



Stefan Engel, 20 June 2020



## Speech on the occasion of the unveiling of the Lenin statue

Dear guests, dear colleagues, dear friends, dear comrades!

Thirty-eight years ago to the day we founded the Marxist-Leninist Party. We had an important discussion then on the matter of giving the right name to the Party. We chose the name “Marxist-Leninist Party of Germany.”

The delegate Helga Janzig from Gelsenkirchen, a cleaner, who organized the first strike of cleaning women in Germany in 1976, stated at the party congress:

*“In our local membership meeting none of the comrades had spoken in favor of ‘MLPD.’ We feared that the workers might confuse us with a theoretical circle.*

*We did not see that we had discussed the matter one-sidedly. It is us communists who have to take Marxism-Leninism to the working class. We base our work on Marxism-Leninism and are obliged to spread it among the workers. If we did not do that, we would be at the mercy of reformism and revisionism and would withhold the way to socialism from the working class.”*

The party name, MLPD, has yet another advantage:

The name was still unknown to the working class and does not carry negative connotations like the name “Communist Party.” The name “MLPD” stands for a party of a new type, such as always demanded by Lenin, when we enter a new epoch of party building.

When the German Communist Party (DKP) was founded in 1968 it became obvious that it would follow the revisionist road of the CPSU and the Socialist Unity Party (SED). The rebuilding of the revolutionary party in Germany became necessary.

The MLPD bears the names of Marx and Lenin in its name because we invoke scientific socialism, which was founded by Marx and Engels and decisively developed further by Lenin.

Marx scientifically criticized the capitalist mode of production, developed the doctrine of class struggle, and founded dialectical and historical materialism as the communists' world outlook.

Lenin was not only a Marxist but also a brilliant theoretician of Marxism. In the middle of World War I he analyzed that, since the turn of the century, in the biggest capitalist countries capitalism had developed into imperialism. This imperialism was based on the monopolization of big capital, to which it did not suffice anymore to exploit only its own workers. Imperialism means, in addition, capitalist exploitation of entire countries and colonies.

In the struggle over the redivision of the world, German imperialism sparked World War I with its 20 million deaths – unprecedented barbarism.

Lenin stuck to the decisions of the International in 1910, which provided that in the case of a war no worker of one country should shoot at workers of other countries. Lenin analyzed this war and considered it the most extreme expression of decay and decadence of the imperialist system. He drew the conclusion that an international socialist revolution was necessary, which actually broke ground with the October Revolution in Russia in 1917. His peace policy was ultimately pivotal for his winning over the decisive majority of the working class and the

peasants in Russia for the proletarian revolution. In a principled way Lenin also settled accounts with the opportunists of Social Democracy, who instead of fighting resolutely for peace went down on their knees before the militarism of the German Empire. With this they went over to social chauvinism and degenerated into the reformist appendage of the German Empire.

Leninism means to apply Marxism to the age of imperialism and the proletarian revolution.

When we acknowledge Marxism-Leninism today, we know, of course, that the texts, books, essays and works of Marx and Lenin are more than 100 years old; those times do not compare with today's societal conditions. At that time there were not even seven or eight imperialist countries. Today we can class about one out of four or five countries of the world with imperialism. The rest are neocolonial and dependent capitalist countries.

In Lenin's time there were only few international monopolies; today we speak of almost 120,000 international monopolies, competing with each other for the world market.

Lenin found out that the rule of the monopolies was transforming more and more into state-monopoly capitalism. That means the monopolies subordinate the state apparatus, merge completely with its organs. And thus the monopolies have erected an all-around rule over the whole society, even over the non-monopoly bourgeoisie. That is why we speak of the dictatorship of the monopolies.

The state certainly does not stand neutrally above the classes, and even less is it a *welfare state*; it is the instrument of domination of the ruling monopolies. Each government in office is merely the service provider of the ruling monopolies.

Marx and Lenin, with their theoretical foundations, gave us an essential guide to understanding the concrete conditions of today. With the dialectical-materialist method they also gave us the decisive tool to handle the theory of Marx and Engels correctly, because Marxism-Leninism does not know any dogmatism.

Marx and Lenin repeatedly emphasized that the concrete analysis of the concrete situation is the vital essence of Marxist theory.

From the beginning, our party set great value on appropriating this method, because party building in Germany had to be geared to the concrete conditions in Germany and the world and could not just be a copy of the old communist movement. This distinguished us essentially from the rest of the Marxist-Leninist movement that developed in the 1970s in the wake of the 1968 student movement. By means of materialist dialectics we analyze the continuous cognition of new phenomena and essential changes, and based on this we can make reliable predictions about future developments. This ability is critical for the revolutionary vanguard of the working class.

Neglect of the dialectical method was one of the fundamental problems of the old communist movement, which enabled the petty-bourgeois mode of thinking to penetrate into the communist movement and made it possible for formerly revolutionary parties to transform into bourgeois parties. Modern revisionism uses the ideology of Marxism-Leninism as an empty phrase while conveying a bourgeois content at the same time.

But Lenin was not only a great theoretician and a role model in applying the dialectical method, he was also a model leader of the revolutionary working-class movement from whom our party has learned a lot.

From Lenin comes the following sentence: *"The 'communist' begins when subbotniks (i.e., unpaid labour with no quota set by any authority or any state) make their appearance; they constitute the labour of individuals on an extensive scale for the public good."* (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 286)

He condemned attempts of party functionaries to obtain individual advantages and introduced a party maximum for functionaries. In the MLPD, from the beginning we introduced such a party maximum, amounting maximally to an average worker's wage. This is to prevent material incentive becoming the driving force for the thinking, feeling and acting of our functionaries and

members. Everybody is supposed to give their best selflessly, everybody is supposed to live modestly.

Such a proletarian mode of thinking makes it possible that the proletarian class struggle advances, that the party amalgamates most closely with the masses of workers, and that the party and socialism can successfully be built.

With a petty-bourgeois mode of thinking, in contrast, neither the party nor socialism can be built. We experienced this in the history of the ML movement, which originated in the 1968 student movement and became history by the end of the 1970s.

Lenin, as well as Marx, was a passionate proponent of internationalism. He was convinced that an effective victory of socialism is only possible on an international level. To him, the October Revolution was therefore only the beginning of an international socialist revolution. Under his leadership the Communist International was founded in 1919.

Lenin shaped the vision of the united socialist states of the world, in which the countries would work together for the benefit of one another, in which there is no longer any war, any exploitation and oppression of any country by other countries, or of workers by capitalists.

The continuation of the international revolution could be drowned in blood, in spite of the revolutionary crisis in Germany, which lasted almost five years, because the objective preconditions of the internationalization of production had not yet progressed far enough.

Today, in contrast, we deal with an internationalization of production and commerce that is shaking the nation-state fetters of the capitalist system more and more vigorously. This is an insoluble problem that will lead either to a new world war or to an international socialist revolution.

Marx and Engels already developed the foundations of a social system in which there is a unity of humankind and nature. From the beginning Lenin had a vision of an electrified society based mainly on renewable energies. Of course, he did not know a global environmental crisis then, but on the foundations of the socialist environmental policy, of Marxist-Leninist ecology, the MLPD still builds up its work today. We know that the global environmental catastrophe can only be prevented when socialism has prevailed over capitalism on a global scale. So environmental policy has become an essential part of our revolutionary rank-and-file work.

By erecting this statue today, we commit ourselves at the same time to adhere to Marxism-Leninism and consistently continue the theories of Marx and Lenin, always using our own brains and steadily linking up with the working class, the ordinary people, the exploited and oppressed of the whole world.

We will not allow anticommunism to sling mud at Marxism-Leninism and its great theoreticians and practical leaders of the revolutionary working-class movement and to oust them from history by systematically manipulating public opinion.

This statue is a victory over the manipulation of opinion and has caused a great commotion, especially in the bourgeois camp. This commotion is very healthy, because it comprises a new societal debate on Marx and Lenin, which is urgently needed and must replace undemocratic anticommunism. Society needs new visions, and these visions can only arise from a clear-cut world outlook and on a correct theoretical basis.

Long live Lenin!

Long live Marxism-Leninism!

Onward with the MLPD and the international Marxist-Leninist and working-class movement on the road to the united socialist countries of the world!