

From Bernstein to Liu Shao-chi

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THE "theory of productive forces" is an international revisionist trend of thought. According to this "theory," socialist revolution is absolutely impossible in a country where capitalism is not highly developed and where the productive forces have not reached a high level and the rural economy is scattered and backward, and socialism will come naturally if capitalism is first allowed to develop fully and the productive forces to grow enormously. For more than half a century, from Bernstein, Kautsky, Trotsky down to Chen Tu-hsiu and Liu Shao-chi, this handful of renegades to the proletariat passed off such an absurd theory as historical materialism, using it as a "theoretical" basis for their opposition to the proletarian revolution.

It is no accident that the "theory of productive forces" emerged at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. World capitalism at that time had developed to its moribund stage, i.e., the stage of imperialism, in which the proletarian revolution had become the order of the day. To cater to the needs of the imperialists, the old-line revisionists of the Second International— Bernstein, Kautsky and their like — brought out their fallacy in an underhand attempt to oppose and strangle the proletarian revolution from within the workers' movement.

Bernstein first put forward this fallacy in 1899 in his book *The Premises of Socialism and the Tasks of the Social-Democracy*. He maintained that with

the highly developed social productive forces, capitalism would grow into socialism peacefully. Therefore, he said, revolution by armed force would become a meaningless phrase. He arbitrarily declared that the victory of socialism could only depend on the general social progress, especially on the increase of social wealth or the growth of social productive forces accompanied by the maturity of the working class in terms of knowledge and morality. He concluded: As for the capitalist system, it should not be destroyed but should be helped to further develop.

The renegade Kautsky also spared no efforts in publicizing the reactionary "theory of productive forces." In his pamphlet *The Road to Power* written in 1909, he asserted that only where the capitalist mode of production was highly developed could there be the possibility of turning capitalist ownership of the means of production into public ownership by virtue of state power.

Lenin waged repeated and effective struggles against this reactionary "theory of productive forces" before and after the Russian October Socialist Revolution. Prior to the October Revolution, Lenin pointed out that victory for socialist revolution would not necessarily be first won in those capitalist countries where the level of productive forces was the highest, but could be first won in Russia, the weak link in the capitalist world. The victory of the October Revolution fully confirmed the

correctness of Lenin's brilliant thesis—Following the victory of the October Revolution, Kautsky continued to brandish the broken-down weapon of the "theory of productive forces." He became even wilder in opposing the October Revolution and opposing the Soviet people taking the socialist road. Shutting his eyes to reality, Kautsky even clamoured in 1930 that the revolution that had taken place in Russia could only serve to clear the way for the full development of capitalism and that only when capitalism was highly developed was it possible to establish a socialist society. Therefore, he alleged, the industrialized West European countries would inevitably precede the East European countries in their march to socialism. He also babbled that without a comparably high educational standard and a highly developed industry, it was absolutely impossible to achieve and maintain mass agricultural production, and therefore agricultural collectivization in the Soviet Union was only a crude experiment which would definitely meet with failure. This meant that, because of the backward productive forces, the Russian proletariat could not keep in its hands the political power it had seized, but had to let the bourgeoisie take over the rule.

Taking over the "theory of productive forces" advocated by Bernstein and Kautsky, Trotsky likewise feverishly attacked Lenin's theory that the victory of socialism was possible first in one country, and attacked the October Revolution. In 1922, in his postscript to The Program of Peace, Trotsky drivelled that Russia had not reached or even approached the stage of establishing a socialist society . . . and that socialism was possible only when there was the basis of developed and thriving productive forces. He further asserted that

a real upsurge in the Russian socialist economy was possible only after the proletariat had triumphed in several of the most important European countries. This meant that the Soviet Union, which was economically backward, was not qualified to build socialism. Such a fallacy is, in essence, designed to create counter-revolutionary public opinion for a capitalist restoration in the Soviet Union.

The great revolutionary teacher Lenin vehemently denounced these absurd and ridiculous theories. He repeatedly stressed the tremendous role which the revolution played in developing production and the tremendous role which the seizure of power and the change in the relations of production played in promoting the development of productive forces. He incisively pointed out that with the Bolshevik Party, a consolidated worker-peasant alliance and under the leadership of such a Party, it was entirely possible to turn Russia into a mighty socialist country after the revolution. He said: "If a definite level of culture is required for the building of Socialism (although nobody can say just what that definite 'level of culture' is, for it differs in every West-European country), why cannot we begin by first achieving the prerequisites for that definite level of culture in a revolutionary way, and then, with the aid of the workers' and peasants' government and the Soviet system, proceed to overtake the other nations?" Lenin sharply criticized the advocates of the "theory of productive forces," saying: "They have completely failed to understand what is decisive in Marxism, namely, its revolutionary dialectic!-."

The Soviet revisionist Khrushchev renegade clique has completely betrayed Marxism-Leninism and has effected an all-round restoration of capit-

alism in the Soviet Union. Out of their counter-revolutionary needs, they prattle that, under socialist conditions, economics is more important than politics, that the problem of production should be given first place and should be placed at the heart of all Party organization activities and come before all work of the Party organizations. Such nonsense is merely a reproduction of the "theory of productive forces" that was advocated by the old-line revisionists.

In China, the "theory of productive forces" was first advocated by the renegade Chen Tu-hsiu. In 1923, in his *The Chinese National Revolution and All Classes in the Society*, he one-sidedly stressed that China's "industry is in its infancy and its culture backward," that "even the bourgeoisie is very infantile and, objectively, the working class is even more infantile." He frantically opposed the proletariat leading the revolution and seizing political power. He ranted: "Under normal circumstances, political power will naturally be in the hands of the bourgeois-

ie following success in the national revolution." Even in 1938, he still jabbered that "there is still much room for the development of capitalism in China." In preaching this he vainly hoped to completely liquidate revolution.

Stepping into the shoes of the renegades Bernstein, Kautsky, Trotsky and Chen Tu-hsiu, the renegade, hidden traitor and scab Liu Shao-chi consistently advocated the reactionary "theory of productive forces." He opposed the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat and thus committed towering crimes.

The great leader Chairman Mao has taught us: "The socialist system will eventually replace the capitalist system; this is an objective law independent of man's will." Those who try to obstruct the advance of history will have a miserable end. Like his predecessors Bernstein, Kautsky, Trotsky and Chen Tu-hsiu, Liu Shao-chi has been submerged by the mighty torrent of history.