

## Great Russian Chauvinism and Ambition to Dominate the World

At a recent all-union conference on teaching Russian, the Soviet authorities decided to speed up imposing the language on the non-Russian peoples. They thus revived the old tsar's "compulsory official language system" which Lenin denounced long ago.

### Open Betrayal of Lenin's Teachings

In his article *Is a Compulsory Official Language Needed?* Lenin pointed out that "a compulsory official language involves coercion, the use of the cudgel." He said: "In practice, it means that the language of the Great Russians, who are a minority of the population of Russia, is imposed upon all the rest of the population of Russia. That is, why Russian Marxists say that there must be no compulsory official language."

Speaking of the oppressed nations later, Lenin stressed the necessity to "not only promote the actual

equality, but also the development of the language and literature of the working people of the formerly oppressed nations." (*Draft Programme of the R.C.P.[B.]*) He also declared that Russian Communists "must in every way counteract attempts at Russification that push the Ukrainian language into the background." (*Draft Resolution of the C.C., R.C.P. [B.] on Soviet Rule in the Ukraine.*)

Openly betraying Lenin's teachings, the Khrushchov-Brezhnev clique has done its utmost to exalt the Russian language and push the languages of the non-Russian peoples into a secondary position so as to forcibly "Russify" them.

Trying to justify imposition of the Russian language on the non-Russian peoples, an alternate member of the political bureau of the Soviet revisionist party declared at the conference that "the Russian language

is the greatest achievement of the linguistic culture of all mankind" and that "it is the alloy of the most magnificent gems from the treasure-house of mankind's culture." The Soviet revisionists also claimed that the Russian language is "the language of revolution," which "immeasurably enriches" the languages of the non-Russian peoples. "It (the Russian language) enables national writers to express and convey all the subtlest nuances in human thought and feelings." That is to say, the languages of the non-Russian peoples are not "languages of revolution" and not "rich" enough to "convey all the subtlest nuances in human thought and feelings." So the non-Russian peoples have to learn Russian and put their own languages in a secondary position or even give them up completely.

### Design to Wipe Out Non-Russian Peoples' Languages

By belittling the languages of the non-Russian peoples, the new tsars mean to condemn the former to extinction for the sake of ultimate Russification. The Soviet journal, *Problems of History*, declared: "Linguistic unity is attained by way of widespread acquisition of one of the most prevalent national languages, which under the Soviet conditions is the Russian language." The Soviet publication, *World Population*, said: Today in the Soviet Union, "the people who adopt another language will eventually lose their ethnic (national) identity."

To dupe the non-Russian peoples, the Soviet revisionists had written in their party programme the sanctimonious pledge "to continue promoting the free development of the languages of the peoples of the U.S.S.R." What "free development of the languages of the peoples" can there be to speak of when these languages will eventually be "unified" with the Russian language?

The Brezhnev clique has openly forced the non-Russian peoples to learn the Russian language and clamoured for "control over the linguistic process" with a view to expediting Russification.

In Khrushchov's time, it was decided that Russian be taught to all primary school pupils. Now the Brezhnev clique has further stipulated that Russian is taught in the day nurseries and kindergartens in areas inhabited by non-Russian peoples. A considerable number of schools in these areas simply do not teach the non-Russian peoples their own languages. It was disclosed in the periodical *Soviet Ethnography* that "the Korean language is not taught" in the middle schools in Lower Dargom in Uzbekistan, a settlement of the Korean minority. In schools where the "two-language system" has been adopted, study of Russian is compulsory, while that of the students' national language is optional, actually just for show.

To further their attempt to do away with the languages of the non-Russian peoples, Brezhnev and com-

pany have gone so far as to forbid them to use terms derived from the roots of their own languages and force them to use the Russian equivalents. The Moldavians speak a language akin to Romanian and rich in its own idioms. The new tsars now forbid them to use it and accuse those who insist on doing so of "trying to substitute terms alien to the nature of the mutual linguistic relationship among the Soviet peoples for unified internationalist scientific terminology."

Lenin called on those sent to work in areas inhabited by non-Russian peoples to endeavour to master the native languages. In November 1919, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in a decision called on the non-Ukrainian employees in Soviet institutions in the Ukraine to learn Ukrainian.

The Soviet revisionists are doing today exactly the opposite. They go out of their way to enhance "the role of Russian" in areas populated by non-Russians and glibly talk about the necessity of non-Russian peoples learning Russian while making no mention of the need for Russian employees working in non-Russian territories to learn the native languages.

What the new tsars have done has produced most grievous consequences. The younger generation of some nationalities simply does not know its own languages. According to *Soviet Ethnography*, the children of the Nivkhi minority in the Soviet Far East "in most cases do not know their own language." The 1970 census published by the Soviet Central Statistical Board shows that half the population of the Soviet minorities, the Evenki, Mansi, Nivkhi, Selkupy, the Saami, Udegeitsy, Orochi, Yukagir and two-thirds of the Itslmen do not speak their own languages.

A Ukrainian literary critic complained that "we see Ukrainian culture and language being pushed into a secondary, 'losing' position." In the Soviet Union, Great Russian chauvinism "has produced much contempt and even hatred for it (Ukrainian)" and "the Ukrainian language is virtually banished from daily life, and those individuals who use it in the cities only become the butt of derision."

The Soviet Central Television in a programme on September 27, 1974 disclosed that two of its viewers wrote to it complaining: "there are practically no native languages in use in the Ukraine, Byelorussia and Moldavia." Brezhnev even described the imposition of the Russian language, the elimination of other languages and other compulsory measures for Russification as the reasons why "a new historical entity of men — the Soviet people — has become a reality." That is to say, in the Soviet Union today whoever fails to know Russian is not a member of the "historical entity of man —

the Soviet people." "Is this good or bad?" he asked. "It is good, it is very good, indeed!" he answered himself.

### **Ambition for Russian to Dominate World**

On the question of Russian, Brezhnev and his like have not only revealed their Great Russian chauvinistic features but have exposed their new tsars' wild ambition to dominate the world. The Soviet book *The Rapprochement of Nationalities and National Languages in the U.S.S.R.* openly declared that "each new epoch is characterized by a certain most prevalent language of its own" and that "the period of mature capitalism and its growth into imperialism ensured the domination, never seen before, of the English language." It said: "A new period now begins with the expansion of the social role and significance of the great Russian language on a world-wide scale." This has brought home the fact that aggression and expansion by the new tsars all over the globe will guarantee the unprecedented domination of Russian in the world.

The new tsars actually have established "unprecedented domination" of the Russian language in some countries under their control. Some member states of the "socialist community" have been forced to make the study of the Russian language "one of the primary tasks of all young people" and to declare that "no ef-

fort should be spared" to unfold "the movement to study the Russian language" as "an undertaking of the whole people." The Brezhnev clique announced gleefully: "The need has arisen for a unified language for international intercourse, which under the conditions of the U.S.S.R. and the whole socialist community is naturally the Russian language."

### **Mounting Resistance**

The people of all nationalities in the Soviet Union have begun to be aware of the new tsars' forcible Russification through eliminating non-Russian national languages, and have resisted it ever more vigorously. A Ukrainian writer pointed out that the Soviet revisionists' linguistic policy is to "eliminate scores of national languages and replace them with a single language." In a petition, 17 mothers of pre-school children in the Ukrainian republic denounced the Soviet revisionist authorities' "reactionary linguistic policy," pointing out that this policy is "contrary to the Constitution and Leninism." In the three republics along the Baltic Sea, "there is widespread reluctance to use the Russian language." In Kiev, Odessa, Ivan-Frankovsk and other major Ukrainian cities, there were mass demonstrations for equality between the Ukrainian and Russian languages in the Ukraine.

(A commentary by Hsinhua Correspondent)