

New Soviet Law Stands Marxism on its Head

anon.

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Although everyone except the most self-deluded realizes that the Soviet Union is a totalitarian police state, its rulers still feel the need to wrap their bureaucratic authority in formal legalisms. Under the direction of Soviet Communist Party chief Leonid Brezhnev, a new Soviet Constitution has been proposed, the fourth since the Bolsheviks seized the government in 1917, which would replace the 1936 Constitution, authored by Stalin. Although both documents contain wordy guarantees of civil liberties and “rights,” the current one will have no more effect than the last which in no way inhibited Stalin from sending millions to forced-labor camps and murdering millions more.

The “Catch 22” in it all, stems from a phrase in the new Constitution, “The exercise of rights and freedoms shall be inseparable from the performance by citizens of their duties.” Since both the “rights and freedoms” as well as the “duties” of Soviet citizens are defined by the party functionaries and the ever-present police apparatus, it comes down to having nothing guaranteed except that you are going to be told what to do and go to jail if you don’t.

Anyone doubting that the Soviet Union is the Eastern branch of capitalism with full-blown class relations in existence should read article 13 of the section entitled “The Economic System.” It states: “The state shall control the measure of labor and consumption in accordance with the principle ‘From each according to his ability to each according to his work.’ Socially useful work and its results shall determine citizens’ status in society!”

This is a pronouncement of such bureaucratic distortion of the principles of social revolution that it stands on its head all that was meant to be liberating and turns it back into increased domination. The original formulation was, “From each according to his ability; to each according to his need.” The Soviet version coupled with the statement following it, is simply the dictum of capitalist society.

In Russia, government officials, technical workers, military men, etc., are designated as more “socially useful” than ditch diggers, farmers, teachers, factory workers, etc., so that the former are rewarded with good housing, cars, country villas and access to imported goods while the latter search for small apartments, wait in endless lines for shoddy domestic goods, and in general suffer under one of the lowest standards of living in Eastern Europe.

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