

2 Significance of Chinese People's Revolution

The significance and importance of the people's revolution in China became clear to mankind when the Chinese people's long protracted, revolutionary war against the reactionary alliance of the imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism ended in the founding of the People's Republic of China on October 1, 1949. This revolution led by the Chinese Communist Party headed by Mao Zedong was not the result of conspiracy by a handful of revolutionaries. It was a great armed revolution made by millions of oppressed and exploited people to establish their rights and freedom. It was a people's revolution, unprecedented in the history of mankind. This revolution led by the Communist Party in a semi-colonial and semi-feudal

society is political, economic as well as cultural. But the Chinese people's revolution is significant not only to the people of China but also to the people of the world as a whole.

The first significance of the Chinese people's revolution is that it is the successful culmination of China's national revolution. The European and the Japanese imperialists in collaboration with the Chinese feudal forces made China a colonial, semi-colonial, and semi-feudal society. There is a long story of the Chinese people's revolutionary struggle against this oppressive allied forces: the Opium War of 1840, the Revolution of Taiping Heavenly Kingdom of 1851-64, the Sino-French War, Sino-Japanese War, the Reform Movement of 1898, the Yi-He-tuan Movement (known as the "Boxer Uprising"), the Revolution of 1911, the May 4 Movement, the Northern Expeditionary War in 1926, and so on. But all these revolutionary struggles failed as they were led by the weak vacillating bourgeoisie. It was only under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, the Party of the Chinese working class, that the people of China were able to achieve their goal of national liberation. The Chinese Communist Party headed by Mao Zedong pursued a correct policy and programme in forging unity among the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie, patriotic elements and the national bourgeoisie and established a broad-based anti-imperialist revolutionary front.

But the task of the Chinese revolution was not simply to complete the national revolution. Mao Zedong wrote in his two historic documents *Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party* and *On New Democracy* : Since the feudal landlord class was the main pillar of imperialist domination in China, the National Revolution could not be successful without the completion of the democratic revolution. **The people's revolution of China was both national and democratic** : it consisted in a national revolution and a democratic revolution for overthrowing Chinese people's two principal enemies—imperialism and the semi-feudal forces. But this **national democratic revolution of China was no longer of the general old type of bourgeois-democratic revolution. It was a special, new type; Mao Zedong called it "new-democratic revolution"**. The first task of this revolution according to Mao Zedong, was to transform the then Chinese social and political system into an independent and democratic society. "A new democratic revolution was a revolution of the broad masses of people led by the proletariat and directed against imperialism and feudalism; it was a revolution of the united front of several revolutionary classes". But the Chinese people's revolution could not stop at the democratic stage, it must advance towards the socialist revolution. Thus the Chinese revolution as a whole embraces a twofold task : completion of the bourgeois-democratic revolution (a new-democratic revolution) and then a socialist revolution in the future. On October 1949, the People's Democratic Dictatorship based

on the United Front of all revolutionary classes was established. The 1954 Constitution described the Chinese People's Republic as "democratic dictatorship" and envisaged the gradual transformation of the entire economy into socialism. Thereafter the democratic revolution having been completed and **the prerequisites for the socialist revolution being created, the People's Republic has become "a socialist state"** as declared by the Constitution of 1982. This is another significance of the people's revolution of China.

The third significance of the people's revolution is that in the epoch of imperialist aggression no people can achieve their national-liberation and freedom from feudal exploitation without the leadership of the Communist Party. This party must hold aloft the national banner and rally around itself the working people and the patriotic and anti-imperialist as well as anti-feudal people against the common enemy of the whole nation.

The fourth significance of the Chinese Revolution is that in a semi-feudal country like China the peasantry constitutes the main force in people's liberation struggle. The national-democratic revolution in China could not become successful if the Chinese Communist Party failed to win over and organise 80% of the country's population (the peasants) under its banner. Stalin said "National problem is, in fact, a peasant problem".

This points to another significance of the Chinese Revolution. It may be a continuation of the October Revolution in Russia, and that, without the latter, the former would not have been possible. But the Chinese Revolution has made a specific and unique contribution to the cause of world revolution. The October Socialist Revolution served as an example for revolution in the oppressor nations, that is, for revolution in the imperialist countries; while the **Chinese Revolution set an example for revolution in the oppressed nations, that is, for revolution in the colonial and semi-colonial countries.**

A distinctive characteristic of the Chinese Revolution lies in the armed revolutionary war waged by the revolutionary forces against the armed counter-revolutionary war waged by the revolutionary forces. Foreign imperialist powers and the Chinese feudalism deprived the people of all political rights by brutal force. In the circumstances the Chinese people could not win their struggle for national-liberation and political right without armed struggle against the enemy. Mao Zedong rightly showed the **necessity of "people's war" against armed counter-revolution** and this principle is principal contribution of the Chinese Revolution in the field of people's revolutionary movement.

The international significance of the Chinese Revolution is also great. The people's revolution in a country of 500 millions (more than 1000 millions

at present) **accelerated the development of the world socialist system and brought about a radical transformation in the correlation of international forces.** It was after the victory of the Chinese Revolution that the national liberation struggles of all colonial people made giant strides. With the ideological, political and material support of the socialist camp, the colonial people's national-liberation struggles became ultimately victorious. The Chinese Revolution showed that people oppressed by feudalism and imperialism are able to bring about radical transformation of the society's political foundation and to govern themselves.

Finally, **the Chinese people's revolution is not only a political and social revolution; it is a cultural revolution as well.** Mao Zedong wrote in his *On New Democracy* : "New-Democratic culture is national culture. This culture opposes imperialism and holds aloft the Chinese people's independence and national honour. It is our national characteristic." But "it is a part of world culture because the Chinese Revolution is a part of the world revolution". This new culture of the Chinese people is spearheaded under the leadership of the proletariat against imperialism and feudalism. The success of a revolution does not depend simply on the capture of political power, the final victory of the revolution is dependent upon people's revolutionary consciousness and idealism.