an example of this.

Such, in general, are the characteristics of the relationship between form and essence. It is impossible to separate the two *for a long time*.

VI. Our understanding of socialist democracy

Democracy cannot be understood as merely casting votes, etc, especially under socialism. *Democracy is a continuous process of forming ideas and making decisions.* It is a continuous process, not a matter of once every five or six years. For this reason, it demands the *opportunity for broad discussion* in every sphere and at every level. What can you take a decision on, when there is no discussion? Without this, even in its finest form, it would be the democracy of acquiescence that we see as the finest form of bourgeois democracy. Socialism, however, demands mass democracy, active democracy.

Keeping this in mind, what kind of democracy must proletarian democracy be? What kind of structure do we

want to build after the revolution?

It would be impossible to set out the programme for this here, but we can definitely set out a certain framework. It has already been set out. It would be enough to dust it off and bring that heritage to the fore once again.

We can consider the programme of democracy in four spheres. These four spheres which I will distinguish are merged with one another in every state, more so under socialism, because once the means of production became state property the spheres of labour and politics completely merged with each other for the first time in history. However, in order to facilitate our thinking, we may separate them into these four spheres: 1. Democracy in the organisation of the state apparatus; 2. Democracy in the organisation of the political system (The extent to which these do not allow separation is clear even from their names); 3. Democracy in the organisation of the economy; 4. Democracy in the organisation of international relations.

6.1. Democracy in the organisation of the state apparatus

The following are necessary elements in the organisation of the state apparatus if there is to be the mass democracy which is the form most suited to the nature of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

(a) In Lenin's words, "dictatorship of the proletariat at the centre, autonomy in the regions." This implies the following: effective central authority which holds sway in every part of the country, combined with broad autonomy in local organs, for example, municipalities, etc., and with

the financial resources, personnel and economic possibilities, etc., which will guarantee this autonomy. Otherwise, autonomy would exist in name only.

The establishment of such a mechanism is one of the strongest weapons against bureaucracy because it eliminates the need to apply to a higher authority in order to take a decision on even the smallest matter. The local organ takes its own decision while the centre has the authority to change it if it is unsuitable from the point of view of the general interest. However, this flows from the top down. If we eliminate the upward flow of advice, then we will have swept away one of the most important measures preventing bureaucracy, one of the most important avenues by which the masses may participate in the work and administration of the state. It is, at the same time, one of the ways of ensuring the proletarian dictatorship's goal of a *cheap, simple and quick state*.

(b) Election of all state functionaries — not only members of parliament, but all state functionaries (administration, justice, education) — and the right of electors to recall them *at any moment*. (Not the right of recall once every two years, etc., but as a continuous right.)

This measure, adopted by the Paris Commune, is one of the characteristics which Marx and Lenin considered as indispensable elements of the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is also an indispensable element of genuine democracy. Similar procedures are also applied to a certain extent in relaxed periods in imperialist countries. However, they have never been and never can be applied to the full extent we have outlined above.

(c) Again something that was applied during the Paris Commune and that Marx advanced as a criterion: the salary of the highest state employee must not exceed that

of a skilled worker. This is an important condition if the living standards of those who are performing the work of a state which is still a sphere for experts are not to be raised above those of the workers, if the state is not to break away from the workers. Moreover, we must not take a dictionary view of the term "salary". For example, the head of Polish radio and television had a plane, helicopter, a yacht valued at 4-5 million marks, and several private villas, all of which he bought with state funds! We must consider this principle of the Paris Commune together with all its implications. (A striking point: our party's menshevik programme says that "the salary of the highest official must not be more than two times the salary of a skilled worker". The kind of cushy spot they are dreaming of is obvious.)

(d) Two changes must be implemented in the sphere of justice. The first is the presence of popular representatives in the courts. This is called a *jury*. The task of the jury is to decide on the guilt or innocence of the accused, that of the judge to hand down the sentence. The second change is that all judges and prosecutors must be elected and that all the electors have the right to recall them at any time. I think that this is practised in various countries in respect to judges, but not prosecutors.

(e) After abolishing the army and forming a new people's army, a whole series of measures must be adopted to prevent the latter from becoming isolated from the people and becoming a force apart from them. It is very useful to develop these in broad outline before the communist party comes to power. If we fail to develop, not concrete "plans" which will tie our hands, but a theoretical framework, great problems will arise after the revolution in determining the place of the army in socialist society.

The production and distribution of weapons must absolutely be subordinated to the knowledge and supervision of the proletariat. The military armoury must be under the guidance of workers' collectives.

(f) Important matters affecting the whole of society and important laws being drafted, to be submitted to popular referendum.

(g). The principle of openness in state operations. The publication of draft laws which are to be discussed. Sittings of the legislative organ to be open to the public through radio, television and newspaper. Popular access to the financial accounts of state organs at every level.

6.2. Democracy in the organisation of the political system

(a) *Acceptance of the multi-party system. Why? Firstly*, because various classes and strata exist. If they do exist, it is better that they advance their own interests in a separate political party rather than, whether they intend it or not, in an objectively destructive manner by seeping into the communist party, destroying its characteristic of being a working class party and gaining control of some of its organs. Lenin says that "democracy does not abolish the class struggle; on the contrary, democracy makes the class struggle more open, broader and easier." If classes and strata exist, let them establish their own parties rather than infiltrate the communist party. When we look at the leadership and even the composition of the membership of the CPSU, the majority is not from the working class. This is not the way it should be. Because various classes and strata exist, there is a great benefit in accepting the multi-

party system.

Secondly, there will also definitely be different points of view within the same class. I am not compelled to think the same as anyone else simply because I am from the same class. Yes, in every situation there is only one truth. But everyone may not be able to see that truth. Differences of opinion may be so deep as to make it impossible to stay together in the same party, yet they may all want to establish socialism. For example, do the French communists not want communism? Does the CPSU not want communism? It would be impossible for them both to remain in the same party on the basis of one of these two programmes. If the French communists were not French but Soviet, why should they not be accorded that right? That road is wrong, but the other may be wrong as well.

Thirdly, since we know that the communist party defends the interests of the working class and working people most consistently, why then should we fear the existence of other parties?

We could make many more points, all of which strengthen the case for acceptance of a multi-party system. This would impart a more open, more honourable and broader form to the class struggle and involve the masses in this struggle to a greater extent. It would also eliminate the peasant and intellectual influence which tends to deform the communist party.

The single-party system in the Soviet Union is *not* a necessary characteristic of socialism. No one can or does argue this. That system came about due to the force of circumstances. However, Lenin had accepted the multi-party system in principle. Many articles he wrote in the years 1917-18 could be cited as examples of this.

(b) *Natural consequences of the multi-party system:* The

constitution of our state must guarantee the following:

1. Freedom to establish political parties without any requirement of accepting the programme of the communist party. In the socialist countries it is stipulated that one must accept the programme of the communist party. Then it is said that there are different parties. If so, these are not different parties, but transmission belts for the communist party. If you agree to a multi-party system, then you cannot make it a condition to accept the programme of the communist party.

2. Consequently, freedom for all political parties *which do not oppose the democratic system* of the proletarian state. What reason do we have to fear other parties? If we say that communism best defends the interests of workers and working people, and if we have set about *achieving* these, then one must have great contempt for people in order to think that they will follow a mistake. As long as they do not come out against the democratic system of the proletarian state, let anyone establish anything he likes. They will preserve the need for the communist party to win the trust of the people. If such a threat exists, that party will not deal in illusions or become lost in corruption. It will be under constant compulsion to hold the pulse of the working class in its hands, to protect its majority. This will be the most important factor preventing it from becoming isolated from the people:

3. Space in the press and on television for every party in proportion to its support in society. Without this, the freedom to establish political parties would be meaningless.

4. Complete respect for the will of the people. This means the following: Elections will be held. There will be different parties with different programmes. If we lose the elections, we will go. Any other way would be illogical.

Any party which loses the support of the majority of the people after the class it represents has assumed control of the state, after it has socialised the means of production, abolished exploitation, and made continuous progress, is a helpless party indeed. Such a party, in İnönü's words, could not even set up a tent. That being the case, it would be better for it to withdraw after losing the elections. Anything else would be hypocrisy. Respect for the will of the people is compulsory. Exert all your efforts in order to win the support of the people up until the revolution; then, after the revolution, refuse to budge from your place regardless of what the people want. Such a thing would be impossible. Lenin teaches differently.

Defending the superiority of the *multi-party soviet system* when various parties were represented in the workers', peasants' and soldiers' soviets at the beginning of 1918, Lenin said as follows: "... if the working people are dissatisfied with their party they can elect other delegates, *hand power to another party* and change the government without any revolution at all." (Lenin, *Collected Works*, vol. 26, p.498). (Our emphasis)

(c)*The electoral system*: What kind of electoral system should there be? There is one thing about which Lenin said that "without it, there can be no democracy": direct elections. Lenin said "committees not elected in direct elections are not democratic committees."

Equal and universal suffrage (including for prisoners) and proportional representation based on the party system.

Another absolutely indispensable element of the electoral system is the secret vote and public count.

All individuals and organisations must have the right to directly put forward candidates for election. Moreover, everyone must have the right to vote for anyone not listed

on the ballot, to vote for any candidate they want, whether or not he has been nominated anywhere.

Another indispensable aspect of the electoral system is the right of recall. If elections are held once every four years, a certain percentage of the electoral majority must have the right of recall whenever it so desires, not merely the right to review things once every two years and recall anyone who has not worked well.

(d) Concrete measures to encourage the development of civic society. For example, state financial aid for associations and provision of meeting places, publication opportunities, etc., etc.

(e) If democracy means constant decision-making, then society must have the right to freely discuss every topic and, in order to create the opportunity for minority views to become majority views, every view which gains a certain degree of support must have the right to print and publish its views in state printing works.

Let us say that someone has written a book. It was not included in the five-year plan. Perhaps no one will like it. But the man stayed up nights writing it, where can he print it? Certainly, if it contains "non-conformist" views, he cannot print it anywhere in a socialist country. If it is like that, then everything will become frozen, nothing can progress. No one will want to do anything any more. So let us say that, if 10,000 people think this book should be printed, then it will be printed at the state printing works. It is not necessary that the 10,000 people should share the views contained in the book. Every view which has been able to gain a certain degree of support either because its ideas have been accepted, or simply for the purpose of having them discussed, must have the right to be printed and published in state publishing houses. Lenin spoke in

this vein.

(f) The principle of *openness* to be guaranteed in social and political life. Application of this principle curbs bureaucracy. Bureaucracy always flourishes in darkness, behind closed doors. Openness leads to the assumption of responsibility by the people, the growth of their initiative. If the people do not know the questions and problems, they cannot mobilise for their solution.

(g) Inviolability of the person and home, and the privacy of personal life, must be guaranteed.

(h) Abolition of the death penalty and of all punishments incompatible with human dignity, the banning of torture. (Sentences to psychiatric hospitals, etc.) In many places, Lenin says, "we will kill counter-revolutionaries, but never torture them." Moreover, he was speaking about the period of open dictatorship. It was such a period that, whenever the whites caught a worker, they would drive a nail through the red star he wore. In such a period, Lenin said, "we will punish but never torture." This is extremely important. We, however, are in any case not talking about a period of open dictatorship. We are talking about democracy under the dictatorship of the proletariat. Executions, tortures and cruelty do not accord with human dignity and degrade those who carry them out.

Sakharov built the hydrogen bomb; he is one of the world's greatest scientists. It is inconceivable to exile such a man to Gorky. Nevertheless, it happened. Sakharov continues to work in exile. Let him write what he wants, even if it is mistakes and lies. He goes for a walk with his wife and, when he returns, it is to find that the KGB has taken away all his work. Can such things happen? These too are torture. What does it matter if Sakharov writes or

not? These things mar the communist system; they must be abolished.

(i) *Freedom of thought and speech*: When we say freedom of thought, do not think that we mean the way it is in the 1961 constitution which the mensheviks find so democratic. If one cannot say what he thinks, what kind of freedom of thought is this? We defend freedom of thought together with freedom of speech and assembly.

Together with these, we defend personal and institutional religious freedom and worship. As an individual, anyone may believe in and worship according to a religion. As an institution, religion may establish an association or church. We do not say this for tactical reasons. Underlying it is a profound philosophical reason. In Engels' words, "belief in atheism cannot be made compulsory." It itself is disbelief.

To stipulate disbelief in god would be like saying "you must believe". However, the communist party will struggle with religions. This is where we separate from the mensheviks. Communists must struggle, not only with "bad" religious men, but also with *religion itself*. Religion is the opium of the people. However, now we are talking, not about the communist party, but about the state. The state cannot impose any restrictions against religion.

(j) Freedom to travel and move within the country and freedom to travel abroad.

(k) Respect for the right of nations to self-determination: this is one of the indispensable articles for the democratisation of society.

(l) The right of everyone to bear arms. The organisation of this right in a manner that will enable the people to cope with the organised armed forces in society and that takes account of modern technology. For

example, *workers' collectives* must be in possession of highly effective modern weapons.

6.3. Democracy in the organisation of the economy

(a) Workplace democracy: Participation of workers and workers' collectives in administration and supervision at all workplaces. Of course, it will be necessary to develop this idea when the time comes. Who will elect the managers? Certainly, it will be necessary to have a bilateral procedure: to guarantee the rights of the centre while developing the will of the people who will work under the manager. Workplace democracy is one of the important sources of democracy under socialism. If those who work in a factory or workplace have no control over the decisions taken, it is not then possible to speak of democracy in the state.

(b) The gradual increase in the trade unions' authority and responsibility in the organisation and supervision of the economy to be guaranteed. It will be necessary to develop concrete measures for this. Socialism is a period of continuous revolutionary *transformation* which stretches to the highest stage of communism. It is not a stationary stage, but a constantly flowing process. It is a stage at which we are compelled to change the superstructure in accordance with the development of the economy, and to develop the will of the working class, of the majority, and the authority of the trade unions, mass organisations and civic society in general at every moment.

(c) Collective bargaining, the right to strike and

general strike to be guaranteed. It is a very bad situation when, under socialism, the working class goes on strike against its own state. But such situations can arise. There may even arise such periods or situations when strikes can save the dictatorship of the proletariat. Again, there may arise such situations, as in Poland, in which strikes may begin to have harmful results. Nevertheless, we can never take away this most natural right of the working class.

(d) The publication of all-encompassing statistics about the state of the economy.

6.4. Democracy in the organisation of international relations.

(a) The abrogation of all international agreements which disregard or restrict the sovereignty and will of the people, withdrawal from all organisations displaying this characteristic.

(b) Agreements to be signed and organisations to be joined after the revolution on behalf of the working class and people, to be ratified by popular vote and again submitted to popular vote at definite intervals. Consequently, there are to be no "secret" agreements.

When recognising such a right, it is also necessary to develop the people's internationalism. If you do not educate the people in an internationalist spirit, they will look at everything from a narrow nationalist perspective. You are obliged to develop their internationalist understanding if they are not to take this kind of approach: "What did this agreement gain for me? They took my timber, what did they give to me?"

VII. The general framework of the foregoing

All the conditions which we have touched upon above serve only to set out a general understanding. It could be much more concrete. This framework is the fundamental law or *constitution* and has been considered on a general level. For it is the general outline of this constitution which will take us and our party forward today.

When we consider together the measures in regard to the organisation of the state apparatus, all of them point to the same thing: Since various spheres of the state apparatus depend on experts, at first we have to use bourgeois intellectuals. Then we will train people to perform these tasks from the working class and hand them over to them. (The state cadres in the Soviet Union today

are intellectuals from the working class and the peasantry). This new section which comes from the working class and the peasantry consequently has a better understanding of their situation. Called the intelligentsia-bureaucracy, it now constitutes a section *separate from* the workers and peasants. Thus all these measures are aimed at involving the will of the working class, of the majority, in state operations as much as possible. All these measures imply a struggle against bureaucracy, a struggle to prevent the state from becoming a force isolated from the people.

Underlying the first, second and third articles cited in regard to the organisation of the political system, is the effort to organise the state-party relationship in socialism. They are not the same thing. Parties determine the policies the state will follow. The state itself applies them. Party members working at various levels of the state, as party members, facilitate and expedite this mechanism and ensure that it functions more fully and effectively.

This is also what the leading role of the communist party in socialist society really means. Under the dictatorship of the proletariat, the communist party is the spirit of hegemony or power. It is the leading force of this dictatorship, but not the state itself. It is not the state. State and party are not the same thing. On the other hand, the communist party is not the working class either.

Certain measures are also necessary in order to democratise society, in order that society may be able to supervise the state more and more effectively and take over an ever broader section of state functions. The articles following on the third article in the section on the organisation of the political system are essentially aimed at achieving this.

The democratic rights themselves which we have

enumerated here, and which can really be developed much further, create difficulties which must be overcome in their day-to-day operation. We are aware of this. However, these are difficulties which will be overcome step by step. And this approach is the most reliable guarantee of preventing the appearance of such great difficulties as in Poland. The most important guarantee for preventing the entire system from being thrown all of a sudden into chaos with everything being turned against it, is the solution of the various day-to-day problems which we will arrive at by our own efforts. If we show the necessary care in dealing with these, then we will eliminate the possibility of coming up against that great, destructive problem.

In conclusion, we can say that the dictatorship of the proletariat will have the active mass democracy, which is the state form most suited to it, only when the conditions we have enumerated are secured. And only if it has such active mass democracy is it able to advance towards the higher stage of communism. For the question of which class rules the state must not be confused with the question of the administration of the state. Lenin said, "... the fact that a class is the leading class does not make it at once capable of administering". (Lenin, *CW*, vol.30, p.457) This is an important contradiction at the stage of revolutionary transition to communism. The working class is the ruling class, but it is not ready to administer. It is compelled to accept some people who must administer in its name. The answer to the question of to what degree it will be able to control them will determine the extent to which it is able to advance towards communism. The extent to which it is able to hold these in the palm of its hand is identical with the extent to which democracy is practised.

“Democracy is the very condition of the dictatorship of the proletariat, its life essence. It helps to prevent the distortion of the principle of the dictatorship by bureaucracy, and ensures that state power should never for a moment lose sight of both the day-to-day and the long-term interests of the working class and of the working people who are its allies. Socialist democracy is not counterposed to the dictatorship of the proletariat and is not called upon to replace it.”
(Bela Biszkü, *Power, Liberty, Democracy*, Corvina Press, Budapest, Hungary, 1978)

Once more on the significance of the democratic struggle.

Up to this point we have attempted to explain, in broad outline, the democracy that the working class state in Turkey will bring. Moreover, what we have said is not the uppermost border of proletarian democracy. That border will extend in proportion to the consolidation and development of the system itself.

Nevertheless, this level of proletarian democracy is one which *no* bourgeois state has ever granted, even in the most relaxed period, and one which it will *never* be able to grant because, when democracy starts becoming genuine, when it begins to continuously reflect the will of the people, then it begins to undermine the foundations of the capitalist system. For this reason, *the single and genuine*

champion of democracy in our epoch is the working class.

In capitalist countries, the relations of production hinder the development of the productive forces. The extent to which the productive forces of these countries are able to develop lags far behind when compared with the extent to which they *would be able to develop* under socialism. Development under socialism is unrestricted. The disharmony between the social character of production and private property will come to a head and destroy capitalism. The scientific and technological revolution is greatly aggravating the inadequacy of capitalism. At the present-day level of the scientific and technological revolution and of the socialisation of production, *it is becoming impossible to continue production* without bringing ever more democratic economic and social procedures.

This gives birth to a decisive contradiction. On the one hand, economic and social life based on scientific and technological development necessitates ever greater democratisation. On the other hand, genuine democracy cannot be applied under capitalism. After a certain point, it repudiates capitalism. For this reason, the struggle for democracy in capitalist, particularly advanced capitalist countries, is a vital part of the working class struggle for socialism.

For our part, we are not afraid to say that the society of Turkey is a backward, intolerant and uncompromising one that has not yet been liberated from the influence of its barbarian history. Perhaps the framework which I have tried to draw will not be able to be applied for some time, or perhaps it will be able to be applied only to a certain extent. We say that this is the democracy required by the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is what we want to

achieve. These will be included in our programme. This is what we will establish, if nothing prevents it.

If the extent to which these will be able to be applied in Turkey is not readily apparent today, this is still no obstacle to our filling a gap which, for various reasons, has been neglected by the communist movement until today. It presents no obstacle to setting out what we understand by democracy under socialism. Leaving aside the question of after the revolution, we are *compelled* to set this out *if we want to make the revolution*. World development has reached such a point that, if we fail to explain the existing gap between socialism and democracy which shows itself in various concrete examples, if we fail to demonstrate that communists are the only force genuinely defending democracy, we will be unable to make the revolution. This problem makes itself felt more sharply in Europe. As long as it is unable to solve this problem, communism there is in danger. Turkey, however, is not that far removed from Europe. Moreover, its development is at an advanced level which cannot be compared with that of the Soviet Union at the time of the revolution.

In Turkey, we are obliged to undertake a really intense struggle for democracy. Our struggle will not end with the making of the revolution itself. Essentially, we must state what we intend to do after the revolution. We cannot deal with the question of democracy in Turkey without closing the gap between socialism and democracy which has shown itself in concrete examples.

We are obliged to make our comrades understand why democracy is so vitally important for socialism, that democracy is a necessary condition for socialism's advance to communism. We cannot be communists if we denigrate this. We must absolutely not allow ourselves to denigrate

democracy in our own minds so that we don't look down our noses when we are discussing the question of democracy in Turkey. Let us speak with a grasp of the historical significance of the term. This is necessary in order to win the hearts of the people today and to be able to advance to communism tomorrow.

In our ranks there is more than a little tendency to belittle democracy — I even remember that, during a discussion on the struggle for democracy in Turkey, one comrade remarked: "Since there is no revolutionary situation today, we'll wage a struggle for democracy so as not to remain idle". Denigrating democracy in such a way is to put it in the bourgeoisie's pocket.

The *artificial gap* between socialism and democracy is not simply a misunderstanding on the part of the comrade we have mentioned. That comrade spoke while supporting socialism himself. Millions of people, however, say they do not want socialism because there is no democracy. This must be rectified, otherwise it will be impossible to make a revolution under the leadership of communists.

Just as it is necessary to allow different parties to exist, so too is it necessary to hand over power to whoever wins the elections. It would be hypocrisy to accept the will of the people up to a certain point and from then on refuse to accept it. Everyone will decide for themselves whether or not to be so hypocritical. As a political movement, we have no such problem.

It would be philosophically repugnant to tell the people to choose among various platforms presented and, at the same time, think that they will make a wrong choice in a system that has rid itself of the corruption of the bourgeoisie. It would mean that you think you will build communism *in their name*.

We say that we will not lose the elections. Shame on the party which loses elections in its own state. Nothing can be done with such a party. All it can do is postpone its collapse and serve as a bad example for the workers of the world.

Additionally, it is necessary to think about this question in conjunction with what we have said on various topics. Classes still exist at the stage we call socialism, until it passes to the higher stage of communism. If classes and the class struggle exist, and you fail to provide democratic channels, the class struggle will pass into the organisations *that do exist*. If the only existing political organisation is the communist party, then we may cause it to *degenerate* while we talk about building socialism. Supposedly, we will save socialism with an approach totally contrary to Marxism-Leninism. With such talk as, "The people do not understand, they are backward. Are we going to recognise exploiters?" all we will accomplish will be to cause the communist party to degenerate. If classes and the class struggle exist, this will definitely be reflected in the political arena. If there is only a single party, and that is the communist party, all the different views and the class struggle itself will flow into it.

Can there not be several working class parties? Of course, there can. There is only one genuine working class party, the communist party, but this is in another sense. The *Communist Manifesto* enumerates various working class parties. But there is only one party which represents the long term interests of the working class as a whole, and that is the communist party. There are also various parties in bourgeois society. The contradictions in socialism are not that kind of antagonistic contradiction, but there will certainly be conflicts of interest, including within the same

class. Especially as socialism advances, and the working class gradually begins to subsume other sections within itself, professional distinctions will gain greater significance. There will be different parties which may or may not be based on these, or which may appear only on the ideological level. If, in America or England, one bourgeois party goes and another comes, does the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie collapse?

Let us not consider these as a dream. If we did, it would mean surrendering to socialism's present-day backwardness. This world will see many things, both socialism and the most advanced democracy.

Let us believe sincerely in democracy, not belittle it, and inculcate in our own minds the thought that the constant development of democracy is necessary and that it is an inseparable part of our communism. Even this understanding alone determines a whole series of things that we will do when we come to power. For it is always possible to do better.

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