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**The Right Deviation in the C.P.S.U.(B.)*
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(Verbatim Report)**



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Comrades, I shall not touch on the personal factor, although it played a rather conspicuous part in the speeches of some of the comrades of Bukharin's group. I shall not touch on it because it is a trivial matter, and it is not worth while dwelling on trivial matters. Bukharin spoke of his private correspondence with me. He read some letters and it can be seen from them that although we were still on terms of personal friendship quite recently, now we differ politically. The same note could be detected in the speeches of Uglanov and Tomsky. How does it happen, they say: we are old Bolsheviks, and suddenly we are at odds and unable to respect one another.

I think that all these moans and lamentations are not worth a brass farthing. Our organisation is not a family circle, nor an association of personal friends; it is the political party of the working class. We cannot allow interests of personal friendship to be placed above the interests of our cause.

Things have come to a sorry pass, comrades, if the only reason why we are called old Bolsheviks is that we are old. Old Bolsheviks are respected not because they are old, but because they are at the same time eternally fresh, never-aging revolutionaries. If an old Bolshevik swerves from the path of the revolution, or degenerates and fails politically, then, even if he is a hundred years old, he has no right to call himself an old Bolshevik; he has no right to demand that the Party should respect him.

Further, questions of personal friendship cannot be put on a par with political questions, for, as the saying goes—friendship is all very well, but duty comes first. We all serve the working class, and if the interests of personal friendship clash with the interests of the revolution, then personal friendship must come second. As Bolsheviks we cannot have any other attitude.

I shall not touch either on the insinuations and veiled accusations of a personal nature that were contained in the speeches of comrades of the Bukharin opposition. Evidently these comrades are attempting to cover up the underlying political basis of our disagreements with insinuations and equivocations. They want to substitute petty political scheming for politics. Tomsky's speech is especially noteworthy in this respect. His was the typical speech of a trade-union politician who attempts to substitute petty political scheming for politics. However, that trick of theirs won't work.

Let us get down to business.

I

One Line or Two Lines?

Have we a single, common, general line or have we two lines? That, comrades, is the basic question.

In his speech here, Rykov said that we have a single general line and that if we do have some “insignificant” disagreements, it is because there are “shades of difference” in the interpretation of the general line. Is that correct?

Unfortunately, it is not. And it is not merely incorrect, but it is absolutely contrary to the truth. If we really have only one line, and there are only shades of difference between us, then why did Bukharin run off to yesterday’s Trotskyists led by Kamenev, in an effort to set up with them a factional bloc directed against the Central Committee and its Political Bureau? Is it not a fact that Bukharin spoke there of a “fatal” line of the Central Committee, of Bukharin’s, Tomsky’s and Rykov’s disagreements in principle with the Central Committee of the Party, of the need for a drastic change in the composition of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee?

If there is only one line, why did Bukharin conspire with yesterday’s Trotskyists against the Central Committee, and why did Rykov and Tomsky aid him in this undertaking?

If there is only one general line, how can one part of the Political Bureau, which supports the single, common, general line, be allowed to undermine the other part, which supports the same general line?

Can such a fluctuating policy be allowed if we have a single, common, general line?

If there is only one line, how are we to account for Bukharin’s declaration of January 30, which was wholly and solely aimed against the Central Committee and its general line?

If there is only one line, how are we to account for the declaration of the trio (Bukharin, Rykov, Tomsky) of February 9, in which, in a brazen and grossly slanderous manner, they accuse the Party: a) of a policy of military-feudal exploitation of the peasantry, b) of a policy of fostering bureaucracy, c) of a policy of disintegrating the Comintern?

Perhaps these declarations are just ancient history? Perhaps it is now considered that these declarations were a mistake? Perhaps Rykov, Bukharin and Tomsky are prepared to take back these undoubtedly mistaken and anti-Party declarations? If that is the case, let them say so frankly and honestly. Then everyone will understand that we have only one line and that there are only shades of difference between us. But, as is evident from the speeches of Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsky, they would not do that. And not only would they not do that, but they have no intention of repudiating these declarations of theirs in the future, and they state that they adhere to their views as set forth in the declarations.

Where then is the single, common, general line?

If there is only one line, and, in the opinion of Bukharin's group, the Party line consists in pursuing a policy of military-feudal exploitation of the peasantry, then do Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsky really wish to join us in pursuing this fatal policy, instead of combating it? That is indeed absurd.

If there is only one line, and, in the opinion of the Bukharin opposition, the Party line consists in fostering bureaucracy, then do Rykov, Bukharin and Tomsky really wish to join us in fostering bureaucracy within the Party, instead of combating it? That is indeed non-sense.

If there is only one line, and, in the opinion of the Bukharin opposition, the Party line consists in disintegrating the Comintern, then do Rykov, Bukharin and Tomsky really wish to join us in disintegrating the Comintern, instead of combating this policy? How are we to believe such nonsense?

No, comrades, there must be something wrong with Rykov's assertion that we have a single, common line. Whichever way you look at it, if we bear in mind the facts just set forth regarding the declarations and conduct of Bukharin's group, there is something amiss with the business of one, common line.

If there is only one line, then how are we to account for the policy of resigning adopted by Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsky? Is it conceivable that where there is a Common general line, one part of the Political Bureau would systematically

refuse to implement the repeated decisions of the Central Committee of the Party and continue to sabotage Party work for six months? If we really have a single, common, general line, how are we to account for this disruptive policy of resigning that is being methodically pursued by one part of the Political Bureau?

From the history of our Party we know of examples of the policy of resigning. We know, for instance, that on the day after the October Revolution some comrades, led by Kamenev and Zinoviev, refused the posts assigned to them and demanded that the policy of the Party should be changed. We know that at that time they sought to justify the policy of resigning by demanding the creation of a coalition government that would include Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, in opposition to the Central Committee of our Party whose policy was to form a purely Bolshevik government. But at that time there was some sense in the policy of resigning, because it was based on the existence of two different lines, one of which was for forming a purely Bolshevik government, and the other for forming a coalition government jointly with the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. That was clear and comprehensible. But we see no logic, no logic whatsoever, when the Bukharin opposition, on the one hand, proclaims the unity of the general line, and, on the other hand, pursues a policy of resigning, adopted from that of Zinoviev and Kamenev in the period of the October Revolution.

One thing or the other—either there is only one line, in which case Bukharin and his friends' policy of resigning is incomprehensible and inexplicable; or we have two lines, in which case the policy of resigning is perfectly comprehensible and explicable.

If there is only one line, how are we to explain the fact that the trio of the Political Bureau—Rykov, Bukharin and Tomsky—deemed it possible, during the voting in the Political Bureau, to abstain when the main theses on the five-year plan and on the peasant question were being adopted? Does it ever happen that there is a single general line but that one section of the comrades abstains from voting on the main questions of our economic policy? No, comrades, such wonders do not occur.

Finally, if there is only one line, and there are only shades of difference between us, why did the comrades of the Bukharin opposition—Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsky—reject the compromise proposed by a commission of the Political Bureau on February 7 of this year? Is it not a fact that this compromise gave Bukharin's group a perfectly acceptable way out of the impasse in which it had landed itself?

Here is the text of this compromise proposed by the majority of the Central Committee on February 7 of this year:

“After an exchange of views in the commission it was ascertained that:

“1) Bukharin admits that his negotiations with Kamenev were a political error;

“2) Bukharin admits that the assertions contained in his ‘declaration’ of January 30, 1929, alleging that the Central Committee is in fact pursuing a policy of ‘military-feudal exploitation of the peasantry,’ that the Central Committee is disintegrating the Comintern and is fostering bureaucracy within the Party—that all these assertions were made in the heat of the moment, during passionate polemics, that he does not maintain these assertions any longer, and considers that there are no differences between him and the Central Committee on these questions;

“3) Bukharin recognises, therefore, that harmonious work in the Political Bureau is possible and necessary;

“4) Bukharin withdraws his resignation both as regards Pravda and as regards the Comintern;

“5) Consequently, Bukharin withdraws his declaration of January 30.

“On the basis of the above, the commission considers it possible not to submit its draft resolution containing a political appraisal of Bukharin’s errors to the joint meeting of the Political Bureau and the Presidium of the Central Control Commission, and requests the joint meeting of the Political Bureau and the Presidium of the Central Control Commission to withdraw from circulation all existing documents (verbatim reports of speeches, etc.).

“The commission requests the Political Bureau and the Presidium of the C.C.C. to provide Bukharin with all the conditions necessary for his normal work as editor-in-chief of Pravda and Secretary of the Executive Committee of the Comintern.”

Why did Bukharin and his friends reject this compromise if we really have only one line, and if there are only shades of difference between us? Is it not perfectly obvious that Bukharin and his friends should have been extremely eager to accept the compromise proposed by the Political Bureau, so as to put an end to the tension existing within the Party and create an atmosphere conducive to unanimity and harmony in the work of the Political Bureau?

There is talk of the unity of the Party, of collective work in the Political Bureau. But is it not obvious that anyone who wants genuine unity and values the collective principle in work should have accepted the compromise? Why then did Bukharin and his friends reject this compromise?

Is it not obvious that if we had only one line, then there would never have been either the trio's declaration of February 9 or Bukharin and his friends' refusal to accept the compromise proposed by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee?

No, comrades, if we bear in mind the facts set forth above, there must be something amiss with the business of your one, common line.

It turns out that in reality we have not one line, but two lines; one of them being the line of the Central Committee and the other the line of Bukharin's group.

In his speech, Rykov did not tell the truth when he declared that we have only one general line. He sought thereby to disguise his own line, which differs from the Party line, for the purpose of stealthily undermining the Party line. The policy of opportunism consists precisely in attempting to slur over disagreements, to gloss over the actual situation within the Party, to disguise one's own position and to make it impossible for the Party to attain complete clarity.

Why does opportunism need such a policy? Because it enables opportunists to carry out in effect their own line, which differs from the Party line, behind a smoke screen of talk about the unity of the line. In his speech at the present plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission Rykov adopted this opportunist standpoint.

Would you care to hear a characterisation of the opportunist in general, as given by Comrade Lenin in one of his articles? This characterisation is important for us not only because of its general significance, but also because it fits Rykov perfectly.

Here is what Lenin says about the specific features of opportunism and of opportunists:

“When we speak of fighting opportunism, we must never forget the feature characteristic of the whole of present-day opportunism in every sphere, namely, its indefiniteness, diffuseness, elusiveness. An opportunist, by his very nature, always evades formulating an issue definitely and decisively, he seeks a middle course, he wriggles like a snake between two mutually exclusive points of view,

trying to ‘agree’ with both and to reduce his differences of opinion to petty amendments, doubts, righteous and innocent suggestions, and so on and so forth” (Vol. VI, p. 320).

There you have a portrait of the opportunist, who dreads clearness and definiteness and who strives to gloss over the actual state of affairs, to slur over the actual disagreements in the Party.

Yes, comrades, one must be able to face the facts no matter how unpleasant they may be. God forbid that we should become infected with the disease of fear of the truth. Bolsheviks, incidentally, are different from all other parties because they do not fear the truth and are not afraid of facing the truth no matter how bitter it may be. And in the present case the truth is that in fact we have not got a single, common line. There is one line, the Party line, the revolutionary, Leninist line. But side by side with it there is another line, the line of Bukharin’s group, which is combating the Party line by means of anti-Party declarations, by means of resignations, by means of slander and camouflaged undermining activities against the Party, by means of backstairs negotiations with yesterday’s Trotskyists for the purpose of setting up an anti-Party bloc. This second line is the opportunist line.

There you have a fact that no amount of diplomatic verbiage or artful statements about the existence of a single line, etc., etc., can disguise.

II

Class Changes and Our Disagreements

What are our disagreements? What are they connected with?

They are connected, first of all, with the class changes that have been taking place recently in our country and a capitalist countries. Some comrades think that the disagreements in our Party are of an accidental nature. That is wrong, comrades. That is quite wrong. The disagreements in our Party have their roots in the class changes, in the intensification of the class struggle which has been taking place lately and which marks a turning point in development.

The chief mistake of Bukharin’s group is that it fails to see these changes and this turning point; it does not see them, and does not want to notice them. That, in fact, explains the failure to understand the new tasks of the Party and of the Comintern which is the characteristic feature of the Bukharin opposition.

Have you noticed, comrades, that the leaders of the Bukharin opposition, in their speeches at the plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission, completely evaded the question of the class changes in our

country, that they did not say a single word about the intensification of the class struggle, and did not even remotely hint at the fact that our disagreements are connected with this very intensification of the class struggle? They talked about everything, about philosophy and about theory, but they did not say a single word about the class changes which determine the orientation and the practical activity of our Party at the present moment.

How is this strange fact to be explained? Is it forgetfulness, perhaps? Of course not! Political leaders cannot forget the chief thing. The explanation is that they neither see nor understand the new revolutionary processes now going on both here, in our country, and in the capitalist countries. The explanation is that they have overlooked the chief thing, they have overlooked those class changes, which a political leader has no right to overlook. This is the real explanation for the confusion and unpreparedness displayed by the Bukharin opposition in face of the new tasks of our Party.

Recall the recent events in our Party. Recall the slogans our Party has issued lately in connection with the new class changes in our country. I refer to such slogans as the slogan of self-criticism, the slogan of intensifying the fight against bureaucracy and of purging the Soviet apparatus, the slogan of training new economic cadres and Red experts, the slogan of strengthening the collective-farm and state-farm movement, the slogan of an offensive against the kulaks, the slogan of reducing production costs and radically improving the methods of trade-union work; the slogan of purging the Party, etc. To some comrades these slogans seemed staggering and dizzying. Yet it is obvious that these slogans are the most necessary and urgent slogans of the Party at the present moment.

The whole thing began when, as a result of the Shakhty affair,² we raised in a new way the question of new economic cadres, of training Red experts from the ranks of the working class to take the place of the old experts.

What did the Shakhty affair reveal? It revealed that the bourgeoisie was still far from being crushed; that it was organising and would continue to organise wrecking activities to hamper our work of economic construction; that our economic, trade-union and, to certain extent, our Party organisations had failed to notice the undermining operations of our class enemies, and that it was therefore necessary to exert all efforts and employ all resources to reinforce and improve our organisations, to develop and heighten their class vigilance.

In this connection the slogan of self-criticism became sharply stressed. Why? Because we cannot improve our economic, trade-union and Party organisations, we cannot advance the cause of building socialism and of curbing the wrecking

activities of the bourgeoisie, unless we develop criticism and self-criticism to the utmost, unless we place the work of our organisations under the control of the masses. It is indeed a fact that wrecking has been and is going on not only in the coal-fields, but also in the metallurgical industries, in the war industries, in the People's Commissariat of Transport, in the gold and platinum industries, etc., etc. Hence the slogan of self-criticism.

Further, in connection with the grain-procurement difficulties, in connection with the opposition of the kulaks to the Soviet price policy, we stressed the question of developing collective farms and state farms to the utmost, of launching an offensive against the kulaks, of organising grain procurements by means of pressure on the kulak and well-to-do elements.

What did the grain-procurement difficulties reveal? They revealed that the kulak was not asleep, that the kulak was growing, that he was busy undermining the policy of the Soviet government, while our Party, Soviet and co-operative organisations—at all events, some of them—either failed to see the enemy, or adapted themselves to him instead of fighting him.

Hence the new stress laid on the slogan of self-criticism, on the slogan of checking and improving our Party, co-operative and procurement organisations generally.

Further, in connection with the new tasks of reconstructing industry and agriculture on the basis of socialism, there arose the slogan of systematically reducing production costs, of strengthening labour discipline, of developing socialist emulation, etc. These tasks called for a revision of the entire activities of the trade unions and Soviet apparatus, for radical measures to put new life into these organisations and for purging them of bureaucratic elements.

Hence the stress laid on the slogan of fighting bureaucracy in the trade unions and in the Soviet apparatus.

Finally, the slogan of purging the Party. It would be ridiculous to think that it is possible to strengthen our Soviet-economic, trade-union and co-operative organisations, that it is possible to purge them of the dross of bureaucracy, without giving a sharp edge to the Party itself. There can be no doubt that bureaucratic elements exist not only in the economic and cooperative, trade-union and Soviet organisations, but in the organisations of the Party itself. Since the party is the guiding force of all these organisations, it is obvious that purging the Party is the essential condition for thoroughly revitalising and improving all the other organisations of the working class. Hence the slogan of purging the Party.

Are these slogans a matter of accident? No, they are not. You see yourselves that they are not accidental. They are necessary links in the single continuous chain which is called the offensive of socialism against the elements of capitalism.

They are connected, primarily, with the period of the reconstruction of our industry and agriculture on the basis of socialism. And what is the reconstruction of the national economy on the basis of socialism? It is the offensive of socialism against the capitalist elements of the national economy along the whole front. It is a most important advance of the working class of our country towards the complete building of socialism. But in order to carry out this reconstruction we must first of all improve and strengthen the cadres of socialist construction—the economic-Soviet and trade-union cadres, and also Party and co-operative cadres; we must give a sharp edge to all our organisations, purge them of dross; we must stimulate the activity of the vast masses of the working class and peasantry.

Further, these slogans are connected with the fact of the resistance of the capitalist elements of the national economy to the offensive of socialism. The so-called Shakhty affair cannot be regarded as something accidental. “Shakhtyists” are at present entrenched in every branch of our industry. Many of them have been caught, but by no means all of them. The wrecking activities of the bourgeois intelligentsia are one of the most dangerous forms of resistance to developing socialism. The wrecking activities are all the more dangerous because they are connected with international capital. Bourgeois wrecking is undoubtedly an indication of the fact that the capitalist elements have by no means laid down their arms, that they are gathering strength for fresh attacks on the Soviet regime.

As for the capitalist elements in the countryside, there is still less reason to regard as accidental the opposition of the kulaks to the Soviet price policy, which has been going on for over a year already. Many people are still unable to understand why it is that until 1927 the kulak gave his grain of his own accord, whereas since 1927 he has ceased to do so. But there is nothing surprising in it. Formerly the kulak was still relatively weak; he was unable to organise his farming properly; he lacked sufficient capital to improve his farm and so he was obliged to bring all, or nearly all, his surplus grain to the market. Now, however, after a number of good harvests, since he has been able to build up his farm, since he has succeeded in accumulating the necessary capital, he is in a position to manoeuvre on the market, he is able to set aside grain, this currency of currencies, as a reserve for himself, and prefers to bring to the market meat, oats, barley and other secondary crops. It would be ridiculous now to hope that the kulak can be made to part with his grain voluntarily.

There you have the root of the resistance which the kulak is now offering to the policy of the Soviet regime.

And what does the resistance offered by the capitalist elements of town and country to the socialist offensive represent? It represents a regrouping of the forces of the class enemies of the proletariat for the purpose of defending the old against the new. It is not difficult to understand that these circumstances cannot but lead to an intensification of the class struggle. But if we are to break the resistance of the class enemies and clear the way for the advance of socialism, we must, besides everything else, give a sharp edge to all our organisations, purge them of bureaucracy, improve their cadres and mobilise the vast masses of the working class and labouring strata of the countryside against the capitalist elements of town and country.

It was on the basis of these class changes that our Party's present slogans arose.

The same must be said about the class changes in capitalist countries. It would be ridiculous to think that the stabilisation of capitalism has remained unchanged. Still more ridiculous would it be to assert that the stabilisation is gaining in strength, that it is becoming secure. As a matter of fact, capitalist stabilisation is being undermined and shaken month by month and day by day. The intensification of the struggle for foreign markets and raw materials, the growth of armaments, the growing antagonism between America and Britain, the growth of socialism in the U.S.S.R., the swing to the left of the working class in the capitalist countries, the wave of strikes and class conflicts in the European countries, the growing revolutionary movement in the colonies, including India, the growth of communism in all countries of the world—all these are facts which indicate beyond a doubt that the elements of a new revolutionary upsurge are accumulating in the capitalist countries.

Hence the task of intensifying the fight against Social-Democracy, and, above all, against its "Left" wing, as being the social buttress of capitalism.

Hence the task of intensifying the fight in the Communist Parties against the Right elements, as being the agents of Social-Democratic influence.

Hence the task of intensifying the fight against conciliation towards the Right deviation, as being the refuge of opportunism in the Communist Parties.

Hence the slogan of purging the Communist Parties of Social-Democratic traditions.

Hence the so-called new tactics of communism in the trade unions.

Some comrades do not understand the significance and importance of these slogans. But a Marxist will always understand that, unless these slogans are put into effect, the preparation of the proletarian masses for new class battles is unthinkable, victory over Social-Democracy is unthinkable, and the selection of real leaders of the communist movement, capable of leading the working class into the fight against capitalism, is impossible.

Such, comrades, are the class changes in our country and in the capitalist countries, on the basis of which the present slogans of our Party both in its internal policy and in relation to the Comintern, have arisen.

Our Party sees these class changes. It understands the significance of the new tasks and it mobilises forces for their fulfilment. That is why it is facing events fully armed. That is why it does not fear the difficulties confronting it, for it is prepared to overcome them.

The misfortune of Bukharin's group is that it does not see these class changes and does not understand the new tasks of the Party. And it is precisely because it does not understand them that it is in a state of complete bewilderment, is ready to flee from difficulties, to retreat in the face of the difficulties, to surrender the positions.

Have you ever seen fishermen when a storm is brewing on a big river—such as the Yenisei? I have seen them many a time. In the face of a storm one group of fishermen will muster all their forces, encourage their fellows and boldly guide the boat to meet the storm: “Cheer up, lads, keep a tight hold of the tiller, cut the waves, we'll win through!”

But there is another type of fishermen—those who, on sensing a storm, lose heart, begin to snivel and demoralise their own ranks: “It's terrible, a storm is brewing: lie down, lads, in the bottom of the boat, shut your eyes, let's hope she'll make the shore somehow.” (General laughter.)

Does it still need proof that the line and conduct of Bukharin's group exactly resembles the line and conduct of the second group of fishermen, who retreat in panic in the face of difficulties?

We say that in Europe the conditions are maturing for a new revolutionary upsurge, that this circumstance dictates to us new tasks along the line of intensifying the fight against the Right deviation in the Communist Parties and of driving the Right deviators out of the Party, of intensifying the fight against

conciliation, which screens the Right deviation; of intensifying the fight against Social-Democratic traditions in the Communist Parties, etc., etc. But Bukharin answers us that all this is nonsense, that no such new tasks confront us, that the whole fact of the matter is that the majority in the Central Committee wants to “haul” him, i.e., Bukharin, “over the coals.”

We say that the class changes in our country dictate to us new tasks which call for a systematic reduction of costs of production and improvement of labour discipline in industry; that these tasks cannot be carried out without radical change in the methods of work of the trade unions. But Tomsy answers us that all this is nonsense, that no such new tasks confront us, that the whole fact of the matter is that the majority in the Central Committee wants to “haul” him, i.e., Tomsy, “over the coals.”

We say that the reconstruction of the national economy dictates to us new tasks along the line of intensifying the fight against bureaucracy in the Soviet and economic apparatus, of purging this apparatus of rotten and alien elements, of wreckers, etc., etc. But Rykov answers us that all this is nonsense, that no such new tasks confront us, that the whole fact of the matter is that the majority in the Central Committee wants to “haul” him, i.e., Rykov, “over the coals.”

Now, is this not ridiculous, comrades? Is it not obvious that Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsy see nothing but their own navels?

The misfortune of Bukharin’s group is that it does not see the new class changes and does not understand the new tasks of the Party. And it is precisely because it does not understand them that it is compelled to drag in the wake of events and to yield to difficulties.

There you have the root of our disagreements.

III

Disagreements in Regard to the Comintern

I have already said that Bukharin does not see and does not understand the new tasks of the Comintern along the line of driving the Rights out of the Communist Parties, of curbing conciliation, and of purging the Communist Parties of Social-Democratic traditions—tasks which are dictated by the maturing conditions for a new revolutionary upsurge. This thesis is fully confirmed by our disagreements on Comintern questions.

How did the disagreements in this sphere begin?

They began with Bukharin's theses at the Sixth Congress³ on the international situation. As a rule, theses first examined by the delegation of the C.P.S.U.(B.). In this case, however, that condition was not observed. What happened was that the theses, signed by Bukharin, were sent to the delegation of the C.P.S.U.(B.) at the same time as they were distributed to the foreign delegations at the Sixth Congress. But the theses proved to be unsatisfactory on a number of points. The delegation of the C.P.S.U.(B.) was obliged to introduce about twenty amendments to the theses.

This created a rather awkward situation for Bukharin. But who was to blame for that? Why was it necessary for Bukharin to distribute the theses to the foreign delegations before they had been examined by the delegation of the C.P.S.U.(B.)? Could the delegation of the C.P.S.U.(B.) refrain from introducing amendments if the theses proved to be unsatisfactory? And so it came about that the delegation of the C.P.S.U.(B.) issued what were practically new theses on the international situation, which the foreign delegations began to counterpose to the old theses signed by Bukharin. Obviously, this awkward situation would not have arisen if Bukharin had not been in a hurry to distribute his theses to the foreign delegations.

I should like to draw attention to four principal amendments which the delegation of the C.P.S.U.(B.) introduced into Bukharin's theses. I should like to draw attention to these principal amendments in order to illustrate more clearly the character of the disagreements on Comintern questions.

The first question is that of the character of the stabilisation of capitalism. According to Bukharin's theses it appeared that nothing new is taking place at the present time to shake capitalist stabilisation, but that, on the contrary, capitalism is reconstructing itself and that, on the whole, it is maintaining itself

more or less securely. Obviously, the delegation of the C.P.S.U.(B.) could not agree with such a characterisation of what is called the third period, i.e., the period through which we are now passing. The delegation could not agree with it because to retain such a characterisation of the third period might give our critics grounds for saying that we have adopted the point of view of so-called capitalist “recovery,” i.e., the point of view of Hilferding, a point of view which we Communists cannot adopt. Owing to this, the delegation of the C.P.S.U.(B.) introduced an amendment which makes it evident that capitalist stabilisation is not and cannot be secure, that it is being shaken and will continue to be shaken by the march of events, owing to the aggravation of the crisis of world capitalism.

This question, comrades, is of decisive importance for the Sections of the Comintern. Is capitalist stabilisation shaken or is it becoming more secure? It is on this that the whole line of the Communist Parties in their day-to-day political work depends. Are we passing through a period of decline of the revolutionary movement, a period of the more gathering of forces, or are we passing through a period when the conditions are maturing for a new revolutionary upsurge, a period of preparation of the working class for future class battles? It is on this that the tactical line of the Communist Parties depends. The amendment of the delegation of the C.P.S.U.(B.) subsequently adopted by the congress, is a good one for the very reason that it gives a clear line based on the latter prospect, the prospect of maturing conditions for a new revolutionary upsurge.

The second question is that of the fight against Social-Democracy. In Bukharin’s theses it was stated that the fight against Social-Democracy is one of the fundamental tasks of the Sections of the Comintern. That, of course, is true. But it is not enough. In order that the fight against Social-Democracy may be waged successfully, stress must be laid on the fight against the so-called “Left” wing of Social-Democracy, that “Left” wing which, by playing with “Left” phrases and thus adroitly deceiving the workers, is retarding their mass defection from Social-Democracy. It is obvious that unless the “Left” Social-Democrats are routed it will be impossible to overcome Social-Democracy in general. Yet, in Bukharin’s theses the question of “Left” Social-Democracy was entirely ignored. That, of course, was a great defect. The delegation of the C.P.S.U.(B.) was therefore obliged to introduce into Bukharin’s theses an appropriate amendment, which was subsequently adopted by the congress.

The third question is that of the conciliatory tendency in the Sections of the Comintern. Bukharin’s theses spoke of the necessity of fighting the Right deviation, but not a word was said there about fighting conciliation towards the Right deviation. That, of course, was a great defect. The point is that when war is declared on the Right deviation, the Right deviators usually disguise

themselves as conciliators and place the Party in an awkward position. To forestall this manoeuvre of the Right deviators we must insist on a determined fight against conciliation. That is why the delegation of the C.P.S.U.(B.) considered it necessary to introduce into Bukharin's theses an appropriate amendment, which was subsequently adopted by the congress.

The fourth question is that of Party discipline. In Bukharin's theses no mention was made of the necessity of maintaining iron discipline in the Communist Parties. That also was a defect of no little importance. Why? Because in a period when the fight against the Right deviation is being intensified, in a period when the slogan of purging the Communist Parties of opportunist elements is being put into effect, the Right deviators usually organise themselves as a faction, set up their own factional discipline and disrupt and destroy the discipline of the Party. To protect the Party from the factional sorties of the Right deviators we must insist on iron discipline in the Party and on the unconditional subordination of Party members to this discipline. Without that there can be no question of waging a serious fight against the Right deviation. That is why the delegation of the C.P.S.U.(B.) introduced into Bukharin's theses an appropriate amendment, which was subsequently adopted by the Sixth Congress.

Could we refrain from introducing these amendments into Bukharin's theses? Of course not. In olden times it was said about the philosopher Plato: We love Plato, but we love truth even more. The same must be said about Bukharin: We love Bukharin, but we love truth, the Party and the Comintern even more. That is why the delegation of the C.P.S.U.(B.) found itself obliged to introduce these amendments into Bukharin's theses.

That, so to speak, was the first stage of our disagreements on Comintern questions.

The second stage of our disagreements is connected with what is known as the Wittorf and Thälmann case. Wittorf was formerly secretary of the Hamburg organisation, and was accused of embezzling Party funds. For this he was expelled from the Party. The conciliators in the Central Committee of the German Communist Party, taking advantage of the fact that Wittorf had been close to Comrade Thälmann, although Comrade Thälmann was in no way implicated in Wittorf's crime, converted the Wittorf case into a Thälmann case, and set out to overthrow the leadership of the German Communist Party. No doubt you know from the press that at that time the conciliators Ewert and Gerhart succeeded temporarily in winning over a majority of the Central Committee of the German Communist Party against Comrade Thälmann. And what followed? They removed Thälmann from the leadership, began to accuse

him of corruption and published a “corresponding” resolution without the knowledge and sanction of the Executive Committee of the Comintern.

Thus, instead of the directive of the Sixth Congress of the Comintern about fighting conciliation being carried out, instead of a fight against the Right deviation and against conciliation, there was, in fact, a most gross violation of this directive, there was a fight against the revolutionary leadership of the German Communist Party, a fight against Comrade Thälmann, with the object of covering up the Right deviation and of consolidating the conciliatory tendency in the ranks of the German Communists.

And so, instead of swinging the tiller over and correcting the situation, instead of restoring the validity of the violated directive of the Sixth Congress and calling the conciliators to order, Bukharin proposed in his well-known letter to sanction the conciliators’ coup, to hand over the German Communist Party to the conciliators, and to revile Comrade Thälmann in the press again by issuing another statement declaring him to be guilty. And this is supposed to be a “leader” of the Comintern! Can there really be such “leaders”?

The Central Committee discussed Bukharin’s proposal and rejected it. Bukharin, of course, did not like that. But who is to blame? The decisions of the Sixth Congress were adopted not in order that they should be violated but in order that they should be carried out. If the Sixth Congress decided to declare war on the Right deviation and conciliation towards it by keeping the leadership in the hands of the main core of the German Communist Party, headed by Comrade Thälmann, and if it occurred to the conciliators Ewert and Gerhart to upset that decision, it was Bukharin’s duty to call the conciliators to order and not to leave in their hands the leadership of the German Communist Party. It is Bukharin, who “forgot” the decisions of the Sixth Congress, who is to blame.

The third stage of our disagreements is connected with the question of the fight against the Rights in the German Communist Party, with the question of routing the Brandler and Thalheimer faction, and of expelling the leaders of that faction from the German Communist Party. The “position” taken up by Bukharin and his friends on that cardinal question was that they persistently avoided taking part in settling it. At bottom, it was the fate of the German Communist Party that was being decided. Yet Bukharin and his friends, knowing this, nevertheless continually hindered matters by systematically keeping away from the meetings of the bodies which had the question under consideration. For the sake of what? Presumably, for the sake of remaining “clean” in the eyes of both the Comintern and the Rights in the German Communist Party. For the sake of being able subsequently to say: “It was not we, the Bukharinites, who carried out the expulsion of Brandler and Thalheimer from the Communist Party, but they, the

majority in the Central Committee.” And that is what is called fighting the Right danger!

Finally, the fourth stage of our disagreements. It is connected with Bukharin’s demand prior to the November plenum of the Central Committee 4 that Neumann be recalled from Germany and that Comrade Thälmann, who, it was alleged, had criticised in one of his speeches Bukharin’s report at the Sixth Congress, be called to order. We, of course, could not agree with Bukharin, since there was not a single document in our possession supporting his demand. Bukharin promised to submit documents against Neumann and Thälmann but never submitted a single one. Instead of documents, he distributed to the members of the delegation of the C.P.S.U.(B.) copies of the speech delivered by Humbert-Droz at the Political Secretariat of the E.C.C.I., the very speech which was subsequently qualified by the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. as an opportunist speech. By distributing Humbert-Droz’s speech to the members of the delegation of the C.P.S.U.(B.), and by recommending it as material against Thälmann, Bukharin wanted to prove the justice of his demand for the recall of Neumann and for calling Comrade Thälmann to order. In fact, however, he thereby showed that he identified himself with the position taken up by Humbert-Droz, a position which the E.C.C.I. regards as opportunist.

Those, comrades, are the main points of our disagreements on Comintern questions.

Bukharin thinks that by conducting a struggle against the Right deviation and conciliation towards it in the Sections of the Comintern, by purging the German and Czechoslovak Communist Parties of Social-Democratic elements and traditions, and by expelling the Brandlers and the Thalheimers from the Communist Parties, we are “disintegrating” the Comintern, “ruining” the Comintern. We, on the contrary, think that by carrying out such a policy and by laying stress on the fight against the Right deviation and conciliation towards it, we are strengthening the Comintern, purging it of opportunists, bolshevising its Sections and helping the Communist Parties to prepare the working class for the future revolutionary battles, for the Party is strengthened by purging itself of dross.

You see that these are not merely shades of difference in the ranks of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.), but quite serious disagreements on fundamental questions of Comintern policy.

IV

Disagreements in Regard to Internal Policy

I have spoken above on the class changes and the class struggle in our country. I said that Bukharin's group is afflicted with blindness and does not see these changes, does not understand the new tasks of the Party. I said that this has caused bewilderment among the Bukharin opposition, has made it fearful of difficulties and ready to yield to them.

It cannot be said that these mistakes of the Bukharinites are purely accidental. On the contrary, they are connected with the stage of development we have already passed through and which is known as the period of restoration of the national economy, a period during which construction proceeded peacefully, automatically, so to speak; during which the class changes now taking place did not yet exist; and during which the intensification of the class struggle that we now observe was not yet in evidence.

But we are now at a new stage of development, distinct from the old period, from the period of restoration. We are now in a new period of construction, the period of the reconstruction of the whole national economy on the basis of socialism. This new period is giving rise to new class changes, to an intensification of the class struggle. It demands new methods of struggle, the regrouping of our forces, the improvement and strengthening of all our organisations.

The misfortune of Bukharin's group is that it is living in the past, that it fails to see the specific features of this new period and does not understand the need for new methods of struggle. Hence its blindness, its bewilderment, its panic in the face of difficulties.

a) The Class Struggle

What is the theoretical basis of this blindness and bewilderment of Bukharin's group?

I think that the theoretical basis of this blindness and bewilderment is Bukharin's incorrect, non-Marxist approach to the question of the class struggle in our country. I have in mind Bukharin's non-Marxist theory of the kulaks growing into socialism, his failure to understand the mechanics of the class struggle under the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The passage from Bukharin's book, *The Path to Socialism*, on the kulaks growing into socialism has been quoted several times here. But it has been quoted here with some omissions. Permit me to quote it in full. This is necessary, comrades, in order to demonstrate the full extent of Bukharin's departure from the Marxist theory of the class struggle.

Listen:

“The main network of our co-operative peasant organisations will consist of co-operative units, not of a kulak, but of a ‘toiler’ type, units that grow into the system of our general state organs and thus become links in the single chain of socialist economy. On the other hand, the kulak co-operative nests will, similarly, through the banks, etc., grow into the same system; but they will be to a certain extent an alien body, similar, for instance, to the concession enterprises.”*

In quoting this passage from Bukharin's pamphlet, some comrades, for some reason or other, omitted the last phrase about the concessionaires. Rosit, apparently desiring to help Bukharin, took advantage of this and shouted here from his seat that Bukharin was being misquoted. And yet, the crux of this whole passage lies precisely in the last phrase about the concessionaires. For if concessionaires are put on a par with the kulaks, and the kulaks are growing into socialism—what follows from that? The only thing that follows is that the concessionaires are also growing into socialism; that not only the kulaks, but the concessionaires, too, are growing into socialism. (General laughter.)

That is what follows.

Rosit. Bukharin says, “an alien body.”

Stalin. Bukharin says not “an alien body,” but “to a certain extent an alien body.” Consequently, the kulaks and concessionaires are “to a certain extent” an alien body in the system of socialism. But Bukharin’s mistake is precisely that, according to him, kulaks and concessionaires, while being “to a certain extent” an alien body, nevertheless grow into socialism.

Such is the nonsense to which Bukharin’s theory leads.

Capitalists in town and country, kulaks and concessionaires, growing into socialism—such is the absurdity Bukharin has arrived at.

No, comrades, that is not the kind of “socialism” we want. Let Bukharin keep it for himself.

Until now, we Marxist-Leninists were of the opinion that between the capitalists of town and country, on the one hand, and the working class, on the other hand, there is an irreconcilable antagonism of interests. That is what the Marxist theory of the class struggle rests on. But now, according to Bukharin’s theory of the capitalists’ peaceful growth into socialism, all this is turned upside down, the irreconcilable antagonism of class interests between the exploiters and the exploited disappears, the exploiters grow into socialism.

Rosit. That is not true, the dictatorship of the proletariat is presumed.

Stalin. But the dictatorship of the proletariat is the sharpest form of the class struggle.

Rosit. Yes, that is the whole point.

Stalin. But, according to Bukharin, the capitalists grow into this very dictatorship of the proletariat. How is it that you cannot understand this, Rosit? Against whom must we fight, against whom must we wage the sharpest form of the class struggle, if the capitalists of town and country grow into the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat?

The dictatorship of the proletariat is needed for the purpose of waging a relentless struggle against the capitalist elements, for the purpose of suppressing the bourgeoisie and of uprooting capitalism. But if the capitalists of town and country, if the kulak and the concessionaire are growing into socialism, is the dictatorship of the proletariat needed at all? If it is, then for the suppression of what class is it needed?

Rosit. The whole point is that, according to Bukharin, the growing into presumes the class struggle.

Stalin. I see that Rosit has sworn to be of service to Bukharin. But his service is really like that of the bear in the fable; for in his eagerness to save Bukharin he is actually hugging him to death. It is not without reason that it is said, “An obliging fool is more dangerous than an enemy.” (General laughter.)

One thing or the other: either there is an irreconcilable antagonism of interests between the capitalist class and the class of the workers who have come to power and have organised their dictatorship, or there is no such antagonism of interests, in which case only one thing remains—namely, to proclaim the harmony of class interests.

One thing or the other:

either Marx’s theory of the class struggle, or the theory of the capitalists growing into socialism;

either an irreconcilable antagonism of class interests, or the theory of harmony of class interests.

We can understand “socialists” of the type of Brentano or Sydney Webb preaching about socialism growing into capitalism and capitalism into socialism, for these “socialists” are really anti-socialists, bourgeois liberals. But one cannot understand a man who wishes to be a Marxist, and who at the same time preaches the theory of the capitalist class growing into socialism.

In his speech Bukharin tried to reinforce the theory of the kulaks growing into socialism by referring to a well-known passage from Lenin. He asserted that Lenin says the same thing as Bukharin.

That is not true, comrades. It is a gross and unpardonable slander against Lenin.

Here is the text of this passage from Lenin:

“Of course, in our Soviet Republic the social order is based on the collaboration of two classes: the workers and peasants, in which the ‘Nepmen,’ i.e., the bourgeoisie, are now permitted to participate on certain conditions” (Vol. XXVII, p. 405).

You see that there is not a word here about the capitalist class growing into socialism. All that is said is that we have “permitted” the Nepmen, i.e., the

bourgeoisie, “on certain conditions” to participate in the collaboration between the workers and the peasants.

What does that mean? Does it mean that we have thereby admitted the possibility of the Nepmen growing into socialism? Of course not. Only people who have lost all sense of shame can interpret the quotation from Lenin in that way. All that it means is that at present we do not destroy the bourgeoisie, that at present we do not confiscate their property, but permit them to exist on certain conditions, i.e., provided they unconditionally submit to the laws of the dictatorship of the proletariat, which lead to increasingly restricting the capitalists and gradually ousting them from national-economic life.

Can the capitalists be ousted and the roots of capitalism destroyed without a fierce class struggle? No, they cannot.

Can classes be abolished if the theory and practice of the capitalists growing into socialism prevails? No, they cannot. Such theory and practice can only cultivate and perpetuate classes, for this theory contradicts the Marxist theory of the class struggle.

But the passage from Lenin is wholly and entirely based on the Marxist theory of the class struggle under the dictatorship of the proletariat.

What can there be in common between Bukharin’s theory of the kulaks growing into socialism and Lenin’s theory of the dictatorship as a fierce class struggle? Obviously, there is not, and cannot be, anything in common between them.

Bukharin thinks that under the dictatorship of the proletariat the class struggle must die down and come to an end so that the abolition of classes may be brought about. Lenin, on the contrary, teaches us that classes can be abolished only by means of a stubborn class struggle, which under the dictatorship of the proletariat becomes even fiercer than it was before the dictatorship of the proletariat.

“The abolition of classes,” says Lenin, “requires a long, difficult and stubborn class struggle, which, after the overthrow of the power of capital, after the destruction of the bourgeois state, after the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, does not disappear (as the vulgar representatives of the old socialism and the old Social-Democracy imagine), but merely changes its forms and in many respects becomes even fiercer” (Vol. XXIV, p. 315).

That is what Lenin says about the abolition of classes.

The abolition of classes by means of the fierce class struggle of the proletariat—such is Lenin's formula.

The abolition of classes by means of the extinction of the class struggle and by the capitalists growing into socialism—such is Bukharin's formula.

What can there be in common between these two formulas?

Bukharin's theory of the kulaks growing into socialism is therefore a departure from the Marxist-Leninist theory of the class struggle. It comes close to the theory propounded by Katheder-Socialism.⁵

That is the basis of all the errors committed by Bukharin and his friends.

It may be said that it is not worth while dwelling at length on Bukharin's theory of the kulaks growing into socialism, since it itself speaks, and not only speaks, but cries out, against Bukharin. That is wrong, comrades! As long as that theory was kept hidden it was possible not to pay attention to it—there are plenty of such stupid things in what various comrades write! Such has been our attitude until quite lately. But recently the situation has changed. The petty-bourgeois elemental forces, which have been breaking out in recent years, have begun to encourage this anti-Marxist theory and made it topical. Now it cannot be said that it is being kept hidden. Now this strange theory of Bukharin's is aspiring to become the banner of the Right deviation in our Party, the banner of opportunism. That is why we cannot now ignore this theory. That is why we must demolish it as a wrong and harmful theory, so as to help our Party comrades to fight the Right deviation.

b) The Intensification of the Class Struggle

Bukharin's second mistake, which follows from his first one, consists in a wrong, non-Marxist approach to the question of the intensification of the class struggle, of the increasing resistance of the capitalist elements to the socialist policy of the Soviet government.

What is the point at issue here? Is it that the capitalist elements are growing faster than the socialist sector of our economy, and that, because of this, they are increasing their resistance, undermining socialist construction? No, that is not the point. Moreover, it is not true that the capitalist elements are growing faster than the socialist sector. If that were true, socialist construction would already be on the verge of collapse.

The point is that socialism is successfully attacking the capitalist elements, socialism is growing faster than the capitalist elements; as a result the relative

importance of the capitalist elements is declining, and for the very reason that the relative importance of the capitalist elements is declining the capitalist elements realise that they are in mortal danger and are increasing their resistance.

And they are still able to increase their resistance not only because world capitalism is supporting them, but also because, in spite of the decline in their relative importance, in spite of the decline in their relative growth as compared with the growth of socialism, there is still taking place an absolute growth of the capitalist elements, and this, to a certain extent, enables them to accumulate forces to resist the growth of socialism.

It is on this basis that, at the present stage of development and under the present conditions of the relation of forces, the intensification of the class struggle and the increase in the resistance of the capitalist elements of town and country are taking place.

The mistake of Bukharin and his friends lies in failing to understand this simple and obvious truth. Their mistake lies in approaching the matter not in a Marxist, but in a philistine way, and trying to explain the intensification of the class struggle by all kinds of accidental causes: the “incompetence” of the Soviet apparatus, the “imprudent” policy of local comrades, the “absence” of flexibility, “excesses,” etc., etc.

Here, for instance, is a quotation from Bukharin’s pamphlet, *The Path to Socialism*, which demonstrates an absolutely non-Marxist approach to the question of the intensification of the class struggle:

“Here and there the class struggle in the countryside breaks out in its former manifestations, and, as a rule, this intensification is provoked by the kulak elements. When, for instance, kulaks, or people who are growing rich at the expense of others and have wormed their way into the organs of Soviet power, begin to shoot village correspondents, that is a manifestation of the class struggle in its most acute form. (This is not true, for the most acute form of the struggle is rebellion. J. Stalin) However, such incidents, as a rule, occur in those places where the local Soviet apparatus is weak. As this apparatus improves, as all the lower units of Soviet power become stronger, as the local, village, Party and Young Communist League organisations improve and become stronger, such phenomena, it is perfectly obvious, will become more and more rare and will finally disappear without a trace.”*

It follows, therefore, that the intensification of the class struggle is to be explained by causes connected with the character of the apparatus, the

competence or incompetence, the strength or weakness of our lower organisations.

It follows, for instance, that the wrecking activities of the bourgeois intellectuals in Shakhty, which are a form of resistance of the bourgeois elements to the Soviet government and a form of intensification of the class struggle, are to be explained, not by the relation of class forces, not by the growth of socialism, but by the incompetence of our apparatus.

It follows that before the wholesale wrecking occurred in the Shakhty area, our apparatus was a good one, but that later, the moment wholesale wrecking occurred, the apparatus, for some unspecified reason, suddenly became utterly incompetent.

It follows that until last year, when grain procurements proceeded automatically and there was no particular intensification of the class struggle, our local organisations were good, even ideal; but that from last year, when the resistance of the kulaks assumed particularly acute forms, our organisations have suddenly become bad and utterly incompetent.

That is not an explanation, but a mockery of an explanation. That is not science, but quackery.

What then is the actual reason for this intensification of the class struggle?

There are two reasons.

Firstly, our advance, our offensive, the growth of socialist forms of economy both in industry and in agriculture, a growth which is accompanied by a corresponding ousting of certain sections of capitalists in town and country. The fact is that we are living according to Lenin's formula: "Who will beat whom?" Will we overpower them, the capitalists—engage them, as Lenin put it, in the last and decisive fight—or will they overpower us?

Secondly, the fact that the capitalist elements have no desire to depart from the scene voluntarily; they are resisting, and will continue to resist socialism, for they realise that their last days are approaching. And they are still able to resist because, in spite of the decline of their relative importance, they are nevertheless growing in absolute numbers; the petty bourgeoisie in town and country, as Lenin said, daily and hourly produces from its midst capitalists, big and small, and these capitalist elements go to all lengths to preserve their existence.

There have been no cases in history where dying classes have voluntarily departed from the scene. There have been no cases in history where the dying bourgeoisie has not exerted all its remaining strength to preserve its existence. Whether our lower Soviet apparatus is good or bad, our advance, our offensive will diminish the capitalist elements and oust them, and they, the dying classes, will carry on their resistance at all costs.

That is the basis for the intensification of the class struggle in our country.

The mistake of Bukharin and his friends is that they identify the growing resistance of the capitalists with the growth of the latter's relative importance. But there are absolutely no grounds for this identification. There are no grounds because the fact that the capitalists are resisting by no means implies that they have become stronger than we are. The very opposite is the case. The dying classes are resisting, not because they have become stronger than we are, but because socialism is growing faster than they are, and they are becoming weaker than we are. And precisely because they are becoming weaker, they feel that their last days are approaching and are compelled to resist with all the forces and all the means in their power.

Such is the mechanics of the intensification of the class struggle and of the resistance of the capitalists at the present moment of history.

What should be the policy of the Party in view of this state of affairs?

The policy should be to arouse the working class and the exploited masses of the countryside, to increase their fighting capacity and develop their mobilised preparedness for the fight against the capitalist elements in town and country, for the fight against the resisting class enemies.

The Marxist-Leninist theory of the class struggle is valuable, among other reasons, because it facilitates the mobilisation of the working class against the enemies of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Wherein lies the harm of the Bukharin theory of the capitalists growing into socialism and of the Bukharin conception of the intensification of the class struggle?

It lies in the fact that it lulls the working class to sleep, undermines the mobilised preparedness of the revolutionary forces of our country, demobilises the working class and facilitates the attack of the capitalist elements against the Soviet regime.

c) The Peasantry

Bukharin's third mistake is on the question of the peasantry. As you know, this question is one of the most important questions of our policy. In the conditions prevailing in our country, the peasantry consists of various social groups, namely, the poor peasants, the middle peasants and the kulaks. It is obvious that our attitude to these various groups cannot be the same. The poor peasant as the support of the working class, the middle peasant as the ally, the kulak as the class enemy—such is our attitude to these social groups. All this is clear and generally known.

Bukharin, however, regards the matter somewhat differently. In his description of the peasantry this differentiation is omitted, the existence of social groups disappears, and there remains but a single drab patch, called the countryside. According to him, the kulak is not a kulak, and the middle peasant is not a middle peasant, but there is a sort of uniform poverty in the countryside. That is what he said in his speech here: Can our kulak really be called a kulak? he said. Why, he is a pauper! And our middle peasant, is he really like a middle peasant? Why, he is a pauper, living on the verge of starvation. Obviously, such a view of the peasantry is a radically wrong view, incompatible with Leninism.

Lenin said that the individual peasantry is the last capitalist class. Is that thesis correct? Yes, it is absolutely correct. Why is the individual peasantry defined as the last capitalist class? Because, of the two main classes of which our society is composed, the peasantry is the class whose economy is based on private property and small commodity production. Because the peasantry, as long as it remains an individual peasantry carrying on small commodity production, produces capitalists from its midst, and cannot help producing them, constantly and continuously.

This fact is of decisive importance for us in the question of our Marxist attitude to the problem of the alliance between the working class and the peasantry. This means that we need, not just any kind of alliance with the peasantry, but only such an alliance as is based on the struggle against the capitalist elements of the peasantry.

As you see, Lenin's thesis about the peasantry being the last capitalist class not only does not contradict the idea of an alliance between the working class and the peasantry, but, on the contrary, supplies the basis for this alliance as an alliance between the working class and the majority of the peasantry directed against the capitalist elements in general and against the capitalist elements of the peasantry in the countryside in particular.

Lenin advanced this thesis in order to show that the alliance between the working class and the peasantry can be stable only if it is based on the struggle against those capitalist elements which the peasantry produces from its midst.

Bukharin's mistake is that he does not understand and does not accept this simple thing, he forgets about the social groups in the countryside, he loses sight of the kulaks and the poor peasants, and all that remains is one uniform mass of middle peasants.

This is undoubtedly a deviation to the Right on the part of Bukharin, in contradistinction to the "Left," Trotskyite, deviation, which sees no other social groups in the countryside than the poor peasants and the kulaks, and which loses sight of the middle peasants.

Wherein lies the difference between Trotskyism and Bukharin's group on the question of the alliance with the peasantry? It lies in the fact that Trotskyism is opposed to the policy of a stable alliance with the middle-peasant masses, while Bukharin's group is in favour of any kind of alliance with the peasantry in general. There is no need to prove that both these positions are wrong and that they are equally worthless.

Leninism unquestionably stands for a stable alliance with the main mass of the peasantry, for an alliance with the middle peasants; but not just any kind of alliance, however, but such an alliance with the middle peasants as ensures the leading role of the working class, consolidates the dictatorship of the proletariat and facilitates the abolition of classes.

"Agreement between the working class and the peasantry," says Lenin, "may be taken to mean anything. If we do not bear in mind that, from the point of view of the working class, agreement is permissible, correct and possible in principle only if it supports the dictatorship of the working class and is one of the measures aimed at the abolition of classes, then the formula of agreement between the working class and the peasantry remains, of course, a formula to which all the enemies of the Soviet regime and all the enemies of the dictatorship subscribe" (Vol. XXVI, p. 387).

And further:

"At present," says Lenin, "the proletariat holds power and guides the state. It guides the peasantry. What does guiding the peasantry mean? It means, in the first place, pursuing a course towards the abolition of classes, and not towards the small producer. If we wandered away from this radical and main course we

should cease to be socialists and should find ourselves in the camp of the petty bourgeoisie, in the camp of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, who are now the most bitter enemies of the proletariat” (ibid., pp. 399-400).

There you have Lenin’s point of view on the question of the alliance with the main mass of the peasantry, of the alliance with the middle peasants.

The mistake of Bukharin’s group on the question of the middle peasant is that it does not see the dual nature, the dual position of the middle peasant between the working class and the capitalists. “The middle peasantry is a vacillating class,” said Lenin. Why? Because, on the one hand, the middle peasant is a toiler, which brings him close to the working class, but, on the other hand, he is a property owner, which brings him close to the kulak. Hence the vacillations of the middle peasant. And this is true not only theoretically. These vacillations manifest themselves also in practice, daily and hourly.

“As a toiler,” says Lenin, “the peasant gravitates towards socialism, preferring the dictatorship of the workers to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. As a seller of grain, the peasant gravitates towards the bourgeoisie, towards freedom of trade, i.e., back to the ‘habitual,’ old, ‘time-hallowed’ capitalism” (Vol. XXIV, p. 314).

That is why the alliance with the middle peasant can be stable only if it is directed against the capitalist elements, against capitalism in general, if it guarantees the leading role of the working class in this alliance, if it facilitates the abolition of classes.

Bukharin’s group forgets these simple and obvious things.

d) NEP and Market Relations

Bukharin’s fourth mistake is on the question of NEP (the New Economic Policy). Bukharin’s mistake is that he fails to see the two-fold character of NEP, he sees only one aspect of NEP. When we introduced NEP in 1921, we directed its spearhead against War Communism, against a regime and system which excluded any and every form of freedom for private trade. We considered, and still consider, that NEP implies a certain freedom for private trade. Bukharin remembers this aspect of the matter. That is very good.

But Bukharin is mistaken in supposing that this is the only aspect of NEP. Bukharin forgets that NEP has also another aspect. The point is that NEP by no means implies complete freedom for private trade, the free play of prices in the

market. NEP is freedom for private trade within certain limits, within certain boundaries, with the proviso that the role of the state as the regulator of the market is guaranteed. That, precisely, is the second aspect of NEP. Moreover, this aspect of NEP is more important for us than the first. In our country there is no free play of prices in the market, such as is usually the case in capitalist countries. We, in the main, determine the price of grain. We determine the price of manufactured goods. We try to carry out a policy of reducing production costs and reducing prices of manufactured goods, while striving to stabilise the prices of agricultural produce. Is it not obvious that such special and specific market conditions do not exist in capitalist countries?

From this it follows that as long as NEP exists, both its aspects must be retained: the first aspect, which is directed against the regime of War Communism and aims at ensuring a certain freedom for private trade, and the second aspect, which is directed against complete freedom for private trade, and aims at ensuring the role of the state as the regulator of the market. Destroy one of these aspects, and the New Economic Policy disappears.

Bukharin thinks that danger can threaten NEP only “from the Left,” from people who want to abolish all freedom of trade. That is not true. It is a gross error. Moreover, such a danger is the least real at the present moment, since there is nobody, or hardly anybody, in our local and central organisations now who does not understand the necessity and expediency of preserving a certain measure of freedom of trade.

The danger from the Right, from those who want to abolish the role of the state as regulator of the market, who want to “emancipate” the market and thereby open up an era of complete freedom for private trade, is much more real. There cannot be the slightest doubt that the danger of disrupting NEP from the Right is much more real at the present time.

It should not be forgotten that the petty-bourgeois elemental forces are working precisely in this direction, in the direction of disrupting NEP from the Right. It should also be borne in mind that the outcries of the kulaks and the well-to-do elements, the outcries of the speculators and profiteers, to which many of our comrades often yield, bombard NEP from precisely this quarter. The fact that Bukharin does not see this second, and very real, danger of NEP being disrupted undoubtedly shows that he has yielded to the pressure of the petty-bourgeois elemental forces.

Bukharin proposes to “normalise” the market and to “manoeuvre” with grain-procurement prices according to areas, i.e., to raise the price of grain. What does this mean? It means that he is not satisfied with Soviet market conditions, he

wants to put a brake on the role of the state as the regulator of the market and proposes that concessions be made to the petty-bourgeois elemental forces, which are disrupting NEP from the Right.

Let us assume for a moment that we followed Bukharin's advice. What would be the result? We raise the price of grain in the autumn, let us say, at the beginning of the grain-purchasing period. But since there are always people on the market, all sorts of speculators and profiteers, who can pay three times as much for grain, and since we cannot keep up with the speculators, for they buy some ten million poods in all while we have to buy hundreds of millions of poods, those who hold grain will all the same continue to hold it in expectation of a further rise in price. Consequently, towards the spring, when the state's real need for grain mainly begins, we should again have to raise the price of grain. But what would raising the price of grain in the spring mean? It would mean ruining the poor and economically weaker strata of the rural population, who are themselves obliged to buy grain in the spring, partly for seed and partly for food—the very grain which they sold in the autumn at a lower price. Can we by such operations obtain any really useful results in the way of securing a sufficient quantity of grain? Most probably not, for there will always be speculators and profiteers able to pay twice and three times as much for the same grain. Consequently, we would have to be prepared to raise the price of grain once again in a vain effort to catch up with the speculators and profiteers.

From this, however, it follows that once having started on the path of raising grain prices we should have to continue down the slippery slope without any guarantee of securing a sufficient quantity of grain.

But the matter does not end there.

Firstly, having raised grain-procurement prices, we should next have to raise the prices of agricultural raw materials as well, in order to maintain a certain proportion in the prices of agricultural produce.

Secondly, having raised grain-procurement prices, we should not be able to maintain low retail prices of bread in the towns—consequently, we should have to raise the selling price of bread. And since we cannot and must not injure the workers, we should have to increase wages at an accelerated pace. But this is bound to lead to a rise in the prices of manufactured goods, for, otherwise, there could be a diversion of resources from the towns into the countryside to the detriment of industrialisation.

As a result, we should have to adjust the prices of manufactured goods and of agricultural produce not on the basis of falling or, at any rate, stabilised prices, but on the basis of rising prices, both of grain and of manufactured goods.

In other words, we should have to pursue a policy of raising the prices of manufactured goods and agricultural produce.

It is not difficult to understand that such “manoeuvring” with prices can only lead to the complete nullification of the Soviet price policy, to the nullification of the role of the state as the regulator of the market, and to giving a free rein to the petty-bourgeois elemental forces.

Who would profit by this?

Only the well-to-do strata of the urban and rural population, for expensive manufactured goods and agricultural produce would necessarily become out of the reach both of the working class and of the poor and economically weaker strata of the rural population. It would profit the kulaks and the well-to-do, the Nepmen and other prosperous classes.

That, too, would be a bond, but a peculiar one, a bond with the wealthy strata of the rural and urban population. The workers and the economically weaker strata of the rural population would have every right to ask us: Whose government are you, a workers’ and peasants’ government or a kulak and Nepmen’s government?

A rupture with the working class and the economically weaker strata of the rural population, and a bond with the wealthy strata of the urban and rural population—that is what Bukharin’s “normalisation” of the market and “manoeuvring” with grain prices according to areas must lead to.

Obviously, the Party cannot take this fatal path.

The extent to which all conceptions of NEP in Bukharin’s mind have become muddled and the extent to which he is firmly held captive by the petty-bourgeois elemental forces is shown, among other things, by the more than negative attitude he displays to the question of the new forms of trade turnover between town and country, between the state and the peasantry. He is indignant and cries out against the fact that the state has become the supplier of goods for the peasantry and that the peasantry is becoming the supplier of grain for the state. He regards this as a violation of all the rules of NEP, as almost the disruption of NEP. Why? On what grounds?

What can there be objectionable in the fact that the state, state industry, is the supplier, without middlemen, of goods for the peasantry, and that the peasantry is the supplier of grain for industry, for the state, also without middlemen?

What can there be objectionable, from the point of view of Marxism and a Marxist policy, in the fact that the peasantry has already become the supplier of cotton, beet and flax for the needs of state industry, and that state industry has become the supplier of urban goods, seed and instruments of production for these branches of agriculture?

The contract system is here the principal method of establishing these new forms of trade turnover between town and country. But is the contract system contrary to the principles of NEP?

What can there be objectionable in the fact that, thanks to this contract system, the peasantry is becoming the state's supplier not only of cotton, beet and flax, but also of grain?

If trade in small consignments, petty trade, can be termed trade turnover, why cannot trade in large consignments, conducted by means of agreements concluded in advance (contracts) as to price and quality of goods be regarded as trade turnover?

Is it difficult to understand that it is on the basis of NEP that these new, mass forms of trade turnover between town and country based on the contract system have arisen, that they mark a very big step forward on the part of our organisations as regards strengthening the planned, socialist direction of our national economy?

Bukharin has lost the capacity to understand these simple and obvious things.

e) The So-Called "Tribute"

Bukharin's fifth mistake (I am speaking of his principal mistakes) is his opportunist distortion of the Party line on the question of the "scissors" between town and country, on the question of the so-called "tribute."

What is the point dealt with in the well-known resolution of the joint meeting of the Political Bureau and the Presidium of the Central Control Commission (February 1929) on the question of the "scissors"? What is said there is that, in addition to the usual taxes, direct and indirect, which the peasantry pays to the state, the peasantry also pays a certain supertax in the form of an over-payment

for manufactured goods, and in the form of an under-payment received for agricultural produce.

Is it true that this supertax paid by the peasantry actually exists? Yes, it is. What other name have we for this supertax? We also call it the “scissors,” the “diversion” of resources from agriculture into industry for the purpose of speeding up our industrial development. Is this “diversion” necessary? We all agree that, as a temporary measure, it is necessary if we really wish to maintain a speedy rate of industrial development.

Indeed, we must at all costs maintain a rapid growth of our industry, for this growth is necessary not only for industry itself, but primarily for agriculture, for the peasantry, which at the present time needs most of all tractors, agricultural machinery and fertilisers.

Can we abolish this supertax at the present time? Unfortunately, we cannot. We must abolish it at the first opportunity, in the next few years. But we cannot abolish it at the present moment.

Now, as you see, this supertax obtained as a result of the “scissors” does constitute “something in the nature of a tribute.” Not a tribute, but “something in the nature of a tribute.” It is “something in the nature of a tribute” on account of our backwardness. We need this supertax to stimulate the development of our industry and to do away with our backwardness.

But does this mean that by levying this additional tax we are thereby exploiting the peasantry? No, it does not. The very nature of the Soviet regime precludes any sort of exploitation of the peasantry by the state. It was plainly stated in the speeches of our comrades at the July plenum⁶ that under the Soviet regime exploitation of the peasantry by the socialist state is ruled out; for a constant rise in the well-being of the labouring peasantry is a law of development of Soviet society, and this rules out any possibility of exploiting the peasantry.

Is the peasantry capable of paying this additional tax? Yes, it is. Why?

Firstly, because the levying of this additional tax is effected under conditions of a constant improvement of the material position of the peasantry.

Secondly, because the peasants have their own private husbandry, the income from which enables them to meet the additional tax, and in this they differ from the industrial workers, who have no private husbandry, but who nonetheless devote all their energies to the cause of industrialisation.

Thirdly, because the amount of this additional tax is being reduced year by year.

Are we right in calling this additional tax “something in the nature of a tribute”? Unquestionably, we are. By our choice of words we are pointing out to our comrades that this additional tax is detestable and undesirable, and that its continuance for any considerable period is impermissible. By giving this name to the additional tax on the peasantry we intend to convey that we are levying it not because we want to, but because we are forced to, and that we, Bolsheviki, must take all measures to abolish this additional tax at the first opportunity, as soon as possible.

Such is the essence of the question of the “scissors,” the “diversion,” the “supertax,” of what the above-mentioned documents designate as “something in the nature of a tribute.”

At first, Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsky tried to wrangle over the word “tribute,” and accused the Party of pursuing a policy of military-feudal exploitation of the peasantry. But now even the blind can see that this was just an unscrupulous attempt of the Bukharinites at gross slander against our Party. Now, even they themselves are compelled tacitly to acknowledge that their chatter about military-feudal exploitation was a resounding failure.

One thing or the other:

either the Bukharinites recognise the inevitability, at the present time, of the “scissors” and “diversion” of resources from agriculture into industry—in which case they are forced to admit that their accusations are of a slanderous nature, and that the Party is entirely right;

or they deny the inevitability, at the present time, of the “scissors” and “diversion,” but in that case let them say it frankly, so that the Party may class them as opponents of the industrialisation of our country.

I could, incidentally, refer to a number of speeches of Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsky, in which they recognise without any reservations the inevitability, at the present time, of the “scissors” and “diversion” of resources from agriculture into industry. And this, indeed, is equivalent to an acceptance of the formula “something in the nature of a tribute.”

Well then, do they continue to uphold the point of view with regard to the “diversion,” and the preservation of the “scissors” at the present time, or not? Let them say it frankly.

Bukharin. The diversion is necessary, but “tribute” is an unfortunate word.
(General laughter.)

Stalin. Consequently, we do not differ on the essence of the question; consequently, the “diversion” of resources from agriculture into industry, the so-called “scissors,” the additional tax, “something in the nature of a tribute”—is a necessary though temporary means for industrialising our country at the present time.

Very well. Then what is the point at issue? Why all the tumult? They do not like the word “tribute” or the words “something in the nature of a tribute,” because they believe that this expression is not commonly used in Marxist literature?

Well then, let us discuss the word “tribute.”

I assert, comrades, that this word has long been in use in our Marxist literature, in Comrade Lenin’s writings, for example. This may surprise some people who do not read Lenin’s works, but it is a fact, comrades. Bukharin vehemently asserted here that “tribute” is an unfitting word to use in Marxist literature. He was indignant and surprised at the fact that the Central Committee of the Party, and Marxists in general, take the liberty of using the word “tribute.” But what is surprising in this, if there is proof that this word has long been in use in the writings of such a Marxist as Comrade Lenin. Or perhaps, from Bukharin’s viewpoint, Lenin does not qualify as a Marxist? Well, you should be straightforward about it, dear comrades.

Take for example the article “‘Left-Wing’ Childishness and Petty-Bourgeois Mentality” (May 1918), which was written by no less a Marxist than Lenin, and read the following passage:

“The petty bourgeois who hoards his thousands is an enemy of state capitalism; he wants to employ these thousands just for himself, against the poor, in opposition to any kind of state control; yet the sum total of these thousands amounts to many thousands of millions that supply a base for speculation, which undermines our socialist construction. Let us assume that a certain number of workers produce in a few days values equal to 1,000. Let us then assume that 200 out of this total vanishes owing to petty speculation, all kinds of pilfering and of “dodging” Soviet decrees and regulations by small property owners. Every class-conscious worker would say: If I could give up 300 out of the 1,000 for the sake of achieving better order and organisation, I would willingly give up 300 instead of 200, because to reduce this “tribute” later on, to, say, 100 or 50, will be quite an easy matter under the Soviet regime, once we have achieved

order and organisation and once we have completely overcome the disruption of all state monopoly by small property owners” (Vol. XXII, p. 515).

That is clear, I think. Should Lenin on this account be declared an advocate of the policy of military-feudal exploitation of the working class? Just try, dear comrades!

A voice. Nevertheless the term “tribute” has never been used in relation to the middle peasant.

Stalin. Do you believe by any chance that the middle peasant is closer to the Party than the working class? You are some Marxist! (General laughter.) If we, the Party of the working class, can speak of “tribute” when it concerns the working class, why cannot we do so when it concerns the middle peasantry, which is only our ally?

Some of the faultfinding people may imagine that the word “tribute” in Lenin’s article “‘Left-Wing’ Childishness” is just a slip of the pen, an accidental slip. A check-up on this point, however, will show that the suspicions of those fault-finding people are entirely groundless. Take another article, or rather a pamphlet, written by Lenin: *The Tax in Kind* (April 1921) and read page 324 (Vol. XXVI, p. 324). You will see that the above-quoted passage regarding “tribute” is repeated by Lenin word for word. Finally, take Lenin’s article “*The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Power*” (Vol. XXII, p. 448, March-April 1918), and you will see that in it, too, Lenin speaks of the “tribute (without quotation marks) which we are paying for our backwardness in the matter of organising accounting and control from below on a nationwide scale.”

It turns out that the word “tribute” is very far from being a fortuitous element in Lenin’s writings. Comrade Lenin uses this word to stress the temporary nature of the “tribute,” to stimulate the energy of the Bolsheviks and to direct it so as at the first opportunity, to abolish this “tribute,” the price the working class has to pay for our backwardness and our “muddling.”

It turns out that when I use the expression “something in the nature of a tribute” I find myself in quite good Marxist company, that of Comrade Lenin.

Bukharin said here that Marxists should not tolerate the word “tribute” in their writings. What kind of Marxists was he speaking about? If he had in mind such Marxists, if they may be so called, as Slepkov, Maretsky, Petrovsky, Rosit, etc., who are more like liberals than Marxists, then his indignation is perfectly justified. If, on the other hand, he has in mind real Marxists, Comrade Lenin, for example, then it must be admitted that among them the word “tribute” has been

in use for a long time, while Bukharin, who is not well acquainted with Lenin's writings, is wide of the mark.

But this does not fully dispose of the question of the "tribute." The point is that it was no accident that Bukharin and his friends took exception to the word "tribute" and began to speak of a policy of military-feudal exploitation of the peasantry. Their outcry about military-feudal exploitation was undoubtedly meant to express their extreme dissatisfaction with the Party policy towards the kulaks that is being applied by our organisations. Dissatisfaction with the Leninist policy of the Party in its leadership of the peasantry, dissatisfaction with our grain-procurement policy, with our policy of developing collective farms and state farms to the utmost, and lastly, the desire to "emancipate" the market and to establish complete freedom for private trade—that is what was expressed in Bukharin's howling about a policy of military-feudal exploitation of the peasantry.

In the history of our Party I cannot recall any other instance of the Party being accused of pursuing a policy of military-feudal exploitation. That weapon against the Party was not borrowed from the arsenal of Marxists. Where, then, was it borrowed from? From the arsenal of Milyukov, the leader of the Cadets. When the Cadets wish to sow dissension between the working class and the peasantry, they usually say: You, Messieurs the Bolsheviks, are building socialism on the corpses of the peasants. When Bukharin raises an outcry about the "tribute," he is singing to the tune of Messieurs the Milyukovs, and is following in the wake of the enemies of the people.

f) The Rate of Development of Industry and the New Forms of the Bond

Finally, the question of the rate of development of industry and of the new forms of the bond between town and country. This is one of the most important questions of our disagreements. Its importance lies in the fact that it is the converging point of all the threads of our practical disagreements about the economic policy of the Party.

What are the new forms of the bond, what do they signify from the point of view of our economic policy?

They signify, first of all, that besides the old forms of the bond between town and country, whereby industry chiefly satisfied the personal requirements of the peasant (cotton fabrics, footwear, and textiles in general, etc.), we now need new forms of the bond, whereby industry will satisfy the productive requirements of

peasant economy (agricultural machinery, tractors, improved seed, fertilisers, etc.).

Whereas formerly we satisfied mainly the personal requirements of the peasant, hardly touching the productive requirements of his economy, now, while continuing to satisfy the personal requirements of the peasant, we must do our utmost to supply agricultural machinery, tractors, fertilisers, etc., which have a direct bearing on the reconstruction of agricultural production on a new technical basis.

As long as it was a question of restoring agriculture and of the peasants putting into use the land formerly belonging to the landlords and kulaks, we could be content with the old forms of the bond. But now, when it is a question of reconstructing agriculture, that is not enough. Now we must go further and help the peasantry to reorganise agricultural production on the basis of new technique and collective labour.

Secondly, they signify that simultaneously with the re-equipment of our industry, we must begin seriously re-equipping agriculture too. We are re-equipping, and have already partly re-equipped our industry, placing it on a new technical basis, supplying it with new, improved machinery and new, improved cadres. We are building new mills and factories and are reconstructing and extending the old ones; we are developing the metallurgical, chemical and machine-building industries. On this basis new towns are springing up, new industrial centres are multiplying and the old ones are expanding. On this basis the demand for food products and for raw materials for industry is growing. But agriculture continues to employ the old equipment, the old methods of tillage practised by our fore-fathers, the old, primitive, now useless, or nearly useless technique, the old, small-peasant, individual forms of farming and labour.

Consider, for example, the fact that before the Revolution we had nearly 16,000,000 peasant households, while now there are no less than 25,000,000. What does this indicate if not that agriculture is becoming more and more scattered and disunited. And the characteristic feature of scattered small farms is that they are unable properly to employ technique, machines, tractors and scientific agronomic knowledge, that they are farms with a small marketable surplus.

Hence the insufficient output of agricultural produce for the market.

Hence the danger of a rift between town and country, between industry and agriculture.

Hence the necessity for increasing the rate of development of agriculture, bringing it up to that of our industry.

And so, in order to eliminate this danger of a rift, we must begin seriously re-equipping agriculture on the basis of new technique. But in order to re-equip it we must gradually unite the scattered individual peasant farms into large farms, into collective farms; we must build up agriculture on the basis of collective labour, we must enlarge the collectives, we must develop the old and new state farms, we must systematically employ the contract system on a mass scale in all the principal branches of agriculture, we must develop the system of machine and tractor stations which help the peasantry to master the new technique and to collectivise labour—in a word, we must gradually transfer the small individual peasant farms to the basis of large-scale collective production, for only large-scale production of a socially-conducted type is capable of making full use of scientific knowledge and modern technique, and of advancing the development of our agriculture with giant strides.

This, of course, does not mean that we must neglect poor and middle individual peasant farming. Not at all. Poor and middle individual peasant farming plays a predominant part in supplying industry with food and raw materials, and will continue to do so in the immediate future. For that very reason we must continue to assist poor and middle individual peasant farms which have not yet united into collective farms.

But this does mean that individual peasant farming alone is no longer adequate. That is shown by our grain-procurement difficulties. That is why the development of individual poor- and middle-peasant farming must be supplemented by the widest possible development of collective forms of farming and of state farms.

That is why we must make a bridge between individual poor- and middle-peasant farming and collective, socially-conducted forms of farming by means of the contract system on a mass scale, by means of machine and tractor stations and by the fullest development of a co-operative communal life in order to help the peasants to transfer their small, individual farming on to the lines of collective labour.

Failing this it will be impossible to develop agriculture to any extent. Failing this it will be impossible to solve the grain problem. Failing this it will be impossible to save the economically weaker strata of the peasantry from poverty and ruin.

Finally, this signifies that we must develop our industry to the utmost as the principal source from which agriculture will be supplied with the means required for its reconstruction: we must develop our iron and steel, chemical and

machine-building industries; we must build tractor works, agricultural-machinery works, etc.

There is no need to prove that it is impossible to develop collective farms, that it is impossible to develop machine and tractor stations, without drawing the main mass of the peasantry into collective forms of farming, with the aid of the contract system on a mass scale, without supplying agriculture with a fairly large quantity of tractors, agricultural machinery, etc.

But it will be impossible to supply the countryside with machines and tractors unless we accelerate the development of our industry. Hence, rapid development of our industry is the key to the reconstruction of agriculture on the basis of collectivism.

Such is the significance and importance of the new forms of the bond.

Bukharin's group is obliged to admit, in words, the necessity of the new forms of the bond. But it is an admission only in words, with the intention, under cover of a verbal recognition of the new forms of the bond, of smuggling in something which is the very opposite. Actually, Bukharin is opposed to the new forms of the bond. Bukharin's starting point is not a rapid rate of development of industry as the lever for the reconstruction of agriculture, but the development of individual peasant farming. He puts in the foreground the "normalisation" of the market and permission for the free play of prices on the agricultural produce market, complete freedom for private trade. Hence his distrustful attitude to the collective farms which manifested itself in his speech at the July plenum of the Central Committee and in his theses prior to that July plenum. Hence his disapproval of any form of emergency measures against the kulaks during grain procurement.

We know that Bukharin shuns emergency measures as the devil shuns holy water.

We know that Bukharin is still unable to understand that under present conditions the kulak will not supply a sufficient quantity of grain voluntarily, of his own accord.

That has been proved by our two years' experience of grain-procurement work.

But what if, in spite of everything, there is not enough marketable grain? To this Bukharin replies: Do not worry the kulaks with emergency measures; import grain from abroad. Not long ago he proposed that we import about 50,000,000 poods of grain, i.e., to the value of about 100,000,000 rubles in foreign currency.

But what if foreign currency is required to import equipment for industry? To this Bukharin replies: Preference must be given to grain imports—thus, evidently, relegating imports of equipment for industry to the background.

It follows, therefore, that the basis for the solution of the grain problem and for the reconstruction of agriculture is not a rapid rate of development of industry, but the development of individual peasant farming, including kulak farming, on the basis of a free market and the free play of prices in the market.

Thus we have two different plans of economic policy.

The Party's plan:

1. We are re-equipping industry (reconstruction). 2. We are beginning seriously to re-equip agriculture (reconstruction).

3. For this we must expand the development of collective farms and state farms, employ on a mass scale the contract system and machine and tractor stations as means of establishing a bond between industry and agriculture in the sphere of production.

4. As for the present grain-procurement difficulties, we must admit the permissibility of temporary emergency measures that are backed by the popular support of the middle- and poor-peasant masses, as one of the means of breaking the resistance of the kulaks and of obtaining from them the maximum grain surpluses necessary for dispensing with imported grain and saving foreign currency for the development of industry.

5. Individual poor- and middle-peasant farming plays, and will continue to play, a predominant part in supplying the country with food and raw materials; but alone it is no longer adequate—the development of individual poor- and middle-peasant farming must therefore be supplemented by the development of collective farms and state farms, by the contract system on a mass scale, by accelerating the development of machine and tractor stations, in order to facilitate the ousting of the capitalist elements from agriculture and the gradual transfer of the individual peasant farms on to the lines of large-scale collective farming, on to the lines of collective labour.

6. But in order to achieve all this, it is necessary first of all to accelerate the development of industry, of the metallurgical chemical and machine-building industries, tractor works, agricultural-machinery works, etc. Failing this it will be impossible to solve the grain problem just as it will be impossible to reconstruct agriculture.

Conclusion: the key to the reconstruction of agriculture is a rapid rate of development of our industry.

Bukharin's plan:

1. "Normalise" the market; permit the free play of prices on the market and a rise in the price of grain, undeterred by the fact that this may lead to a rise in the prices of manufactured goods, raw materials and bread.
2. The utmost development of individual peasant farming accompanied by a certain reduction of the rate of development of collective farms and state farms (Bukharin's theses in July and his speech at the July plenum).
3. Grain procurements to proceed automatically, excluding at any time or under any circumstances even a partial use of emergency measures against the kulaks, even though such measures are supported by the middle- and poor-peasant masses.
4. In the event of shortage of grain, to import about 100 million rubles' worth of grain.
5. And if there is not enough foreign currency to pay for grain imports and imports of equipment for industry, to reduce imports of equipment and, consequently, the rate of development of our industry—otherwise our agriculture will simply "mark time," or even "directly decline."

Conclusion: the key to the reconstruction of agriculture is the development of individual peasant farming.

That is how it works out, comrades!

Bukharin's plan is a plan to reduce the rate of development of industry and to undermine the new forms of the bond.

Such are our disagreements.

Sometimes the question is asked: Have we not been late in developing the new forms of the bond, in developing collective farms, state farms, etc.?

Some people assert that the Party was at least about two years late in starting with this work. That is wrong, comrades. It is absolutely wrong. Only noisy "Lefts," who have no conception of the economy of the U.S.S.R., can talk like that.

What is meant by being late in this matter? If it is a question of foreseeing the need for collective farms and state farms, then we can say that we began that at the time of the October Revolution. There cannot be the slightest doubt that already then—at the time of the October Revolution—the Party foresaw the need for collective farms and state farms. Lastly, one can take our programme, adopted at the Eighth Congress of the Party (March 1919). The need for collective farms and state farms is recognised there quite clearly.

But the mere fact that the top leadership of our Party fore saw the need for collective farms and state farms was not enough for carrying into effect and organising a mass movement for collective farms and state farms. Consequently, it is not a matter of foreseeing, but of carrying out a plan of collective-farm and state-farm development. But in order to carry out such a plan a number of conditions are required which did not exist before, and which came into existence only recently.

That is the point, comrades.

In order to carry out the plan for a mass movement in favour of collective farms and state farms, it is necessary, first of all, that the Party's top leadership should be supported in this matter by the mass of the Party membership. As you know, ours is a Party of a million members. It was therefore necessary to convince the mass of the Party membership of the correctness of the policy of the top leadership. That is the first point.

Further, it is necessary that a mass movement in favour of collective should arise within the peasantry, that the peasants—far from fearing the collective farms—should themselves join the collective farms and become convinced by experience of the advantage of collective farming over individual farming. This is a serious matter, requiring a certain amount of time. That is the second point.

Further, it is necessary that the state should possess the material resources required to finance collective-farm development, to finance the collective farms and state farms. And this, dear comrades, is a matter that requires many hundreds of millions of rubles. That is the third point.

Finally, it is necessary that industry should be fairly adequately developed so as to be able to supply agriculture with machinery, tractors, fertilisers, etc. That is the fourth point.

Can it be asserted that all these conditions existed here two or three years ago? No, it cannot.

It must not be forgotten that we are a party in power, not in opposition. An opposition party can issue slogans—I am speaking of fundamental practical slogans of the movement—in order to carry them into effect after coming into power. Nobody can accuse an opposition party of not carrying out its fundamental slogans immediately, for everybody knows that it is not the opposition party which is at the helm, but other parties.

In the case of a party in power, however, such as our Bolshevik Party is, the matter is entirely different. The slogans of such a party are not mere agitational slogans, but something much more than that, for they have the force of practical decision, the force of law, and must be carried out immediately. Our Party cannot issue a practical slogan and then defer its implementation. That would be deceiving the masses. For a practical slogan to be issued, especially so serious a slogan as transferring the vast masses of the peasantry on to the lines of collectivism, the conditions must exist that will enable the slogan to be carried out directly; finally, these conditions must be created, organised. That is why it is not enough for the Party's top leadership merely to foresee the need for collective farms and state farms. That is why we also need the conditions to enable us to realise, to carry out, our slogans immediately.

Was the mass of our Party membership ready for the utmost development of collective farms and state farms, say, some two or three years ago? No, it was not ready. The serious turn of the mass of the Party membership towards the new forms of the bond began only with the first serious grain-procurement difficulties. It required those difficulties for the mass of the Party membership to become conscious of the full necessity of accelerating the adoption of the new forms of the bond, and primarily, of the collective farms and state farms, and resolutely to support its Central Committee in this matter. This is one condition which did not exist before, but which does exist now.

Was there any serious movement among the vast masses of the peasantry in favour of collective farms or state farms some two or three years ago? No, there was not. Everybody knows that two or three years ago the peasantry was hostilely disposed to the state farms, while they contemptuously called the collective farms the “kommunia,” regarding them as something utterly useless. And now? Now, the situation is different. Now we have whole strata of the peasantry who regard the state farms and collective farms as a source of assistance to peasant farming in the way of seed, pedigree cattle, machines and tractors. Now we have only to supply machines and tractors, and collective farms will develop at an accelerated pace.

What was the cause of this change of attitude among certain, fairly considerable, strata of the peasantry? What helped to bring it about?

In the first place, the development of the co-operatives and a co-operative communal life. There can be no doubt that without the powerful development of the co-operatives, particularly the agricultural co-operatives, which produced among the peasantry a psychological background in favour of the collective farms, we would not have that urge towards the collective farms which is now displayed by whole strata of the peasantry.

An important part in this was also played by the existence of well-organised collective farms, which set the peasants good examples of how agriculture can be improved by uniting small peasant farms into large, collective, farms.

The existence of well-organised state farms, which helped the peasants to improve their methods of farming, also played its part here. I need not mention other facts with which you are all familiar. There you have another condition which did not exist before, but which does exist now.

Further, can it be asserted that we were able some two or three years ago to give substantial financial aid to the collective farms and state farms, to assign hundreds of millions of rubles for this purpose? No, it cannot be asserted. You know very well that we even lacked sufficient means for developing that minimum of industry without which no industrialisation at all is possible, let alone the reconstruction of agriculture. Could we take those means from industry, which is the basis for the industrialisation of the country, and transfer them to the collective farms and state farms? Obviously, we could not. But now? Now we have the means for developing the collective farms and state farms.

Finally, can it be asserted that some two or three years ago our industry was an adequate basis for supplying agriculture with large quantities of machines, tractors, etc.? No, it cannot be asserted. At that time our task was to create the minimum industrial basis required for supplying machines and tractors to agriculture in the future. It was on the creation of such a basis that our scanty financial resources were then spent. And now? Now we have this industrial basis for agriculture. At all events, this industrial basis is being created at a very rapid rate.

It follows that the conditions required for the mass development of the collective farms and state farms were created only recently.

That is how matters stand, comrades.

That is why it cannot be said that we were late in developing the new forms of the bond.

g) Bukharin as a Theoretician

Such, in the main, are the principal mistakes committed by the theoretician of the Right opposition, Bukharin, on the fundamental questions of our policy.

It is said that Bukharin is one of the theoreticians of our Party. This is true, of course. But the point is that not all is well with his theorising. This is evident if only from the fact that on questions of Party theory and policy he has piled up the heap of mistakes which I have just described. These mistakes, mistakes on Comintern questions, mistakes on questions of the class struggle, the intensification of the class struggle, the peasantry, NEP, the new forms of the bond—these mistakes could not possibly have occurred accidentally. No, these mistakes are not accidental. These mistakes of Bukharin's followed from his wrong theoretical line, from the defects in his theories. Yes, Bukharin is a theoretician, but he is not altogether a Marxist theoretician; he is a theoretician who has much to learn before he can become a Marxist theoretician.

Reference has been made to the letter in which Comrade Lenin speaks of Bukharin as a theoretician. Let us read this letter:

“Of the younger members of the Central Committee,” says Lenin, “I should like to say a few words about Bukharin and Pyatakov. In my opinion, they are the most outstanding forces (of the youngest ones), and regarding them the following should be borne in mind: Bukharin is not only a very valuable and important theoretician in our Party, he is also legitimately regarded as the favourite of the whole Party, but it is very doubtful whether his theoretical views can be classed as fully Marxist, for there is something scholastic in him (he has never studied and, I think, has never fully understood dialectics)”* (Verbatim report of the July plenum, 1926, Part IV, p. 66).

Thus, he is a theoretician without dialectics. A scholastic theoretician. A theoretician about whom it was said: “It is very doubtful whether his theoretical views can be classed as fully Marxist.” That is how Lenin characterised Bukharin's theoretical complexion.

You can well understand, comrades, that such a theoretician has still much to learn. And if Bukharin understood that he is not yet a full-fledged theoretician, that he still has much to learn, that he is a theoretician who has not yet mastered dialectics—and dialectics is the soul of Marxism—if he understood that, he

would be more modest, and the Party would only benefit thereby. But the trouble is that Bukharin is wanting in modesty. The trouble is that not only is he wanting in modesty, but he even presumes to teach our teacher Lenin on a number of questions and, above all, on the question of the state. And that is Bukharin's misfortune.

Allow me in this connection to refer to the well-known theoretical controversy which flared up in 1916 between Lenin and Bukharin on the question of the state. This is important for us in order to expose both Bukharin's inordinate pretensions to teach Lenin and the roots of his theoretical weaknesses on such important questions as the dictatorship of the proletariat, the class struggle, etc.

As you know, an article by Bukharin appeared in 1916 in the magazine *Internatsional Molodyozhy*,⁷ signed *Nota Bene*; this article was in point of fact directed against Comrade Lenin. In this article Bukharin wrote:

“ . . . It is quite a mistake to seek the difference between the Socialists and the Anarchists in the fact that the former are in favour of the state while the latter are against it. The real difference is that revolutionary Social-Democracy desires to organise the new social production as centralised production, i.e., technically the most advanced production; whereas decentralised anarchist production would mean only retrogression to old technique, to the old form of enterprises. . . .”

“ . . . Social-Democracy, which is, or at least should be, the educator of the masses, must now more than ever emphasise its hostility in principle to the state. . . . The present war has shown how deeply the roots of the state idea have penetrated the souls of the workers.”

Criticising these views of Bukharin's, Lenin says in a well known article published in 1916:

“This is wrong. The author raises the question of the difference in the attitude of Socialists and Anarchists towards the state. But he replies not to this question, but to another, namely, the difference in the attitude of Socialists and Anarchists towards the economic foundation of future society. That, of course, is a very important and necessary question. But it does not follow that the main point of difference in the attitude of the Socialists and Anarchists towards the state can be ignored. The Socialists are in favour of utilising the modern state and its institutions in the struggle for the emancipation of the working class, and they also urge the necessity of utilising the state for the peculiar transitional form from capitalism to socialism. This transitional form, which is also a state, is the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Anarchists want to ‘abolish’ the state, to ‘blow it up’ (“sprengen”), as Comrade *Nota Bene* expresses it in one place,

erroneously ascribing this view to the Socialists. The Socialists—unfortunately the author quotes the words of Engels relevant to this subject rather incompletely—hold that the state will ‘wither away,’ will gradually ‘fall asleep’ after the bourgeoisie has been expropriated.” . . .

“In order to ‘emphasise’ out ‘hostility in principle’ to the state, we must indeed understand it ‘clearly.’ This clarity, however, our author lacks. His phrase about the ‘roots of the state idea’ is entirely muddled, non-Marxist and non-socialist. It is not ‘the state idea’ that has clashed with the repudiation of the idea of the state, but opportunist policy (i.e., an opportunist, reformist, bourgeois attitude towards the state) that has clashed with revolutionary Social-Democratic policy (i.e., with the revolutionary Social-Democratic attitude to the bourgeois state and towards utilising the state against the bourgeoisie in order to overthrow it). These are entirely different things” (Vol. XIX, p. 296).

I think it is clear what the point at issue is, and what a semi-anarchist mess Bukharin has got into!

Sten. At that time Lenin had not yet fully formulated the necessity for “blowing up” the state. Bukharin, while committing anarchist mistakes, was approaching a formulation of the question.

Stalin. No, that is not what we are concerned with at present. What we are concerned with is the attitude towards the state in general. The point is that in Bukharin’s opinion the working class should be hostile in principle to any kind of state, including the working-class state.

Sten. Lenin then only spoke about utilising the state; he said nothing in his criticism of Bukharin regarding the “blowing up” of the state.

Stalin. You are mistaken, the “blowing up” of the state is not a Marxist formula, it is an anarchist formula. Let me assure you that the point here is that, in the opinion of Bukharin (and of the Anarchists), the workers should emphasise their hostility in principle to any kind of state, and, therefore, also to the state of the transition period, to the working-class state.

Just try to explain to our workers that the working class must become imbued with hostility in principle to the proletarian dictatorship, which, of course, is also a state.

Bukharin’s position, as set forth in his article in *Internatsional Molodyozhy*, is one of repudiating the state in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism.

Bukharin overlooked a “trifle” here, namely, the whole transition period, during which the working class cannot do without its own state if it really wants to suppress the bourgeoisie and build socialism. That is the first point.

Secondly, it is not true that at the time Comrade Lenin in his criticism did not deal with the theory of “blowing up,” of “abolishing” the state in general. Lenin not only dealt with this theory, as is evident from the passages I have quoted, but he criticised and demolished it as an anarchist theory, and counterposed to it the theory of forming and utilising a new state after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, namely, the state of the proletarian dictatorship.

Finally, the anarchist theory of “blowing up” and “abolishing” the state must not be confused with the Marxist theory of the “withering away” of the proletarian state or the “breaking up,” the “smashing” of the bourgeois state machine. There are persons who are inclined to confuse these two different concepts in the belief that they express one and the same idea. But that is wrong. Lenin proceeded precisely from the Marxist theory of “smashing” the bourgeois state machine and the “withering away” of the proletarian state when he criticised the anarchist theory of “blowing up” and “abolishing” the state in general.

Perhaps it will not be superfluous if, for the sake of greater clarity, I quote here one of Comrade Lenin’s manuscripts on the state, apparently written at the end of 1916, or the beginning of 1917 (before the February Revolution of 1917). From this manuscript it is easily seen that:

a) in criticising Bukharin’s semi-anarchist errors on the question of the state, Lenin proceeded from the Marxist theory of the “withering away” of the proletarian state and the “smashing” of the bourgeois state machine;

b) although Bukharin, as Lenin expressed it, “is nearer to the truth than Kautsky,” nevertheless, “instead of exposing the Kautskyites, he helps them with his mistakes.”

Here is the text of this manuscript:

“Of extremely great importance on the question of the state is the letter of Engels to Bebel dated March 18-28, 1875.

“Here is the most important passage in full:

“... ‘The free people’s state is transformed into the free state. Taken in its grammatical sense, a free state is one where the state is free in relation to its citizens, hence a state with a despotic government. The whole talk about the

state should be dropped, especially since the Commune, which was no longer a state in the proper sense of the word. The “people’s state” has been thrown in our faces by the Anarchists to the point of disgust, although already Marx’s book against Proudhon and later the Communist Manifesto directly declare that with the introduction of the socialist order of society the state will dissolve of itself (sich auflöst) and disappear. As, therefore, the state is only a transitional institution which is used in the struggle, in the revolution, in order to hold down one’s adversaries by force, it is pure nonsense to talk of a free people’s state: so long as the proletariat still uses (Engels’ italics) the state, it does not use it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the state as such ceases to exist. We would therefore propose to replace the word state (Engels’ italics) everywhere by the word “community” (Gemeinwesen), a good old German word which can very well represent the French word “commune.”

“This is, perhaps, the most remarkable, and certainly, the most pronounced passage, so to speak, in the works of Marx and Engels ‘against the state.’

“(1) ‘The whole talk about the state should be dropped.’

“(2) ‘The Commune was no longer a state in the proper sense of the word.’ (What was it, then? A transitional form from the state to no state, obviously!)

“(3) The ‘people’s state’ has been ‘thrown in our faces’ (in die Zähne geworfen, literally—thrown in our teeth) by the Anarchists too long (that is, Marx and Engels were ashamed of the obvious mistake made by their German friends; but they regarded it, and of in the circumstances that then existed, correctly regarded it as a far less serious mistake than that made by the Anarchists. This NB!!).

“(4) The state will ‘disintegrate (“dissolve”) (Nota Bene) of itself and disappear’ . . . (compare later “will wither away”) ‘with the introduction of the socialist order of society.’ . . .

“(5) The state is a ‘temporary institution’ which is used ‘in the struggle, in the revolution’ . . . (used by the proletariat, of course). . . .

“(6) The state is needed not for freedom, but for holding down (Niederhaltung is not suppression in the proper sense of the word, but preventing restoration, keeping in submission) the adversaries of the proletariat.

“(7) When there will be freedom, there will be no state.

“(8) ‘We’ (i.e., Engels and Marx) would propose to replace the word ‘state’ everywhere (in the programme) by the word ‘community’ (Gemeinwesen), ‘commune’!!!

“This shows how Marx and Engels were vulgarised and defiled not only by the opportunists, but also by Kautsky.

“The opportunists have not understood a single one of these eight rich ideas!!

“They have taken only what is practically necessary for the present time: to utilise the political struggle, to utilise the present state to educate, to train the proletariat, to ‘wrest concessions.’ That is correct (as against the Anarchists), but that is only 1/100 part of Marxism, if one can thus express it arithmetically.

“In his propagandist works, and publications generally, Kautsky has completely slurred over (or forgotten? or not understood?) points 1, 2, 5, 6, 7 and 8, and the ‘Zerbrechen’ of Marx (in his controversy with Pannekoek in 1912 or 1913, Kautsky (see below, pp. 45-47) completely dropped into opportunism on this question.)

“What distinguishes us from the Anarchists is (α) the use of the state now and (β) during the proletarian revolution (the ‘dictatorship of the proletariat’)— points of very great importance in practice at this moment. (But it is these very points that Bukharin forgot!)

“What distinguishes us from the opportunists is the more profound, ‘more permanent’ truths regarding ($\alpha\alpha$) the ‘temporary’ nature of the state, ($\beta\beta$) the harm of ‘chatter’ about it now, ($\gamma\gamma$) the not entirely state character of the dictatorship of the proletariat, ($\delta\delta$) the contradiction between the state and freedom, ($\epsilon\epsilon$) the more correct idea (concept, programmatic term) ‘community’ instead of state, ($\zeta\zeta$) ‘smashing’ (Zerbrechen) of the bureaucratic-military machine.

“It must not be forgotten also that the avowed opportunists in Germany (Bernstein, Kolb, etc.) directly repudiate the dictatorship of the proletariat, while the official programme and Kautsky indirectly repudiate it, by not saying anything about it in their day-to-day agitation and tolerating the renegacy of Kolb and Co.

“In August 1916, Bukharin was written to: ‘Allow your ideas about the state to mature.’ Without, however, allowing them to mature, he broke into print, as ‘Nota Bene,’ and did it in such a way that, instead of exposing the Kautskyites, he helped them with his mistakes!! Yet, as a matter of fact, Bukharin is nearer to the truth than Kautsky.”⁸

Such is the brief history of the theoretical controversy on the question of the state.

It would seem that the matter is clear: Bukharin made semi-anarchist mistakes—it is time to correct those mistakes and proceed further in the footsteps of Lenin. But only Leninists can think like that. Bukharin, it appears, does not agree. On the contrary, he asserts that it was not he who was mistaken, but Lenin; that it was not he who followed, or ought to have followed, in the footsteps of Lenin, but, on the contrary, that it was Lenin who found himself compelled to follow in the footsteps of Bukharin.

You do not believe this, comrades? In that case, listen further. After the controversy in 1916, nine years later, during which interval Bukharin maintained silence, and a year after the death of Lenin—namely, in 1925—Bukharin published an article in the symposium *Revolutsia Prava*, entitled “Concerning the Theory of the Imperialist State,” which previously had been rejected by the editors of *Sbornik Sotsial-Demokrata*⁹ (i.e., by Lenin). In a footnote to this article Bukharin bluntly declares that it was not Lenin but he, Bukharin, who was right in this controversy. That may seem incredible, comrades, but it is a fact.

Listen to the text of this footnote:

“V. I. (i.e., Lenin) wrote a short article containing criticism of the article in *Internatsional Molodyozhy*. The reader will easily see that I had not made the mistake attributed to me, for I clearly saw the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat; on the other hand, from Ilyich’s article it will be seen that at that time he was wrong about the thesis on ‘blowing up’ the state (bourgeois state, of course), and confused that question with the question of the withering away of the dictatorship of the proletariat.* Perhaps I should have enlarged on the subject of the dictatorship at that time. But in justification I may say that at that time there was such a wholesale exaltation of the bourgeois state by the Social-Democrats that it was natural to concentrate all attention on the question of blowing up that machine.

“When I arrived in Russia from America and saw Nadezhda Konstantinovna** (that was at our illegal Sixth Congress and at that time V. I. was in hiding) her first words were: ‘V. I. asked me to tell you that he has no disagreements with you now over the question of the state.’ Studying this question, Ilyich came to the same conclusions* regarding ‘blowing up,’ but he developed this theme, and later the theory of the dictatorship, to such an extent as to create a whole epoch in the development of theoretical thought in this field.”

That is how Bukharin writes about Lenin a year after Lenin's death.

There you have a pretty example of the hypertrophied pretentiousness of a half-educated theoretician!

Quite possibly, Nadezhda Konstantinovna did tell Bukharin what he writes here. But what conclusions can be drawn from this fact? The only conclusion that can be drawn is that Lenin had certain grounds for believing that Bukharin had renounced or was ready to renounce his mistakes. That is all. But Bukharin thought differently. He decided that henceforth, not Lenin, but he, i.e., Bukharin, must be regarded as the creator, or, at least, the inspirer of the Marxist theory of the state.

Hitherto we have regarded ourselves as Leninists, and we continue to do so. But it now appears that both Lenin and we, his disciples, are Bukharinites. Rather funny, comrades. But that's what happens when one has to deal with Bukharin's puffed-up pretentiousness.

It might be thought that Bukharin's footnote to the above-mentioned article was a slip of the pen, that he wrote something silly, and then forgot about it. But it turns out that that is not the case. Bukharin, it turns out, spoke in all seriousness. That is evident, for example, from the fact that the statement he made in this footnote regarding Lenin's mistakes and Bukharin's correctness was republished recently, namely, in 1927, i.e., two years after Bukharin's first attack on Lenin, in a biographical sketch of Bukharin written by Maretsky, and it never occurred to Bukharin to protest against this . . . boldness of Maretsky. Obviously Bukharin's attack on Lenin cannot be regarded as accidental.

It appears, therefore, that Bukharin is right, and not Lenin, that the inspirer of the Marxist theory of the state is not Lenin, but Bukharin.

Such, comrades, is the picture of the theoretical distortions and the theoretical pretensions of Bukharin.

And this man, after all this, has the presumption to say in his speech here that there is "something rotten" in the theoretical line of our Party, that there is a deviation towards Trotskyism in the theoretical line of our Party!

And this is said by that same Bukharin who is making (and has made in the past) a number of gross theoretical and practical mistakes, who only recently was a pupil of Trotsky's, and who only the other day was seeking to form a bloc with

the Trotskyites against the Leninists and was paying them visits by the backdoor.

Is that not funny, comrades?

h) A Five-year Plan or a Two-Year Plan

Permit me now to pass to Rykov's speech. While Bukharin tried to provide a theoretical basis for the Right deviation, Rykov attempted in his speech to provide it with a basis of practical proposals and to frighten us with "horrors" drawn from our difficulties in the sphere of agriculture. That does not mean that Rykov did not touch upon theoretical questions. He did touch upon them. But in doing so he made at least two serious mistakes.

In his draft resolution on the five-year plan, which was rejected by the commission of the Political Bureau, Rykov says that "the central idea of the five-year plan is to increase the productivity of labour of the people." In spite of the fact that the commission of the Political Bureau rejected this absolutely false line, Rykov defended it here in his speech.

Is it true that the central idea of the five-year plan in the Soviet country is to increase the productivity of labour? No, it is not true. It is not just any kind of increase in the productivity of labour of the people that we need. What we need is a specific increase in the productivity of labour of the people, namely, an increase that will guarantee the systematic supremacy of the socialist sector of the national economy over the capitalist sector. A five-year plan which overlooks this central idea is not a five-year plan, but five-year rubbish.

Every society, capitalist and pre-capitalist society included, is interested in increasing the productivity of labour in general. The difference between Soviet society and every other society lies in the very fact that it is interested not in just any kind of increase of the productivity of labour, but in such an increase as will ensure the supremacy of socialist forms of economy over other forms, and primarily over capitalist forms of economy, and will thus ensure that the capitalist forms of economy are overcome and ousted. But Rykov forgot this really central idea of the five-year plan of development of Soviet society. That is his first theoretical mistake.

His second mistake is that he does not distinguish, or does not want to understand the distinction—from the point of view of trade turnover—between, let us say, a collective farm and all kinds of individual enterprises, including individual capitalist enterprises. Rykov assures us that from the point or view of

trade turnover on the grain market, from the point of view of obtaining grain, he does not see any difference between a collective farm and a private holder of grain; to him, therefore, it is a matter of indifference whether we buy grain from a collective farm, a private holder, or an Argentinian grain merchant. That is absolutely wrong. It is a repetition of the statement of Frumkin, who at one time used to assure us that it was a matter of indifference to him where and from whom we bought grain, whether from a private dealer or from a collective farm.

That is a masked form of defence, of rehabilitation, of justification of the kulak's machinations on the grain market. That this defence is conducted from the point of view of trade turn over does not alter the fact that it is, nevertheless, a justification of the kulak's machinations on the grain market. If from the viewpoint of trade turnover there is no difference between collective and non-collective forms of economy, is it worth while developing collective farms, granting them privileges and devoting ourselves to the difficult task of overcoming the capitalist elements in agriculture? It is obvious that Rykov has taken a wrong line. That is his second theoretical mistake.

But this is by the way. Let us pass to the practical questions raised in Rykov's speech.

Rykov said here that in addition to the five-year plan we need another, a parallel plan, namely, a two-year plan for the development of agriculture. He justified this proposal for a parallel two-year plan on the grounds of the difficulties experienced in agriculture. He said: the five-year plan was a good thing and he was in favour of it; but if at the same time we drew up a two-year plan for agriculture it would be still better—otherwise agriculture would get into a fix.

On the face of it there appears to be nothing wrong with this proposal. But upon closer scrutiny we find that the two-year plan for agriculture was invented in order to emphasise that the five-year plan is unreal, a plan merely on paper. Could we agree to that? No, we could not. We said to Rykov: If you are dissatisfied with the five-year plan with regard to agriculture, if you think that the funds we are assigning in the five-year plan for developing agriculture are inadequate, then tell us plainly what your supplementary proposals are, what additional investments you propose—we are ready to include these additional investments in agriculture in the five-year plan. And what happened? We found that Rykov had no supplementary proposals to make about additional investments in agriculture. The question arises: Why then a parallel two-year plan for agriculture?

We said to him further: In addition to the five-year plan there are yearly plans which are part of the five-year plan. Let us include in the first two of the yearly

plans the concrete additional proposals for developing agriculture that you have, that is, if you have any at all. And what happened? We found that Rykov had no such concrete plans for additional assignments to propose.

We then realised that Rykov's proposal for a two-year plan was not made for the purpose of developing agriculture, but arose from a desire to emphasise that the five-year plan was unreal, a plan merely on paper, from a desire to discredit the five-year plan. For "conscience" sake, for appearance sake, a five-year plan; but for work, for practical purposes, a two-year plan—that was Rykov's strategy. Rykov brought the two-year plan on the scene in order subsequently, during the practical work of carrying out the five-year plan, to counterpose it to the five-year plan, reconstruct the five-year plan and adapt it to the two-year plan by paring down and curtailing the assignments for industry.

It was on these grounds that we rejected Rykov's proposal for a parallel two-year plan.

i) The Question of the Crop Area

Rykov tried here to frighten the Party by asserting that the crop area throughout the U.S.S.R. is showing a steady tendency to diminish. Moreover, he threw out the hint that the policy of the Party was to blame for the diminution of the crop area. He did not say outright that we are faced with a retrogression of agriculture, but the impression left by his speech is that something like retrogression is taking place.

Is it true that the crop area is showing a steady tendency to diminish? No, it is not true. Rykov made use of average figures of the crop area throughout the country. But the method of average figures, if it is not corrected by data for individual districts, cannot be regarded as a scientific method.

Rykov has, perhaps, read Lenin's *Development of Capitalism in Russia*. If he has read it he ought to remember how Lenin inveighed against the bourgeois economists for using the method of average figures showing the expansion of the crop area and ignoring the data for individual districts. It is strange that Rykov should now repeat the mistakes of the bourgeois economists. Now, if we examine the changes in the crop area according to districts, i.e., if we approach the matter scientifically, it will be seen that in certain districts the crop area is expanding steadily, while in others it sometimes diminishes, depending chiefly on meteorological conditions; moreover, there are no facts to indicate that there is a steady diminution of the crop area anywhere, even in a single important grain growing district.

Indeed, there has recently been a decrease in the crop area in districts which have been affected by frost or drought, in certain regions of the Ukraine, for instance. . . .

A voice. Not the whole Ukraine.

Schlichter. In the Ukraine the crop area has increased by 2.7 per cent.

Stalin. I am referring to the steppe regions of the Ukraine. In other districts, for instance in Siberia, the Volga region, Kazakhstan, and Bashkiria, which were not affected by unfavourable weather conditions, the crop area has been steadily expanding.

How is it that in certain districts the crop area is steadily expanding, while in others it sometimes diminishes? It cannot really be asserted that the Party has one policy in the Ukraine and another in the east or in the central area of the U.S.S.R. That would be absurd, comrades. Obviously weather conditions are of no little importance here.

It is true that the kulaks are reducing their crop areas irrespective of weather conditions. For that, if you like, the policy of the Party, which is to support the poor- and middle-peasant masses against the kulaks, is "to blame." But what if it is? Did we ever pledge ourselves to pursue a policy which would satisfy all social groups in the countryside, including the kulaks? And, moreover, how can we pursue a policy which would satisfy both the exploiters and the exploited—if we desire at all to pursue a Marxist policy? What is there strange in the fact that, as a result of our Leninist policy, which is intended to restrict and overcome the capitalist elements in the countryside, the kulaks begin partly to reduce the area of their crops? What else would you expect?

Perhaps this policy is wrong? Then let them tell us so plainly. Is it not strange that people who call themselves Marxists are so frightened as to try to make out that the partial reduction of crop areas by the kulaks is a decrease of the crop area as a whole, forgetting that besides the kulaks there are also the poor and middle peasants, whose crop area is expanding, that there are the collective farms and state farms, whose crop area is growing at an increasing rate?

Finally, one more error in Rykov's speech regarding the crop area. Rykov complained here that in certain places, namely, where there has been the greatest development of collective farms, the tillage of the individual poor and middle peasants is beginning to diminish. That is true. But what is wrong with that? How could it be otherwise? If the poor- and middle-peasant farms are beginning

to abandon individual tillage and are going over to collective farming, is it not obvious that the growth in size and numbers of the collective farms is bound to result in a decrease of the tillage of the individual poor and middle peasants? But what would you expect?

The collective farms now have something over two million hectares of land. At the end of the five-year plan period, the collective farms will have more than 25,000,000 hectares. At whose expense does the tillage of the collective farms expand? At the expense of the tillage of the individual poor and middle peasants. But what would you expect? How else is the individual farming of the poor and middle peasants to be transferred on to the lines of collective farming? Is it not obvious that in a large number of areas the tillage of the collective farms will expand at the expense of individual tillage?

It is strange that people refuse to understand these elementary things.

j) Grain Procurements

A lot of fairy-tales have been told here about our grain difficulties. But the main features of our current grain difficulties have been overlooked.

First of all, it has been forgotten that this year we harvested about 500-600 million poods of rye and wheat—I refer to the gross harvest—less than last year. Could this fail to affect our grain procurements? Of course it was bound to affect them.

Perhaps the policy of the Central Committee is responsible for this? No, the policy of the Central Committee has nothing to do with it. The explanation lies in the serious crop failure in the steppe regions of the Ukraine (frost and drought), and the partial crop failure in the North Caucasus, the Central Black Earth region, and the North-Western region.

That is the principal reason why our grain procurements (rye and wheat) in the Ukraine by April 1 last year totalled 200,000,000 poods, while this year the total barely reached 26-27 million poods.

That also explains the drop in wheat and rye procurements in the Central Black Earth region to about one-eighth and in the North Caucasus to about one-fourth.

In certain regions in the East, grain procurements this year almost doubled. But this could not compensate, and, of course, did not compensate, for our grain deficit in the Ukraine, the North Caucasus and the Central Black Earth region.

It must not be forgotten that in normal harvest years the Ukraine and the North Caucasus provide about one half of the total grain procurements in the U.S.S.R.

It is strange that Rykov lost sight of this fact.

Finally, the second circumstance, which constitutes the chief feature of our current grain-procurement difficulties. I refer to the resistance of the kulak elements in the countryside to the grain-procurement policy of the Soviet government. Rykov ignored this circumstance. But to ignore it means to ignore the chief factor in grain procurements. What does the experience of the past two years as regard grain procurements show? It shows that the well-to-do strata of the countryside, who hold considerable grain surpluses and play an important role in the grain market, refuse to deliver voluntarily the necessary quantity of grain at the prices fixed by the Soviet government. In order to provide bread for the towns and industrial centres, for the Red Army and the regions growing industrial crops, we require about 500,000,000 poods of grain annually. We are able to procure 300-350 million poods coming in automatically. The remaining 150,000,000 poods have to be secured through organised pressure on the kulaks and the well-to-do strata of the rural population. That is what our experience of grain procurements during the past two years shows.

What has happened during these two years? Why these changes? Why were automatic deliveries adequate before, and why are they inadequate now? What has happened is that during these years the kulak and well-to-do elements have grown, the series of good harvests has not been without benefit to them, they have become stronger economically; they have accumulated a little capital and now are in a position to manoeuvre in the market; they hold back their grain surpluses in expectation of high prices, and get a living from other crops.

Grain should not be regarded as an ordinary commodity. Grain is not like cotton, which cannot be eaten and which cannot be sold to everybody. Unlike cotton, grain, under our present conditions, is a commodity which everybody will take and without which it is impossible to exist. The kulak takes this into account and holds back his grain, infecting the grain holders in general by his example. The kulak knows that grain is the currency of currencies. The kulak knows that a surplus of grain is not only a means of self-enrichment, but also a means of enslaving the poor peasant. Under present conditions, grain surpluses in the hands of the kulak is a means of economically and politically strengthening the kulak elements. Therefore, by taking these grain surpluses from the kulaks, we not only facilitate the supply of grain to the towns and the Red Army, but we also destroy a means of strengthening the kulaks economically and politically.

What must be done to obtain these grain surpluses? We must, first of all, abolish the harmful and dangerous mentality of letting matters take their own course. Grain procurements must be organised. The poor- and middlepeasant masses must be mobilised against the kulaks, and their public support organised for the measures of the Soviet government to increase grain procurements. The significance of the Urals-Siberian method of grain procurement, which is based on the principle of selfimposed obligations, lies precisely in the fact that it makes it possible to mobilise the labouring strata of the rural population against the kulaks for the purpose of increasing grain procurements. Experience has shown that this method gives us good results. Experience has shown that these good results are obtained in two directions: firstly, we extract the grain surpluses from the well-to-do strata of the rural population and thereby help to supply the country; secondly, we mobilise on this basis the poor- and middle-peasant masses against the kulaks, educate them politically and organise them into a vast, powerful, political army supporting us in the countryside. Certain comrades fail to realise the importance of this latter factor. Yet it is one of the important results, if not the most important result, of the Urals-Siberian method of grain procurement.

It is true that this method is sometimes coupled with the employment of emergency measures against the kulaks, which evokes comical howls from Bukharin and Rykov. But what is wrong with it? Why should we not, sometimes, under certain conditions, employ emergency measures against our class enemy, against the kulaks? Why is it regarded as permissible to arrest speculators in the towns by hundreds and exile them to the Turukhansk region, but not permissible to take the grain surpluses from the kulaks—who are speculating in grain and trying to seize the Soviet government by the throat and to enslave the poor peasants—by methods of public compulsion and at prices at which the poor and middle peasants sell their grain to our procurement organisations? Where is the logic in this? Has our Party ever declared that it is opposed in principle to the employment of emergency measures against speculators and kulaks? Have we no laws against speculators?

Evidently, Rykov and Bukharin are opposed in principle to any employment of emergency measures against the kulaks. But that is bourgeois-liberal policy, not Marxist policy. Surely you know that, after the introduction of the New Economic Policy, Lenin even expressed himself in favour of a return to the policy of Poor Peasants' Committees, under certain conditions of course. And what indeed is the partial employment of emergency measures against the kulaks? Not even a drop in the ocean compared with the policy of Poor Peasants' Committees.

The adherents of Bukharin's group hope to persuade the class enemy voluntarily to forego his interests and voluntarily to deliver his grain surpluses to us. They hope that the kulak, who has grown stronger, who is speculating, who is able to hold out by selling other products and who conceals his grain surpluses—they hope that this kulak will give us his grain surpluses voluntarily at our procurement prices. Have they lost their senses? Is it not obvious that they do not understand the mechanics of the class struggle, that they do not know what classes are?

Do they know how the kulaks jeer at our officials and the Soviet government at village meetings called to promote grain procurements? Have they heard of such facts as, for instance, what happened in Kazakhstan, when one of our agitators tried for two hours to persuade the holders of grain to deliver grain for supplying the country, and a kulak stepped forward with a pipe in his mouth and said: "Do us a little dance, young fellow, and I will let you have a couple of poods of grain."

Voices. The swine!

Stalin. Try to persuade people like that.

Class is class, comrades. You cannot get away from that truth. The Urals-Siberian method is a good one for the very reason that it helps to rouse the poor- and middle-peasant strata against the kulaks, it helps to smash the resistance of the kulaks and compels them to deliver the grain surpluses to the Soviet government bodies.

The most fashionable word just now among Bukharin's group is the word "excesses" in grain procurements. That word is the most current commodity among them, since it helps them to mask their opportunist line. When they want to mask their own line they usually say: We, of course, are not opposed to pressure being brought to bear upon the kulak, but we are opposed to the excesses which are being committed in this sphere and which hurt the middle peasant. They then go on to relate stories of the "horrors" of these excesses; they read letters from "peasants," panic-stricken letters from comrades, such as Markov, and then draw the conclusion: the policy of bringing pressure to bear upon the kulaks must be abandoned.

How do you like that? Because excesses are committed in carrying out a correct policy, that correct policy, it seems, must be abandoned. That is the usual trick of the opportunists: on the pretext that excesses are committed in carrying out a correct line, abolish that line and replace it by an opportunist line. Moreover, the supporters of Bukharin's group very carefully hush up the fact that there is

another kind of excesses, more dangerous and more harmful,—namely, excesses in the direction of merging with the kulak, in the direction of adaptation to the well-to-do strata of the rural population, in the direction of abandoning the revolutionary policy of the Party for the opportunist policy of the Right deviators.

Of course, we are all opposed to those excesses. None of us wants the blows directed against the kulaks to hurt the middle peasants. That is obvious, and there can be no doubt about it. But we are most emphatically opposed to the chatter about excesses, in which Bukharin's group so zealously indulges, being used to scuttle the revolutionary policy of our Party and replace it by the opportunist policy of Bukharin's group. No, that trick of theirs won't work.

Point out at least one political measure taken by the Party that has not been accompanied by excesses of one kind or another. The conclusion to be drawn from this is that we must combat excesses. But can one on these grounds decry the line itself, which is the only correct line?

Take a measure like the introduction of the seven-hour day. There can be no doubt that this is one of the most revolutionary measures carried out by our Party in the recent period. Who does not know that this measure, which by its nature is a profoundly revolutionary one, is frequently accompanied by excesses, sometimes of a most objectionable kind? Does that mean that we ought to abandon the policy of introducing the seven-hour day?

Do the supporters of the Bukharin opposition understand what a mess they are getting into in playing up the excesses committed during the grain-procurement campaign?

k) Foreign Currency Reserves and Grain Imports

Lastly, a few words about grain imports and our reserves of foreign currency. I have already mentioned the fact that Rykov and his close friends several times raised the question of importing grain from abroad. At first Rykov spoke of the need to import some 80-100 million poods of grain. This would require about 200 million rubles' worth of foreign currency. Later, he raised the question of importing 50,000,000 poods, that is, for 100 million rubles' worth of foreign currency. We rejected this suggestion, as we had come to the conclusion that it was preferable to bring pressure to bear upon the kulaks and wring out of them their quite substantial grain surpluses, rather than expend foreign currency earmarked for imports of equipment for our industry.

Now Rykov makes a change of front. Now he asserts that the capitalists are offering us grain on credit, but that we refuse to take it. He said that several telegrams had passed through his hands, telegrams showing that the capitalists are willing to let us have grain on credit. Moreover, he tried to make it appear that there are people in our ranks who refuse to accept grain on credit either owing to a whim or for some other inexplicable reasons.

That is all nonsense, comrades. It would be absurd to imagine that the capitalists in the West have suddenly begun to take pity on us, that they are willing to give us some tens of millions of poods of grain practically free of charge or on long-term credit. That is nonsense, comrades.

What is the point then? The point is that for the past six months various capitalist groups have been probing us, probing our financial possibilities, our financial standing, our endurance. They approach our trade representatives in Paris, Czechoslovakia, America and the Argentine with offers of grain on very short-term credit, not exceeding three, or, at the most, six months. Their object is not so much to sell us grain on credit, as to find out whether our position is really very difficult, whether our financial possibilities are really exhausted, or, whether our financial position is strong, and whether we will snatch at the bait that they have thrown out.

There are big disputes going on now in the capitalist world on the subject of our financial possibilities. Some say that we are already bankrupt, and that the fall of Soviet power is a matter of a few months, if not weeks. Others say that this is not true, that Soviet power is firmly rooted, has financial possibilities and sufficient grain.

At the present time our task is to display the requisite firmness and stamina, not to succumb to mendacious promises of grain on credit, and to show the capitalist world that we shall manage without importing grain. That is not just my personal opinion. That is the opinion of the majority of the Political Bureau.

For this reason we decided to decline the offer of philanthropists of the Nansen type to import into the U.S.S.R. a million dollars' worth of grain on credit. For the same reason we gave a negative answer to all those intelligence agents of the capitalist world in Paris, America and Czechoslovakia, who were offering us a small quantity of grain on credit.

For the same reason we decided to exercise the utmost economy in grain consumption, and the maximum degree of organising efficiency in grain procurement.

By doing so, we sought to achieve two aims: on the one hand to do without importing grain and thus keep our foreign currency for importing equipment, and, on the other hand, to show all our enemies that we stand on firm ground and have no intention of succumbing to promises of alms.

Was this policy correct? I believe that it was the only correct policy. It was correct not only because we found here, within our own country, new possibilities of obtaining grain. It was correct, too, because by managing without grain imports and by sweeping aside the intelligence agents of the capitalist world, we have strengthened our international position, improved our financial standing and exploded all idle chatter about “the impending collapse” of Soviet power.

The other day we held certain preliminary talks with representatives of German capitalists. They are promising us a 500,000,000 credit, and it looks as though they in fact consider it necessary to grant us this credit so as to ensure Soviet orders for their industry.

A few days ago we had the visit of a delegation of British Conservatives, who also consider it necessary to recognise the stability of Soviet power and the expediency of granting us credits so as to ensure Soviet orders for their industry.

I believe that we would not have had these new possibilities of obtaining credits, in the first place from the Germans, and then from one group of British capitalists, if we had not displayed the necessary firmness that I spoke of earlier.

Consequently, the point is not that we are refusing some imaginary grain on imaginary long-term credit because of an alleged whim. The point is that we must be able to size up our enemies, to discern their real desires, and to display the stamina necessary for consolidating our international position.

That, comrades, is the reason why we have refused to import grain.

As you see, the question of grain imports is far from being as simple as Rykov would have us believe. The question of grain imports is one that concerns our international position.

Thus we have reviewed all the principal questions relating to our disagreements in the sphere of theory as well as in the sphere of the policy of the Comintern and the internal policy of our Party. From what has been said it is apparent that Rykov's statement about the existence of a single line does not correspond to the real state of affairs. From what has been said it is apparent that we have in fact two lines. One line is the general line of the Party, the revolutionary Leninist line of our Party. The other line is the line of Bukharin's group. This second line has not quite crystallised yet, partly because of the incredible confusion of views within the ranks of Bukharin's group, and partly because this second line, being of little importance in the Party, tries to disguise itself in one way or another. Nevertheless, as you have seen, this line exists, and it exists as a line which is distinct from the Party line, as a line opposed to the general Party line on almost all questions of our policy. This second line is that of the Right deviation.

Let us pass now to questions of Party leadership.

a) The Factionalism of Bukharin's Group

Bukharin said that there is no opposition within our Party, that Bukharin's group is not an opposition. That is not true, comrades. The discussion at the plenum showed quite clearly that Bukharin's group constitutes a new opposition. The oppositional work of this group consists in attempts to revise the Party line; it seeks to revise the Party line and is preparing the ground for replacing the Party line by another line, the line of the opposition, which can be nothing but the line of the Right deviation.

Bukharin said that the group of three does not constitute a factional group. That is not true, comrades. Bukharin's group has all the characteristics of a faction. There is the platform the factional secrecy, the policy of resigning, the organised struggle against the Central Committee. What more is required? Why hide the truth about the factionalism of Bukharin's group, when it is self-evident? The very reason why the plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission has met is to tell all the truth here about our disagreements. And the truth is that Bukharin's group is a factional group. And it is not merely a factional group, but—I would say—the most repulsive and the pettiest of all the factional groups that ever existed in our Party.

This is evident if only from the fact that it is now attempting to use for its factional aims such an insignificant and petty affair as the disturbances in Adjaria. In point of fact, what does the so-called "revolt" in Adjaria amount to in comparison with such revolts as the Kronstadt revolt? I believe that in comparison with this the so-called "revolt" in Adjaria is not even a drop in the

ocean. Were there any instances of Trotskyites or Zinovievites attempting to make use of the serious revolt which occurred in Kronstadt to combat the Central Committee, the Party? It must be admitted, comrades, that there were no such instances. On the contrary, the opposition groups which existed in our Party at the time of that serious revolt helped the Party in suppressing it, and they did not dare to make use of it against the Party.

Well, and how is Bukharin's group acting now? You have already had evidence that it is attempting in the pettiest and most offensive way to utilise against the Party the microscopic "revolt" in Adjara. What is this if not an extreme degree of factional blindness and factional degeneration?

Apparently, it is being demanded of us that no disturbances should occur in our border regions which have common frontiers with capitalist countries.

Apparently, it is being demanded of us that we should carry out a policy which would satisfy all classes of our society, the rich and the poor, the workers and the capitalists. Apparently, it is being demanded of us that there should be no discontented elements. Have not these comrades from Bukharin's group gone out of their minds?

How can anybody demand of us, people of the proletarian dictatorship who are waging a struggle against the capitalist world, both inside and outside our country, that there should be no discontented elements in our country, and that disturbances should not sometimes occur in certain border regions which have common frontiers with hostile countries? For what purpose then does the capitalist encirclement exist, if not to enable international capital to apply all its efforts to organise actions by discontented elements in our border regions against the Soviet regime? Who, except empty-headed liberals, would raise such demands? Is it not obvious that factional pettiness can sometimes produce in people a typically liberal blindness and narrow-mindedness?

b) Loyalty and Collective Leadership

Rykov assured us here that Bukharin is one of the most "irreproachable" and "loyal" Party members in his attitude towards the Central Committee of our Party.

I am inclined to doubt it. We cannot take Rykov's word for it. We demand facts. And Rykov is unable to supply facts.

Take, for example, such a fact as the negotiations Bukharin conducted behind the scenes with Kamenev's group, which is connected with the Trotskyites; the

negotiations about setting up a factional bloc, about changing the policy of the Central Committee, about changing the composition of the Political Bureau, about using the grain-procurement crisis for attacking the Central Committee. The question arises: Where is Bukharin's "loyal" and "irreproachable" attitude towards his Central Committee?

Is not such behaviour, on the contrary, a violation of any kind of loyalty to his Central Committee, to his Party, on the part of a member of the Political Bureau? If this is called loyalty to the Central Committee, then what is the word for betrayal of one's Central Committee?

Bukharin likes to talk about loyalty and honesty, but why does he not try to examine his own conscience and ask himself whether he is not violating in the most dishonest manner the elementary requirements of loyalty to his Central Committee when he conducts secret negotiations with Trotskyites against his Central Committee and thereby betrays his Central Committee?

Bukharin spoke here about the lack of collective leadership in the Central Committee of the Party, and assured us that the requirements of collective leadership were being violated by the majority of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee.

Our plenum, of course, has put up with everything. It can even tolerate this shameless and hypocritical assertion of Bukharin's. But one must have really lost all sense of shame to make so bold as to speak in this way at the plenum against the majority of the Central Committee.

In truth, how can we speak of collective leadership if the majority of the Central Committee, having harnessed itself to the chariot of state, is straining all its forces to move it forward and is urging Bukharin's group to give a helping hand in this arduous task, while Bukharin's group is not only not helping its Central Committee but, on the contrary, is hampering it in every way, is putting a spoke in its wheels, is threatening to resign, and comes to terms with enemies of the Party, with Trotskyites, against the Central Committee of our Party?

Who, indeed, but hypocrites can deny that Bukharin, who is setting up a bloc with the Trotskyites against the Party, and is betraying his Central Committee, does not want to and will not implement collective leadership in the Central Committee of our Party?

Who, indeed, but the blind can fail to see that if Bukharin nevertheless chatters about collective leadership in the Central Committee, putting the blame on the majority of the Central Committee, he is doing so with the object of disguising his treacherous conduct?

It should be noted that this is not the first time that Bukharin has violated the elementary requirements of loyalty and collective leadership in relation to the Central Committee of the Party. The history of our Party knows of instances when, in Lenin's lifetime, in the period of the Brest Peace, Bukharin, being in the minority on the question of peace, rushed to the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who were the enemies of our Party, conducted backstairs negotiations with them, and attempted to set up a bloc with them against Lenin and the Central Committee. What agreement he was trying to reach at the time with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries— we, unfortunately, do not yet know.¹⁰ But we do know that at the time the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries were planning to arrest Lenin and carry out an anti-Soviet coup d'état. . . . But the most amazing thing is that, while rushing to the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and conspiring with them against the Central Committee, Bukharin continued, just as he is doing now, to clamour about the necessity of collective leadership.

The history of our Party knows, too, of instances when, in Lenin's lifetime, Bukharin, who had a majority in the Moscow Regional Bureau of our Party and the support of a group of "Left" Communists, called on all Party members to express lack of confidence in the Central Committee of the Party, to refuse to submit to its decisions and to raise the question of splitting our Party. That was during the period of the Brest Peace, after the Central Committee had already decided that it was necessary to accept the conditions of the Brest Peace.

Such is the character of Bukharin's loyalty and collective leadership.

Rykov spoke here about the necessity of collective work. At the same time he pointed an accusing finger at the majority of the Political Bureau, asserting that he and his close friends were in favour of collective work, while the majority of the Political Bureau, consequently, were against it. However, Rykov was unable to cite a single fact in support of his assertion.

In order to expose this fable of Rykov's, let me cite a few facts, a few examples which will show you how Rykov carries out collective work.

First example. You have heard the story about the export of gold to America. Many of you may believe that the gold was shipped to America by decision of the Council of People's Commissars or the Central Committee, or with the consent of the Central Committee, or with its knowledge. But that is not true, comrades. The Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars have had nothing to do with this matter. There is a ruling which prohibits the export of gold without the approval of the Central Committee. But this ruling was violated. Who was it that authorised the export? It turns out that the

shipment of gold was authorised by one of Rykov's deputies with Rykov's knowledge and consent.

Is that collective work?

Second example. This concerns negotiations with one of the big private banks in America, whose property was nationalised after the October Revolution, and which is now demanding compensation for its losses. The Central Committee has learned that a representative of our State Bank has been discussing terms of compensation with that bank.

Settlement of private claim is, as you are aware, a very important question inseparably connected with our foreign policy. One might think that these negotiations were conducted with the approval of the Council of People's Commissars or the Central Committee. However, that is not the case, comrades. The Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars have had nothing to do with this matter. Subsequently, upon learning about these negotiations, the Central Committee decided to stop them. But the question arises: Who authorised these negotiations? It turns out that they were authorised by one of Rykov's deputies with Rykov's knowledge and consent.

Is that collective work?

Third example. This concerns the supplying of agricultural machinery to kulaks and middle peasants. The point is that the EKOSO of the R.S.F.S.R.,¹¹ which is presided over by one of Rykov's deputies for matters concerning the R.S.F.S.R., decided to reduce the supply of agricultural machines to the middle peasants and increase the supply of machines to the upper strata of the peasantry, i.e., to the kulaks. Here is the text of this anti-Party, anti-Soviet ruling of the EKOSO of the R.S.F.S.R.:

“In the Kazakh and Bashkir A.S.S.R., the Siberian and Lower Volga territories, the Middle Volga and Urals regions, the proportion of sales of farm machines and implements set forth in this paragraph shall be increased to 20 per cent for the upper strata of the peasantry and decreased to 30 per cent for the middle strata.”

How do you like that? At a time when the Party is intensifying the offensive against the kulaks and is organising the masses of the poor and middle peasants against the kulaks, the EKOSO of the R.S.F.S.R. adopts a decision to reduce the level of deliveries of farm machinery to the middle peasants and increase the level of deliveries to the upper strata of the peasantry.

And it is suggested that this is a Leninist, communist policy.

Subsequently, when the Central Committee learned about this incident, it annulled the decision of the EKOSO. But who was it that authorised this anti-Soviet ruling? It was authorised by one of Rykov's deputies, with Rykov's knowledge and consent.

Is that collective work?

I believe that these examples are sufficient to show how Rykov and his deputies practise collective work.

c) The Fight Against the Right Deviation

Bukharin spoke here of the "civil execution" of three members of the Political Bureau, who, he says, "were being hauled over the coals" by the organisations of our Party. He said that the Party had subjected these three members of the Political Bureau—Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsy—to "civil execution" by criticising their errors in the press and at meetings, while they, the three members of the Political Bureau, were "compelled" to keep silent.

All that is nonsense, comrades. Those are the false words of a Communist gone liberal who is trying to weaken the Party in its fight against the Right deviation. According to Bukharin, if he and his friends have become entangled in Right deviationist mistakes, the Party has no right to expose those mistakes, the Party must stop fighting the Right deviation and wait until it shall please Bukharin and his friends to renounce their mistakes.

Is not Bukharin asking too much from us? Is he not under the impression that the Party exists for him, and not he for the Party? Who is compelling him to keep silent, to remain in a state of inaction when the whole Party is mobilised against the Right deviation and is conducting determined attacks against difficulties? Why should not he, Bukharin, and his close friends come forward now and engage in a determined fight against the Right deviation and conciliation towards it? Can anyone doubt that the Party would welcome Bukharin and his close friends if they decided to take this not so difficult step? Why do they not decide to take this step, which, after all, is their duty? Is it not because they place the interests of their group above the interests of the Party and its general line? Whose fault is it that Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsy are missing in the fight against the Right deviation? Is it not obvious that talk about the "civil execution" of the three members of the Political Bureau is a poorly amouflaged attempt on the part of the three members of the Political Bureau to compel the Party to keep silent and to stop fighting against the Right deviation?

The fight against the Right deviation must not be regarded as a secondary task of our Party. The fight against the Right deviation is one of the most decisive tasks of our Party. If we, in our own ranks, in our own Party, in the political General Staff of the proletariat, which is directing the movement and is leading the proletariat forward—if we in this General Staff should allow the free existence and the free functioning of the Right deviators, who are trying to demobilise the Party, demoralise the working class, adapt our policy to the tastes of the “Soviet” bourgeoisie, and thus yield to the difficulties of our socialist construction—if we should allow all this, what would it mean? Would it not mean that we are ready to put a brake on the revolution, disrupt our socialist construction, flee from difficulties, and surrender our positions to the capitalist elements?

Does Bukharin’s group understand that to refuse to fight the Right deviation is to betray the working class, to betray the revolution?

Does Bukharin’s group understand that unless we overcome the Right deviation and conciliation towards it, it will be impossible to overcome the difficulties facing us, and that unless we overcome these difficulties it will be impossible to achieve decisive successes in socialist construction?

In view of this, what is the worth of this pitiful talk about the “civil execution” of three members of the Political Bureau?

No, comrades, the Bukharinites will not frighten the Party with liberal chatter about “civil execution.” The Party demands that they should wage a determined fight against the Right deviation and conciliation towards it side by side with all the members of the Central Committee of our Party. It demands this of Bukharin’s group in order to help to mobilise the working class, to break down the resistance of the class enemies and to organise decisive victory over the difficulties of our socialist construction.

Either the Bukharinites will fulfil this demand of the Party, in which case the Party will welcome them, or they will not do so, in which case they will have only themselves to blame.

VI

Conclusions

I pass to the conclusions.

I submit the following proposals:

- 1) We must first of all condemn the views of Bukharin's group. We must condemn the views of this group as set forth in its declarations and in the speeches of its representatives, and state that these views are incompatible with the Party line and fully coincide with the position of the Right deviation.
- 2) We must condemn Bukharin's secret negotiations with Kamenev's group as the most flagrant expression of the disloyalty and factionalism of Bukharin's group.

3) We must condemn the policy of resigning that was being practised by Bukharin and Tomsy, as a gross violation of the elementary requirements of Party discipline.

4) Bukharin and Tomsy must be removed from their posts and warned that in the event of the slightest attempt at insubordination to the decisions of the Central Committee, the latter will be forced to exclude both of them from the Political Bureau.

5) We must take appropriate measures forbidding members and candidate members of the Political Bureau, when speaking publicly, to deviate in any way from the line of the Party and the decisions of the Central Committee or of its bodies.

6) We must take appropriate measures so that press organs, both Party and Soviet, newspapers as well as periodicals, should fully conform to the line of the Party and the decisions of its leading bodies.

7) We must adopt special provisions, including even expulsion from the Central Committee and from the Party, for persons who attempt to violate the confidential nature of the decisions of the Party, its Central Committee and Political Bureau.

8) We must distribute the text of the resolution of the joint plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission on inner-Party questions to all the local Party organisations and to the delegates to the Sixteenth Party Conference,¹² without publishing it in the press for the time being.

That, in my opinion, is the way out of this situation.

Some comrades insist that Bukharin and Tomsy should be immediately expelled from the Political Bureau of the Central Committee. I do not agree with these comrades. In my opinion, for the time being we can do without resorting to such an extreme measure.

Notes

* The present text of this speech contains over 30 pages which were not published in the press at the time.—Ed.

1. The plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission, C.P.S.U.(B.) held April 16-23, 1929, discussed: 1) inner-Party affairs; 2) questions concerning the Sixteenth All-Union Party Conference; and 3) the purging of the Party. The plenum approved the resolution on inner-Party affairs which had been adopted by a joint meeting of the Political Bureau of the C.C. and the Presidium of the C.C.C. on February 9, 1929, and in a special resolution condemned the Right-opportunist activities of Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsky. The plenum approved and resolved to submit to the Sixteenth All-Union Party Conference the theses presented by the Political Bureau on a five-year plan for the development of the national economy, on ways and means of promoting agriculture and tax relief for the middle peasants, and on the results and immediate tasks of the fight against bureaucracy. It also decided to submit to the Sixteenth Party Conference theses, which it had approved in principle, on a purge of members and candidate members of the C.P.S.U.(B.). J. V. Stalin delivered a speech on “The Right Deviation in the C.P.S.U.(B.)” at the meeting of the plenum on April 22. (For the resolutions of the plenum of the C.C. and the C.C.C. of the C.P.S.U.(B.), see Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums, Part II, 1953, pp. 429-47).

2. This refers to the sabotage activities of a counter-revolutionary organisation of bourgeois experts which had operated in Shakhty and other Donbas areas in 1923-28.

3. The Sixth Congress of the Comintern was held in Moscow, July 17-September 1, 1928. It discussed a report on the activities of the Executive Committee of the Comintern and reports of the Executive Committee of the Young Communist International and of the International Control Commission, measures for combating the danger of imperialist wars, the programme of the Communist International, the revolutionary movement in the colonies and semi-colonies, the economic situation in the U.S.S.R. and the situation in the C.P.S.U.(B.), and endorsed the Rules of the Comintern. In its resolutions, the congress drew attention to the growth of the internal contradictions of capitalism, which were inevitably leading to a further shaking of the capitalist stabilisation and to a sharp accentuation of the general crisis of capitalism. The congress defined the tasks of the Communist International springing from the new conditions off the working-class struggle, and mobilised the Communist Parties to intensify the fight against the Right deviation, as the chief danger, and against conciliation towards it. The congress took note of the achievements of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. and their importance in strengthening the

revolutionary positions of the international proletariat, and called upon the working people of the whole world to defend the Soviet Union. J. V. Stalin took a leading part in the work of the congress, he was elected to the Presidium of the congress, to the Programme Commission and to the Political Commission set up to draft the theses on the international situation and the tasks of the Communist International.

4. This refers to the plenum of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.), together with members of the Central Control Commission and Central Auditing Commission, which was held November 16-24, 1928.

* My italics.—J. Stalin.

5. Katheder-Socialism—a trend in bourgeois ideology, chiefly in bourgeois political economy, which arose in Germany in the latter half of the nineteenth century and later became widespread in Britain, America and France. Its representatives were bourgeois-liberal professors who used their university chairs (Katheder means university chair) to combat Marxism and the developing revolutionary working-class movement, to slur over the contradictions of capitalism, and to preach class conciliation. The Katheder-Socialists denied the class, exploiting character of the bourgeois state and alleged that the latter was capable of perfecting capitalism by means of social reforms. Referring to the German representatives of this trend, Engels wrote: “Our Katheder-Socialists have never been much more, theoretically, than slightly philanthropic vulgar economists, and now they have sunk to the level of simple apologists of Bismarck’s state socialism” (K. Marx and F. Engels, Works, Vol. XXVII, p. 499). In Russia, the bourgeois-liberal reformist ideas of the Katheder-Socialists were preached by the legal Marxists. The Russian Mensheviks, the opportunist parties of the Second International and the modern Right-wing Socialists also went over to the position of Katheder-Socialism, striving to subordinate the working-class movement to the interests of the bourgeoisie and preaching that capitalism would grow gradually and peacefully into socialism.

* My italics.—J. Stalin.

6 This refers to the plenum of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.) held July 4-12, 1928.

* My italics.—J. Stalin.

7. Youth International (Jugend Internationale)—a magazine, the organ of the International Union of Socialist Youth Organisations, published in Zurich from September 1915 to May 1918. From 1919 to 1941 it was the organ of the

Executive Committee of the Young Communist International. (In 1925-28, it appeared under the title Communist Youth International.)

8. See Lenin Miscellany XIV, pp. 250-59.

9. Sbornik Sotsial-Demokrata (Symposium of Sotsial Demokrat) was published by the C.C., R.S.D.L.P. in 1916 under the personal direction of V. I. Lenin. Two numbers were issued: in October and December 1916.

* My italics.—J. Stalin.

** Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya, Lenin's wife.—Tr..

* My italics.—J. Stalin.

10. At the time of the Brest Peace (1918), Bukharin and the group of "Left" Communists he headed joined with Trotsky in waging a fierce struggle within the Party against Lenin, demanding the continuation of the war with the aim of exposing the young Soviet Republic, which still had no army, to the blows of German imperialism. At the trial of the anti-Soviet "Right-Trotskyist bloc" in 1938, it was established that Bukharin and the group of "Left" Communists headed by him had joined with Trotsky and the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries in a secret counter-revolutionary conspiracy against the Soviet Government with the object of torpedoing the Brest Peace Treaty, arresting and assassinating V. I. Lenin, J. V. Stalin and Y. M. Sverdlov, and establishing a government of Bukharinites, Trotskyists and Left Socialist-Revolutionaries.

11. EKOSO of the R.S.F.S.R.—Economic Council of the Council of People's Commissars of the R.S.F.S.R.

12. The Sixteenth Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.), which took place in Moscow, April 23-29, 1929, discussed a five-year plan of development of the national economy, ways and means of promoting agriculture and tax relief for the middle peasants, results and immediate tasks of the fight against bureaucracy, and the purge and verification of members and candidate members of the C.P.S.U.(B.). The first five-year plan was the chief question discussed by the conference. It rejected the "minimum" variant of the five-year plan advocated by the Right capitulators and adopted an "optimal" variant, to be obligatory under all circumstances. The conference condemned the Right deviation as representing a complete rejection of the Party's Leninist policy and an outright adoption of the position of the kulaks, and it called upon the Party to deliver a crushing blow to the Right deviation, as the chief danger at that period, and also to conciliatory attitudes towards deviations from the Leninist line. V. M. Molotov reported to

the conference on the April plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.) and on the speech delivered at that meeting by J. V. Stalin on “The Right Deviation in the C.P.S.U.(B.)” (see pp. 1-113 in this volume). The conference unanimously passed a resolution on “Inner-Party Affairs” and adopted an appeal to all workers and labouring peasants of the Soviet Union for full development of socialist emulation. (For the resolutions of the Sixteenth Conference, see Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences