

Socialism in one country - fighting for ourselves

SOCIALISM in one country was discussed at the last meeting in the autumn series organised by the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) in London.

Until 1917 it was generally supposed that socialism in one country was impossible to achieve. In 1915, however, Lenin wrote that revolution in one particular country could not be prevented once begun. His belief that it could be consolidated in one country was proved true after 1917. Socialism was built in Russia, a country surrounded by enemies. The imperialists, led by Britain, launched the attacks of intervention and blockade and armed the White army. Their defeat, and the successful spread of the socialist ideology throughout that vast country is the inspiration of our age.

All the pessimistic carping and criticisms of the opposition were proved wrong not by argument but by positive results: a country that was industrially and economically backward was transformed

through industrialisation, electrification; a country without reserves of capital refused all outside aid and created wealth for its people.

Opponents of the Bolshevik Party claimed that the Soviet Union could never defend itself against its enemies without a protective ring of socialist countries - but socialism was consolidated throughout the nineteen-thirties while fascism developed without.

Two other struggles for socialism on the other side of the world, in China and Vietnam, were born in the nineteen thirties. As in Russia, the successful revolutions there demonstrated how socialism in one country depends on understanding our national contradictions. In Vietnam and China successful revolution followed on the understanding that the colonialists were the main enemy, and then the national bourgeoisie. All this means that socialism can only develop in one country - it cannot be exported or imported.

After the Second World War socialism in one country emerged victorious. What has happened since in the world, in the Soviet Union and China, shows only that complete victory is not always possible in a world dominated by imperialism. Albania, however, has applied the principles of Marxism-Leninism to building socialism in the most backward country of Europe.

But is socialism possible in the very heartland of imperialism, in Britain? Britain is a country where a materialist and scientific ideology gained the ascendancy over religion long ago, where awe of the monarchy is long dead, buried with the king the people executed. The working class of Britain is rooted in the country and faces a capitalist class which has no roots - multinationalism also means weakness. In their weakness they attempt to destroy our roots, and their home base. Only a migrant nomadic working class can serve capitalism now.

So if the class does not take hold of socialism, what is the alternative? We can't turn the clock back to the nineteenth or early twentieth century, to hopes of an evolutionary socialism. We can't turn to a united international communist movement for aid, which is no great handicap really. We have to rely on our resources in any case.

Everything is in our favour: the world is in ferment, and we have vast resources of energy. We must understand that if we allow fascism to return it will be fascism with the neutron bomb this time.

If we understand that socialism is possible in one country, then the capitalist class in their frenzy to destroy Britain understand and fear this too. This takes us back to the beginning, to Marx, who said, "The proletariat must, of course, first of all settle matters with its own bourgeoisie."