

After Lenin's death Stalin as the chief leader of the Party and the state creatively applied and developed Marxism-Leninism. In the struggle to defend the legacy of Leninism against its enemies - the Trotskyites, Zinovievites and other bourgeois agents - Stalin expressed the will and wishes of the people and proved himself to be an outstanding Marxist-Leninist fighter. The reason Stalin won the support of the Soviet people and played an important role in history was primarily that he, together with the other leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, brought about the triumph of socialism in the Soviet Union and created the conditions for the victory of the Soviet Union in the war against Hitler; these victories of the Soviet people conformed to the interests of the working class of the world and all progressive mankind. It was therefore quite natural for the name of Stalin to be greatly honoured throughout the world. But having won such high honour among the people both at home and abroad by his correct application of the Leninist line, Stalin erroneously exaggerated his own role and counterposed his individual authority to the collective leadership, and as a result certain of his actions were opposed to certain fundamental Marxist-Leninist concepts he himself had propagated....

Marxist-Leninists hold that leaders play a big role in history. The people and their parties need forerunners who are able to represent the interests and will of the people, stand in the forefront of their historic struggles, and serve as their leaders. But when any leader of the Party or the state places himself over and above the Party and the masses, instead of in their midst, when he alienates himself from the masses, he ceases to have all-round, penetrating insight into the affairs of the state. As long as this was the case, even so outstanding a personality as Stalin could not avoid making unrealistic and erroneous decisions on certain important matters... During the later part of his life, Stalin took more and more pleasure in this cult of the individual and violated the Party's system of democratic centralism and the principle of combining collective leadership with individual responsibility. As a result, he made some serious mistakes: for example, he broadened the scope of the suppression of counter-revolution; he lacked the necessary vigilance on the eve of the anti-fascist war; he failed to pay proper attention to the further development of agriculture and the material welfare of peasantry; he gave certain wrong advice on the international communist movement, and, in particular, made a wrong decision on the question of Yugoslavia. On these issues, Stalin fell victim to subjectivism and one-sidedness and divorced himself from objective reality and from the masses.

The cult of the individual is a rotten carry-over from the long history of mankind. The cult of the individual is rooted not only in the exploiting classes but also in the small producers. As is well known, patriarchy is a product of small-producer economy...

The struggle against the cult of the individual, which was launched by the Twentieth Congress, is a great and courageous fight by the communists and the people of the Soviet Union to clear away the ideological obstacles blocking their advance...

It must be pointed out that Stalin's works should, as before, still be seriously studied and that we should accept all that is of value in them, as an important historical legacy, especially those many works in which he defended Leninism and correctly summarized the experience of building up the Soviet Union. But there are two ways of studying them - the Marxist way and the doctrinaire way. Some people treat Stalin's writings in a doctrinaire manner and therefore cannot analyse and see what is correct and what is not and everything that is correct they consider a panacea and apply indiscriminately, and thus inevitably they make mistakes. For instance, Stalin put forward a formula that in different revolutionary periods the main blow should be so directed as to isolate the middle-of-the-road social and political forces of the time. This formula of Stalin's should be treated according to circumstances and from a critical, Marxist point of view. In certain circumstances it may be correct to isolate the middle forces, but it is not correct to isolate them under all circumstances. Our experience teaches us

that the main blow of the revolution should be directed at the chief enemy and to isolate him, whereas with the middle forces, a policy of both uniting with them and struggling against them should be adopted, so that they are at least neutralized; and as circumstances permit, efforts should be made to shift them from their position of neutrality to one of alliance with us in order to facilitate the development of the revolution. But there was a time - the ten years of civil war from 1927 to 1936 - when some of our comrades crudely applied this formula of Stalin's to China's revolution by turning their main attack on the middle forces, singling them out as the most dangerous enemy; the result was that, instead of isolating the real enemy, we isolated ourselves and suffered losses to the advantage of the real enemy. In the light of this doctrinaire error, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China during the period of the anti-Japanese war formulated a policy of developing the progressive forces, winning over the middle-of-the roaders, and isolating the diehards for the purpose of defeating the Japanese aggressors...

Some people consider that Stalin was wrong in everything. This is a grave misconception. Stalin was a great Marxist-Leninist, yet at the same time a Marxist-Leninist who committed several gross errors without realizing that they were errors. We should view Stalin from a historical standpoint, make a proper and all round analysis to see where he was right and where he was wrong and draw useful lessons therefrom. Both the things he did right and the things he did wrong were phenomena of the international communist movement and bore the imprint of the times. Taken as a whole the international communist movement is only a little over hundred years old and it is only thirty-nine years since the victory of the October Revolution; experience in many fields of revolutionary work is still inadequate. Great achievements have been made, but there are still shortcomings and mistakes....

Reactionary forces the world over are pouring ridicule on this event: they jeer at the fact that we are overcoming mistakes in our camp. But what will come of all this ridicule? There is not the slightest doubt that these scoffers will find themselves facing a still more powerful, forever invincible, great camp of peace and socialism, headed by the Soviet Union, while the murderous, bloodsucking enterprises of these scoffers will be in a pretty fix.