

Stalin, J.W.

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Preface

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The Eighth Volume of J. V. Stalin's Works contains writings and speeches of the period January-November 1926.

The year 1926 was the first year of the all-out effort of the Bolshevik Party to put into effect the general line of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government for the socialist industrialisation of the country.

In his works Concerning Questions of Leninism and The Economic Situation of the Soviet Union and the Policy of the Party, J. V. Stalin exposes the malicious distortions of the principles of Leninism by the Zinoviev-Kamenev group, upholds the decisions of the Fourteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.), and discloses the attempts of the "New Opposition" to infect the Party with disbelief in the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R.

In his report to the Fifteenth Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.) The Social-Democratic Deviation in Our Party and in his reply to the discussion on the report, J. V. Stalin upholds the ideological and organisational unity of the Bolshevik Party and exposes the capitulationist ideology and the disruptive, splitting activities of the Trotsky-Zinoviev bloc.

In these works J. V. Stalin develops Lenin's teaching on the possibility of the victory of socialism in individual countries, and demonstrates the possibility, necessity and international significance of the building of a socialist society in the U.S.S.R. in the conditions of capitalist encirclement, outlines the practical tasks of the Party in the field of socialist construction, and defines the concrete ways and means of putting into effect the Party's general line for the socialist industrialisation of the country.

In "The British Strike and the Events in Poland," "The Anglo-Russian Unity Committee," "The Fight against Right and 'Ultra-Left' Deviations," the "Speech Delivered in the German Commission of the Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I." and other works, J. V. Stalin stresses the necessity for a persistent and consistent struggle for working-class unity, against imperialist reaction, and against the danger of new imperialist wars. He exposes Trotsky's adventurist theory of skipping-over movements which have not yet outlived their day, and indicates the lines and methods of the ideological and organisational struggle against opportunism in the Communist Parties abroad.

In the speech on "The Prospects of the Revolution in China," J. V. Stalin analyses the distinguishing features, character and trend of the Chinese revolution.

This volume includes the following documents published for the first time: "The Peasantry as an Ally of the Working Class," "The Possibility of Building Socialism in Our Country," "Speech Delivered in the French Commission of the Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I.," speech on "The Anglo-Russian Committee," "Letter to Slepkov," "Measures for Mitigating

the Inner-Party Struggle,” and Stalin’s letter “To the Editorial Board of the Daily Worker, Central Organ of the Workers Party of America.” J. V. Stalin’s letter “To Comrade Kaganovich and the Other Members of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee, Ukrainian C.P. (B.)” is given here for the first time in full.

Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute
of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.)

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Biographical Chronicle (January-November 1926)

Fight Against Right and "Ultra-Left" Deviations

J. V. Stalin

Two Speeches Delivered at a Meeting of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I., January 22, 1926;

First published: Pravda, No. 40, February 18, 1926

I

I think that the attitude of Hansen and Ruth Fischer is wrong. They demand that the fight against the Rights and "ultra-Lefts" should be waged always and everywhere, under all conditions, with equal intensity, on the principle, so to speak, of equity. This idea of equity, of striking at the Rights and "ultra-Lefts" with equal intensity under all conditions and circumstances, is childish. It is one that no politician can entertain. The question of the fight against the Rights and "ultra-Lefts" must be regarded not from the standpoint of equity, but from the standpoint of the demands of the political situation, of the political requirements of the Party at any given moment. Why, in the French Party, is the fight against the Rights the immediate urgent task at the present moment, while in the German Communist Party the immediate task is the fight against the "ultra-Lefts"? Because the situations in the French and the German Communist Parties are not identical. Because the political requirements of these two Parties at the present time are different.

Germany has only recently emerged from a profound revolutionary crisis, when the Party was conducting its fight by the method of direct assault. Now the German Communist Party is going through a period of mustering forces and preparing the masses for the decisive battles to come. In this new situation, the method of direct assault will no longer do for the attainment of the old objectives. What the German Communist Party must now do is to pass to the method of flank movements, with the aim of winning over the majority of the working class in Germany. It is natural under these circumstances that we should find in Germany a group of "ultra-Lefts" which keeps repeating the old slogans in a schoolboy fashion and is unable or unwilling to adapt itself to the new conditions of the struggle, which demand new methods of work. Hence we have the "ultra Lefts," who by their policy are hindering the Party from adapting itself to the new conditions of the struggle and from finding its way to the broad masses of the German proletariat. Either the German Communist Party breaks the resistance of the "ultra-Lefts," and then it will be on the high road to winning over the majority of the working class; or it does not, and then it will make the present crisis chronic and disastrous for the Party. Hence the fighting against the "ultra-Lefts" in the German Communist Party is the latter's immediate task.

In France we have a different situation. In that country there has been no profound revolutionary crisis so far. The struggle there has proceeded within the bounds of legality, and the methods of struggle have been exclusively, or almost exclusively, of a legal character. But now a crisis has begun to develop in France. I have in mind the Moroccan and Syrian wars and France's financial difficulties. How deep that crisis is, it is difficult to say at present, but it is a crisis nevertheless, and one which demands of the Party a combination of legal and illegal forms of struggle, and the maximum Bolshevisation of the Party. It is natural under these circumstances that we should find in the French Party a group -- I am referring to the Rights -- which is unable or unwilling to adapt itself to the new conditions of the struggle, and which continues from inertia to insist on the old methods of struggle as the only correct ones. This circumstance, of course, cannot but hinder the Bolshevisation of the French Communist Party. Hence the Right danger in the French Communist Party is the immediate danger. Hence the task of fighting against the Right danger is the urgent task of the French Communist Party.

A few illustrations from the history of the C.P.S.U.(B.). After the 1905 Revolution there arose in our Party, too, an "ultra-Left" group, known as the "Otzovists," which was unable or unwilling to adapt itself to the new conditions of the struggle and refused to recognise the method of utilising legal opportunities (the Duma, workers' clubs, insurance funds, etc.). As you know, Lenin resolutely fought that group, and it was after the Party had succeeded in overcoming that group that it was able to take the right road. We had the same thing after the 1917 Revolution, when an "ultra-Left" group opposed the Brest Peace. As you know, our Party, under Lenin's leadership, smashed this group too.

What do these facts show? They show that the question of the fight against the Rights and "ultra-Lefts" must be put not abstractly, but concretely, depending on the political situation.

Is it accidental that the French have come to the Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Communist International with a resolution against the Right elements in their Party, and the Germans with a resolution against the "ultra-Lefts"? Of course not. The tongue ever turns to the aching tooth.

Hence, the idea of equity, of striking at the Rights and "ultra-Lefts" with equal intensity, is untenable.

For that very reason, I would suggest, deleting from the draft resolution on the "ultra-Lefts" in Germany the phrase which says that in the German Communist Party it is necessary to concentrate to an equal degree on the struggle against the Rights and the "ultra-Lefts." I propose that this phrase be deleted for the same reason that the phrase about concentrating on the struggle against the "ultra-Lefts" was deleted from the resolution on the Rights in the French Communist Party. That the Rights and "ultra-Lefts" must be fought always and everywhere is perfectly true. But that is not the point just now; the point is what to concentrate on at the present moment in France, on the one hand, and in Germany, on the other. I think that in the French Communist Party it is necessary to concentrate on the fight against the Rights, for that is demanded by political necessity at the present moment, while in the German Communist Party it is necessary to concentrate on the fight against the "ultra-Lefts," since that is demanded by the political requirements of the German Communist Party at the present moment.

What is the position of the intermediate group in the German Communist Party -- the Ruth Fischer-Maslow group -- looking at the question from the point of view just expounded? This group, in my opinion, is diplomatically screening Scholem's "ultra-Left" group. The Ruth Fischer-Maslow group is not siding with the Scholem group openly, but it is doing everything in its power to weaken the force of the Party's blow against the Scholem group. The Ruth Fischer-Maslow group is thus hampering the efforts of the Central Committee of the German Communist Party to overcome and eliminate the "ultra-Left" prejudices of the German Communist Party. The German Communist Party must therefore wage a determined fight against this group, the Ruth Fischer-Maslow group. Either the Ruth Fischer-Maslow group is smashed, and then the Party will be in a position to overcome the present crisis in the fight against the Scholem group; or the German Communist Party is taken in by the diplomatic wiles of the Ruth Fischer-Maslow group, and then the fight will be lost, to the benefit of Scholem.

II

It seems to me that in the matter of the inner-party ideological struggle, Hansen is preaching a sort of parson's morality, one entirely unbecoming a Communist Party. Apparently, he is not opposed to an ideological struggle. But he would like to conduct it in such a way as not to discredit any of the opposition leaders. I must say that no such struggle ever happens. I must say that one who is prepared to tolerate a struggle only provided that none of the leaders is in any way compromised, virtually denies the possibility of waging any kind of ideological struggle within the Party. Ought we to disclose mistakes committed by party leaders? Ought we to bring those mistakes to light, so as to educate the party masses on the basis of the mistakes of the leaders? I think that we ought to do so. I think that there is no other way of correcting mistakes. I think that the method of slurring over mistakes is not our method. But it follows from this that there can be no inner-party struggle and correction of mistakes without some leader or other being in some way compromised. That may be sad, but nothing can be done about it, because we are powerless against the inevitable.

Ought we to fight against both "ultra-Lefts" and Rights? Hansen asks. Of course, we ought to. We settled that question long ago. The dispute is not about that. The dispute is about which danger we should concentrate on in the fight at this moment in the two different Parties, the French and the German, the situations of which are at present dissimilar. Is it accidental that the French have come to the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. with a resolution against the Rights, and the Germans with a resolution against the "ultra-Lefts"? Perhaps the French are mistaken in concentrating on the fight against the Rights? Why, in that case, did Hansen not attempt to come to the Presidium with a counter-resolution regarding the fight against the "ultra-Lefts" in France? Perhaps the Germans are mistaken in concentrating on the fight against the "ultra-Lefts"? Why, in that case, did Hansen and Ruth Fischer not attempt to come to the Presidium with a counter-resolution concentrating on the fight against the Rights? What is the point here? The point is that we are faced not with the abstract question of combating Rights and "ultra-Lefts" in general, but with the concrete question of the immediate tasks of the German Party at the present moment. And the immediate task of the German Communist Party is to overcome the "ultra-Left" danger, just as the immediate task of the French Communist Party is to overcome the Right danger.

How, for instance, are we to explain the generally known fact that the Communist Parties of Britain, France and Czechoslovakia have already obtained important footholds in the trade-union movements of their countries, have found their way to the broad masses of the working class, and are beginning to win the confidence, if not of the majority, at least of a considerable section of the working class, whereas in Germany the position in this respect is still weak? It is to be explained above all by the fact that the "ultra-Lefts" are still strong in the German Communist Party, and that they still look sceptically on the trade unions, on the slogan of a united front, on the slogan of winning over the trade unions. Everyone knows that until recently the "ultra-Lefts" upheld the slogan "Get out of the trade unions." Everyone knows that survivals of this anti-proletarian slogan have not yet been completely eradicated among the "ultra-Lefts." One thing or the other: either the German Communist Party succeeds in speedily and decisively ridding itself of the prejudices of the "ultra-Lefts" regarding methods of work among the masses, after having utterly smashed -- ideologically smashed -- the Scholem group; or it does not succeed, in which case the crisis in the German Communist Party may take a most dangerous turn.

It is said that there are honest revolutionary workers among the "ultra-Lefts," and that we must not repel them. That is quite true, and we are not suggesting that they should be repelled.

For that reason we are not introducing into our draft resolution any proposal that any of the "ultra-Lefts," and least of all workers, should be repelled or expelled from the Party. But how are those workers to be raised to the level of political understanding of a Leninist party? How are they to be rescued from the misconceptions they are now labouring under owing to the errors and prejudices of their "ultra-Left" leaders? There is only one method of achieving this, and that is the method of politically repudiating the "ultra-Left" leaders, the method of exposing the "ultra-Left" errors which are misleading honest revolutionary workers and hindering them from setting foot on the broad highway. Can we tolerate putrid diplomacy, the slurring over of errors, in questions of the ideological struggle in the Party and the political education of the masses? No, we cannot. We should be deceiving the workers if we did. What, then, is the solution? There is only one solution, and that is to expose the errors of the "ultra-Left" leaders, and in this way help honest revolutionary workers to take the right road.

It is said that a blow at the "ultra-Lefts" may lead to the accusation that the German Communist Party has swung to the Right. That is nonsense, comrades. At the All-Russian Party Conference in 1908, when Lenin fought the Russian "ultra-Lefts" and utterly routed them, in our midst, too, there were people who accused Lenin of Rightism, of having swung to the Right. But all the world now knows that Lenin's position at that time was correct, that his standpoint was the only revolutionary one, and that the Russian "ultra-Lefts," who were then making a show of "revolutionary" phrases, were in reality opportunists.

It should not be forgotten that Rights and "ultra-Lefts" are actually twins, that consequently both take an opportunist stand, the difference between them being that whereas the Rights do not always conceal their opportunism, the Lefts invariably camouflage their opportunism with "revolutionary" phrases. We cannot allow our policy to be determined by what scandal mongers and philistines may say about us. We must go our way firmly and confidently, paying no heed to the tales idle minds may invent about us. The Russians have an apt saying: "the dogs bark, the caravan passes." We should bear this saying in mind; it may stand us in good stead on more than one occasion.

Ruth Fischer says that later on the Right danger may come to be the immediate question for the German Communist Party. That is quite possible and even probable. But what follows from this? Ruth Fischer draws the strange conclusion that the blow against the "ultra-Lefts" in Germany, who already at this moment constitute a real danger, should be weakened, and the blow against the Rights, who may become a serious danger in the future, should be strengthened immediately. It will be easily seen that this is a rather ludicrous and fundamentally incorrect way of putting the question. Only a betwixt-and-between diplomatic group like the Ruth Fischer-Maslow group could land itself in such a ludicrous position in its effort to weaken the Party's struggle against the "ultra-Lefts," and thus save the Scholem group, withdrawing it from the blow. For that is the whole purpose of Ruth Fischer's proposal. I think that there must be a similar intermediate diplomatic group in France, one that is trying with honeyed speeches to shield the Right elements in the French Communist Party. It is therefore an immediate task of the day to fight the intermediate diplomatic groups both in the German and in the French Parties.

Ruth Fischer asserts that if a resolution against the "ultra-Lefts" in Germany is adopted, it would only aggravate the situation in the Party. It seems to me that Ruth Fischer is anxious to prolong the crisis in the German Communist Party, to make it a protracted and chronic one. We cannot therefore follow the path of Ruth Fischer, for all her diplomacy and honeyed talk about peace in the Party.

I think, comrades, that important Marxist elements have already crystallised in the German Party. I think that the present working-class core of the German Communist Party constitutes that Marxist core which the German Communist Party needs. The task of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. is to support that core and assist it in its struggle against all deviations, above all against the "ultra-Left" deviation. We must therefore adopt a resolution directed against the "ultra-Lefts" in Germany.

**Preface to the First Edition
of the Collection
Questions of Leninism¹**

The pamphlet *The Foundations of Leninism*² must be regarded as one of the basic components of the present collection. This pamphlet was first published nearly two years ago, in May 1924. It now appears in a second edition in the present collection. In these two years much water has flowed under the bridge: the Party has passed through two discussions, a number of pamphlets and manuals on Leninism have been published, new practical questions of socialist construction have come to the fore. Naturally, the new questions that have arisen during these two years, as well as the results of the discussions which have taken place since the pamphlet appeared, could not be taken into account in this pamphlet. Naturally, too, the concrete questions of our constructive work (NEP, state capitalism, the question of the middle peasantry, etc.) could not be fully treated in a small pamphlet which constitutes a “concise synopsis of the foundations of Leninism.” These and similar questions could be treated by the author only in subsequent pamphlets (*The October Revolution and the Tactics of the Russian Communists*,³ *The Results of the Work of the Fourteenth Conference of the R.C.P.(B.)*,⁴ *Questions and Answers*,⁵ etc.), which have been included in the present collection and which are organically linked with the basic theses expounded in the original pamphlet *The Foundations of Leninism*. This circumstance fully justifies the publication of the present collection, which thus constitutes a single and integral work on questions of Leninism.

The latest discussion, at the Fourteenth Party Congress, summed up the Party’s ideological and constructive activities in the recent period, from the Thirteenth to the Fourteenth Congress. It also served in a way as a test of the views advanced by the “New Opposition.” It is permissible to ask: What has this test shown?

Notes

1. This “Preface” formed the introductory part to the work *Concerning Questions of Leninism*, written by J. V. Stalin in January 1926 in lieu of a preface to the collection *Questions of Leninism*, which was published in February 1926.

2. See J. V. Stalin, *Works* Vol. 6, pp. 71-196

3. See J. V. Stalin, *Works* Vol. 6, pp. 374-420

4. See J. V. Stalin, *Works* Vol. 7, pp. 90-134

5. See J. V. Stalin, *Works* Vol. 7, pp. 158-214

**Concerning Questions of Leninism
Dedicated to the Leningrad
Organisation of the C.P.S.U.(B.)
January 25, 1926**

I

THE DEFINITION OF LENINISM

The pamphlet *The Foundations of Leninism* contains a definition of Leninism which seems to have received general recognition. It runs as follows:

“Leninism is Marxism of the era of imperialism and the proletarian revolution. To be more exact, Leninism is the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution in general, the theory and tactics of the dictatorship of the proletariat in particular.”¹

Is this definition correct?

I think it is correct. It is correct, firstly, because it correctly indicates the historical roots of Leninism, characterising it as Marxism of the era of imperialism, as against certain critics of Lenin who wrongly think that Leninism originated after the imperialist war. It is correct, secondly, because it correctly notes the international character of Leninism, as against Social-Democracy, which considers that Leninism is applicable only to Russian national conditions. It is correct, thirdly, because it correctly notes the organic connection between Leninism and the teachings of Marx, characterising Leninism as Marxism of the era of imperialism, as against certain critics of Leninism who consider it not a further development of Marxism, but merely the restoration of Marxism and its application to Russian conditions.

All that, one would think, needs no special comment. Nevertheless, it appears that there are people in our party who consider it necessary to define Leninism somewhat differently. Zinoviev, for example, thinks that:

“Leninism is Marxism of the era of imperialist wars and of the world revolution which began directly in a country where the peasantry predominates.”

What can be the meaning of the words underlined by Zinoviev? What does introducing the backwardness of Russia, its peasant character, into the definition of Leninism mean?

It means transforming Leninism from an international proletarian doctrine into a product of specifically Russian conditions.

It means playing into the hands of Bauer and Kautsky, who deny that Leninism is suitable for other countries, for countries in which capitalism is more developed.

It goes without saying that the peasant question is of very great importance for Russia, that our country is a peasant country. But what significance can this fact have in characterising the foundations of Leninism? Was Leninism elaborated only on Russian soil, for Russia alone, and not on the soil of imperialism, and for the imperialist countries generally? Do such works of Lenin as *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*,² *The State and Revolution*,³ *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*,⁴ “Left-Wing” Communism, an Infantile Disorder,⁵ etc., apply only to Russia, and not to all imperialist countries in general? Is not Leninism the generalisation of the experience of the revolutionary movement of all countries?

Are not the fundamentals of the theory and tactics of Leninism suitable, are they not obligatory, for the proletarian parties of all countries? Was not Lenin right when he said that “Bolshevism can serve as a model of tactics for all”? (See Vol. XXIII, p. 386.)* Was not Lenin right when he spoke about the “international significance** of Soviet power and of the fundamentals of Bolshevik theory and tactics”? (See Vol. XXV, pp. 171-72.) Are not, for example, the following words of Lenin correct?

“In Russia, the dictatorship of the proletariat must inevitably differ in certain specific features from that in the advanced countries, owing to the very great backwardness and petty-bourgeois character of our country. But the basic forces—and the basic forms of social economy—are the same in Russia as in any capitalist country, so that these specific features can relate only to what is not most important”** (see Vol. XXIV, p. 508).

But if all that is true, does it not follow that Zinoviev’s definition of Leninism cannot be regarded as correct?

How can this nationally restricted definition of Leninism be reconciled with internationalism?

II

THE MAIN THING IN LENINISM

In the pamphlet *The Foundations of Leninism*, it stated:

“Some think that the fundamental thing in Leninism is the peasant question, that the point of departure of Leninism is the question of the peasantry, of its role, its relative importance. This is absolutely wrong. The fundamental question of Leninism, its point of departure, is not the peasant question, but the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of the conditions under which it can be achieved, of the conditions under which it can be consolidated. The peasant question, as the question of the ally of the proletariat in its struggle for power, is a derivative question.”⁹

Is this thesis correct?

I think it is correct. This thesis follows entirely from the definition of Leninism. Indeed, if Leninism is the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution, and the basic content of the proletarian revolution is the dictatorship of the proletariat, then it is clear that the main thing in Leninism is the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the elaboration of this question, the substantiation and concretisation of this question.

Nevertheless, Zinoviev evidently does not agree with this thesis. In his article “In Memory of Lenin,” he says:

“As I have already said, the question of the role of the peasantry is the fundamental question** of Bolshevism, of Leninism.”

As you see, Zinoviev’s thesis follows entirely from his wrong definition of Leninism. It is therefore as wrong as his definition of Leninism is wrong.

Is Lenin’s thesis that the dictatorship of the proletariat is the “root content of the proletarian revolution” correct? (See Vol. XXIII, p. 337.) It is unquestionably correct. Is the thesis that

Leninism is the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution correct? I think it is correct. But what follows from this? From this it follows that the fundamental question of Leninism, its point of departure, its foundation, is the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Is it not true that the question of imperialism, the question of the spasmodic character of the development of imperialism, the question of the victory of socialism in one country, the question of the proletarian state, the question of the Soviet form of this state, the question of the role of the Party in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the question of the paths of building socialism—that all these questions were elaborated precisely by Lenin? Is it not true that it is precisely these questions that constitute the basis, the foundation of the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat? Is it not true that without the elaboration of these fundamental questions, the elaboration of the peasant question from the standpoint of the dictatorship of the proletariat would be inconceivable?

It goes without saying that Lenin was an expert on the peasant question. It goes without saying that the peasant question as the question of the ally of the proletariat is of the greatest significance for the proletariat and forms a constituent part of the fundamental question of the dictatorship of the proletariat. But is it not clear that if Leninism had not been faced with the fundamental question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the derivative question of the ally of the proletariat, the question of the peasantry, would not have arisen either? Is it not clear that if Leninism had not been faced with the practical question of the conquest of power by the proletariat, the question of an alliance with the peasantry would not have arisen either?

Lenin would not have been the great ideological leader of the proletariat that he unquestionably is—he would have been a simple “peasant philosopher,” as foreign literary philistines often depict him—had he elaborated the peasant question, not on the basis of the theory and tactics of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but independently of this basis, apart from this basis.

One or the other:

Either the peasant question is the main thing in Leninism, and in that case Leninism is not suitable, not obligatory, for capitalistically developed countries, for those which are not peasant countries.

Or the main thing in Leninism is the dictatorship of the proletariat, and in that case Leninism is the international doctrine of the proletarians of all lands, suitable and obligatory for all countries without exception, including the capitalistically developed countries.

Here one must choose.

III

THE QUESTION OF “PERMANENT” REVOLUTION

In the pamphlet *The Foundations of Leninism*, the “theory of permanent revolution” is appraised as a “theory” which under-estimates the role of the peasantry. There it is stated:

“Consequently, Lenin fought the adherents of ‘permanent’ revolution, not over the question of uninterruptedness, for Lenin himself maintained the point of view of uninterrupted revolution,

but because they under-estimated the role of the peasantry, which is an enormous reserve of the proletariat.”⁷

This characterisation of the Russian “permanentists” was considered as generally accepted until recently. Nevertheless, although in general correct, it cannot be regarded as exhaustive. The discussion of 1924, on the one hand, and a careful analysis of the works of Lenin, on the other hand, have shown that the mistake of the Russian “permanentists” lay not only in their under-estimation of the role of the peasantry, but also in their under-estimation of the strength of the proletariat and its capacity to lead the peasantry, in their disbelief in the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat.

That is why, in my pamphlet *The October Revolution and the Tactics of the Russian Communists* (December 1924), I broadened this characterisation and replaced it by another, more complete one. Here is what is stated in that pamphlet:

“Hitherto only one aspect of the theory of ‘permanent revolution’ has usually been noted—lack of faith in the revolutionary potentialities of the peasant movement. Now, in fairness, this must be supplemented by another aspect—lack of faith in the strength and capacity of the proletariat in Russia.”⁸

This does not mean, of course, that Leninism has been or is opposed to the idea of permanent revolution, without quotation marks, which was proclaimed by Marx in the forties of the last century.⁹ On the contrary, Lenin was the only Marxist who correctly understood and developed the idea of permanent revolution. What distinguishes Lenin from the “permanentists” on this question is that the “permanentists” distorted Marx’s idea of permanent revolution and transformed it into lifeless, bookish wisdom, whereas Lenin took it in its pure form and made it one of the foundations of his own theory of revolution. It should be borne in mind that the idea of the growing over of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into the socialist revolution, propounded by Lenin as long ago as 1905, is one of the forms of the embodiment of Marx’s theory of permanent revolution. Here is what Lenin wrote about this as far back as 1905:

“From the democratic revolution we shall at once, and just to the extent of our strength, the strength of the class-conscious and organised proletariat, begin to pass to the socialist revolution. We stand for uninterrupted revolution.** We shall not stop halfway. . . .

“Without succumbing to adventurism or going against our scientific conscience, without striving for cheap popularity, we can and do say only one thing: we shall put every effort into assisting the entire peasantry to carry out the democratic revolution in order thereby to make it easier for us, the party of the proletariat, to pass on, as quickly as possible, to the new and higher task—the socialist revolution” (see Vol. VIII, pp. 186-87).

And here is what Lenin wrote on this subject sixteen years later, after the conquest of power by the proletariat:

“The Kautskys, Hilferdings, Martovs, Chernovs, Hillquits, Longuets, MacDonalds, Turatis, and other heroes of ‘Two-and-a-Half’ Marxism were incapable of understanding . . . the relation between the bourgeois-democratic and the proletarian-socialist revolutions. The first grows over into the second.** The second, in passing, solves the questions of the first. The

second consolidates the work of the first. Struggle, and struggle alone, decides how far the second succeeds in outgrowing the first” (see Vol. XXVII, p. 26).

I draw special attention to the first of the above quotations, taken from Lenin’s article entitled “The Attitude of Social-Democracy Towards the Peasant Movement,” published on September 1, 1905. I emphasise this for the information of those who still continue to assert that Lenin arrived at the idea of the growing over of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into the socialist revolution, that is to say, the idea of permanent revolution, after the imperialist war. This quotation leaves no doubt that these people are profoundly mistaken.

IV

THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION AND THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

What are the characteristic features of the proletarian revolution as distinct from the bourgeois revolution?

The distinction between the proletarian revolution and the bourgeois revolution may be reduced to five main points.

- 1) The bourgeois revolution usually begins when there already exist more or less ready-made forms belonging to the capitalist order, forms which have grown and matured within the womb of feudal society prior to the open revolution, whereas the proletarian revolution begins when ready-made forms belonging to the socialist order are either absent, or almost absent.
- 2) The main task of the bourgeois revolution consists in seizing power and making it conform to the already existing bourgeois economy, whereas the main task of the proletarian revolution consists, after seizing power, in building a new, socialist economy.
- 3) The bourgeois revolution is usually consummated with the seizure of power, whereas in the proletarian revolution the seizure of power is only the beginning, and power is used as a lever for transforming the old economy and organising the new one.
- 4) The bourgeois revolution limits itself to replacing one group of exploiters in power by another group of exploiters, in view of which it need not smash the old state machine; whereas the proletarian revolution removes all exploiting groups from power and places in power the leader of all the toilers and exploited, the class of proletarians, in view of which it cannot manage without smashing the old state machine and substituting a new one for it.
- 5) The bourgeois revolution cannot rally the millions of the toiling and exploited masses around the bourgeoisie for any length of time, for the very reason that they are toilers and exploited; whereas the proletarian revolution can and must link them, precisely as toilers and exploited, in a durable alliance with the proletariat, if it wishes to carry out its main task of consolidating the power of the proletariat and building a new, socialist economy.

Here are some of Lenin’s main theses on this subject:

“One of the fundamental differences between bourgeois revolution and socialist revolution,” says Lenin, “is that for the bourgeois revolution, which arises out of feudalism, the new economic organisations are gradually created in the womb of the old order, gradually

changing all the aspects of feudal society. Bourgeois revolution was confronted by only one task—to sweep away, to cast aside, to destroy all the fetters of the preceding society. By fulfilling this task every bourgeois revolution fulfils all that is required of it: it accelerates the growth of capitalism.

“The socialist revolution is in an altogether different position. The more backward the country which, owing to the zigzags of history, has proved to be the one to start the socialist revolution, the more difficult it is for it to pass from the old capitalist relations to socialist relations. To the tasks of destruction are added new tasks of unprecedented difficulty—organisational tasks” (see Vol. XXII, p. 315).

“Had not the popular creative spirit of the Russian revolution,” continues Lenin, “which had gone through the great experience of the year 1905, given rise to the Soviets as early as February 1917, they could not under any circumstances have seized power in October, because success depended entirely upon the existence of ready-made organisational forms of a movement embracing millions. These ready-made forms were the Soviets, and that is why in the political sphere there awaited us those brilliant successes, the continuous triumphant march, that we experienced; for the new form of political power was ready to hand, and all we had to do was, by passing a few decrees, to transform the power of the Soviets from the embryonic state in which it existed in the first months of the revolution into a legally recognised form which has become established in the Russian state—i.e., into the Russian Soviet Republic” (see Vol. XXII, p. 315).

“But two problems of enormous difficulty still remained,” says Lenin, “the solution of which could not possibly be the triumphant march which our revolution experienced in the first months . . . ” (ibid.).

“Firstly, there were the problems of internal organisation, which confront every socialist revolution. The difference between socialist revolution and bourgeois revolution lies precisely in the fact that the latter finds ready-made forms of capitalist relationships, while Soviet power—proletarian power—does not inherit such ready-made relationships, if we leave out of account the most developed forms of capitalism, which, strictly speaking, extended to but a small top layer of industry and hardly touched agriculture. The organisation of accounting, the control of large enterprises, the transformation of the whole of the state economic mechanism into a single huge machine, into an economic organism that works in such a way that hundreds of millions of people are guided by a single plan—such was the enormous organisational problem that rested on our shoulders. Under the present conditions of labour this problem could not possibly be solved by the ‘hurrah’ methods by which we were able to solve the problems of the Civil War” (ibid., p. 318).

“The second enormous difficulty . . . was the international question. The reason why we were able to cope so easily with Kerensky’s gangs, why we so easily established our power and without the slightest difficulty passed the decrees on the socialisation of the land and on workers’ control, the reason why we achieved all this so easily was only that a fortunate combination of circumstances protected us for a short time from international imperialism. International imperialism, with the entire might of its capital, with its highly organised military technique, which is a real force, a real fortress of international capital, could in no case, under no circumstances, live side by side with the Soviet Republic, both because of its objective position and because of the economic interests of the capitalist class which is embodied in it—it could not do so because of commercial connections, of international

financial relations. In this sphere a conflict is inevitable. Therein lies the greatest difficulty of the Russian revolution, its greatest historical problem: the necessity of solving the international tasks, the necessity of calling forth an international revolution” (see Vol. XXII, p. 317).

Such is the intrinsic character and the basic meaning of the proletarian revolution.

Can such a radical transformation of the old bourgeois order be achieved without a violent revolution, without the dictatorship of the proletariat?

Obviously not. To think that such a revolution can be carried out peacefully, within the framework of bourgeois democracy, which is adapted to the rule of the bourgeoisie, means that one has either gone out of one’s mind and lost normal human understanding, or has grossly and openly repudiated the proletarian revolution.

This thesis must be emphasised all the more strongly and categorically for the reason that we are dealing with the proletarian revolution which for the time being has triumphed only in one country, a country which is surrounded by hostile capitalist countries and the bourgeoisie of which cannot fail to receive the support of international capital.

That is why Lenin says that:

“The emancipation of the oppressed class is impossible not only without a violent revolution, but also without the destruction of the apparatus of state power which was created by the ruling class” (see Vol. XXI, p. 373).

“First let the majority of the population, while private property still exists, i.e., while the rule and yoke of capital still exists, express themselves in favour of the party of the proletariat, and only then can and should the party take power—so say the petty-bourgeois democrats who call themselves ‘Socialists’ but who are in reality the servitors of the bourgeoisie”** (see Vol. XXIV, p. 647).

“We say:** Let the revolutionary proletariat first overthrow the bourgeoisie, break the yoke of capital, and smash the bourgeois state apparatus, then the victorious proletariat will be able rapidly to gain the sympathy and support of the majority of the toiling non-proletarian masses by satisfying their needs at the expense of the exploiters” (ibid.).

“In order to win the majority of the population to its side,” Lenin says further, “the proletariat must, in the first place, overthrow the bourgeoisie and seize state power; secondly, it must introduce Soviet power and smash the old state apparatus to bits, whereby it immediately undermines the rule, prestige and influence of the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeois compromisers over the non-proletarian toiling masses. Thirdly, it must entirely destroy the influence of the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeois compromisers over the majority of the non-proletarian toiling masses by satisfying their economic needs in a revolutionary way at the expense of the exploiters” (ibid., p. 641).

Such are the characteristic features of the proletarian revolution.

What, in this connection, are the main features of the dictatorship of the proletariat, once it is admitted that the dictatorship of the proletariat is the basic content of the proletarian revolution?

Here is the most general definition of the dictatorship of the proletariat given by Lenin:

“The dictatorship of the proletariat is not the end of the class struggle, but its continuation in new forms. The dictatorship of the proletariat is the class struggle of the proletariat, which has won victory and has seized political power, against the bourgeoisie, which although vanquished has not been annihilated, has not disappeared, has not ceased its resistance, has increased its resistance” (see Vol. XXIV, p. 311).

Arguing against confusing the dictatorship of the proletariat with “popular” government, “elected by all,” with “non-class” government, Lenin says:

“The class which took political power into its hands did so knowing that it took power alone.** That is a part of the concept dictatorship of the proletariat. This concept has meaning only when this one class knows that it alone is taking political power in its hands, and does not deceive itself or others with talk about ‘popular’ government, ‘elected by all, sanctified by the whole people’” (see Vol. XXVI, p. 286).

This does not mean, however, that the power of one class, the class of the proletarians, which does not and cannot share power with other classes, does not need aid from, and an alliance with, the labouring and exploited masses of other classes for the achievement of its aims. On the contrary. This power, the power of one class, can be firmly established and exercised to the full only by means of a special form of alliance between the class of proletarians and the labouring masses of the petty-bourgeois classes, primarily the labouring masses of the peasantry.

What is this special form of alliance? What does it consist in? Does not this alliance with the labouring masses of other, non-proletarian, classes wholly contradict the idea of the dictatorship of one class?

This special form of alliance consists in that the guiding force of this alliance is the proletariat. This special form of alliance consists in that the leader of the state, the leader in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat is one party, the party of the proletariat, the Party of the Communists, which does not and cannot share leadership with other parties.

As you see, the contradiction is only an apparent, a seeming one.

“The dictatorship of the proletariat,” says Lenin, “is a special form of class alliance** between the proletariat, the vanguard of the working people, and the numerous non-proletarian strata of working people (the petty bourgeoisie, the small proprietors, the peasantry, the intelligentsia, etc.), or the majority of these; it is an alliance against capital, an alliance aiming at the complete overthrow of capital, at the complete suppression of the resistance of the bourgeoisie and of any attempt on its part at restoration, an alliance aiming at the final establishment and consolidation of socialism. It is a special type of alliance, which is being built up in special circumstances, namely, in the circumstances of fierce civil war; it is an alliance of the firm supporters of socialism with the latter’s wavering allies and sometimes with ‘neutrals’ (then instead of an agreement for struggle, the alliance becomes an agreement

for neutrality), an alliance between classes which differ economically, politically, socially and ideologically”** (see Vol. XXIV, p. 311).

In one of his instructional reports, Kamenev, disputing this conception of the dictatorship of the proletariat, states:

“The dictatorship is not** an alliance of one class with another.”

I believe that Kamenev here has in view, primarily, a passage in my pamphlet *The October Revolution and the Tactics of the Russian Communists*, where it is stated:

“The dictatorship of the proletariat is not simply a governmental top stratum ‘skilfully’ ‘selected’ by the careful hand of an ‘experienced strategist,’ and ‘judiciously relying’ on the support of one section or another of the population. The dictatorship of the proletariat is the class alliance between the proletariat and the labouring masses of the peasantry for the purpose of overthrowing capital, for achieving the final victory of socialism, on the condition that the guiding force of this alliance is the proletariat.”¹⁰

I wholly endorse this formulation of the dictatorship of the proletariat, for I think that it fully and entirely coincides with Lenin’s formulation, just quoted.

I assert that Kamenev’s statement that “the dictatorship is not an alliance of one class with another,” in the categorical form in which it is made, has nothing in common with Lenin’s theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

I assert that such statements can be made only by people who have failed to understand the meaning of the idea of the bond, the idea of the alliance of the proletariat and peasantry, the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat within this alliance.

Such statements can be made only by people who have failed to understand Lenin’s thesis:

“Only an agreement with the peasantry** can save the socialist revolution in Russia as long as the revolution in other countries has not taken place” (see Vol. XXVI, p. 238).

Such statements can be made only by people who have failed to understand Lenin’s thesis:

“The supreme principle of the dictatorship** is the maintenance of the alliance of the proletariat and peasantry in order that the proletariat may retain its leading role and state power” (ibid., p. 460).

Pointing out one of the most important aims of the dictatorship, the aim of suppressing the exploiters, Lenin says:

“The scientific concept of dictatorship means nothing more nor less than completely unrestricted power, absolutely unimpeded by laws or regulations and resting directly on the use of force” (see Vol. XXV, p. 441).

“Dictatorship means—note this once and for all, Messrs. Cadets—unrestricted power, based on force and not on law. In time of civil war any victorious power can be only a dictatorship” (see Vol. XXV, p. 436).

But of course, the dictatorship of the proletariat does not mean only the use of force, although there is no dictatorship without the use of force.

“Dictatorship,” says Lenin, “does not mean only the use of force, although it is impossible without the use of force; it also means the organisation of labour on a higher level than the previous organisation” (see Vol. XXIV, p. 305).

“The dictatorship of the proletariat . . . is not only the use of force against the exploiters, and not even mainly the use of force. The economic foundation of this revolutionary use of force, the guarantee of its effectiveness and success is the fact that the proletariat represents and creates a higher type of social organisation of labour compared with capitalism. This is the essence. This is the source of the strength and the guarantee of the inevitable complete triumph of communism” (see Vol. XXIV, pp. 335-36).

“Its quintessence (i.e., of the dictatorship—J. St.) is the organisation and discipline of the advanced detachment of the working people, of its vanguard, its sole leader, the proletariat, whose object is to build socialism, to abolish the division of society into classes, to make all members of society working people, to remove the basis for any exploitation of man by man. This object cannot be achieved at one stroke. It requires a fairly long period of transition from capitalism to socialism, because the reorganisation of production is a difficult matter, because radical changes in all spheres of life need time, and because the enormous force of habit of petty-bourgeois and bourgeois conduct of economy can be overcome only by a long and stubborn struggle. That is why Marx spoke of an entire period of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as the period of transition from capitalism to socialism” (ibid., p. 314).

Such are the characteristic features of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Hence the three main aspects of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

- 1) The utilisation of the rule of the proletariat for the suppression of the exploiters, for the defence of the country, for the consolidation of the ties with the proletarians of other lands, and for the development and victory of the revolution in all countries.
- 2) The utilisation of the rule of the proletariat in order to detach the labouring and exploited masses once and for all from the bourgeoisie, to consolidate the alliance of the proletariat with these masses, to draw these masses into the work of socialist construction, and to ensure the state leadership of these masses by the proletariat.
- 3) The utilisation of the rule of the proletariat for the organisation of socialism, for the abolition of classes, for the transition to a society without classes, to a socialist society.

The proletarian dictatorship is a combination of all these three aspects. No single one of these aspects can be advanced as the sole characteristic feature of the dictatorship of the proletariat. On the other hand, in the circumstances of capitalist encirclement, the absence of even one of these features is sufficient for the dictatorship of the proletariat to cease being a dictatorship. Therefore, not one of these three aspects can be omitted without running the risk of distorting the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Only all these three aspects taken together give us the complete and finished concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The dictatorship of the proletariat has its periods, its special forms, diverse methods of work. During the period of civil war, it is the forcible aspect of the dictatorship that is most conspicuous. But it by no means follows from this that no constructive work is carried on during the period of civil war. Without constructive work it is impossible to wage civil war. During the period of socialist construction, on the other hand, it is the peaceful, organisational and cultural work of the dictatorship, revolutionary law, etc., that are most conspicuous. But, again, it by no means follows from this that the forcible aspect of the dictatorship has ceased to exist or can cease to exist in the period of construction. The organs of suppression, the army and other organisations, are as necessary now, at the time of construction, as they were during the period of civil war. Without these organs, constructive work by the dictatorship with any degree of security would be impossible. It should not be forgotten that for the time being the revolution has been victorious in only one country. It should not be forgotten that as long as capitalist encirclement exists the danger of intervention, with all the consequences resulting from this danger, will also exist.

V

THE PARTY AND THE WORKING CLASS IN THE SYSTEM OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

I have dealt above with the dictatorship of the proletariat from the point of view of its historical inevitability, from the point of view of its class content, from the point of view of its state nature, and, finally, from the point of view of the destructive and creative tasks which it performs throughout the entire historical period that is termed the period of transition from capitalism to socialism.

Now we must say something about the dictatorship of the proletariat from the point of view of its structure, from the point of view of its “mechanism,” from the point of view of the role and significance of the “transmission belts,” the “levers,” and the “directing force” which in their totality constitute “the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat” (Lenin), and with the help of which the daily work of the dictatorship of the proletariat is accomplished.

What are these “transmission belts” or “levers” in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat? What is this “directing force”? Why are they needed?

The levers or transmission belts are those very mass organisations of the proletariat without the aid of which the dictatorship cannot be realised.

The directing force is the advanced detachment of the proletariat, its vanguard, which is the main guiding force of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The proletariat needs these transmission belts, these levers, and this directing force, because without them, in its struggle for victory, it would be a weaponless army in face of organised and armed capital. The proletariat needs these organisations because without them it would suffer inevitable defeat in its fight for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, in its fight for the consolidation of its rule, in its fight for the building of socialism. The systematic help of these organisations and the directing force of the vanguard are needed because in the absence of these conditions it is impossible for the dictatorship of the proletariat to be at all durable and firm.

What are these organisations?

Firstly, there are the workers' trade unions, with their central and local ramifications in the shape of a whole series of organisations concerned with production, culture, education, etc. These unite the workers of all trades. They are non-Party organisations. The trade unions may be termed the all-embracing organisation of the working class, which is in power in our country. They are a school of communism. They promote the best people from their midst for the work of leadership in all branches of administration. They form the link between the advanced and the backward elements in the ranks of the working class. They connect the masses of the workers with the vanguard of the working class.

Secondly, there are the Soviets, with their numerous central and local ramifications in the shape of administrative, economic, military, cultural and other state organisations, plus the innumerable mass associations of the working people which have sprung up of their own accord and which encompass these organisations and connect them with the population. The Soviets are a mass organisation of all the working people of town and country. They are a non-Party organisation. The Soviets are the direct expression of the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is through the Soviets that all measures for strengthening the dictatorship and for building socialism are carried out. It is through the Soviets that the state leadership of the peasantry by the proletariat is exercised. The Soviets connect the vast masses of the working people with the vanguard of the proletariat.

Thirdly, there are the co-operatives of all kinds, with all their ramifications. These are a mass organisation of the working people, a non-Party organisation, which unites the working people primarily as consumers, and also, in the course of time, as producers (agricultural co-operatives). The co-operatives acquire special significance after the consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat, during the period of extensive construction. They facilitate contact between the vanguard of the proletariat and the mass of the peasantry and make it possible to draw the latter into the channel of socialist construction.

Fourthly, there is the Youth League. This is a mass organisation of young workers and peasants; it is a non-Party organisation, but is linked with the Party. Its task is to help the Party to educate the young generation in the spirit of socialism. It provides young reserves for all the other mass organisations of the proletariat in all branches of administration. The Youth League has acquired special significance since the consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat, in the period of extensive cultural and educational work carried on by the proletariat.

Lastly, there is the Party of the proletariat, its vanguard. Its strength lies in the fact that it draws into its ranks all the best elements of the proletariat from all the mass organisations of the latter. Its function is to combine the work of all the mass organisations of the proletariat without exception and to direct their activities towards a single goal, the goal of the emancipation of the proletariat. And it is absolutely necessary to combine and direct them towards a single goal, for otherwise unity in the struggle of the proletariat is impossible, for otherwise the guidance of the proletarian masses in their struggle for power, in their struggle for building socialism, is impossible. But, only the vanguard of the proletariat, its Party, is capable of combining and directing the work of the mass organisations of the proletariat. Only the Party of the proletariat, only the Communist Party, is capable of fulfilling this role of main leader in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Why?

“... because, in the first place, it is the rallying centre of the finest elements in the working class, who have direct connections with the non-Party organisations of the proletariat and very frequently lead them; because, secondly, the Party, as the rallying centre of the finest members of the working class, is the best school for training leaders of the working class, capable of directing every form of organisation of their class; because, thirdly, the Party, as the best school for training leaders of the working class, is, by reason of its experience and prestige, the only organisation capable of centralising the leadership of the struggle of the proletariat, thus transforming each and every non-Party organisation of the working class into an auxiliary body and transmission belt linking the Party with the class” (see *The Foundations of Leninism* 11).

The Party is the main guiding force in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

“The Party is the highest form of class organisation of the proletariat” (Lenin).

To sum up: the trade unions, as the mass organisation of the proletariat, linking the Party with the class primarily in the sphere of production; the Soviets, as the mass organisation of the working people, linking the Party with the latter primarily in the sphere of state administration; the co-operatives, as the mass organisation mainly of the peasantry, linking the Party with the peasant masses primarily in the economic sphere, in the sphere of drawing the peasantry into the work of socialist construction; the Youth League, as the mass organisation of young workers and peasants, whose mission it is to help the vanguard of the proletariat in the socialist education of the new generation and in training young reserves; and, finally, the Party, as the main directing force in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat, whose mission it is to lead all these mass organisations—such, in general, is the picture of the “mechanism” of the dictatorship, the picture of “the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat.”

Without the Party as the main guiding force, it is impossible for the dictatorship of the proletariat to be at all durable and firm.

Thus, in the words of Lenin, “taken as a whole, we have a formally non-communist, flexible and relatively wide, and very powerful proletarian apparatus, by means of which the Party is closely linked with the class and with the masses, and by means of which, under the leadership of the Party, the dictatorship of the class is exercised” (see Vol. XXV, p. 192).

Of course, this must not be understood in the sense that the Party can or should take the place of the trade unions, the Soviets, and the other mass organisations. The Party exercises the dictatorship of the proletariat. However, it exercises it not directly, but with the help of the trade unions, and through the Soviets and their ramifications. Without these “transmission belts,” it would be impossible for the dictatorship to be at all firm.

“It is impossible to exercise the dictatorship,” says Lenin, “without having a number of ‘transmission belts’ from the vanguard to the mass of the advanced class, and from the latter to the mass of the working people” (see Vol. XXVI, p. 65).

“The Party, so to speak, draws into its ranks the vanguard of the proletariat, and this vanguard exercises the dictatorship of the proletariat. Without a foundation like the trade unions the dictatorship cannot be exercised, state functions cannot be fulfilled. And these functions have

to be exercised through** a number of special institutions also of a new type; namely, through** the Soviet apparatus” (see Vol. XXVI, p. 64).

The highest expression of the leading role of the Party, here, in the Soviet Union, in the land of the dictatorship of the proletariat, for example, is the fact that not a single important political or organisational question is decided by our Soviet and other mass organisations without guiding directives from the Party. In this sense it could be said that the dictatorship of the proletariat is, in essence, the “dictatorship” of its vanguard, the “dictatorship” of its Party, as the main guiding force of the proletariat. Here is what Lenin said on this subject at the Second Congress of the Comintern¹²:

“Tanner says that he stands for the dictatorship of the proletariat, but the dictatorship of the proletariat is not conceived quite in the same way as we conceive it. He says that by the dictatorship of the proletariat we mean, in essence,** the dictatorship of its organised and class-conscious minority.

“And, as a matter of fact, in the era of capitalism, when the masses of the workers are continuously subjected to exploitation and cannot develop their human potentialities, the most characteristic feature of working-class political parties is that they can embrace only a minority of their class. A political party can comprise only a minority of the class, in the same way as the really class-conscious workers in every capitalist society constitute only a minority of all the workers. That is why we must admit that only this class-conscious minority can guide the broad masses of the workers and lead them. And if Comrade Tanner says that he is opposed to parties, but at the same time is in favour of the minority consisting of the best organised and most revolutionary workers showing the way to the whole of the proletariat, then I say that there is really no difference between us” (see Vol. XXV, p. 347).

But this, however, must not be understood in the sense that a sign of equality can be put between the dictatorship of the proletariat and the leading role of the Party (the “dictatorship” of the Party), that the former can be identified with the latter, that the latter can be substituted for the former. Sorin, for example, says that “the dictatorship of the proletariat is the dictatorship of our Party.” This thesis, as you see, identifies the “dictatorship of the Party” with the dictatorship of the proletariat. Can we regard this identification as correct and yet remain on the ground of Leninism? No, we cannot. And for the following reasons:

Firstly. In the passage from his speech, at the Second Congress of the Comintern quoted above, Lenin does not by any means identify the leading role of the Party with the dictatorship of the proletariat. He merely says that “only this class-conscious minority (i.e., the Party—J. St.) can guide the broad masses of the workers and lead them,” that it is precisely in this sense that “by the dictatorship of the proletariat we mean, in essence**, the dictatorship of its organised and class-conscious minority.”

To say “in essence” does not mean “wholly.” We often say that the national question is, in essence, a peasant question. And this is quite true. But this does not mean that the national question is covered by the peasant question, that the peasant question is equal in scope to the national question, that the peasant question and the national question are identical. There is no need to prove that the national question is wider and richer in its scope than the peasant question. The same must be said by analogy as regards the leading role of the Party and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Although the Party carries out the dictatorship of the proletariat, and in this sense the dictatorship of the proletariat is, in essence, the “dictatorship” of its

Party, this does not mean that the “dictatorship of the Party” (its leading role) is identical with the dictatorship of the proletariat, that the former is equal in scope to the latter. There is no need to prove that the dictatorship of the proletariat is wider and richer in its scope than the leading role of the Party. The Party carries out the dictatorship of the proletariat, but it carries out the dictatorship of the proletariat, and not any other kind of dictatorship. Whoever identifies the leading role of the Party with the dictatorship of the proletariat substitutes “dictatorship” of the Party for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Secondly. Not a single important decision is arrived at by the mass organisations of the proletariat without guiding directives from the Party. That is perfectly true. But does that mean that the dictatorship of the proletariat consists entirely of the guiding directives given by the Party? Does that mean that, in view of this, the guiding directives of the Party can be identified with the dictatorship of the proletariat? Of course not. The dictatorship of the proletariat consists of the guiding directives of the Party plus the carrying out of these directives by the mass organisations of the proletariat, plus their fulfilment by the population. Here, as you see, we have to deal with a whole series of transitions and intermediary steps which are by no means unimportant elements of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Hence, between the guiding directives of the Party and their fulfilment lie the will and actions of those who are led, the will and actions of the class, its willingness (or unwillingness) to support such directives, its ability (or inability) to carry out these directives, its ability (or inability) to carry them out in strict accordance with the demands of the situation. It scarcely needs proof that the Party, having taken the leadership into its hands, cannot but reckon with the will, the condition, the level of political consciousness of those who are led, cannot leave out of account the will, the condition, and level of political consciousness of its class. Therefore, whoever identifies the leading role of the Party with the dictatorship of the proletariat substitutes the directives given by the Party for the will and actions of the class.

Thirdly. “The dictatorship of the proletariat,” says Lenin, “is the class struggle of the proletariat, which has won victory and has seized political power” (see Vol. XXIV, p. 311). How can this class struggle find expression? It may find expression in a series of armed actions by the proletariat against the sorties of the overthrown bourgeoisie, or against the intervention of the foreign bourgeoisie. It may find expression in civil war, if the power of the proletariat has not yet been consolidated. It may find expression, after power has already been consolidated, in the extensive organisational and constructive work of the proletariat, with the enlistment of the broad masses in this work. In all these cases, the acting force is the proletariat as a class. It has never happened that the Party, the Party alone, has undertaken all these actions with only its own forces, without the support of the class. Usually it only directs these actions, and it can direct them only to the extent that it has the support of the class. For the Party cannot cover, cannot replace the class. For, despite all its important leading role, the Party still remains a part of the class. Therefore, whoever identifies the leading role of the Party with the dictatorship of the proletariat substitutes the Party for the class.

Fourthly. The Party exercises the dictatorship of the proletariat. “The Party is the direct governing vanguard of the proletariat; it is the leader” (Lenin).¹³ In this sense the Party takes power, the Party governs the country. But this must not be understood in the sense that the Party exercises the dictatorship of the proletariat separately from the state power, without the state power; that the Party governs the country separately from the Soviets, not through the Soviets. This does not mean that the Party can be identified with the Soviets, with the state power. The Party is the core of this power, but it is not and cannot be identified with the state power.

“As the ruling Party,” says Lenin, “we could not but merge the Soviet ‘top leadership’ with the Party ‘top leadership’—in our country they are merged and will remain so” (see Vol. XXVI, p. 208). This is quite true. But by this Lenin by no means wants to imply that our Soviet institutions as a whole, for instance our army, our transport, our economic institutions, etc., are Party institutions, that the Party can replace the Soviets and their ramifications, that the Party can be identified with the state power. Lenin repeatedly said that “the system of Soviets is the dictatorship of the proletariat,” and that “the Soviet power is the dictatorship of the proletariat” (see Vol. XXIV, pp. 15, 14); but he never said that the Party is the state power, that the Soviets and the Party are one and the same thing. The Party, with a membership of several hundred thousand, guides the Soviets and their central and local ramifications, which embrace tens of millions of people, both Party and non-Party, but it cannot and should not supplant them. That is why Lenin says that “the dictatorship is exercised by the proletariat organised in the Soviets, the proletariat led by the Communist Party of Bolsheviks”; that “all the work of the Party is carried on through** the Soviets, which embrace the labouring masses irrespective of occupation” (see Vol. XXV, pp. 192, 193); and that the dictatorship “has to be exercised . . . through** the Soviet apparatus” (see Vol. XXVI, p. 64). Therefore, whoever identifies the leading role of the Party with the dictatorship of the proletariat substitutes the Party for the Soviets, i.e., for the state power.

Fifthly. The concept of dictatorship of the proletariat is a state concept. The dictatorship of the proletariat necessarily includes the concept of force. There is no dictatorship without the use of force, if dictatorship is to be understood in the strict sense of the word. Lenin defines the dictatorship of the proletariat as “power based directly on the use of force” (see Vol. XIX, p. 315). Hence, to talk about dictatorship of the Party in relation to the proletarian class, and to identify it with the dictatorship of the proletariat, is tantamount to saying that in relation to its class the Party must be not only a guide, not only a leader and teacher, but also a sort of dictator employing force against it, which, of course, is quite incorrect. Therefore, whoever identifies “dictatorship of the Party” with the dictatorship of the proletariat tacitly proceeds from the assumption that the prestige of the Party can be built up on force employed against the working class, which is absurd and quite incompatible with Leninism. The prestige of the Party is sustained by the confidence of the working class. And the confidence of the working class is gained not by force—force only kills it—but by the Party’s correct theory, by the Party’s correct policy, by the Party’s devotion to the working class, by its connection with the masses of the working class, by its readiness and ability to convince the masses of the correctness of its slogans.

What, then, follows from all this?

From this it follows that:

- 1) Lenin uses the word dictatorship of the Party not in the strict sense of the word (“power based on the use of force”), but in the figurative sense, in the sense of its undivided leadership.
- 2) Whoever identifies the leadership of the Party with the dictatorship of the proletariat distorts Lenin, wrongly attributing to the Party the function of employing force against the working class as a whole.

3) Whoever attributes to the Party the function, which it does not possess, of employing force against the working class as a whole, violates the elementary requirements of correct mutual relations between the vanguard and the class, between the Party and the proletariat.

Thus, we have come right up to the question of the mutual relations between the Party and the class, between Party and non-Party members of the working class.

Lenin defines these mutual relations as “mutual confidence** between the vanguard of the working class and the mass of the workers” (see Vol. XXVI, p. 235).

What does this mean?

It means, firstly, that the Party must closely heed the voice of the masses; that it must pay careful attention to the revolutionary instinct of the masses; that it must study the practice of the struggle of the masses and on this basis test the correctness of its own policy; that, consequently, it must not only teach the masses, but also learn from them. It means, secondly, that the Party must day by day win the confidence of the proletarian masses; that it must by its policy and work secure the support of the masses; that it must not command but primarily convince the masses, helping them to realise through their own experience the correctness of the policy of the Party; that, consequently, it must be the guide, the leader and teacher of its class.

To violate these conditions means to upset the correct mutual relations between the vanguard and the class, to undermine “mutual confidence,” to shatter both class and Party discipline.

“Certainly,” says Lenin, “almost everyone now realises that the Bolsheviks could not have maintained themselves in power for two-and-a-half months, let alone two-and-a-half years, without the strictest, truly iron discipline in our Party, and without the fullest and unreserved support of the latter by the whole mass of the working class,** that is, by all its thinking, honest, self-sacrificing and influential elements, capable of leading or of carrying with them the backward strata” (see Vol. XXV, p. 173).

“The dictatorship of the proletariat,” says Lenin further, “is a stubborn struggle—bloody and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic, educational and administrative—against the forces and traditions of the old society. The force of habit of millions and tens of millions is a most terrible force. Without an iron party tempered in the struggle, without a party enjoying the confidence of all that is honest in the given class,** without a party capable of watching and influencing the mood of the masses, it is impossible to conduct such a struggle successfully” (see Vol. XXV, p. 190).

But how does the Party acquire this confidence and support of the class? How is the iron discipline necessary for the dictatorship of the proletariat built up within the working class; on what soil does it grow up?

Here is what Lenin says on this subject:

“How is the discipline of the revolutionary party of the proletariat maintained? How is it tested? How is it reinforced? Firstly, by the class consciousness of the proletarian vanguard and by its devotion to the revolution, by its stamina, self-sacrifice and heroism. Secondly, by its ability to link itself with, to keep in close touch with, and to a certain extent, if you like, to

merge with the broadest masses of the working people**—primarily with the proletariat, but also with the non-proletarian, labouring masses. Thirdly, by the correctness of the political leadership exercised by this vanguard, by the correctness of its political strategy and tactics, provided that the broadest masses have been convinced through their own experience of this correctness. Without these conditions, discipline in a revolutionary party that is really capable of being the party of the advanced class, whose mission it is to overthrow the bourgeoisie and transform the whole of society, cannot be achieved. Without these conditions, attempts to establish discipline inevitably become a cipher, an empty phrase, mere affectation. On the other hand, these conditions cannot arise all at once. They are created only by prolonged effort and hard-won experience. Their creation is facilitated only by correct revolutionary theory, which, in its turn, is not a dogma, but assumes final shape only in close connection with the practical activity of a truly mass and truly revolutionary movement” (see Vol. XXV, p. 174).

And further:

“Victory over capitalism requires the correct correlation between the leading, Communist, Party, the revolutionary class—the proletariat—and the masses, i.e., the working people and exploited as a whole. Only the Communist Party, if it is really the vanguard of the revolutionary class, if it contains all the best representatives of that class, if it consists of fully class-conscious and devoted Communists who have been educated and steeled by the experience of stubborn revolutionary struggle, if this Party has succeeded in linking itself inseparably with the whole life of its class and, through it, with the whole mass of exploited, and if it has succeeded in inspiring the complete confidence of this class and this mass**—only such a party is capable of leading the proletariat in the most ruthless, resolute and final struggle against all the forces of capitalism. On the other hand, only under the leadership of such a party can the proletariat develop the full might of its revolutionary onslaught and nullify the inevitable apathy and, partly, resistance of the small minority of the labour aristocracy corrupted by capitalism, and of the old trade-union and cooperative leaders, etc.—only then will it be able to display its full strength, which, owing to the very economic structure of capitalist society, is immeasurably greater than the proportion of the population it Constitutes” (see Vol. XXV, p. 315).

From these quotations it follows that:

- 1) The prestige of the Party and the iron discipline within the working class that are necessary for the dictatorship of the proletariat are built up not on fear or on “unrestricted” rights of the Party, but on the confidence of the working class in the Party, on the support which the Party receives from the working class.
- 2) The confidence of the working class in the Party is not acquired at one stroke, and not by means of force against the working class, but by the Party’s prolonged work among the masses, by the correct policy of the Party, by the ability of the Party to convince the masses through their own experience of the correctness of its policy, by the ability of the Party to secure the support of the working class and to take the lead of the masses of the working class.
- 3) Without a correct Party policy, reinforced by the experience of the struggle of the masses, and without the confidence of the working class, there is not and cannot be real leadership by the Party.

4) The Party and its leadership, if the Party enjoys the confidence of the class, and if this leadership is real leadership, cannot be counterposed to the dictatorship of the proletariat, because without the leadership of the Party (the “dictatorship” of the Party), enjoying the confidence of the working class, it is impossible for the dictatorship of the proletariat to be at all firm.

Without these conditions, the prestige of the Party and iron discipline within the working class are either empty phrases or boastfulness and adventurism.

It is impossible to counterpose the dictatorship of the proletariat to the leadership (the “dictatorship”) of the Party. It is impossible because the leadership of the Party is the principal thing in the dictatorship of the proletariat, if we have in mind a dictatorship that is at all firm and complete, and not one like the Paris Commune, for instance, which was neither a complete nor a firm dictatorship. It is impossible because the dictatorship of the proletariat and the leadership of the Party lie, as it were, on the same line of activity, operate in the same direction.

“The mere presentation of the question,” says Lenin, “‘dictatorship of the Party or dictatorship of the class? dictatorship (Party) of the leaders or dictatorship (Party) of the masses?’ testifies to the most incredible and hopeless confusion of thought. . . . Everyone knows that the masses are divided into classes. . . ; that usually, and in the majority of cases, at least in modern civilised countries, classes are led by political parties; that political parties, as a general rule, are directed by more or less stable groups composed of the most authoritative, influential and experienced members, who are elected to the most responsible positions and are called leaders. . . . To go so far . . . as to counterpose, in general, dictatorship of the masses to dictatorship of the leaders is ridiculously absurd and stupid” (see Vol. XXV, pp. 187, 188).

That is absolutely correct. But that correct statement proceeds from the premise that, correct mutual relations exist between the vanguard and the masses of the workers, between the Party and the class. It proceeds from the assumption that the mutual relations between the vanguard and the class remain, so to say, normal, remain within the bounds of “mutual confidence.”

But what if the correct mutual relations between the vanguard and the class, the relations of “mutual confidence” between the Party and the class are upset?

What if the Party itself begins, in some way or other, to counterpose itself to the class, thus upsetting the foundations of its correct mutual relations with the class, thus upsetting the foundations of “mutual confidence”? Are such cases at all possible?

Yes, they are.

They are possible:

1) if the Party begins to build its prestige among the masses, not on its work and on the confidence of the masses, but on its “unrestricted” rights;

2) if the Party’s policy is obviously wrong and the Party is unwilling to reconsider and rectify its mistake;

3) if the Party's policy is correct on the whole but, the masses are not yet ready to make it their own, and the Party is either unwilling or unable to bide its time so as to give the masses an opportunity to become convinced through their own experience that the Party's policy is correct, and seeks to impose it on the masses.

The history of our Party provides a number of such cases. Various groups and factions in our Party have come to grief and disappeared because they violated one of these three conditions, and sometimes all these conditions taken together.

But it follows from this that counterposing the dictatorship of the proletariat to the "dictatorship" (leadership) of the Party can be regarded as incorrect only:

1) if by dictatorship of the Party in relation to the working class we mean not a dictatorship in the proper sense of the word ("power based on the use of force"), but the leadership of the Party, which precludes the use of force against the working class as a whole, against its majority, precisely as Lenin meant it;

2) if the Party has the qualifications to be the real leader of the class, i.e., if the Party's policy is correct, if this policy accords with the interests of the class;

3) if the class, if the majority of the class, accepts that policy, makes that policy its own, becomes convinced, as a result of the work of the Party, that that policy is correct, has confidence in the Party and supports it.

The violation of these conditions inevitably gives rise to a conflict between the Party and the class, to a split between them, to their being counterposed to each other.

Can the Party's leadership be imposed on the class by force? No, it cannot. At all events, such a leadership cannot be at all durable. If the Party wants to remain the Party of the proletariat it must know that it is, primarily and principally, the guide, the leader, the teacher of the working class. We must not forget what Lenin said on this subject in his pamphlet *The State and Revolution*:

"By educating the workers' party, Marxism educates the vanguard of the proletariat, which is capable of taking power and of leading the whole people to socialism, of directing and organising the new order, of being the teacher, the guide, the leader³⁹ of all the toilers and exploited in building up their social life without the bourgeoisie and against the bourgeoisie" (see Vol. XXI, p. 386).

Can one consider the Party as the real leader of the class if its policy is wrong, if its policy comes into collision with the interests of the class? Of course not. In such cases the Party, if it wants to remain the leader, must reconsider its policy, must correct its policy, must acknowledge its mistake and correct it. In confirmation of this thesis one could cite, for example, such a fact from the history of our Party as the period of the abolition of the surplus-appropriation system, when the masses of workers and peasants were obviously discontented with our policy and when the Party openly and honestly decided to reconsider this policy. Here is what Lenin said at the time, at the Tenth Party Congress, on the question of abolishing the surplus-appropriation system and introducing the New Economic Policy:

“We must not try to conceal anything, but must say straightforwardly that the peasantry is not satisfied with the form of relations that has been established with it, that it does not want this form of relations and will not go on living in this way. That is indisputable. It has definitely expressed this will. This is the will of the vast mass of the labouring population. We must reckon with this; and we are sufficiently sober politicians to say straightforwardly: Let us reconsider our policy towards the peasantry”** (see Vol. XXVI, p. 238).

Can one consider that the Party should take the initiative and leadership in organising decisive actions by the masses merely on the ground that its policy is correct on the whole, if that policy does not yet meet the confidence and support of the class because, say, of the latter’s political backwardness; if the Party has not yet succeeded in convincing the class of the correctness of its policy because, say, events have not yet matured? No, one cannot. In such cases the Party, if it, wants to be a real leader, must know how to bide its time, must convince the masses that its policy is correct, must help the masses to become convinced through their own experience that this policy is correct.

“If the revolutionary party,” says Lenin, “has not a majority in the advanced detachments of the revolutionary classes and in the country, an uprising is out of the question” (see Vol. XXI, p. 282).

“Revolution is impossible without a change in the views of the majority of the working class, and this change is brought about by the political experience of the masses” (see Vol. XXV, p. 221).

“The proletarian vanguard has been won over ideologically. That is the main thing. Without this not even the first step towards victory can be made. But it is still a fairly long way from victory. Victory cannot be won with the vanguard alone. To throw the vanguard alone into the decisive battle, before the whole class, before the broad masses have taken up a position either of direct support of the vanguard, or at least of benevolent neutrality towards it, and one in which they cannot possibly support the enemy, would be not merely folly but a crime. And in order that actually the whole class, that actually the broad masses of the working people and those oppressed by capital may take up such a position, propaganda and agitation alone are not enough. For this the masses must have their own political experience” (ibid., p. 228).

We know that this is precisely how our Party acted during the period from Lenin’s April Theses to the October uprising of 1917. And it was precisely because it acted according to these directives of Lenin’s that it was successful in the uprising.

Such, basically, are the conditions for correct mutual relations between the vanguard and the class. What does leadership mean when the policy of the Party is correct and the correct relations between the vanguard and the class are not upset?

Leadership under these circumstances means the ability to convince the masses of the correctness of the Party’s policy; the ability to put forward and to carry out such slogans as bring the masses to the Party’s positions and help them to realise through their own experience the correctness of the Party’s policy; the ability to raise the masses to the Party’s level of political consciousness, and thus secure the support of the masses and their readiness for the decisive struggle.

Therefore, the method of persuasion is the principal method of the Party's leadership of the working class.

"If we, in Russia today," says Lenin, "after two-and-a-half years of unprecedented victories over the bourgeoisie of Russia and the Entente, were to make 'recognition of the dictatorship' a condition of trade-union membership, we should be committing a folly, we should be damaging our influence over the masses, we should be helping the Mensheviks. For the whole task of the Communists is to be able to convince the backward elements, to be able to work among them, and not to fence themselves off from them by artificial and childish 'Left' slogans" (see Vol. XXV, p. 197).

This, of course, must not be understood in the sense that the Party must convince all the workers, down to the last man, and that only after this is it possible to proceed to action, that only after this is it possible to start operations. Not at all! It only means that before entering upon decisive political actions the Party must, by means of prolonged revolutionary work, secure for itself the support of the majority of the masses of the workers, or at least the benevolent neutrality of the majority of the class. Otherwise Lenin's thesis, that a necessary condition for victorious revolution is that the Party should win over the majority of the working class, would be devoid of all meaning.

Well, and what is to be done with the minority, if it does not wish, if it does not agree voluntarily to submit to the will of the majority? Can the Party, must the Party, enjoying the confidence of the majority, compel the minority to submit to the will of the majority? Yes, it can and it must. Leadership is ensured by the method of persuading the masses, as the principal method by which the Party influences the masses. This, however, does not preclude, but presupposes, the use of coercion, if such coercion is based on confidence in the Party and support for it on the part of the majority of the working class, if it is applied to the minority after the Party has convinced the majority.

It would be well to recall the controversies around this subject that took place in our Party during the discussion on the trade-union question. What was the mistake of the opposition, the mistake of the Tsektran,¹⁴ at that time? Was it that the opposition then considered it possible to resort to coercion? No! It, was not that. The mistake of the opposition at that time was that, being unable to convince the majority of the correctness of its position, having lost the confidence of the majority, it nevertheless began to apply coercion, began to insist on "shaking up" those who enjoyed the confidence of the majority.

Here is what Lenin said at that time, at the Tenth Congress of the Party, in his speech on the trade unions:

"In order to establish mutual relations and mutual confidence between the vanguard of the working class and the masses of the workers, it was necessary, if the Tsektran had made a mistake . . . to correct this mistake. But when people begin to defend this mistake, it becomes a source of political danger. Had not the utmost possible been done in the way of democracy in heeding the moods expressed here by Kutuzov, we would have met with political bankruptcy. First we must convince, and then coerce. We must at all costs first convince, and then coerce.** We were not able to convince the broad masses, and we upset the correct relations between the vanguard and the masses" (see Vol. XXVI, p. 235).

Lenin says the same thing in his pamphlet *On the Trade Unions*¹⁵:

“We applied coercion correctly and successfully only when we were able to create beforehand a basis of conviction for it” (ibid., p. 74).

And that is quite true, for without those conditions no leadership is possible. For only in that way can we ensure unity of action in the Party, if we are speaking of the Party, or unity of action of the class, if we are speaking of the class as a whole. Without this there is splitting, confusion and demoralisation in the ranks of the working class.

Such in general are the fundamentals of correct leadership of the working class by the Party.

Any other conception of leadership is syndicalism, anarchism, bureaucracy—anything you please, but not Bolshevism, not Leninism.

The dictatorship of the proletariat cannot be counterposed to the leadership (“dictatorship”) of the Party if correct mutual relations exist between the Party and the working class, between the vanguard and the masses of the workers. But from this it follows that it is all the more impermissible to identify the Party with the working class, the leadership (“dictatorship”) of the Party with the dictatorship of the working class. On the ground that the “dictatorship” of the Party cannot be counterposed to the dictatorship of the proletariat, Sorin arrived at the wrong conclusion that “the dictatorship of the proletariat is the dictatorship of our Party.”

But Lenin not only speaks of the impermissibility of such counterposition, he also speaks of the impermissibility of counterposing “the dictatorship of the masses to the dictatorship of the leaders.” Would you, on this ground, have us identify the dictatorship of leaders with the dictatorship of the proletariat? If we took that line, we would have to say that “the dictatorship of the proletariat is the dictatorship of our leaders.” But it is precisely to this absurdity that we are led, properly speaking, by the policy of identifying the “dictatorship” of the Party with the dictatorship of the proletariat. . . .

Where does Zinoviev stand on this subject?

In essence, Zinoviev shares Sorin’s point of view of identifying the “dictatorship” of the Party with the dictatorship of the proletariat—with the difference, however, that Sorin expresses himself more openly and clearly, whereas Zinoviev “wiggles.” One need only take, for instance, the following passage in Zinoviev’s book *Leninism* to be convinced of this:

“What,” says Zinoviev, “is the system existing in the U.S.S.R. from the standpoint of its class content? It is the dictatorship of the proletariat. What is the direct mainspring of power in the U.S.S.R.? Who exercises the power of the working class? The Communist Party! In this sense, we have** the dictatorship of the Party. What is the juridical form of power in the U.S.S.R.? What is the new type of state system that was created by the October Revolution? The Soviet system. The one does not in the least contradict the other.”

That the one does not contradict the other is, of course, correct if by the dictatorship of the Party in relation to the working class as a whole we mean the leadership of the Party. But, how is it possible, on this ground, to place a sign of equality between the dictatorship of the proletariat and the “dictatorship” of the Party, between the Soviet system and the “dictatorship” of the Party? Lenin identified the system of Soviets with the dictatorship of the proletariat, and he was right, for the Soviets, our Soviets, are organisations which rally the labouring masses around the proletariat under the rally of the Party. But when, where, and in

which of his writings did Lenin place a sign of equality between the “dictatorship” of the Party and the dictatorship of the proletariat, between the “dictatorship” of the Party and the system of Soviets, as Zinoviev does now? Neither the leadership (“dictatorship”) of the Party nor the leadership (“dictatorship”) of the leaders contradicts the dictatorship of the proletariat. Would you, on this ground, have us proclaim that our country is the country of the dictatorship of the proletariat, that is to say, the country of the dictatorship of the Party, that is to say, the country of the dictatorship of the leaders? And yet the “principle” of identifying the “dictatorship” of the Party with the dictatorship of the proletariat, which Zinoviev enunciates surreptitiously and uncourageously, leads precisely to this absurdity.

In Lenin’s numerous works I have been able to note only five cases in which he touches, in passing, on the question of the dictatorship of the Party.

The first case is in his controversy with the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, where he says:

“When we are reproached with the dictatorship of one party, and when, as you have heard, a proposal is made to establish a united socialist front, we reply: ‘Yes, the dictatorship of one party! We stand by it, and cannot depart from it, for it is that Party which, in the course of decades, has won the position of vanguard of the whole factory and industrial proletariat’” (see Vol. XXIV, p. 423).

The second case is in his “Letter to the Workers and Peasants in Connection with the Victory over Kolchak,” in which he says:

“Some people (especially the Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries—all of them, even the ‘Lefts’ among them) are trying to scare the peasants with the bogey of the ‘dictatorship of one party,’ the Party of Bolsheviks, Communists.

“The peasants have learned from the instance of Kolchak not to be afraid of this bogey.

“Either the dictatorship (i.e., iron rule) of the landlords and capitalists, or the dictatorship of the working class” (see Vol. XXIV, p. 436).

The third case is Lenin’s speech at the Second Congress of the Comintern in his controversy with Tanner. I have quoted it above.*

The fourth case is a few lines in the pamphlet “Left-Wing” Communism, an Infantile Disorder. The passages in question have already been quoted above.*

And the fifth case is in his draft outline of the dictatorship of the proletariat, published in the Lenin Miscellany, Volume III, where there is a sub-heading “Dictatorship of One Party” (see Lenin Miscellany, Vol. III, p. 497).

It should be noted that in two out of the five cases, the last and the second, Lenin puts the words “dictatorship of one party” in quotation marks, thus clearly emphasising the inexact, figurative sense of this formula.

It should also be noted that in every one of these cases, by the “dictatorship of the Party” Lenin meant dictatorship (“iron rule”) over the “landlords and capitalists,” and not over the working class, contrary to the slanderous fabrications of Kautsky and Co.

It is characteristic that in none of his works, major or secondary, in which Lenin discusses or merely alludes to the dictatorship of the proletariat and the role of the Party in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat, is there any hint whatever that “the dictatorship of the proletariat is the dictatorship of our Party.” On the contrary, every page, every line of these works cries out against such a formula (see *The State and Revolution*, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, “Left-Wing” Communism, an Infantile Disorder, etc.).

Even more characteristic is the fact that in the theses of the Second Congress of the Comintern¹⁶ on the role of a political party, which were drawn up under the direct guidance of Lenin, and to which Lenin repeatedly referred in his speeches as a model of the correct formulation of the role and tasks of the Party, we find not one word, literally not one word, about dictatorship of the Party.

What does all this indicate?

It indicates that:

a) Lenin did not regard the formula “dictatorship of the Party” as irreproachable and exact, for which reason it is very rarely used in Lenin’s works, and is sometimes put in quotation marks;

b) on the few occasions that Lenin was obliged, in controversy with opponents, to speak of the dictatorship of the Party, he usually referred to the “dictatorship of one party,” i.e., to the fact that our Party holds power alone, that it does not share power with other parties. Moreover, he always made it clear that the dictatorship of the Party in relation to the working class meant the leadership of the Party, its leading role;

c) in all those cases in which Lenin thought it necessary to give a scientific definition of the role of the Party in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat, he spoke exclusively of the leading role of the Party in relation to the working class (and there are thousands of such cases);

d) that is why it never “occurred” to Lenin to include the formula “dictatorship of the Party” in the fundamental resolution on the role of the Party—I have in mind the resolution adopted at the Second Congress of the Comintern;

e) the comrades who identify, or try to identify, the “dictatorship” of the Party and, therefore, the “dictatorship of the leaders” with the dictatorship of the proletariat are wrong from the point of view of Leninism, and are politically short-sighted, for they thereby violate the conditions for correct mutual relations between the vanguard and the class.

This is apart from the fact that the formula “dictatorship of the Party,” when taken without the above-mentioned reservations, can give rise to quite a number of dangers and political setbacks in our practical work. This formula, taken without reservations, says, as it were:

a) to the non-Party masses: don’t dare to contradict, don’t dare to argue, for the Party can do everything, for we have the dictatorship of the Party;

b) to the Party cadres: act more boldly, tighten the screw, there is no need to heed what the non-Party masses say, we have the dictatorship of the Party;

c) to the top leadership of the Party: you may indulge in the luxury of a certain amount of complacency, you may even become conceited, for we have the dictatorship of the Party, and, “consequently,” the dictatorship of the leaders.

It is opportune to call attention to these dangers precisely at the present moment, in a period when the political activity of the masses is rising, when the readiness of the Party to heed the voice of the masses is of particular value to us, when attention to the requirements of the masses is a fundamental precept of our Party, when it is incumbent upon the Party to display particular caution and particular flexibility in its policy, when the danger of becoming conceited is one of the most serious dangers confronting the Party in its task of correctly leading the masses.

One cannot but recall Lenin’s golden words at the Eleventh Congress of our Party:

“Among the mass of the people we (the Communists—J. St.) are after all but a drop in the ocean, and we can administer only when we properly express what the people are conscious of. Unless we do this the Communist Party will not lead the proletariat, the proletariat will not lead the masses, and the whole machine will collapse” (see Vol. XXVII, p. 256).

“Properly express what the people are conscious of”—this is precisely the necessary condition that ensures for the Party the honourable role of the principal guiding force in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

VI

THE QUESTION OF THE VICTORY OF SOCIALISM IN ONE COUNTRY

The pamphlet *The Foundations of Leninism* (May 1924, first edition) contains two formulations on the question of the victory of socialism in one country. The first of these says:

“Formerly, the victory of the revolution in one country was considered impossible, on the assumption that it would require the combined action of the proletarians of all or at least of a majority of the advanced countries to achieve victory over the bourgeoisie. Now this point of view no longer fits in with the facts. Now we must proceed from the possibility of such a victory, for the uneven and spasmodic character of the development of the various capitalist countries under the conditions of imperialism, the development within imperialism of catastrophic contradictions leading to inevitable wars, the growth of the revolutionary movement in all countries of the world—all this leads, not only to the possibility, but also to the necessity of the victory of the proletariat in individual countries” (see *The Foundations of Leninism* 17).

This thesis is quite correct and needs no comment. It is directed against the theory of the Social-Democrats, who regard the seizure of power by the proletariat in one country, without the simultaneous victory of the revolution in other countries, as utopian.

But the pamphlet *The Foundations of Leninism* contains a second formulation, which says:

“But the overthrow of the power of the bourgeoisie and establishment of the power of the proletariat in one country does not yet mean that the complete victory of socialism has been ensured. The principal task of socialism—the organisation of socialist production—has still to be fulfilled. Can this task be fulfilled, can the final victory of socialism be achieved in one country, without the joint efforts of the proletarians in several advanced countries? No, it cannot. To overthrow the bourgeoisie the efforts of one country are sufficient; this is proved by the history of our revolution. For the final victory of socialism, for the organisation of socialist production, the efforts of one country, particularly of a peasant country like Russia, are insufficient; for that, the efforts of the proletarians of several advanced countries are required” (see *The Foundations of Leninism*, first edition 18).

This second formulation was directed against the assertions of the critics of Leninism, against the Trotskyists, who declared that the dictatorship of the proletariat in one country, in the absence of victory in other countries, could not “hold out in the face of a conservative Europe.”

To that extent—but only to that extent—this formulation was then (May 1924) adequate, and undoubtedly it was of some service.

Subsequently, however, when the criticism of Leninism in this sphere had already been overcome in the Party, when a new question had come to the fore—the question of the possibility of building a complete socialist society by the efforts of our country, without help from abroad—the second formulation became obviously inadequate, and therefore incorrect.

What is the defect in this formulation?

Its defect is that it joins two different questions into one: it joins the question of the possibility of building socialism by the efforts of one country—which must be answered in the affirmative—with the question whether a country in which the dictatorship of the proletariat exists can consider itself fully guaranteed against intervention, and consequently against the restoration of the old order, without a victorious revolution in a number of other countries—which must be answered in the negative. This is apart from the fact that this formulation may give occasion for thinking that the organisation of a socialist society by the efforts of one country is impossible—which, of course, is incorrect.

On this ground I modified and corrected this formulation in my pamphlet *The October Revolution and the Tactics of the Russian Communists* (December 1924); I divided the question into two—into the question of a full guarantee against the restoration of the bourgeois order, and the question of the possibility of building a complete socialist society in one country. This was effected, in the first place, by treating the “complete victory of socialism” as a “full guarantee against the restoration of the old order,” which is possible only through “the joint efforts of the proletarians of several countries”; and, secondly, by proclaiming, on the basis of Lenin’s pamphlet *On Co-operation*,¹⁹ the indisputable truth that we have all that is necessary for building a complete socialist society (see *The October Revolution and the Tactics of the Russian Communists*).*

It was this new formulation of the question that formed the basis for the well-known resolution of the Fourteenth Party Conference “The Tasks of the Comintern and the R.C.P.(B.),”²⁰ which examines the question of the victory of socialism in one country in

connection with the stabilisation of capitalism (April 1925), and considers that the building of socialism by the efforts of our country is possible and necessary.

This new formulation also served as the basis for my pamphlet *The Results of the Work of the Fourteenth Conference of the R.C.P.(B.)* published in May 1925, immediately after the Fourteenth Party Conference.

With regard to the presentation of the question of the victory of socialism in one country, this pamphlet states:

“Our country exhibits two groups of contradictions. One group consists of the internal contradictions that exist between the proletariat and the peasantry (this refers to the building of socialism in one country—J. St.). The other group consists of the external contradictions that exist between our country, as the land of socialism, and all the other countries, as lands of capitalism (this refers to the final victory of socialism—J. St.).” . . . “Anyone who confuses the first group of contradictions, which can be overcome entirely by the efforts of one country, with the second group of contradictions, the solution of which requires the efforts of the proletarians of several countries, commits a gross error against Leninism. He is either a muddle-head or an incorrigible opportunist” (see *The Results of the Work of the Fourteenth Conference of the R.C.P.(B.)*. 21)

On the question of the victory of socialism in our country, the pamphlet states:

“We can build socialism, and we will build it together with the peasantry under the leadership of the working class”. . . for “under the dictatorship of the proletariat we possess . . . all that is needed to build a complete socialist society, overcoming all internal difficulties, for we can and must overcome them by our own efforts” (ibid. 22).

On the question of the final victory of socialism, it states:

“The final victory of socialism is the full guarantee against attempts at intervention, and hence against restoration, for any serious attempt at restoration can take place only with serious support from outside, only with the support of international capital. Therefore, the support of our revolution by the workers of all countries, and still more the victory of the workers in at least several countries, is a necessary condition for fully guaranteeing the first victorious country against attempts at intervention and restoration, a necessary condition for the final victory of socialism” (ibid.23).

Clear, one would think.

It is well known that this question was treated in the same spirit in my pamphlet *Questions and Answers* (June 1925) and in the political report of the Central Committee to the Fourteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.)²⁴ (December 1925).

Such are the facts.

These facts, I think, are known to all the comrades, including Zinoviev.

If now, nearly two years after the ideological struggle in the Party and after the resolution that was adopted at the Fourteenth Party Conference (April 1925), Zinoviev finds it possible in his

reply to the discussion at the Fourteenth Party Congress (December 1925) to dig up the old and quite inadequate formula contained in Stalin's pamphlet written in April 1924, and to make it the basis for deciding the already decided question of the victory of socialism in one country—then this peculiar trick of his only goes to show that he has got completely muddled on this question. To drag the Party back after it has moved forward, to evade the resolution of the Fourteenth Party Conference after it has been confirmed by a Plenum of the Central Committee,²⁵ means to become hopelessly entangled in contradictions, to have no faith in the cause of building socialism, to abandon the path of Lenin, and to acknowledge one's own defeat.

What is meant by the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country?

It means the possibility of solving the contradictions between the proletariat and the peasantry by means of the internal forces of our country, the possibility of the proletariat seizing power and using that power to build a complete socialist society in our country, with the sympathy and the support of the proletarians of other countries, but without the preliminary victory of the proletarian revolution in other countries.

Without, such a possibility, building socialism is building without prospects, building without being sure that socialism will be completely built. It is no use engaging in building socialism without being sure that we can build it completely, without being sure that the technical backwardness of our country is not an insuperable obstacle to the building of a complete socialist society. To deny such a possibility means disbelief in the cause of building socialism, departure from Leninism.

What is meant by the impossibility of the complete, final victory of socialism in one country without the victory of the revolution in other countries?

It means the impossibility of having a full guarantee against intervention, and consequently against the restoration of the bourgeois order, without the victory of the revolution in at least a number of countries. To deny this indisputable thesis means departure from internationalism, departure from Leninism.

“We are living,” says Lenin, “not merely in a state, but in a system of states, and the existence of the Soviet Republic side by side with imperialist states for a long time is unthinkable. One or the other must triumph in the end. And before that end comes, a series of frightful collisions between the Soviet Republic and the bourgeois states will be inevitable. That means that if the ruling class, the proletariat, wants to, and will hold sway, it must prove this by its military organisation also” (see Vol. XXIV, p. 122).

“We have before us,” says Lenin in another passage, “a certain equilibrium, which is in the highest degree unstable, but an unquestionable, an indisputable equilibrium nevertheless. Will it last long? I do not know and, I think, it is impossible to know. And therefore we must exercise very great caution. And the first precept of our policy, the first lesson to be learned from our governmental activities during the past year, the lesson which all the workers and peasants must learn, is that we must be on the alert, we must remember that we are surrounded by people, classes and governments who openly express their intense hatred for us. We must remember that we are at all times but a hair's breadth from every manner of invasion” (see Vol. XXVII, p. 117).

Clear, one would think.

Where does Zinoviev stand as regards the question of the victory of socialism in one country?

Listen:

“By the final victory of socialism is meant, at least: 1) the abolition of classes, and therefore 2) the abolition of the dictatorship of one class, in this case the dictatorship of the proletariat.” . . . “In order to get a clearer idea of how the question stands here, in the U.S.S.R., in the year 1925,” says Zinoviev further, “we must distinguish between two things: 1) the assured possibility of engaging in building socialism—such a possibility, it stands to reason, is quite conceivable within the limits of one country; and 2) the final construction and consolidation of socialism, i.e., the achievement of a socialist system, of a socialist society.”

What can all this signify?

It signifies that by the final victory of socialism in one country Zinoviev understands, not a guarantee against intervention and restoration, but the possibility of completely building socialist society. And by the victory of socialism in one country Zinoviev understands the kind of building socialism which cannot and should not lead to completely building socialism. Building at haphazard, without prospects, building socialism although completely building a socialist society is impossible—such is Zinoviev’s position.

To engage in building socialism without the possibility of completely building it, knowing that it cannot be completely built—such are the absurdities in which Zinoviev has involved himself.

But this is a mockery of the question, not a solution of it!

Here is another extract from Zinoviev’s reply to the discussion at the Fourteenth Party Congress:

“Take a look, for instance, at what Comrade Yakovlev went so far as to say at the last Kursk Gubernia Party Conference. He asks: ‘Is it possible for us, surrounded as we are on all sides by capitalist enemies, to completely build socialism in one country under such conditions?’ And he answers: ‘On the basis of all that has been said we have the right to say not only that we are building socialism, but that in spite of the fact that for the time being we are alone, that for the time being we are the only Soviet country, the only Soviet state in the world, we shall completely build socialism’ (Kurskaya Pravda, No. 279, December 8, 1925). Is this the Leninist method of presenting the question,” Zinoviev asks, “does not this smack of national narrow-mindedness?”**

Thus, according to Zinoviev, to recognise the possibility of completely building socialism in one country means adopting the point of view of national narrow-mindedness, while to deny such a possibility means adopting the point of view of internationalism.

But if that is true, is it at all worth while fighting for victory over the capitalist elements in our economy?

Does it not follow from this that such a victory is impossible?

Capitulation to the capitalist elements in our economy—that is what the inherent logic of Zinoviev’s line of argument leads us to.

And this absurdity, which has nothing in common with Leninism, is presented to us by Zinoviev as “internationalism,” as “100 per cent Leninism”!

I assert that on this most important question of building socialism Zinoviev is deserting Leninism and slipping to the standpoint of the Menshevik Sukhanov.

Let us turn to Lenin. Here is what he said about the victory of socialism in one country even before the October Revolution, in August 1915:

“Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism. Hence, the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country taken separately. The victorious proletariat of that country, having expropriated the capitalists and organised socialist production,** would stand up against the rest of the world, the capitalist world, attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries, raising revolts in those countries against the capitalists, and in the event of necessity coming out even with armed force against the exploiting classes and their states” (see Vol. XVIII, pp. 232-33).

What is meant by Lenin’s phrase “having . . . organised socialist production” which I have stressed? It means that the proletariat of the victorious country, having seized power, can and must organise socialist production. And what does “organise socialist production” mean? It means completely building a socialist society. It scarcely needs proof that this clear and definite statement of Lenin’s requires no further comment. Otherwise Lenin’s call for the seizure of power by the proletariat in October 1917 would be incomprehensible.

You see that this clear thesis of Lenin’s, in comparison with Zinoviev’s muddled and anti-Leninist “thesis” that we can engage in building socialism “within the limits of one country,” although it is impossible to build it completely, is as different from the latter as the heavens from the earth.

The statement quoted above was made by Lenin in 1915, before the proletariat had taken power. But perhaps he modified his views after the experience of taking power, after 1917? Let us turn to Lenin’s pamphlet *On Co-operation*, written in 1923.

“As a matter of fact;” says Lenin, “state power over all large-scale means of production, state power in the hands of the proletariat, the alliance of this proletariat with the many millions of small and very small peasants, the assured leadership of the peasantry by the proletariat, etc.—is not this all that is necessary for building a complete socialist society from the co-operatives, from the co-operatives alone, which we formerly looked down upon as huckstering and which from a certain aspect we have the right to look down upon as such now, under NEP? Is this not all that is necessary for building a complete socialist society?*** This is not yet the building of socialist society, but it is all that is necessary and sufficient for this building”*** (see Vol. XXVII, p. 392).

In other words, we can and must build a complete socialist society, for we have at our disposal all that is necessary and sufficient for this building.

I think it would be difficult to express oneself more clearly.

Compare this classical thesis of Lenin's with the anti-Leninist rebuke Zinoviev administered to Yakovlev, and you will realise that Yakovlev was only repeating Lenin's words about the possibility of completely building socialism in one country, whereas Zinoviev, by attacking this thesis and castigating Yakovlev, deserted Lenin and adopted the point of view of the Menshevik Sukhanov, the point of view that it is impossible to build socialism completely in our country owing to its technical backwardness.

One can only wonder why we took power in October 1917 if we did not count on completely building socialism.

We should not have taken power in October 1917—this is the conclusion to which the inherent logic of Zinoviev's line of argument leads us.

I assert further that in the highly important question of the victory of socialism Zinoviev has gone counter to the definite decisions of our Party, as registered in the well-known resolution of the Fourteenth Party Conference "The Tasks of the Comintern and the R.C.P.(B.) in Connection with the Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I."

Let us turn to this resolution. Here is what it says about the victory of socialism in one country:

"The existence of two directly opposite social systems gives rise to the constant menace of capitalist blockade, of other forms of economic pressure, of armed intervention, of restoration. Consequently, the only guarantee of the final victory of socialism, i.e., the guarantee against restoration,** is a victorious socialist revolution in a number of countries. . . ." "Leninism teaches that the final victory of socialism, in the sense of a full guarantee against the restoration** of bourgeois relationships, is possible only on an international scale. . . ." "But it does not follow** from this that it is impossible to build a complete socialist society** in a backward country like Russia, without the 'state aid' (Trotsky) of countries more developed technically and economically" (see the resolution26).

As you see, the resolution interprets the final victory of socialism as a guarantee against intervention and restoration, in complete contrast to Zinoviev's interpretation in his book Leninism.

As you see, the resolution recognises the possibility of building a complete socialist society in a backward country like Russia without the "state aid" of countries more developed technically and economically, in complete contrast to what Zinoviev said when he rebuked Yakovlev in his reply to the discussion at the Fourteenth Party Congress.

How else can this be described if not as a struggle on Zinoviev's part against the resolution of the Fourteenth Party Conference?

Of course, Party resolutions are sometimes not free from error. Sometimes they contain mistakes. Speaking generally, one may assume that the resolution of the Fourteenth Party Conference also contains certain errors. Perhaps Zinoviev thinks that this resolution is erroneous. But then he should say so clearly and openly, as befits a Bolshevik. For some reason or other, however, Zinoviev does not do so. He preferred to choose another path, that of attacking the resolution of the Fourteenth Party Conference from the rear, while keeping silent about this resolution and refraining from any open criticism of the resolution. Zinoviev

evidently thinks that this will be the best way of achieving his purpose. And he has but one purpose, namely—to “improve” the resolution, and to amend Lenin “just a little bit.” It scarcely needs proof that Zinoviev has made a mistake in his calculations.

What is Zinoviev’s mistake due to? What is the root of this mistake?

The root of this mistake, in my opinion, lies in Zinoviev’s conviction that the technical backwardness of our country is an insuperable obstacle to the building of a complete socialist society; that the proletariat cannot completely build socialism owing to the technical backwardness of our country. Zinoviev and Kamenev once tried to raise this argument at a meeting of the Central Committee of the Party prior to the April Party Conference.²⁷ But they received a rebuff and were compelled to retreat, and formally they submitted to the opposite point of view, the point of view of the majority of the Central Committee. But although he formally submitted to it, Zinoviev has continued to wage a struggle against it all the time. Here is what the Moscow Committee of our Party says about this “incident” in the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) in its “Reply” to the letter of the Leningrad Gubernia Party Conference²⁸:

“Recently, in the Political Bureau, Kamenev and Zinoviev advocated the point of view that we cannot cope with the internal difficulties due to our technical and economic backwardness unless an international revolution comes to our rescue. We, however, with the majority of the members of the Central Committee, think that we can build socialism, are building it, and will completely build it, notwithstanding our technical backwardness and in spite of it. We think that the work of building will proceed far more slowly, of course, than in the conditions of a world victory; nevertheless, we are making progress and will continue to do so. We also believe that the view held by Kamenev and Zinoviev expresses disbelief in the internal forces of our working class and of the peasant masses who follow its lead. We believe that it is a departure from the Leninist position” (see “Reply”).

This document appeared in the press during the first sittings of the Fourteenth Party Congress. Zinoviev, of course, had the opportunity of attacking this document at the congress. It is characteristic that Zinoviev and Kamenev found no arguments against this grave accusation directed against them by the Moscow Committee of our Party. Was this accidental? I think not. The accusation, apparently, hit the mark. Zinoviev and Kamenev “replied” to this accusation by silence, because they had no “card to beat it.”

The “New Opposition” is offended because Zinoviev is accused of disbelief in the victory of socialist construction in our country. But if after a whole year of discussion on the question of the victory of socialism in one country; after Zinoviev’s view-point has been rejected by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee (April 1925); after the Party has arrived at a definite opinion on this question, recorded in the well-known resolution of the Fourteenth Party Conference (April 1925)—if, after all this, Zinoviev ventures to oppose the point of view of the Party in his book *Leninism* (September 1925), if he then repeats this opposition at the Fourteenth Party Congress—how can all this, this stubbornness, this persistence in his error, be explained if not by the fact that Zinoviev is infected, hopelessly infected, with disbelief in the victory of socialist construction in our country?

It pleases Zinoviev to regard this disbelief of his as internationalism. But since when have we come to regard departure from Leninism on a cardinal question of Leninism as internationalism?

Will it not be more correct to say that it is not the Party but Zinoviev who is sinning against internationalism and the international revolution? For what is our country, the country “that is building socialism,” if not the base of the world revolution? But can it be a real base of the world revolution if it is incapable of completely building a socialist society? Can it remain the mighty centre of attraction for the workers of all countries that it undoubtedly is now, if it is incapable of achieving victory at home over the capitalist elements in our economy, the victory of socialist construction? I think not. But does it not follow from this that disbelief in the victory of socialist construction, the dissemination of such disbelief, will lead to our country being discredited as the base of the world revolution? And if our country is discredited the world revolutionary movement will be weakened. How did Messrs. the Social-Democrats try to scare the workers away from us? By preaching that “the Russians will not get anywhere.” What are we beating the Social-Democrats with now, when we are attracting a whole series of workers’ delegations to our country and thereby strengthening the position of communism all over the world? By our successes in building socialism. Is it not obvious, then, that whoever disseminates disbelief in our successes in building socialism thereby indirectly helps the Social-Democrats, reduces the sweep of the international revolutionary movement, and inevitably departs from internationalism? . . .

You see that Zinoviev is in no better position in regard to his “internationalism” than in regard to his “100 per cent Leninism” on the question of building socialism in one country.

That is why the Fourteenth Party Congress rightly defined the views of the “New Opposition” as “disbelief in the cause of socialist construction,” as “a distortion of Leninism.”²⁹

VII

THE FIGHT FOR THE VICTORY OF SOCIALIST CONSTRUCTION

I think that disbelief in the victory of socialist construction is the principal error of the “New Opposition.” In my opinion, it is the principal error because from it spring all the other errors of the “New Opposition.” The errors of the “New Opposition” on the questions of NEP, state capitalism, the nature of our socialist industry, the role of the co-operatives under the dictatorship of the proletariat, the methods of fighting the kulaks, the role and importance of the middle peasantry—all these errors are to be traced to the principal error of the opposition, to disbelief in the possibility of completely building a socialist society by the efforts of our country.

What is disbelief in the victory of socialist construction in our country?

It is, first of all, lack of confidence that, owing to certain conditions of development in our country, the main mass of the peasantry can be drawn into the work of socialist construction.

It is, secondly, lack of confidence that the proletariat of our country, which holds the key positions in our national economy, is capable of drawing the main mass of the peasantry into the work of socialist construction. It is from these theses that the opposition tacitly proceeds in its arguments about the paths of our development—no matter whether it does so consciously or unconsciously.

Can the main mass of the Soviet peasantry be drawn into the work of socialist construction?

In the pamphlet *The Foundations of Leninism* there are two main theses on this subject:

1) “The peasantry in the Soviet Union must not be confused with the peasantry in the West. A peasantry that has been schooled in three revolutions, that fought against the tsar and the power of the bourgeoisie side by side with the proletariat and under the leadership of the proletariat, a peasantry that has received land and peace at the hands of the proletarian revolution and by reason of this has become the reserve of the proletariat—such a peasantry cannot but be different from a peasantry which during the bourgeois revolution fought under the leadership of the liberal bourgeoisie, which received land at the hands of that bourgeoisie, and in view of this became the reserve of the bourgeoisie. It scarcely needs proof that the Soviet peasantry, which has learnt to appreciate its political friendship and political collaboration with the proletariat and which owes its freedom to this friendship and collaboration, cannot but represent exceptionally favourable material for economic collaboration with the proletariat.”

2) “Agriculture in Russia must not be confused with agriculture in the West. There, agriculture is developing along the ordinary lines of capitalism, under conditions of profound differentiation among the peasantry, with large landed estates and private capitalist latifundia at one extreme and pauperism, destitution and wage slavery at the other. Owing to this, disintegration and decay are quite natural there. Not so in Russia. Here agriculture cannot develop along such a path, if for no other reason than that the existence of Soviet power and the nationalisation of the principal instruments and means of production preclude such a development. In Russia the development of agriculture must proceed along a different path, along the path of organising millions of small and middle peasants in co-operatives, along the path of developing in the countryside a mass co-operative movement supported by the state by means of preferential credits. Lenin rightly pointed out in his articles on co-operation that the development of agriculture in our country must proceed along a new path, along the path of drawing the majority of the peasants into socialist construction through the co-operatives, along the path of gradually introducing into agriculture the principles of collectivism, first in the sphere of marketing and later in the sphere of production of agricultural products. . . .

“It scarcely needs proof that the vast majority of the peasantry will eagerly take this new path of development, rejecting the path of private capitalist latifundia and wage slavery, the path of destitution and ruin.”⁷⁰

Are these theses correct?

I think that both theses are correct and incontrovertible for the whole of our construction period under the conditions of NEP.

They are merely the expression of Lenin’s well-known theses on the bond between the proletariat and the peasantry, on the inclusion of the peasant farms in the system of socialist development of our country; of his theses that the proletariat must march towards socialism together with the main mass of the peasantry, that the organisation of the vast masses of the peasantry in co-operatives is the high road of socialist construction in the countryside, that with the growth of our socialist industry, “for us, the more growth of co-operation is identical . . . with the growth of socialism” (see Vol. XXVII, p. 396).

Indeed, along what path can and must the development of peasant economy in our country proceed? Peasant economy is not capitalist economy. Peasant economy, if you take the overwhelming majority of the peasant farms, is small commodity economy. And what is peasant small commodity economy? It is economy standing at the cross-roads between

capitalism and socialism. It may develop in the direction of capitalism, as it is now doing in capitalist countries, or in the direction of socialism, as it must do here, in our country, under the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Whence this instability, this lack of independence of peasant economy? How is it to be explained?

It is to be explained by the scattered character of the peasant farms, their lack of organisation, their dependence on the towns, on industry, on the credit system, on the character of the state power in the country, and, lastly, by the well-known fact that the countryside follows, and necessarily must follow, the town both in material and in cultural matters.

The capitalist path of development of peasant economy means development through profound differentiation among the peasantry, with large latifundia at one extreme and mass impoverishment at the other. Such a path of development is inevitable in capitalist countries, because the countryside, peasant economy, is dependent on the towns, on industry, on credit concentrated in the towns, on the character of the state power—and in the towns it is the bourgeoisie, capitalist industry, the capitalist credit system and the capitalist state power that hold sway.

Is this path of development of peasant farms obligatory for our country, where the towns have quite a different aspect, where industry is in the hands of the proletariat, where transport, the credit system, the state power, etc., are concentrated in the hands of the proletariat, where the nationalisation of the land is a universal law of the country? Of course not. On the contrary. Precisely because the towns do lead the countryside, while we have in the towns the rule of the proletariat, which holds all the key positions of national economy—precisely for this reason the peasant farms in their development must proceed along a different path, the path of socialist construction.

What is this path?

It is the path of the mass organisation of millions of peasant farms into co-operatives in all spheres of co-operation, the path of uniting the scattered peasant farms around socialist industry, the path of implanting the elements of collectivism among the peasantry at first in the sphere of marketing agricultural produce and supplying the peasant farms with the products of urban industry and later in the sphere of agricultural production.

And the further we advance the more this path becomes inevitable under the conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat, because co-operative marketing, co-operative supplying, and, finally, co-operative credit and production (agricultural co-operatives) are the only way to promote the welfare of the countryside, the only way to save the broad masses of the peasantry from poverty and ruin.

It is said that our peasantry, by its position, is not socialist, and, therefore, incapable of socialist development. It is true, of course, that the peasantry, by its position, is not socialist. But this is no argument against the development of the peasant farms along the path of socialism, once it has been proved that the countryside follows the town, and in the towns it is socialist industry that holds sway. The peasantry, by its position, was not socialist at the time of the October Revolution either, and it did not by any means want to establish socialism in our country. At that time it strove mainly for the abolition of the power of the landlords and

for the ending of the war, for the establishment of peace. Nevertheless, it followed the lead of the socialist proletariat. Why? Because the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the seizure of power by the socialist proletariat was at that time the only way of getting out of the imperialist war, the only way of establishing peace. Because there was no other way at that time, nor could there be any. Because our Party was able to hit upon that degree of the combination of the specific interests of the peasantry (the overthrow of the landlords, peace) with, and their subordination to, the general interests of the country (the dictatorship of the proletariat) which proved acceptable and advantageous to the peasantry. And so the peasantry, in spite of its non-socialist character, at that time followed the lead of the socialist proletariat.

The same must be said about socialist construction in our country, about drawing the peasantry into the channel of this construction. The peasantry is non-socialist by its position. But it must, and certainly will, take the path of socialist development, for there is not, and cannot be, any other way of saving the peasantry from poverty and ruin except the bond with the proletariat, except the bond with socialist industry, except the inclusion of peasant economy in the common channel of socialist development by the mass organisation of the peasantry in co-operatives.

But why precisely by the mass organisation of the peasantry in co-operatives?

Because in the mass organisation in co-operatives “we have found that degree of the combination of private interest, private trading interest, with state supervision and control of this interest, that degree of its subordination to the general interests” (Lenin)³¹ which is acceptable and advantageous to the peasantry and which ensures the proletariat the possibility of drawing the main mass of the peasantry into the work of socialist construction. It is precisely because it is advantageous to the peasantry to organise the sale of its products and the purchase of machines for its farms through co-operatives, it is precisely for that reason that it should and will proceed along the path of mass organisation in co-operatives.

What does the mass organisation of peasant farms in co-operatives mean when we have the supremacy of socialist industry?

It means that peasant small commodity economy abandons the old capitalist path, which is fraught with mass ruin for the peasantry, and goes over to the new path of development, the path of socialist construction.

This is why the fight for the new path of development of peasant economy, the fight to draw the main mass of the peasantry into the work of socialist construction, is the immediate task facing our Party.

The Fourteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.), therefore, was right in declaring:

“The main path of building socialism in the countryside consists in using the growing economic leadership of socialist state industry, of the state credit institutions, and of the other key positions in the hands of the proletariat to draw the main mass of the peasantry into co-operative organisation and to ensure for this organisation a socialist development, while utilising, overcoming and ousting its capitalist elements” (see Resolution of the Congress on the Report of the Central Committee³²).

The profound mistake of the “New Opposition” lies in the fact that it does not believe in this new path of development of the peasantry, that it does not see, or does not understand, the absolute inevitability of this path under the conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat. And it does not understand this because it does not believe in the victory of socialist construction in our country, it does not believe in the capacity of our proletariat to lead the peasantry along the path to socialism.

Hence the failure to understand the dual character of NEP, the exaggeration of the negative aspects of NEP and the treatment of NEP as being mainly a retreat.

Hence the exaggeration of the role of the capitalist elements in our economy, and the belittling of the role of the levers of our socialist development (socialist industry, the credit system, the co-operatives, the rule of the proletariat, etc.).

Hence the failure to understand the socialist nature of our state industry, and the doubts concerning the correctness of Lenin’s co-operative plan.

Hence the inflated accounts of differentiation in the countryside, the panic in face of the kulak, the belittling of the role of the middle peasant, the attempts to thwart the Party’s policy of securing a firm alliance with the middle peasant, and, in general, the wobbling from one side to another on the question of the Party’s policy in the countryside.

Hence the failure to understand the tremendous work of the Party in drawing the vast masses of the workers and peasants into building up industry and agriculture, revitalising the co-operatives and the Soviets, administering the country, combating bureaucracy, improving and remodelling our state apparatus—work which marks a new stage of development and without which no socialist construction is conceivable.

Hence the hopelessness and consternation in face of the difficulties of our work of construction, the doubts about the possibility of industrialising our country, the pessimistic chatter about degeneration of the Party, etc.

Over there, among the bourgeoisie, all is going on fairly well, but here, among the proletarians, things are fairly bad; unless the revolution in the West takes place pretty soon, our cause is lost—such is the general tone of the “New Opposition” which, in my opinion, is a liquidationist tone, but which, for some reason or other (probably in jest), the opposition tries to pass off as “internationalism.”

NEP is capitalism, says the opposition. NEP is mainly a retreat, says Zinoviev. All this, of course, is untrue. In actual fact, NEP is the Party’s policy, permitting a struggle between the socialist and the capitalist elements and aimed at the victory of the socialist elements over the capitalist elements. In actual fact, NEP only began as a retreat, but it aimed at regrouping our forces during the retreat and launching an offensive. In actual fact, we have been on the offensive for several years now, and are attacking successfully, developing our industry, developing Soviet trade, and ousting private capital.

But what is the meaning of the thesis that NEP is capitalism, that NEP is mainly a retreat? What does this thesis proceed from?

It proceeds from the wrong assumption that what is now taking place in our country is simply the restoration of capitalism, simply a “return” to capitalism. This assumption alone can explain the doubts of the opposition regarding the socialist nature of our industry. This assumption alone can explain the panic of the opposition in face of the kulak. This assumption alone can explain the haste with which the opposition seized upon the inaccurate statistics on differentiation in the peasantry. This assumption alone can explain the opposition’s special forgetfulness of the fact that the middle peasant is the central figure in our agriculture. This assumption alone can explain the under-estimation of the importance of the middle peasant and the doubts concerning Lenin’s cooperative plan. This assumption alone can serve to “substantiate” the “New Opposition’s” disbelief in the new path of development of the countryside, the path of drawing it into the work of socialist construction.

As a matter of fact, what is taking place in our country now is not a one-sided process of restoration of capitalism, but a double process of development of capitalism and development of socialism—a contradictory process of struggle between the socialist and the capitalist elements, a process in which the socialist elements are overcoming the capitalist elements. This is equally incontestable as regards the towns, where state industry is the basis of socialism, and as regards the countryside, here the main foothold for socialist development is mass co-operation linked up with socialist industry.

The simple restoration of capitalism is impossible, if only for the reason that the proletariat is in power, that large-scale industry is in the hands of the proletariat, and that transport and credit are in the possession of the proletarian state.

Differentiation in the countryside cannot assume its former dimensions, the middle peasants still constitute the main mass of the peasantry, and the kulak cannot regain his former strength, if only for the reason that the land has been nationalised, that it has been withdrawn from circulation, while our trade, credit, tax and cooperative policy is directed towards restricting the kulaks’ exploiting proclivities, towards promoting the welfare of the broad mass of the peasantry and levelling out the extremes in the countryside. That is quite apart from the fact that the fight against the kulaks is now proceeding not only along the old line of organising the poor peasants against the kulaks, but also along the new line of strengthening the alliance of the proletariat and the poor peasants with the mass of the middle peasants against the kulaks. The fact that the opposition does not understand the meaning and significance of the fight against the kulaks along this second line once more confirms that the opposition is straying towards the old path of development in the countryside—the path of capitalist development, when the kulaks and the poor peasants constituted the main forces in the countryside, while the middle peasants were “melting away.”

Co-operation is a variety of state capitalism, says the opposition, citing in this connection Lenin’s pamphlet *The Tax in Kind*³³; and, consequently, it does not believe it possible to utilise the co-operatives as the main foothold for socialist development. Here, too, the opposition commits a gross error. Such an interpretation of co-operation was adequate and satisfactory in 1921, when *The Tax in Kind* was written, when we had no developed socialist industry, when Lenin conceived of state capitalism as the possible basic form of conducting our economy, and when he considered co-operation in conjunction with state capitalism. But this interpretation has now become inadequate and has been rendered obsolete by history, for times have changed since then: our socialist industry has developed, state capitalism never took hold to the degree expected, whereas the co-operatives, which now have over ten million members, have begun to link up with socialist industry.

How else are we to explain the fact that already in 1923, two years after *The Tax in Kind* was written, Lenin began to regard co-operation in a different light, and considered that “co-operation, under our conditions, very often entirely coincides with socialism” (see Vol. XXVII, p. 396).

How else can this be explained except by the fact that during those two years socialist industry had grown, whereas state capitalism had failed to take hold to the required extent, in view of which Lenin began to consider co-operation, not in conjunction with state capitalism, but in conjunction with socialist industry?

The conditions of development of co-operation had changed. And so the approach to the question of co-operation had to be changed also.

Here, for instance, is a remarkable passage from Lenin’s pamphlet *On Co-operation* (1923), which throws light on this matter:

“Under state capitalism,** co-operative enterprises differ from state capitalist enterprises, firstly, in that they are private enterprises and, secondly, in that they are collective enterprises. Under our present system,** co-operative enterprises differ from private capitalist enterprises because they are collective enterprises, but they do not differ** from socialist enterprises if the land on which they are situated and the means of production belong to the state, i.e., the working class” (see Vol. XXVII, p. 396).

In this short passage two big questions are solved. Firstly, that “our present system” is not state capitalism. Secondly, that co-operative enterprises taken in conjunction with “our system” “do not differ” from socialist enterprises.

I think it would be difficult to express oneself more clearly.

Here is another passage from the same pamphlet of Lenin’s:

“... for us, the mere growth of co-operation (with the ‘slight’ exception mentioned above) is identical with the growth of socialism, and at the same time we must admit that a radical change has taken place in our whole outlook on socialism” (ibid.).

Obviously, the pamphlet *On Co-operation* gives a new appraisal of the co-operatives, a thing which the “New Opposition” does not want to admit, and which it is carefully hushing up, in defiance of the facts, in defiance of the obvious truth, in defiance of Leninism. Co-operation taken in conjunction with state capitalism is one thing, and co-operation taken in conjunction with socialist industry is another.

From this, however, it must not be concluded that a gulf lies between *The Tax in Kind* and *On Co-operation*. That would, of course, be wrong. It is sufficient, for instance, to refer to the following passage in *The Tax in Kind* to discern immediately the inseparable connection between *The Tax in Kind* and the pamphlet *On Co-operation* as regards appraisal of the co-operatives. Here it is:

“The transition from concessions to socialism is a transition from one form of large-scale production to another form of large-scale production. The transition from small-proprietor co-operatives to socialism is a transition from small production to large-scale production, i.e., it

is a more complicated transition, but, if successful, is capable of embracing wider masses of the population, is capable of pulling up the deeper and more tenacious roots of the old, pre-socialist** and even pre-capitalist relations, which most stubbornly resist all ‘innovations’” (see Vol. XXVI, p. 337).

From this quotation it is evident that even during the time of *The Tax in Kind*, when we had as yet no developed socialist industry, Lenin was of the opinion that, if successful, co-operation could be transformed into a powerful weapon in the struggle against “pre-socialist,” and, hence, against capitalist relations. I think it was precisely this idea that subsequently served as the point of departure for his pamphlet *On Co-operation*.

But what follows from all this?

From all this it follows that the “New Opposition” approaches the question of co-operation, not in a Marxist way, but metaphysically. It regards co-operation not as a historical phenomenon taken in conjunction with other phenomena, in conjunction, say, with state capitalism (in 1921) or with socialist industry (in 1923), but as something constant and immutable, as a “thing in itself.”

Hence the mistakes of the opposition on the question of co-operation, hence its disbelief in the development of the countryside towards socialism through co-operation, hence its turning back to the old path, the path of capitalist development in the countryside.

Such, in general, is the position of the “New Opposition” on the practical questions of socialist construction.

There is only one conclusion: the line of the opposition, so far as it has a line, its wavering and vacillation, its disbelief in our cause and its consternation in face of difficulties, lead to capitulation to the capitalist elements of our economy.

For, if NEP is mainly a retreat, if the socialist nature of state-industry is doubted, if the kulak is almost omnipotent, if little hope can be placed in the co-operatives, if the role of the middle peasant is progressively declining, if the new path of development in the countryside is open to doubt, if the Party is almost degenerating, while the revolution in the West is not very near—then what is there left in the arsenal of the opposition, what can it count on in the struggle against the capitalist elements in our economy? You cannot go into battle armed only with “The Philosophy of the Epoch.”³⁴

It is clear that the arsenal of the “New Opposition,” if it can be termed an arsenal at all, is an unenviable one. It is not an arsenal for battle. Still less is it one for victory.

It is clear that the Party would be doomed “in no time” if it entered the fight equipped with such an arsenal; it would simply have to capitulate to the capitalist elements in our economy.

That is why the Fourteenth Congress of the Party was absolutely right in deciding that “the fight for the victory of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. is the main task of our Party”; that one of the necessary conditions for the fulfilment of this task is “to combat disbelief in the cause of building socialism in our country and the attempts to represent our enterprises, which are of a ‘consistently socialist type’ (Lenin), as state capitalist enterprises”; that “such ideological trends, which prevent the masses from adopting a conscious attitude towards the

building of socialism in general and of a socialist industry in particular, can only serve to hinder the growth of the socialist elements in our economy and to facilitate the struggle of private capital against them”; that “the congress therefore considers that wide-spread educational work must be carried on for the purpose of overcoming these distortions of Leninism” (see Resolution on the Report of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.)35).

The historical significance of the Fourteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) lies in the fact that it was able radically to expose the mistakes of the “New Opposition,” that it rejected their disbelief and whining, that it clearly and precisely indicated the path of the further struggle for socialism, opened before the Party the prospect of victory, and thus armed the proletariat with an invincible faith in the victory of socialist construction.

January 25, 1926

Notes

1 See J. V. Stalin, Works, Vol. 6, pp. 71-196.

2 See V. I. Lenin, Works, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 22, pp. 173-290.

3 See V. I. Lenin, Works, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 25, pp. 353-462.

4 See V. I. Lenin, Works, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 28, pp. 207-302.

5 See V. I. Lenin, Works, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 31, pp. 1-97.

* References in Roman numerals to Lenin’s works here and elsewhere are to the 3rd Russian edition of the Works.—Tr.

** My italics.—J. St.

** My italics.—J. St.

6 See J. V. Stalin, Works, Vol. 6, p. 126.

** My italics.—J. St.

7 See J. V. Stalin, Works, Vol. 6, p. 107.

8 See J. V. Stalin, Works, Vol. 6, pp. 395-96.

9 See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, The First Address of the Central Committee to the Communist League (Selected Works, Vol. I, Moscow 1951, pp. 99-108).

** My italics.—J. St.

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10 See J. V. Stalin, Works, Vol. 6, pp. 379-80.

** My italics.—J. St.

** My italics.—J. St.

11. See J. V. Stalin, Works, Vol. 6, pp. 185-86.

** My italics.—J. St.

** My italics.—J. St.

12. The Second Congress of the Communist International was held July 19-August 7, 1920. J. V. Stalin is here quoting from Lenin's speech on "The Role of the Communist Policy."

** My italics.—J. St.

** My italics.—J. St.

** My italics.—J. St.

13. See V. I. Lenin, Works, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 32, p. 76

** My italics.—J. St.

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14. Tsektran—the Central Committee of the Joint Union of Rail and Water Transport Workers—was formed in September 1920. In 1920 and in the beginning of 1921, the leadership of the Tsektran was in the hands of Trotskyists, who used methods of sheer compulsion and dictation in conducting trade-union activities. In March 1921 the First All-Russian Joint Congress of Rail and Water Transport Workers expelled the Trotskyists from the leadership of the Tsektran, elected a new Central Committee and outlined new methods of trade-union work.

** My italics.—J. St.

15. See V. I. Lenin, Works, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 32, pp. 1-22

** My italics.—J. St.

* See this volume, pp. 39-40.—Ed.

* See this volume, pp. 46-47, 47-48, 50, 54, 55.—Ed.

16. The theses of the Second Congress of the Comintern on “The Role of the Communist Party in the Proletarian Revolution” were adopted as a resolution of the congress (for the resolution, see V. I. Lenin, Works, 3rd Russ. ed., Vol. XXV, pp. 560-66).

17. See J. V. Stalin, Works, Vol. 6, p. 109.

18. See J. V. Stalin’s pamphlet, Lenin and Leninism, 1924, p. 60

19. See V. I. Lenin, Works, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 33, pp. 427-35

* This new formulation. of the question was substituted for the old one in subsequent editions of the pamphlet The Foundations of Leninism.

20. For the resolution of the Fourteenth Party Conference on “The Tasks of the Comintern and the R.C.P.(B.) in Connection with the Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I.,” see Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums, Part II, 1953, pp. 43-52.

21. See J. V. Stalin, Works, Vol. 7, pp. 111, 120-21.

22. See J. V. Stalin, Works, Vol. 7, pp. 111, 117-18.

23. See J. V. Stalin, Works, Vol. 7, p. 120.

24. See J. V. Stalin, Works, Vol. 7, pp. 267-403.

25. This refers to the plenum of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) which was held April 23-30, 1925. The plenum endorsed the resolutions adopted by the Fourteenth Conference of the R.C.P.(B.), including the resolution on “The Tasks of the Comintern and the R.C.P.(B.) in Connection with the Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I.” that defined the Party’s position on the question of the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. (See Resolutions

and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums, Part II, 1953, pp. 43-52.)

** My italics.—J. St.

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26. See Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums, Part II, 1953, pp. 49 and 46.

27. This refers to the Fourteenth Conference of the R.C.P.(B). held April 27-29, 1925.

28. The reply of the Moscow Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) to the letter of the Twenty-Second Leningrad Gubernia Party Conference, a letter that was a factional attack by the followers of Zinoviev and Kamenev, was published in Pravda, No. 291, December 20, 1925.

29. See Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums, Part II, 1953, p. 77.

30. See J. V. Stalin, Works, Vol. 6, pp. 137-38, 140, 141.

31. See V. I. Lenin, Works, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 33, p. 428.

32. See Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums, Part II, 1953, p. 78.

33. See V. I. Lenin, Works, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 32, pp. 308-43.

** My italics.—J. St.

** My italics.—J. St.

** My italics.—J. St.

** My italics.—J. St.

34. "The Philosophy of the Epoch" was the title of an anti-Party article written by Zinoviev in 1925. For a criticism of this article, see J. V. Stalin, Works, Vol. 7, pp. 385-88.

35. See Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums, Part II, 1953, p. 75, 77

The Peasantry as an Ally of the Working Class
Reply to Comrades P. F. Boltnev,
V. I. Efremov and V. I. Ivlev

I apologise for not having been able to reply to you sooner.

I did not say anywhere in my speech 1 that the working class needs the peasantry as an ally only at the present time.

I did not say in that speech that after the victory of the revolution in one of the European countries the alliance of the working class and the peasantry would be superfluous in Russia. It seems to me that you have not read my speech at the Moscow Conference very carefully.

What is stated there is only that “the peasantry is the only ally that can be of direct assistance to our revolution at this very moment.” Does it follow from this that after a victorious revolution in Europe the peasantry may become superfluous for the working class of our country? Of course not.

You ask: “What will happen when the world revolution takes place, when the fourth ally—the peasantry—is no longer needed? How will it be looked upon then?”

In the first place, to say that “after the world revolution” the peasantry will no longer be needed is untrue. It is untrue, because “after the world revolution” our economic constructive work should proceed with giant strides, and socialism cannot be built without the peasantry, any more than the peasantry can extricate itself from its poverty without the proletariat. Consequently, far from weakening after a victorious revolution in the West, the alliance of the workers and peasants should grow stronger.

Secondly, “after the world revolution,” when our constructive work is intensified a hundredfold, the trend will be for the workers and peasants to disappear as two entirely different economic groups, to be converted into working people of the land and of the factories, that is, to become equal in economic status. And what does that mean? It means that the alliance of the workers and peasants will gradually be converted into a fusion, a complete union, into a single socialist society of former workers and former peasants, and later simply of working people of a socialist society.

That is our view as regards the peasantry “after the victory of the world revolution.”

The matter at issue in my speech was not how our Party would look upon the peasantry in the future, but which of the four allies of the working class is its most direct ally and immediate assistant at the present moment, at the present juncture, when the capitalists in the West are to some extent beginning to recuperate.

Why did I present the question in my speech precisely in this light? Because there are people in our Party who, out of stupidity and folly, believe that the peasantry is not our ally. Whether it is a good or a bad thing that there are such people in our Party is another matter, but the fact remains that there are. It was against such people that my speech was levelled, and I therefore pointed out that at the present juncture the peasantry is the most direct ally of the working class, and that those who sow distrust towards the peasantry may, without themselves

realising it, wreck the cause of our revolution, that is to say, they may wreck both the cause of the workers and the cause of the peasants.

That is what, I was talking about.

It seems to me that you are somewhat offended at my calling the peasantry a not very firm ally, an ally not as reliable as the proletariat of the capitalistically developed countries. I see that you have taken offence at this. But am I not right? Must I not tell the truth bluntly? Is it not true that at the time of the Kolchak and Denikin invasions the peasantry quite often vacillated, siding now with the workers, now with the generals? And were there not plenty of peasant volunteers in Denikin's and Kolchak's armies?

I am not blaming the peasants, because their vacillations are due to their inadequate political understanding. But, since I am a Communist, I must tell the truth bluntly. That is what Lenin taught us. And the truth is that at a difficult moment, when the workers were being hard pressed by Kolchak and Denikin, the peasantry did not always display sufficient staunchness and firmness as an ally of the working class.

Does this mean that we may wash our hands of the peasantry, as certain unwise comrades are doing now, who do not consider it an ally of the proletariat at all? No. To wash our hands of the peasantry would be to commit a crime against both the workers and the peasants.

We shall do everything in our power to raise the political understanding of the peasants, to enlighten them, to bring them closer to the working class, the leader of our revolution—and we shall see to it that the peasantry becomes the ever firmer and ever more reliable ally of the proletariat in our country.

And when the revolution breaks out in the West, the peasantry will become thoroughly firm and one of the most loyal allies of the working class in our country.

That is how the attitude of the Communists towards the peasantry as an ally of the working class should be understood.

With comradely greetings,
J. Stalin
February 9, 1926

Notes

1. See Resolutions and Decisions of the C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums, Part II, 1953, pp. 73-82.

The Possibility of Building Socialism in our Country

Reply to Comrade Pokoyev

Comrade Pokoyev,

I am late in replying, for which I apologise to you and your comrades.

Unfortunately, you have not understood our disagreements at the Fourteenth Congress. The point was not at all that the opposition asserted that we had not yet arrived at socialism, while the congress held that we had already arrived at socialism. That is not true. You will not find a single member in our Party who would say that we have already achieved socialism.

That was not at all the subject of the dispute at the congress. The subject of the dispute was this. The congress held that the working class, in alliance with the labouring peasantry, can deal the finishing blow to the capitalists of our country and build a socialist society, even if there is no victorious revolution in the West to come to its aid. The opposition, on the contrary, held that we cannot deal the finishing blow to our capitalists and build a socialist society until the workers are victorious in the West. Well, as the victory of the revolution in the West is rather late in coming, nothing remains for us to do, apparently, but to loaf around. The congress held, and said so in its resolution on the report of the Central Committee [1], that these views of the opposition implied disbelief in victory over our capitalists.

That was the point at issue, dear comrades.

This, of course, does not mean that we do not need the help of the West-European workers. Suppose that the West-European workers did not sympathise with us and did not render us moral support. Suppose that the West-European workers did not prevent their capitalists from launching an attack upon our Republic. What would be the outcome? The outcome would be that the capitalists would march against us and radically disrupt our constructive work, if not destroy us altogether. If the capitalists are not attempting this, it is because they are afraid that if they were to attack our Republic, the workers would strike at them from the rear. That is what we mean when we say that the West-European workers are supporting our revolution.

But from the support of the workers of the West to the victory of the revolution in the West is a long, long way. Without the support of the workers of the West we could scarcely have held out against the enemies surrounding us. If this support should later develop into a victorious revolution in the West, well and good. Then the victory of socialism in our country will be final. But what if this support does not develop into a victory of the revolution in the West? If there is no such victory in the West, can we build a socialist society and complete the building of it? The congress answered that we can. Otherwise, there would have been no point in our taking power in October 1917. If we had not counted on giving the finishing blow to our capitalists, everyone will say that we had no business to take power in October 1917. The opposition, however, affirms that we cannot finish off our capitalists by our own efforts.

That is the difference between us.

There was also talk at the congress of the final victory of socialism. What does that mean? It means a full guarantee against the intervention of foreign capitalists and the restoration of the old order in our country as the result of an armed struggle by those capitalists against our country. Can we, by our own efforts, ensure this guarantee, that is, render armed intervention

on the part of international capital impossible? No, we cannot. That is something to be done jointly by ourselves and the proletarians of the entire West. International capital can be finally curbed only by the efforts of the working class of all countries, or at least of the major European countries. For that the victory of the revolution in several European countries is indispensable—without it the final victory of socialism is impossible.

What follows then in conclusion?

It follows that we are capable of completely building a socialist society by our own efforts and without the victory of the revolution in the West, but that, by itself alone, our country cannot guarantee itself against encroachments by international capital—for that the victory of the revolution in several Western countries is needed. The possibility of completely building socialism in our country is one thing, the possibility of guaranteeing our country against encroachments by international capital is another.

In my opinion, your mistake and that of your comrades is that you have not yet found your way in this matter and have confused these two questions.

With comradely greetings,
J. Stalin

P. S. You should get hold of the Bolshevik [2] (of Moscow), No. 3, and read my article in it. It would make matters easier for you.

J. Stalin
February 10, 1926

Notes

1. See Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums, Part II, 1953 pp. 73-82.

2. The magazine Bolshevik, No. 3, dated February 15, 1926.

J. V. Stalin's work Concerning Questions of Leninism

Bolshevik—theoretical and political magazine, organ of the Central Committee, C.P.S.U.(B.), which began publication in April 1924. Since November 1952 it is published under the title Kommunist.

Comrade Kotovsky

I knew Comrade Kotovsky as an exemplary Party member, an experienced military organiser and a skilful commander.

I have a particularly vivid memory of him on the Polish front in 1920, when Comrade Budyonny was dashing to Zhitomir in the rear of the Polish army, and Kotovsky was leading his cavalry brigade in dare-devil raids on the Poles' Kiev army. He was a terror to the Polish Whites, for no one was as capable as he of "making mincemeat" of them, as our Red Army men used to say.

It is as the bravest among our modest commanders, and as the most modest among the brave that I remember Comrade Kotovsky.

Eternal glory to his memory!

J. Stalin

**Speech Delivered at the French Commission of the Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the
E.C.C.I. 1
March 6, 1926**

Comrades, I am unfortunately not very well acquainted with French affairs. Hence I cannot deal with this subject as exhaustively as is required here. Nevertheless I have formed a definite opinion of French affairs from the speeches I have heard here at this plenary session of the E.C.C.I., and on these grounds I consider it my duty to make a few remarks in this commission.

We have several questions before us.

The first question concerns the political situation in France. I am somewhat disquieted by the complacency to be detected in the speeches of comrades concerning the present political situation in France. One gets the impression, that in France the position is more or less balanced—that, in general, things are getting along so-so; there are certain difficulties, it is true, but they will most likely not lead to any crisis, and so forth. That is wrong, comrades. I would not say that France is on the eve of her 1923 crisis. All the same, I believe that she is moving towards a crisis. In this respect, I regard as correct both the commission's theses and the remarks of certain of the comrades.

This is a special kind of crisis, because in France there is no unemployment. The crisis is alleviated by the fact that France is just now being nourished with gold from Germany. But these are temporary phenomena—firstly, because German gold will not suffice to cover France's internal deficiencies and to meet her debts to Britain and America; and, secondly, because unemployment in France is inevitable. So long as there is inflation, which stimulates exports, perhaps there will be no unemployment; but later, when the currency finds its level and international debt settlements make their effect felt, concentration of industry and unemployment will be unavoidable in France. The surest symptom that France is moving towards a crisis is the consternation prevailing in French ruling circles, the ministerial reshuffles which are taking place there.

The development of a crisis should never be represented as an ascending line of increasing collapses. Such crises do not occur. A revolutionary crisis as a rule develops in the form of zigzags: first a small collapse, then an improvement, then a more serious collapse, then a certain rise, and so on. The existence of zigzags should not lead to the belief that the affairs of the bourgeoisie are improving.

In this matter, therefore, complacency is dangerous. It is dangerous, because the crisis may advance more swiftly than is anticipated, and then the French comrades may be caught unawares. And a party that is caught unawares cannot direct developments. Accordingly, I consider that the French Communist Party should steer its course in anticipation of a gradually mounting revolutionary crisis. And the French Party must conduct its agitation and propaganda in such a way as to prepare the minds and hearts of the workers for this crisis.

The second question is the growing danger from the Right within the Party. I believe that both around and within the French Communist Party there is an already fairly solid militant group of Rights, headed by individuals expelled or not expelled from the Party, a group which all the time will be sapping the Party's strength. I have just been talking to Crémet. He told me something new: he said that not only in the Party, but also in the trade unions there are groups

of Rights who are working surreptitiously, and here and there are conducting an outright attack on the revolutionary wing of the Communist Party. Even Engler's statement today is symptomatic in this respect, and the serious attention of the comrades must be drawn to this fact.

The Rights always raise their head in a period of growing crisis. That is a general law of revolutionary crises. The Rights raise their head because they are afraid of a revolutionary crisis and are therefore ready to do everything in their power to drag the Party back and not allow the growing crisis to develop. Hence I think that, since the French Communist Party has to mould new revolutionary cadres and prepare the masses for the crisis, its immediate task is to rebuff the Rights and to isolate them.

Is the French Communist Party prepared to administer such a rebuff?

I pass to the third question—the state of affairs in the leading group of the French Communist Party. Voices are to be heard saying that, if the Rights are to be isolated, the leading group of the French Communist Party must be rid of two comrades who have fought the Rights, but who have committed serious errors. I am referring to Treint and Suzanne Girault. I shall speak frankly, for the best thing is to call a spade a spade.

I do not know how advisable it would be to open the attack on the Rights by removing from the leading group those who are fighting the Rights. I thought, on the contrary, that a different proposal would be made, something like this, for instance: since the Rights have grown insolent, since they, when they closed down their organ *Bulletin Communiste*,³ published a declaration which was a slap in the face to the Party, would it not be possible to consider exposing some of the Rights politically, if not expelling them from the Party altogether? I thought that that was how the question would be put in view of the Right danger. I thought that I would hear just that sort of statement here. Instead, we are asked to begin isolating the Rights by isolating two non-Rights. I do not see the logic of that, comrades!

But interwoven with this question of the struggle against the Rights is another question, namely, the absence of a closely-welded majority group in the Political Bureau of the French Communist Party. It is perfectly true that the Party cannot wage a struggle either against the Right group or against the “ultra-Left” group unless there is a compact majority in the Party's leading group capable of concentrating fire on one point. That is perfectly correct. I consider that such a group is bound to take shape, and I believe that it has already taken shape, or will take shape in the near future, around such comrades as Semard, Crémet, Thorez and Monmousseau. To set up such a group, or to establish teamwork, so to speak, between these comrades, in a single leading body, would mean a concentration of forces in the fight against the Rights. You cannot defeat the Rights—because the Rights are multiplying, and they apparently have certain roots in the French working class—you cannot, I say, defeat the Rights unless you unite all the revolutionary Communists within the leading group which is prepared to fight the Rights to a finish. To start the fight against the Rights by dividing your forces is irrational, unwise. If there is no concentration of forces, you may both weaken yourselves and lose the fight against the Rights.

Of course, it is possible that the French comrades do not consider feasible a concentration of all forces, including in it both Treint and Suzanne Girault; it is possible that they consider this out of the question. In that case, let the French comrades, at a plenum of their Central Committee or at their congress, make the appropriate changes in the composition of their

Political Bureau. Let them do this themselves, without the E.C.C.I. They have the right to do so.

Quite recently, at the Fourteenth Congress of the Party, we Russian comrades passed a resolution to the effect that the sections should be given greater opportunity to govern themselves. The way we understand it is that the E.C.C.I. should refrain as far as possible from directly interfering in the affairs of the sections, in particular in the formation of the leading groups of our Comintern sections. Don't compel us, comrades, to infringe a decision we have only just adopted at our Party congress. Of course, there are cases when repressive measures against individual comrades are necessary, but I see no such necessity at the present moment.

I think, therefore, that what is required of our commission is the following:

Firstly, to draft a clear-cut political resolution on the French question, calling for a determined struggle against the Rights, and pointing out the mistakes of those comrades who have committed mistakes.

Secondly, to advise the French comrades to rally the leading group within the Central Committee of the French Communist Party around this resolution, spearheaded against the Rights, that is, to bind the members of that, group to carry out this resolution conscientiously by their joint efforts.

Thirdly, to advise the French comrades that in their practical work there should be no infatuation for the method of amputation, the method of repressive measures.

The fourth question is that of the workers' trade unions in France. I have gained the impression that some French comrades take this matter too lightly. I admit that errors have been committed by representatives of the trade-union Confederation, but I admit also that errors have been committed by the Central Committee of the French Communist Party in regard to the Confederation. It is quite natural that Comrade Monmousseau would like the Party to exercise less tutelage. That is in the nature of things, since there are two parallel organisations—the Party and the trade-union Confederation—and at times there is bound to be a certain amount of friction between them. This also happens with us, the Russians, and in all Communist Parties—it is unavoidable. But the less the Central Committee of the French Communist Party intrudes in every detail of trade-union affairs, the less friction will there be. The trade unions should be led by Communists who work permanently in the trade unions, and not independently of them. There have been instances of hypertrophy in the leadership of the trade unions in our Party, the Russian Party. You can find in the records of our Party quite a number of resolutions adopted by our Party congresses laying down that the Party should not exercise tutelage over the trade unions—that it should guide them, not exercise tutelage over them. I am afraid that the French Party—I trust the comrades will forgive me for saying so—has also sinned somewhat against the trade unions in this respect. I consider the Party the highest form of organisation of the working class, and precisely for this reason more must be demanded of it. Consequently, the errors of the Central Committee must be eliminated in the first place, so that relations with the trade unions may be improved and strengthened, and so that Comrade Monmousseau and the other trade-union leaders may be in a position to work along the lines required from the point of view of the Communist Party.

The Party cannot develop further, especially in the conditions existing in the West, the Party cannot grow stronger, if it does not have a very important bulwark in the shape of the trade unions and their leaders. Only a party that knows how to maintain extensive connections with the trade unions and their leaders, and which knows how to establish genuine proletarian contact with them—only such a party can win over the majority of the working class in the West. You know yourselves that without winning over the majority of the working class, it is impossible to count on victory.

Well then, what do we find?

We find that:

- a) France is moving towards a crisis;
- b) sensing this crisis and fearing it, the Right-wing elements are raising their head and trying to drag the Party back;
- c) the immediate task of the Party is to eliminate the Right danger, to isolate the Rights;
- d) in order to isolate the Rights, a concentration is needed of all the genuinely communist leaders within the leadership of the Party who are capable of waging a fight against the Rights to a finish;
- e) in order that the concentration of forces may yield the desired results in the fight against the Rights and in preparing the workers for the revolutionary crisis, it is necessary that the leading group should have the backing of the trade unions and should be able to maintain proletarian contact with the trade unions and their officials;
- f) there should be no infatuation in practical work for the method of amputation, the method of repressive measures against individual comrades, but that use must be made chiefly of the method of persuasion.

Notes

1. The Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Comintern was held in Moscow, February 17 to March 15, 1926. It discussed reports on the work of the E.C.C.I. and the Communist Party of Great Britain, reports on the immediate tasks of Communists in the trade-union movement, and on the results of the Second Organisational Conference, and reports of the twelve commissions which were working at the plenum. The plenum devoted special attention to the tasks of Communists in the fight for the revolutionary unity of the international trade-union movement on the basis of united front tactics. J. V. Stalin was elected a member of the Presidium, a member of the Political, Eastern and French Commissions of the plenum, and chairman of the German Commission.

2. The reference is to the profound revolutionary crisis in Germany in the autumn of 1923.

3. Bulletin Communiste—a fortnightly newspaper, the organ of the Right wing of the French Communist Party, published in Paris. The first issue appeared in October 1925, and the newspaper ceased publication after the fifteenth issue, in January 1926. The last issue carried an anti-Party declaration of the Right wing of the French Communist Party.

International Communist Women's Day

Ardent greetings to working women and women toilers throughout the world who are uniting in one common family of labour around the socialist proletariat.

I wish them every success:

- 1) in strengthening the international ties of the workers of all countries and achieving the victory of the proletarian revolution;
- 2) in emancipating the backward sections of women toilers from intellectual and economic bondage to the bourgeoisie;
- 3) in uniting the peasant women around the proletariat—the leader of the revolution and of socialist construction;
- 4) in making the two sections of the oppressed masses, which are still unequal in status, a single army of fighters for the abolition of all inequality and of all oppression, for the victory of the proletariat, and for the building of a new, socialist society in our country.

Long live International Communist Women's Day!

J. Stalin

**Speech Delivered in the German Commission
of the Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I.
March 8, 1926**

Comrades, I have only a few remarks to make.

1. Some comrades are of the opinion that, if the interests of the U.S.S.R. were to demand it, it would be the duty of the Communist Parties of the West to adopt a Right-wing policy. I do not agree, comrades. I must say that this assumption is absolutely incompatible with the principles by which we Russian comrades are guided in our work. I cannot imagine a situation ever arising in which the interests of our Soviet Republic would require deviations to the Right on the part of our brother parties. For what does pursuing a Right-wing policy mean? It means betraying the interests of the working class in one way or another. I cannot imagine that the interests of the U.S.S.R. could require our brother parties to betray the interests of the working class, even for a single moment. I cannot imagine that the interests of our Republic, which is the base of the world-wide revolutionary proletarian movement, could require not the maximum revolutionary spirit and political activity of the workers of the West, but a diminution of their activity, a blunting of their revolutionary spirit. Such an assumption is insulting to us, to the Russian comrades. I therefore consider it my duty to dissociate myself wholly and completely from such an absurd and absolutely unacceptable assumption.

2. About the Central Committee of the German Communist Party. We hear the voices of certain intellectuals asserting that the Central Committee of the German Communist Party is weak, that its leadership is feeble, that the work is adversely affected by the absence of intellectual forces in the Central Committee, that the Central Committee does not exist, and so forth. That is all untrue, comrades. I consider such talk as the antics of intellectuals, unworthy of Communists. The present Central Committee of the German Communist Party did not take shape accidentally. It was born in the struggle against Right-wing errors. It gained strength in the struggle against "ultra-Left" errors. It is therefore neither Right, nor "ultra-Left." It is a Leninist Central Committee. It is precisely that leading working-class group which the German Communist Party needs just now.

It is said that theoretical knowledge is not a strong point with the present Central Committee. What of it?—if the policy is correct, theoretical knowledge will come in due course. Knowledge is something acquirable; if you haven't got it today, you may get it tomorrow. But a correct policy, such as the Central Committee of the German Communist Party is now pursuing, is not so easily mastered by certain conceited intellectuals. The strength of the present Central Committee lies in the fact that it is pursuing a correct Leninist policy, and that is something which the puny intellectuals who pride themselves on their "knowledge" refuse to recognise. In the opinion of certain comrades, it is enough for an intellectual to have read some two or three books, or to have written a couple of pamphlets, for him to lay claim to the right of leading the Party. That is wrong, comrades. It is ridiculously wrong. You may have written whole tomes on philosophy, but if you have not mastered the correct policy of the Central Committee of the German Communist Party, you cannot be allowed at the helm of the Party.

Comrade Thälmann, use the services of these intellectuals if they really want to serve the cause of the working class, or send them to the devil if they are determined to command at all costs. . . . The fact that workers predominate in the present Central Committee is a big asset for the German Communist Party.

What is the task of the German Communist Party? It is to find a path to the masses of workers with a Social-Democratic outlook who have gone astray in the wilderness of Social-Democratic confusion, and thus win over the majority of the working class to the side of the Communist Party. Its task is to help its brothers who have gone astray to find the right road and link up with the Communist Party. There are two possible methods of approach to the working-class masses. One, which is characteristic of the intellectuals, is the method of lashing out at the workers, of “winning over” the workers whip in hand, so to speak. It does not need proof that this method has nothing in common with the communist method, because it only repels the workers instead of attracting them. The other method lies in finding a common language with our brothers who have gone astray and who have landed in the camp of the Social-Democrats, helping them to extricate themselves from the Social-Democratic wilderness, and making it easier for them to come over to the side of communism. This method of work is the only communist one. That the present Central Committee is of proletarian composition is a fact which greatly facilitates the application of this latter method in Germany. It is to this that must be attributed those successes in forming a united front which the present Central Committee of the German Communist Party undoubtedly has to its credit.

3. About Meyer. I listened attentively to Meyer’s sensible speech. But I must say that there was one point in it with which I cannot agree. It follows from what Meyer says that it was not he that came over to the Central Committee of the German Communist Party but, on the contrary, it was the Central Committee that came over to him. That is not true, comrades. He did not say so explicitly, but that idea was implicit in his whole speech. It is not true, it is a profound mistake. The present Central Committee was born in the struggle against the Rights, in whose ranks Meyer was active until recently. The Central Committee cannot become Right-wing, if it does not want to go against its very nature, if it does not want to turn back the wheel of the history of the German Communist Party. If, nevertheless, Meyer has begun to come closer to this Central Committee, it follows from this that he has begun to move to the Left, has begun to realise the errors of the Rights, has begun to turn away from the Rights. Consequently, it is not the Central Committee that is moving towards Meyer, but, on the contrary, it is Meyer that is moving towards the Central Committee. He is moving towards the Central Committee, but he has not reached it yet. He has still to take another two or three steps away from the Rights towards the Central Committee fully to arrive at the position of the present leadership of the German Communist Party. I am far from regarding Meyer as a leper, I am not recommending that he should be kept at a distance; all I am saying is that he has to take another two or three steps forward if he wants to identify himself completely with the position of the present Central Committee of the German Communist Party.

4. About Scholem. I shall not dwell at length on the German “ultra-Lefts” and on Scholem’s policy. Quite enough has been said about that here. I only want to focus attention on one passage in his speech and to examine it critically. Scholem is now in favour of inner-party democracy. He therefore proposes that a general discussion should be started—that Brandler and Radek and everybody, from the Rights to the “ultra-Lefts,” should be invited, a general amnesty declared and a general discussion opened. That would be wrong, comrades. We don’t want that. Previously, Scholem was opposed to inner-party democracy. Now he is running to the other extreme and declaring in favour of unlimited and absolutely unrestrained democracy. Heaven save us from such democracy! The Russians have an apt saying: “Tell a fool to kneel and pray, and he will split his forehead bowing.” (Laughter.) No, we don’t want that sort of democracy. The German Communist Party has already recovered from the disease of Rightism. There would be no sense now in infecting it with the disease artificially. What

the German Communist Party is now suffering from is the disease of “ultra-Leftism.” There would be no sense in intensifying this disease—it has to be eradicated, not intensified. It is not just any kind of discussion or any kind of democracy that we need, but such discussion and such democracy as will be of benefit to the communist movement in Germany. I am therefore opposed to Scholem’s general amnesty.

5. About the Ruth Fischer group. So much has been said about this group here that it remains for me to say only a few words. I consider that of all the undesirable and objectionable groups in the German Communist Party, this group is the most undesirable and the most objectionable. One “ultra-Left” proletarian observed here that the workers are losing faith in the leaders. If that is true, it is very sad. For where there is no faith in the leaders there can be no real party. But who is to blame for that? The Ruth Fischer group is to blame, with its double-dealing in politics, its habit of saying one thing and doing another, and the eternal divergence between words and deeds that characterises the practice of this diplomatic group. The workers can have no faith in the leaders when the leaders have grown rotten from playing a diplomatic game, when their words are not backed by their deeds, when they say one thing and do another.

Why did the Russian workers have such unbounded faith in Lenin? Was it only because his policy was correct? No, it was not only because of that. They had faith in Lenin also because they knew that his words and his deeds were never at variance, that Lenin “will not let you down.” That, among other things, was the basis on which Lenin’s prestige was built. That was the method by which Lenin educated the workers, that was how he implanted in them faith in their leaders. The method of the Ruth Fischer group, the method of rotten diplomacy, is the direct opposite of Lenin’s method. I can respect and believe Bordiga, although I do not consider him a Leninist or a Marxist; I can believe him because he says what he thinks. I can even believe Scholem, who does not always say what he thinks (laughter), but who sometimes says more than he means to. (Laughter.) But with the best will in the world I cannot for a single moment believe Ruth Fischer, for she never says what she thinks. That is why I consider the Ruth Fischer group the most objectionable of all the objectionable groups in the German Communist Party.

6. About Urbahns. I have a great respect for Urbahns as a revolutionary. I am prepared to pay him homage for having conducted himself so well at the trial. But I must say that with these virtues of Urbahns’s alone one cannot get very far. Revolutionary spirit is a good thing. Staunchness is even better. But if these virtues are all you have to your credit, it is very little—dreadfully little, comrades. Such assets may last you a month or two, but then they will fail, will most certainly fail, if they are not reinforced by a correct policy. An implacable struggle is now being waged in the German Communist Party between the Central Committee and the Katz gang. Where does Urbahns stand? With the Katz gang or with the Central Committee? With the petty-bourgeois philosopher Korsch or with the Central Committee? He has got to choose. He cannot stick half-way between these contending forces. Urbahns must have the courage to say frankly and honestly where he stands: with the Central Committee or with its rabid opponents. Here the utmost definiteness is required. Urbahns’s misfortune is that he, apparently, still lacks this definiteness, that he suffers from political short-sightedness. Political short-sightedness may be forgiven once, it may be forgiven twice; but if short-sightedness becomes a policy, it borders on the criminal. That is why I consider that Urbahns must define his position frankly and honestly, if he does not want to forfeit the last vestiges of his influence in the Party. The working-class masses cannot live by remembering how well Urbahns conducted himself at the trial. The working-class masses need a correct policy. If

Urbahns proves to have no clear and definite policy, then one does not have to be a prophet to foretell that of his prestige not even the memory will remain.

**The Economic Situation of the Soviet Union
and the Policy of the Party
Report to the Active of the Leningrad Party Organisation on the Work of the Plenum of
the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.) 1
April 13, 1926**

Comrades, permit me to begin my report.

There were four items on the agenda of the April plenum of the Central Committee of our Party.

The first item was the economic situation of our country and the economic policy of our Party.

The second item was the reorganisation of our grain procurement agencies with a view to making them simpler and cheaper.

The third item was the plan of work of the Political Bureau of our Central Committee and of the plenum of the Central Committee for 1926, from the view-point of working out the principal key questions of our economic construction.

The fourth item was the replacement of Yevdokimov as Secretary of the Central Committee by another candidate—Comrade Shvernik.

Leaving aside the last item—the replacement of one secretary by another—it may be said that all the others, which formed the main axis around which the discussion at the plenum of the Central Committee turned, could be reduced to a single basic question—the economic situation of our country and the policy of the Party. In my report, therefore, I shall deal with this one basic question—the economic situation of our country.

I

TWO PERIODS OF NEP

The major factor determining our policy is that our country in the course of its economic development has entered a new period of NEP, a new period of the New Economic Policy, a period of direct industrialisation. It is now five years since the New Economic Policy was proclaimed by Vladimir Ilyich. The principal task which faced us, the Party, at that time was to lay a socialist foundation for our national economy under the conditions of the New Economic Policy, under the conditions of expanded trade. Today, too, this strategic task confronts us as our principal task. At that time, in the first period of NEP, beginning with 1922, we approached this principal task from the view-point of the development primarily of agriculture. Comrade Lenin said that our task was to lay a socialist foundation for the national economy, but that in order to lay such a foundation it was necessary to have a developed industry, because industry is the basis, the alpha and omega of socialism, of socialist construction, and in order to develop industry, it was necessary to begin with agriculture.

Why?

Because in order to expand industry under the conditions of economic disruption which we were then experiencing, it was necessary first of all to create certain prerequisites for industry in the way of markets, raw materials and food. Industry cannot be developed out of nothing at

all; industry cannot be developed if there are no raw materials in the country, if there is no food for the workers, and if agriculture, which represents the chief market for our industry, is not developed to at least some extent. Consequently, in order to develop industry, at least three prerequisites were necessary: firstly, a home market—and our home market so far is predominantly a peasant market; secondly, it was necessary to have a more or less developed output of agricultural raw materials (sugar beet, flax, cotton, etc.); thirdly, it was necessary that the countryside should be able to provide a certain minimum of agricultural produce for supplying industry, for supplying the workers. That is why Lenin said that for laying a socialist foundation for our economy, for building industry, we should have to begin with agriculture.

There were many at that time who did not believe this. Objections on this score were raised especially by the so-called “Workers’ Opposition.” How can that be? it said: our Party calls itself a workers’ party, yet it is beginning the development of the economy with agriculture. How, it said, is that to be understood? Objections were also raised at that time by other oppositionists, who believed that industry can be built in any conditions, even if starting with nothing, and without taking the real possibilities into account. But the history of the economic development of our country in that period has clearly shown that the Party was right, that in order to lay a socialist foundation for our economy, in order to develop industry, it was necessary to begin with agriculture.

That was the first period of the New Economic Policy.

Now we have entered the second period of NEP. The most important and most characteristic feature of our economy today is that the centre of gravity has shifted to industry. Whereas at that time, in the first period of the New Economic Policy, we had to begin with agriculture, because on it depended the development of the whole national economy, now, in order to continue laying the socialist foundation of our economy, in order to promote our economy as a whole, it is on industry that we must focus attention. Agriculture itself can now make no progress if it is not promptly supplied with agricultural machines, tractors, manufactured goods, etc. Consequently, whereas at that time, in the first period of the New Economic Policy, the development of the national economy as a whole depended on agriculture, now it depends, and has already depended, on the direct expansion of industry.

II THE COURSE TOWARDS INDUSTRIALISATION

That is the essence and basic significance of the slogan, of the course towards industrialising the country, which was proclaimed at the Fourteenth Party Congress, and which is now being put into effect. It was this basic slogan that the plenum of the Central Committee in April of this year took as the starting point of its work. Consequently, the immediate and fundamental task now is to hasten the tempo of development of our industry, to promote our industry to the utmost by utilising the resources at our disposal, and thereby to accelerate the development of the economy as a whole.

This task has become particularly urgent just now, at the present juncture, among other reasons because a certain discrepancy has arisen, owing to the way our economy has developed, between the demand for manufactured goods in town and country and the supply of those goods by industry, because the demand for industrial products is growing faster than industry itself, because the goods shortage we are now experiencing, with all its attendant consequences, is a reflection and outcome of this discrepancy. It scarcely needs proof that the

swift development of our industry is the surest way to eliminate this discrepancy and to put an end to the goods shortage.

Some comrades think that industrialization implies the development of any kind of industry. There are even some queer fellows who believe that Ivan the Terrible was an industrialist, because in his day he created certain embryonic industries. If we follow this line of argument, then Peter the Great should be styled the first industrialist. That, of course, is untrue. Not every kind of industrial development is industrialisation. The centre of industrialisation, the basis for it, is the development of heavy industry (fuel, metal, etc.), the development, in the last analysis, of the production of the means of production, the development of our own machine-building industry. Industrialisation has the task not only of increasing the share of manufacturing industry in our national economy as a whole; it has also the task, within this development, of ensuring economic independence for our country, surrounded as it is by capitalist states, of safeguarding it from being converted into an appendage of world capitalism. Encircled as it is by capitalism, the land of the dictatorship of the proletariat cannot remain economically independent if it does not itself produce instruments and means of production in its own country, if it remains stuck at a level of development where it has to keep its national economy tethered to the capitalistically developed countries, which produce and export instruments and means of production. To get stuck at that level would be to put, ourselves in subjection to world capital.

Take India. India, as everyone knows, is a colony. Has India an industry? It undoubtedly has. Is it developing? Yes, it is. But the kind of industry developing there is not one which produces instruments and means of production. India imports its instruments of production from Britain. Because of this (although, of course, not only because of this), India's industry is completely subordinated to British industry. That is a specific method of imperialism—to develop industry in the colonies in such a way as to keep it tethered to the metropolitan country, to imperialism.

But it follows from this that the industrialisation of our country cannot consist merely in the development of any kind of industry, of light industry, say, although light industry and its development are absolutely essential for us. It follows from this that industrialisation is to be understood above all as the development of heavy industry in our country, and especially of our own machine-building industry, which is the principal nerve of industry in general. Without this, there can be no question of ensuring the economic independence of our country.

III QUESTIONS OF SOCIALIST ACCUMULATION

But, comrades, in order that industrialisation may go forward, our old factory equipment must be renovated and new factories built. The distinguishing feature of the present period of development of our industry is that the mills and factories bequeathed to us by the capitalists of the tsarist period are already being operated to capacity, to the full, and in order to make further progress now the technical equipment must be improved, the old factories must be re-equipped and new ones built. Unless this is done, it will be impossible now to go forward.

But, comrades, in order to renovate our industry on the basis of new technical equipment, we need considerable, very considerable, amounts of capital. And we are very short of capital, as you all know. This year we shall be able to assign something over 800 millions for the fundamental cause of capital investment in industry. That, of course, is not much. But it is something. It will be our first substantial investment in our industry. I say it is not much,

because our industry could quite comfortably absorb several times that sum. We have to advance our industry. We have to expand our industry as swiftly as possible, to double or treble the number of workers. We have to convert our country from an agrarian into an industrial country—and the sooner the better. But all this requires considerable capital.

Consequently, the question of accumulation for the development of industry, the question of socialist accumulation, has now become one of first-rate importance for us.

Are we able, are we in a position, left to our own devices, without foreign loans, on the basis of the internal resources of our country, to ensure for our industry such accumulation and such reserves as are essential for pursuing the course towards industrialisation, for the victory of socialist construction in our country?

That is a serious question, to which special attention should be devoted.

Various methods of industrialisation are known to history.

Britain was industrialised owing to the fact that it, plundered colonies for decades and centuries, gathered “surplus” capital there, which it invested in its own industry, and thus accelerated its own industrialisation. That is one method of industrialisation.

Germany hastened its industrialisation as a result of its victorious war with France in the seventies of the last century, when it levied an indemnity of 5,000 million francs on the French and poured these funds into its own industry. That is a second method of industrialisation.

Both these methods are barred to us, for we are a land of Soviets, for colonial plunder, and armed conquest with the aim of plunder, are incompatible with the nature of the Soviet power.

Russia, the old Russia, leased out concessions and received loans on enslaving terms, endeavouring in this way gradually to get on to the road to industrialisation. That is a third method. But it was the road to bondage, or semi-bondage, to the conversion of Russia into a semi-colony. That road, too, is barred to us, for we did not wage civil war for three years and repel interventionists of every type only in order, after victory over the interventionists, to enter voluntarily into bondage to the imperialists.

There remains a fourth road to industrialisation. That is to find funds for industry out of our own savings, the way of socialist accumulation, to which Comrade Lenin repeatedly drew attention as the only way of industrialising our country.

Well, then, is the industrialisation of our country possible on the basis of socialist accumulation?

Have we the sources for such accumulation, sufficient to ensure industrialisation?

Yes, it is possible. Yes, we do have the sources. I might refer to such a fact as the expropriation of the landlords and capitalists in our country as a result of the October Revolution, the abolition of private ownership of the land, mills, factories, etc., and their conversion into public property. It scarcely needs proof that this fact represents a fairly substantial source of accumulation.

I might refer, further, to such a fact as the annulment of the tsarist debts, which removed a burden of thousands of millions of rubles of indebtedness from our national economy. It should not be forgotten that if these debts had remained, we should have had to pay annually several hundreds of millions in interest alone, to the detriment of our industry and our entire national economy. There is no question that this circumstance has greatly facilitated the matter of accumulation.

I might point to our nationalised industry, which has been restored and is developing, and which yields a certain amount of profit necessary for the further development of industry. That is also a source of accumulation.

I might point to our nationalised foreign trade, which yields a certain amount of profit and which, consequently, also represents a certain source of accumulation.

One might also refer to our more or less organised state home trade, which likewise yields some profit and hence also represents a certain source of accumulation.

One might point to such a lever for accumulation as our nationalised banking system, which yields some profit and within the measure of its capacity supplies funds for our industry.

Lastly, we have such a weapon as the state power, which is in control of the state budget and which sets aside a certain sum of money for the further development of our economy in general, and of our industry in particular.

Those, in the main, are our chief sources of internal accumulation.

They are of interest because they provide us with the possibility of creating those necessary reserves without which the industrialisation of our country is impossible.

But possibility, comrades, is not yet actuality. As a result of incompetent management a pretty wide gap may develop between the possibility of accumulation and actual accumulation. We cannot, therefore, rest content with possibilities alone. We must convert the possibility of socialist accumulation into actual accumulation, if we are really thinking of creating the necessary reserves for our industry.

The question therefore arises: how are we to conduct the business of accumulation so that our industry will feel its benefits; what key points of our economic life must we concentrate on first of all in order that the possibility of accumulation may be converted into actual socialist accumulation?

There exists a number of channels of accumulation, and the chief of them, at least, should be mentioned. Firstly. It is necessary that the surpluses from accumulation in the country should not be dissipated, but should be gathered together in our credit institutions—co-operative and state—and also by means of domestic loans, in order that they may be utilised primarily for the needs of industry. Naturally, the depositors should be paid a certain rate of interest. It cannot be said that in this field matters have been at all satisfactory. But the problem of improving our credit network, of enhancing the prestige of our credit institutions in the eyes of the public, and of floating internal loans is certainly one of the immediate problems confronting us, and we must solve it at all costs.

Secondly. We must carefully plug up all those channels and orifices through which part of the surpluses from accumulation in the country flow into the pockets of private capitalists to the detriment of socialist accumulation. This makes it necessary to pursue a policy in regard to prices which will not create a gulf between wholesale and retail prices. All measures must be taken to reduce retail prices of manufactured goods and agricultural produce, so as to stop, or at least to reduce to a minimum, the seepage of surpluses from accumulation into the pocket of the private capitalist. That is one of the cardinal questions of our economic policy. It is a source of serious danger both to the work of our accumulation and to the chervonets.

Thirdly. Within industry itself and every one of its branches, certain reserves must be set aside for the amortisation of enterprises and for their expansion and further development. That is a matter which is absolutely necessary and essential, and we must go ahead with it at all costs.

Fourthly. The state must accumulate certain reserves needed to insure the country against all kinds of contingencies (crop failure), to keep industry supplied, to support agriculture, to promote culture, etc. We cannot live and function nowadays without reserves. Even the peasant, with his small farm, cannot manage nowadays without certain reserves. Still less can the state in a big country manage without reserves.

We must above all have a foreign trade reserve. Our exports and imports must be so arranged that a certain reserve, a certain favourable balance of trade, remains in the hands of the state. That is absolutely necessary not only to insure ourselves against surprises in the foreign markets, but also as a means of supporting our chervonets, which so far is stable, but, which may begin to fluctuate if we do not secure a favourable balance of trade. The task is to increase our exports and to adapt our imports to our export possibilities.

We cannot say, as used to be said in the old days: "We shall export even if we go short of food ourselves." We cannot say that, because our workers and peasants want a human standard of eating, and we fully support them in that. We could, nevertheless, without detriment to home consumption, adopt every measure so as to increase our exports, and so that a certain reserve of foreign currency remains in the hands of the state. If, in 1923, we were able to abandon the Soviet paper money for a firm currency, one of the reasons was that we then had a certain reserve of foreign currency, thanks to a favourable balance of trade. If we want to keep our chervonets firm, we must continue to manage our foreign trade in such a way as to leave us with a foreign currency reserve as one of the bases for our chervonets.

Further, we need certain reserves in the sphere of home trade. What I have chiefly in mind is the accumulation of grain reserves in the hands of the state so as to enable it to intervene in the grain market and combat the kulaks and other grain speculators who are inordinately forcing up prices of agricultural produce. That is essential if only to avert the danger of the cost of living being artificially forced up in the industrial centres and the wages of the workers being undermined.

Lastly, we need a taxation policy which will shift the burden of taxation on to the shoulders of the well-to-do strata, and at the same time create a certain reserve at the disposal of the state in the sphere of the state budget. The course of execution of our 4,000 million ruble state budget indicates that our revenue may exceed our expenditure by about one hundred million rubles or more. To some comrades this figure seems enormous. But these comrades, apparently, have poor eyesight, otherwise they would have observed that for a country like ours a reserve of one hundred million rubles is a drop in the ocean. There are some who think

that we do not need this reserve at all. But what if there should be a crop failure or some other calamity in our country this year? What funds are we to have recourse to? Nobody, surely, is going to give us help for nothing. Consequently, we must have something laid by of our own. And if nothing untoward happens this year, we shall use this reserve for the national economy, for industry in the first place. Rest assured, these reserves will not be wasted.

Such in the main, comrades, are the key points of our economic life which we must concentrate on first of all in order that the possibility of internal accumulation for the industrialisation of our country may be converted into actual socialist accumulation.

IV

THE PROPER USE OF ACCUMULATIONS. THE REGIME OF ECONOMY

But accumulation is not by any means the whole of the problem, nor can it be. We must also know how to spend the accumulated reserves wisely and thriftily, so that not a single kopek of the people's wealth is wasted and so that the accumulated funds are used for the main purpose of satisfying the vital requirements of the industrialisation of our country. Unless these conditions are observed, we shall run the risk of our accumulated funds being misappropriated or dissipated on all sorts of minor and major expenditures which have nothing to do either with the development of industry or with the advancement of our national economy as a whole. The ability to expend funds wisely and thriftily is a most valuable art, and one which is not acquired all at once. It cannot be said that we, our Soviet and co-operative bodies, are marked by great ability in this respect. On the contrary, all the evidence goes to show that things are far from satisfactory in this field. It is hard to have to admit it, comrades, but it is a fact which no resolutions can cover up. There are times when our administrative bodies resemble the peasant who saved up a little money and, instead of using it to re-equip his farm and acquire new implements, bought a great big gramophone and—came to grief. I say nothing of the cases of downright misappropriation of accumulated reserves, of the extravagance of a number of agencies of our state apparatus, of embezzlement, etc.

A series of effective measures must therefore be taken to save our accumulations from being dissipated, misappropriated, dispersed into unnecessary channels, or otherwise diverted from the main line of building up our industry.

It is necessary, in the first place, that our industrial plans should not be the product of bureaucratic fancy, but that they should be closely co-ordinated with the state of the national economy, taking into account our country's resources and reserves. The planning of industrial construction must not lag behind the development of industry. But, neither must it run too far ahead, losing touch with agriculture and disregarding the rate of accumulation in our country.

The demand of our home market and the extent of our resources—these are the foundation for the expansion of our industry. Our industry is based on the home market. In this respect the economic development of our country resembles that of the United States, whose industry grew up on the basis of the home market, in contrast to Britain, whose industry is primarily based on foreign markets. There are a number of branches of industry in Britain forty or fifty per cent of whose output is for foreign markets. America, on the contrary, still relies on its home market, exporting to foreign markets not more than ten or twelve per cent of her output. The industry of our country will rely upon the home market—primarily the peasant market—to an even greater extent than American industry does. That is the basis of the bond between industry and peasant economy.

The same must be said of our rate of accumulation, of the reserves available for the development of our industry. Among us there is sometimes a fondness for drawing up fantastic industrial plans, without taking our actual resources into account. People sometimes forget that you can build neither industrial plans nor any “broad” and “all-embracing” enterprises without a certain minimum of funds, a certain minimum of reserves. They forget this and run too far ahead. And what does running too far ahead in the matter of industrial planning mean? It means building beyond your resources. It means noisily proclaiming ambitious plans, drawing thousands and tens of thousands of additional workers into production, raising a great hullabaloo and later, when it is discovered that funds are inadequate, discharging workers, paying them off, incurring immense losses, sowing disillusionment in our constructive efforts, and causing a political scandal. Do we need that? No, comrades, we do not. We must neither lag behind the actual development of industry, nor run ahead of it. We must keep abreast of the development of our industry and impel it forward, without however cutting it off from its base.

Our industry is the leading element in the entire system of the national economy; it draws with it and leads forward our national economy, including agriculture. It reshapes our entire national economy in its own image and likeness; it leads agriculture along with it, drawing the peasantry, through the co-operative movement, into the channel of socialist construction. But our industry can fulfil this leading and transforming role with honour only if it does not get out of touch with agriculture, only if it does not disregard our rate of accumulation, the resources and reserves at our disposal. An army command which gets out of touch with its army and loses contact with it is not a command. Similarly, industry that gets out of touch with the national economy as a whole and loses contact with it, cannot be the leading element in the national economy.

That is why correct and intelligent industrial planning is an indispensable condition for the expedient use of accumulations.

It is necessary, in the second place, to reduce and simplify our state and co-operative apparatus, our budget-maintained and self-maintained institutions, from top to bottom, to put them on sounder lines and make them cheaper. The inflated establishments and unparalleled extravagance of our administrative agencies have become a by-word. It was not without reason that Lenin asserted scores and hundreds of times that the unwieldiness and costliness of our state apparatus were too great a burden on the workers and peasants, and that it had to be reduced and made cheaper at all costs and by every available means. It is high time to set about this in earnest, in a Bolsheviki way, and to introduce a regime of the strictest economy. (Applause.) It is high time to set about this, if we do not want to go on allowing our accumulations to be dissipated, to the detriment of industry.

Here is a vivid example. It is said that our grain exports are unprofitable, do not pay. And why are they unprofitable? Because our procurement agencies spend more on procuring grain than they should. It has been established by all our planning bodies that the procurement of one pood of grain should cost not more than 8 kopeks. But it turns out that instead of 8 kopeks, they have been spending 13 kopeks per pood, an excess of 5 kopeks. And how has this happened? It has happened because every more or less independent procurement agent—whether Communist or non-Party—before proceeding to procure grain considers it necessary to inflate his staff of assistants, to provide himself with an army of stenographers and typists, and, of course, to provide himself with a car, and he incurs a heap of unproductive expenditure—so that later, when the accounts are made up, it is found that our exports do not

pay. Bearing in mind that we procure hundreds of millions of poods of grain, and that on each pood we pay an excess of 5 kopeks, the result is tens of millions of rubles wasted. That is where the funds we accumulate are going and will continue to go if we do not adopt the strictest measures to stop the extravagance of our state apparatus.

I have given only one solitary example. But who does not know that we have hundreds and thousands of such examples.

The plenum of the Central Committee of our Party decided to simplify our procurement apparatus and make it cheaper. You have probably read the resolution of the plenum² on this point—it was published in the press. We shall put that resolution into force with the utmost rigour. But that is not enough, comrades. That is only one tiny section of the inefficiency and shortcomings of our state apparatus. We must go further and adopt measures to reduce the size and cost of our entire state apparatus, both budget-maintained and self-maintained, of the whole co-operative apparatus and of the whole goods distribution network, from top to bottom.

It is necessary, in the third place, for us to wage a determined struggle against every species of extravagance in our administrative bodies and in everyday life, against that criminal attitude towards the people's wealth and state reserves which has been noticeable among us of late. We see prevailing among us now a regular riot, an orgy, of all kinds of fêtes, celebration meetings, jubilees, unveilings of monuments and the like. Scores and hundreds of thousands of rubles are squandered on these "affairs." There is such a multitude of celebrities of all kinds to be fêted and of lovers of celebrations, so staggering is the readiness to celebrate every kind of anniversary—semi-annual, annual, biennial and so on—that truly tens of millions of rubles are needed to satisfy the demand. Comrades, we must put a stop to this profligacy, which is unworthy of Communists. It is high time to understand that, with the needs of industry to provide for, and faced by such facts as the mass of unemployed and of homeless children, we cannot tolerate and have no right to tolerate this profligacy and this orgy of squandering.

Most noteworthy of all is the fact that a more thrifty attitude towards state funds is sometimes to be observed among non-Party people than among Party people. A Communist engages in this sort of thing with greater boldness and readiness. It means nothing to him to distribute money allowances to a batch of his employees and call these gifts bonuses, although there is nothing in the nature of a bonus about it. It means nothing to him to over-step, or evade, or violate the law. Non-Party people are more cautious and restrained in this respect. The reason presumably is that some Communists are inclined to regard the law, the state and such things as a family matter. (Laughter.) This explains why some Communists do not scruple sometimes to intrude like pigs (pardon the expression, comrades) into the state's vegetable garden and snatch what they can or display their generosity at the expense of the state. (Laughter.) This scandalous state of affairs must be stopped, comrades. We must launch a determined struggle against profligacy, and squandering in our administrative bodies and in everyday life, if we are sincerely desirous of husbanding our accumulations for the needs of industry.

It is necessary, in the fourth place, to conduct a systematic struggle against theft, against what is known as "carefree" theft, in our state bodies, in the co-operatives, in the trade unions, etc. There is shamefaced and surreptitious theft, and there is bold-faced, or "carefree" theft, as the press calls it. I recently read an item by Okunev in Komsomolskaya Pravda about "carefree"

theft. There was, it appears, a foppish young fellow with a moustache, who carried on his “carefree” theft in one of our institutions. He stole systematically and incessantly, and always without mishap. The noteworthy thing is not so much the thief himself, as the fact that the people around him, who knew that he was a thief, not only did nothing to stop him but, on the contrary, were more inclined to clap him on the back and praise him for his dexterity, so that the thief became something of a hero in the eyes of the public. That is what deserves attention, comrades, and is the most dangerous thing of all. When a spy or a traitor is caught, there are no bounds to the indignation of the public, which demands that he be shot. But when a thief operates in the sight of all and steals state property, the people around him just smile good-naturedly and pat him on the back. Yet it is obvious that a thief who steals the people’s wealth and undermines the interests of the national economy is no better, if not worse, than a spy or a traitor. Finally, of course, this fellow, the fop with the moustache, was arrested. But what does the arrest of one “carefree” thief signify? There are hundreds and thousands of them. You cannot get rid of them all with the help of the G.P.U. Another measure, a more important and effective one, is needed here. It consists in creating around such petty thieves an atmosphere of moral ostracism and public detestation. It consists in launching such a campaign and creating such a moral atmosphere among the workers and peasants as to prevent the possibility of thieving and to make life difficult and impossible for thieves and pilferers of the people’s wealth—whether “carefree” or not. The task is to combat theft—as one of the means of protecting our accumulations from misappropriation.

It is necessary, lastly, to conduct a campaign to put a stop to absenteeism at the mills and factories, to raise the productivity of labour and to strengthen labour discipline in our enterprises. Tens and hundreds of thousands of man-days are lost to industry owing to absenteeism. Hundreds of thousands and millions of rubles are lost as a result, to the detriment of our industry. We shall not be able to advance our industry, we shall not be able to raise wages, if absenteeism is not stopped, if productivity of labour remains stationary. It must be explained to the workers, and especially to those who have only recently entered the mills and factories, that by absenteeism and by not helping to raise labour productivity, they are acting to the detriment of the common cause, to the detriment of the entire working class, and to the detriment of our industry. The task is to combat absenteeism and to fight for enhanced productivity of labour in the interests of our industry, in the interests of the working class as a whole.

Such are the ways and means that must be adopted to protect our accumulations and reserves from being dissipated and misappropriated, and to ensure that they are used for the industrialisation of our country.

V

WE MUST CREATE CADRES OF BUILDERS OF INDUSTRY

I have spoken of the course towards industrialisation. I have spoken of the ways of accumulating reserves for the development of industrialisation. I have spoken, lastly, of how the accumulations should be rationally used for the needs of industry. But all that, comrades, is not enough. If the Party’s directive concerning the industrialisation of our country is to be carried out, it is necessary, over and above all that, to create cadres of new people, cadres of new builders of industry.

No task, and especially so great a task as the industrialisation of our country, can be accomplished without human beings, without new people, without cadres of new builders. Formerly, at the time of the Civil War, we were especially in need of commanding cadres for

building the army and waging war—regimental, brigade, divisional and corps commanders. Without those new commanding cadres, who had come from the rank and file and had risen owing to their ability, we could not have built up an army and could not have defeated our numerous enemies. It was they, the new commanding cadres, who saved our army and our country in those days—with the general support, of course, of the workers and peasants. But we are now in the period of the building of industry. We have passed now from the fronts of the Civil War to the front of industry. Accordingly, we now need new commanding cadres for industry—capable directors of mills and factories, competent executives of trusts, efficient, trade managers, intelligent planners of industrial development. We now have to create new regimental, brigade, divisional and corps commanders for economy, for industry. Without such people, we shall not be able to advance one step.

The task therefore is to create numerous cadres of builders of industry from the ranks of the workers and the Soviet intelligentsia—that Soviet intelligentsia which has thrown in its lot with the working class and which, together with us, is laying the socialist foundation of our economy.

The task is to create such cadres and to bring them to the fore, giving them every assistance.

It has become customary of late to castigate business executives on the charge of moral corruption, and there is often a disposition to extend what are individual faults to business executives in general. Anyone who takes the fancy can come along and give a kick to a business executive and accuse him of all the mortal sins. That, comrades, is a bad habit, and must be dropped once and for all. It must be realised that there is a black sheep in every family. It must be realised that the industrialisation of our country and the promotion of new cadres of builders of industry is a task that requires not scourging our business executives, but rendering them every support in building our industry. Our business executives must be surrounded with an atmosphere of confidence and support, they must be assisted in the work of moulding new people—builders of industry, and the post of builder of industry must be made a post of honour in socialist construction. Those are the lines along which our Party organisations must now work.

VI

WE MUST RAISE THE ACTIVITY OF THE WORKING CLASS

Such are the immediate tasks confronting us in connection with the course towards the industrialisation of our country.

Can these tasks be accomplished without the direct assistance and support of the working class? No, they cannot. Advancing our industry, raising its productivity, creating new cadres of builders of industry, correctly conducting socialist accumulation, sensibly using accumulations for the needs of industry, establishing a regime of the strictest economy, tightening up the state apparatus, making it operate cheaply and honestly, purging it of the dross and filth which have adhered to it during the period of our work of construction, waging a systematic struggle against stealers and squanderers of state property—all these are tasks which no party can cope with without the direct and systematic support of the vast masses of the working class. Hence the task is to draw the vast masses of non-Party workers into all our constructive work. Every worker, every honest peasant must assist the Party and the Government in putting into effect a regime of economy, in combating the misappropriation and dissipation of state reserves, in getting rid of thieves and swindlers, no matter what disguise they assume, and in making our state apparatus healthier and cheaper. Inestimable

service in this respect could be rendered by production conferences. There was a time when production conferences were very much in vogue. Now, somehow, we don't hear about them. That is a great mistake, comrades. The production conferences must be revived at all costs. It is not only minor questions, for instance of hygiene, that must be put before them. Their programme must be made broader and more comprehensive. The principal questions of the building of industry must be placed before them. Only in that way is it possible to raise the activity of the vast masses of the working class and to make them conscious participants in the building of industry.

VII

WE MUST STRENGTHEN THE ALLIANCE OF THE WORKERS AND PEASANTS

But when speaking about raising the activity of the working class, we must not forget the peasantry. Lenin taught us that the alliance of the working class and peasantry is the basic principle of the dictatorship of the proletariat. That we must not forget. The development of industry, socialist accumulation, the regime of economy—all these are problems that must be solved if we are to gain the upper hand over private capital and put an end to our economic difficulties. But none of these problems could be solved in the absence of Soviet power, in the absence of the dictatorship of the proletariat. And the dictatorship of the proletariat rests upon an alliance of the working class and peasantry. Consequently, all our problems may remain unsolved if we undermine or weaken the alliance of the working class and peasantry.

There are people in the Party who look upon the labouring mass of the peasantry as a foreign body, as an object of exploitation for industry, as something in the nature of a colony for our industry. These are dangerous people, comrades. For the working class, the peasantry can be neither an object of exploitation nor a colony. Peasant economy is a market for industry, just as industry is a market for peasant economy. But the peasantry is not only our market. It is also an ally of the working class. For that very reason, improvement of peasant economy, mass organisation of the peasantry into co-operatives, and the raising of their standard of life, are prerequisites without which no serious development of our industry can be achieved. And, conversely, the development of industry, the production of agricultural machinery and tractors, and a plentiful supply of manufactured goods for the peasants are prerequisites without which there can be no advancement of agriculture. That is one of the most important bases of the alliance of the working class and peasantry. Hence we cannot agree with those comrades who every now and then urge that greater pressure should be exerted on the peasantry in the shape of excessive increases of taxation, higher prices of manufactured goods, and so on. We cannot agree with them because, without themselves being aware of it, they undermine the alliance of the working class and peasantry and shake the foundations of the dictatorship of the proletariat. And what we want is to strengthen, not undermine, the alliance of the working class and peasantry.

But it is not just any sort of alliance of the working class and peasantry that we advocate. We stand for an alliance in which the leading role belongs to the working class. Why? Because unless the working class plays the leading role in the system of the alliance of the workers and peasants, the toiling and exploited masses cannot defeat the landlords and capitalists. I know that certain comrades do not agree with this. They say: yes, the alliance is a good thing, but why also leadership by the working class? Those comrades are profoundly mistaken. They are mistaken because they do not realise that only an alliance of the workers and peasants that is led by the most experienced and revolutionary class, the working class, can be victorious.

Why did the peasant revolts of the tinge of Pugachov or Stepan Razin come to grief? Why did the peasants in those days fail to get rid of the landlords? Because they did not then have, and could not have had, such a revolutionary leader as the working class. Why did the French revolution end in a victory for the bourgeoisie and the return of the previously expelled landlords? Because the French peasants did not then have, and could not have had, such a revolutionary leader as the working class; at that time the peasants were led by bourgeois liberals. Ours is the only country in the world where an alliance of the workers and peasants has triumphed over the landlords and capitalists. How is this to be explained? By the fact that at the head of the revolutionary movement in our country there stood, and continues to stand, the battle-steeled class of the workers, The idea of leadership by the working class has only to be discredited, and the alliance of the workers and peasants in our country will be utterly destroyed, and the capitalists and landlords will return to their old nests.

That is why we must preserve and strengthen the alliance of the working class and peasantry in our country.

That is why we must preserve and strengthen the leadership of the working class in the system of that alliance.

VIII

WE MUST PUT INNER-PARTY DEMOCRACY INTO EFFECT

I have spoken of raising the activity of the working class, of the task of drawing the vast masses of the working class into the work of building our economy, into the work of building our industry. But raising the activity of the working class is a big and serious matter. In order to raise the activity of the working class, it is necessary first of all to raise the activity of the Party itself. The Party itself must firmly and resolutely adopt the course of inner-Party democracy; our organisations must draw the broad mass of the Party membership, which determines the fate of our Party, into discussing the questions of our constructive work. Without this, there can be no question of raising the activity of the working class.

I lay particular stress on this because our Leningrad organisation recently passed through a period when some of its leaders would not speak of inner-Party democracy except in sarcasm. I have in mind the period prior to, during and immediately after the Party congress, when the Party units in Leningrad were not allowed to assemble, when some of their organisers behaved—pardon my bluntness—like policemen towards their Party units and forbade them to meet. It was by this, in fact, that the so-called “New Opposition,” headed by Zinoviev, worked its own undoing.

If members of our Central Committee, with the help of the active in Leningrad, succeeded in the space of a fortnight in repelling and isolating the opposition, which was waging a struggle there against the decisions of the Fourteenth Congress, it was because the explanatory campaign on the decisions of the congress coincided with the urge for democracy that existed, that was seeking an outlet, and at last broke through in the Leningrad Organisation. I should like you, comrades, to bear this recent lesson in mind. Bearing it in mind, I should like you to put inner-Party democracy into effect sincerely and resolutely, raise the activity of the Party masses, draw them into the discussion of the fundamental questions of socialist construction, and convince them of the correctness of the decisions adopted by the April plenum of the Central Committee of our Party. It is precisely to convince the Party masses that I should like you to do, because the method of persuasion is the basic method of our work in the ranks of the working class.

IX

WE MUST PROTECT THE UNITY OF THE PARTY

Some comrades think that inner-Party democracy implies freedom of factional groups. Well, comrades, in this respect I beg to differ. That is not the way we understand inner-Party democracy. Between inner-Party democracy and freedom of factional groups there is absolutely nothing in common, nor can there be.

What does inner-Party democracy mean? Inner-Party democracy means raising the activity of the Party masses and strengthening the unity of the Party, strengthening conscious proletarian discipline in the Party.

What does freedom of factional groups mean? Freedom of factional groups means disintegrating the Party ranks, splitting the Party into separate centres, weakening the Party, weakening the dictatorship of the proletariat.

What can there be in common between the two? There are people in our Party whose one dream is to have a general Party discussion. There are people among us who cannot conceive of the Party not being engaged in discussion, people who covet the title of professional debaters. Heaven protect us from those professional debaters! What we need now is not an artificial discussion, nor the conversion of our Party into a debating society, but the intensification of our constructive work in general, and of industrial construction in particular, the strengthening of a militant, solid, united and indivisible party that can firmly and confidently direct our constructive work. Anyone who strives for endless discussions, anyone who strives for freedom of factional groups, undermines the unity and saps the strength of our Party.

Wherein lay our strength in the past, and wherein lies our strength today? In the correctness of our policy and the unity of our ranks. The Fourteenth Congress of our Party gave us a correct policy. The task now is to ensure that our ranks are united, that our Party is united and ready to carry out the decisions of the Party congress, come what may.

Such is the basic idea of the decisions of the plenum of the Central Committee of our Party.

X

CONCLUSIONS

Permit me now to pass to the conclusions.

Firstly, we must promote the industry of our country, as the foundation of socialism and the guiding force which leads forward the whole of our national economy.

Secondly, we must create new cadres of builders of industry, as the direct and immediate operators of the course towards industrialisation.

Thirdly, we must accelerate the pace of our socialist accumulation and accumulate reserves for the needs of our industry.

Fourthly, we must arrange for correct use of the accumulated reserves and establish a regime of the strictest economy.

Fifthly, we must raise the activity of the working class and draw the vast masses of the workers into the work of building socialism.

Sixthly, we must strengthen the alliance of the working class and peasantry and the leadership of the working class within this alliance.

Seventhly, we must raise the activity of the Party masses and put inner-Party democracy into effect.

Eighthly, we must protect and strengthen the unity of our Party, the solidarity of our ranks.

Shall we be able to accomplish these tasks? Yes, we shall, if we want to do so. And we do want to—everyone can see that. We shall, because we are Bolsheviks, because we are not afraid of difficulties, because difficulties exist in order to be contended with and overcome. We shall, because our policy is correct and we know where we are going. And we shall march forward firmly and confidently towards our goal, towards the victory of socialist construction.

Comrades, we were a tiny group in Leningrad in February 1917, nine years ago. Veteran Party members will remember that at that time we Bolsheviks constituted an inconsiderable minority of the Leningrad Soviet. Veteran Bolsheviks will remember how we were scoffed at by the numerous enemies of Bolshevism. But we marched forward and captured one position after another, because our policy was correct and we waged the fight with united ranks. Then that tiny force grew into a mighty force. We routed the bourgeoisie and overthrew Kerensky. We established the power of the Soviets. We routed Kolchak and Denikin. We drove the Anglo-French and American marauders out of our country. We overcame economic disruption. Lastly, we restored our industry and agriculture. Now we are confronted with a new task—the task of industrialising our country. The most serious difficulties are behind us. Can it be doubted that we shall cope also with this new task, the industrialisation of our country? Of course, not. On the contrary, we now have all the requisites for overcoming the difficulties and accomplishing the new tasks set us by the Fourteenth Congress of our Party.

That is why I think, comrades, that on the new front, the front of industry, we are certain to win. (Stormy applause.)

Notes

1. The Plenum of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B) was held April 6-9, 1926. At the morning sitting of the plenum on April 9, 1926, J. V. Stalin spoke in the discussion of the report on “The Economic Situation and the Economic Policy,” and at the evening sitting he delivered a report on the plan of work of the Political Bureau and plenum of the Central Committee, C.P.S.U.(B) for 1926. (For decisions of the plenum, see Resolutions and Decisions of the C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums, Part II, 1953, pp. 138-47.)

2. This refers to the resolution on “Organisation of the Grain Procurement Apparatus in the 1926/27 Campaign” adopted at a plenum of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B), April 9, 1926.

**To Comrade Kaganovich
and the Other Members of the Political Bureau
of the Central Committee, Ukraine C.P.(B.) 1
April 26, 1926**

I have had a talk with Shumsky. It was a long talk, lasting over two hours. As you know, he is dissatisfied with the situation in the Ukraine. The reasons for his dissatisfaction may be reduced to two main points.

1. He considers that Ukrainisation is progressing far too slowly, that it is looked upon as an imposed obligation and is being carried out reluctantly and very haltingly. He considers that Ukrainian culture and the Ukrainian intelligentsia are growing at a rapid pace, and that if we do not assume control of this movement it may by-pass us. He considers that the movement should be headed by people who believe in Ukrainian culture, who are or want to be acquainted with it, who support and are capable of supporting the growing movement for Ukrainian culture. He is particularly dissatisfied with the conduct of the top leadership of the Party and trade unions in the Ukraine, which, in his opinion, is hindering Ukrainisation. He thinks that one of the principal faults of the top leadership of the Party and trade unions is that it does not draw Communists who are directly linked with Ukrainian culture into the direction of Party and trade-union work. He thinks that Ukrainisation should be carried out first of all within the ranks of the Party and among the proletariat.

2. He thinks that if these shortcomings are to be corrected, it is necessary in the first place to alter the composition of the Party and Soviet top leadership with a view to its Ukrainisation, and that only on this condition can a change of sentiment in favour of Ukrainisation be brought about among the cadres of our functionaries in the Ukraine. He proposes that Grinko should be appointed to the post of Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and Chubar to the post of Political Secretary of the C.C., Ukr.C.P.(B.), that the composition of the Secretariat and the Political Bureau should be improved, and so forth. He thinks that unless these and similar changes are made, it will be impossible for him, Shumsky, to work in the Ukraine. He says that should the Central Committee insist, he is prepared to return to the Ukraine even if the present conditions of work are left unchanged, but he is convinced that nothing would come of it. He is particularly dissatisfied with the work of Kaganovich. He thinks that Kaganovich has succeeded in putting Party organisation work on proper lines, but he considers that the predominance of the organisational element in Comrade Kaganovich's methods renders normal work impossible. He is convinced that the effects of the organisational pressure exerted by Comrade Kaganovich in his work, of his method of relegating higher Soviet institutions and their leaders to the background, will make themselves felt within the very near future, and he cannot guarantee that these effects will not take the form of a serious conflict.

Here is my opinion.

1. As regards the first point, there is some truth in what Shumsky says. It is true that a broad movement in favour of Ukrainian culture and Ukrainian public life has begun and is spreading in the Ukraine. It is true that we must under no circumstances allow that movement to fall into the hands of elements hostile to us. It is true that a number of Communists in the Ukraine do not realise the meaning and importance of that movement and are therefore taking no steps to gain control of it. It is true that a change of sentiment must be brought about among our Party and Soviet cadres, who are still imbued with an ironical and sceptical attitude towards

Ukrainian culture and Ukrainian public life. It is true that we must painstakingly select and build up cadres capable of gaining control of the new movement in the Ukraine. All that is true. Nevertheless, Shumsky commits at least two serious errors.

Firstly. He confuses Ukrainisation of the apparatus of our Party and other bodies with Ukrainisation of the proletariat. The apparatus of our Party, state and other bodies serving the population can and should be Ukrainised, a due tempo in this matter being observed. But it is impossible to Ukrainise the proletariat from above. It is impossible to compel the mass of the Russian workers to give up the Russian language and Russian culture and accept the Ukrainian culture and language as their own. That would be contrary to the principle of the free development of nationalities. It would not be national freedom, but a peculiar form of national oppression. There can be no doubt that with the industrial development of the Ukraine and the influx into industry of Ukrainian workers from the surrounding countryside, the composition of the Ukrainian proletariat will change. There can be no doubt that the composition of the Ukrainian proletariat will become Ukrainised, just as the composition of the proletariat in Latvia or Hungary, say, which was at one time German in character, subsequently became Latvianised or Magyarised. But this is a lengthy, spontaneous and natural process. To attempt to replace this spontaneous process by the forcible Ukrainisation of the proletariat from above would be a utopian and harmful policy, one capable of stirring up anti-Ukrainian chauvinism among the non-Ukrainian sections of the proletariat in the Ukraine. It seems to me that Shumsky has a wrong idea of Ukrainisation and does not take this latter danger into account.

Secondly. While quite rightly stressing the positive character of the new movement in the Ukraine in favour of Ukrainian culture and Ukrainian public life, Shumsky fails to see its seamy side. Shumsky fails to see that, in view of the weakness of the indigenous communist cadres in the Ukraine, this movement, which is very frequently led by non-communist intellectuals, may here and there assume the character of a struggle to alienate Ukrainian culture and public life from general Soviet culture and public life, the character of a struggle against “Moscow” in general, against the Russians in general, against Russian culture and its highest achievement—Leninism. I shall not stop to prove that this is becoming an increasingly real danger in the Ukraine. I only want to say that even certain Ukrainian Communists are not free from such defects. I have in mind such a generally known fact as the article of the Communist Khvilevoy in the Ukrainian press. Khvilevoy’s demand for the “immediate de-Russification of the proletariat” in the Ukraine, his opinion that “Ukrainian poetry must get away from Russian literature and its style as fast as possible,” his statement that “the ideas of the proletariat are known to us without Moscow art,” his infatuation with the idea that the “young” Ukrainian intelligentsia has some kind of Messianic role to play, his ludicrous and non-Marxist attempt to divorce culture from politics—all this and much else like it sounds (cannot but sound!) more than strange nowadays coming from the mouth of a Ukrainian Communist. At a time when the proletarians of Western Europe and their Communist Parties are in sympathy with “Moscow,” this citadel of the international revolutionary movement and of Leninism, at a time when the proletarians of Western Europe look with admiration at the flag that flies over Moscow, the Ukrainian Communist Khvilevoy has nothing better to say in favour of “Moscow” than to call on the Ukrainian leaders to get away from “Moscow” “as fast as possible.” And that is called internationalism! What is to be said of other Ukrainian intellectuals, those of the non-communist camp, if Communists begin to talk, and not only to talk but even to write in our Soviet press, in the language of Khvilevoy? Shumsky does not realise that we can gain control of the new movement in the Ukraine in favour of Ukrainian culture only by combating extremes like Khvilevoy’s in the

communist ranks. Shumsky does not realise that only by combating such extremes can the rising Ukrainian culture and public life be converted into a Soviet culture and public life.

2. Shumsky is right when he asserts that the top leadership (Party and other) in the Ukraine should be Ukrainian. But he is mistaken about the tempo. And that is the main thing just now. He forgets that there are not enough purely Ukrainian Marxist cadres for this as yet. He forgets that such cadres cannot be created artificially. He forgets that such cadres can be reared only in the process of work, and that this requires time. . . . What would be the effect of appointing Grinko to the post of Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars at this moment? How might such a step be assessed by the Party in general and the Party cadres in particular? Will they not take it to imply that our line is to depreciate the weight and prestige of the Council of People's Commissars? For it cannot be concealed from the Party that Grinko's Party and revolutionary standing is considerably lower than Chubar's. Can we take such a step now, in the present period of the revitalisation of the Soviets and of increasing weight and prestige of the Soviet bodies? Would it not be better, both in the interest of our work and in the interest of Grinko himself, to forego such plans for the time being? I am in favour of the Secretariat and Political Bureau of the C.C., Ukr.C.P.(B.), as well as the top Soviet bodies, being reinforced with Ukrainian elements. But it is wrong to represent matters as if there were no Ukrainians in the leading organs of the Party and Soviets. What about Skrypnik and Zatonsky, Chubar and Petrovsky, Grinko and Shumsky—are they not Ukrainians? Shumsky's mistake is that, while his perspective is correct, he disregards the question of tempo. And tempo is now the main thing.

With communist greetings,
J. Stalin
26. IV. 1926

Notes

1. This letter was published in part in the collection: J. V. Stalin, *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*, Moscow 1934, pp. 172-173

The British Strike and the Events in Poland
Report Delivered at a Meeting of Workers of the Chief Railway Workshops in Tiflis
June 8, 1926

Comrades, with your permission, I shall proceed to make a statement on affairs in Britain in connection with the strike¹ and on the recent events in Poland,² a statement which your chairman, Comrade Chkheidze, has been good enough to call a report, but which can only be called a statement because of its brevity.

WHAT CAUSED THE STRIKE IN BRITAIN?

The first question is that of the causes of the strike in Britain. How could it happen that Britain, that land of capitalist might and unparalleled compromises, has of late become an arena of gigantic social conflicts? How could it happen that “great Britain,” “mistress of the seas,” became the country of a general strike?

I should like to point out a number of circumstances which made the general strike in Britain inevitable. The time has not yet come to give an exhaustive reply to this question. But we can, and should, point out certain decisive events which made the strike inevitable. Of these circumstances, four may be noted as the most important.

Firstly. Britain formerly occupied a monopoly position among the capitalist states. Owning a number of huge colonies, and having what for those days was an exemplary industry, it was able to parade as the “workshop of the world” and to rake in vast super-profits. That was the period of “peace and prosperity” in Britain. Capital raked in super-profits, crumbs from those super-profits fell to the share of the top section of the British labour movement, the leaders of the British labour movement were gradually tamed by capital, and conflicts between labour and capital were usually settled by compromise.

But the further development of world capitalism, especially the development of Germany, America and, in part, of Japan, which entered the world market as competitors of Britain, radically undermined Britain’s former monopoly position. The war and the post-war crisis dealt a further decisive blow to Britain’s monopoly position. There were fewer super-profits, the crumbs which fell to the share of the British labour leaders began to dwindle away. Voices began to be raised more and more frequently about the reduction in the standard of living of the British working class. The period of “peace and prosperity” was succeeded by a period of conflicts, lockouts and strikes. The British worker began to swing to the Left, to resort more and more frequently to the method of direct struggle against capital.

That being the state of affairs, it will be easily understood why the bullying tone of the British mine owners in threatening a lock-out could not remain unanswered by the miners.

Secondly. The second circumstance is the restoration of international market connections, and the consequent intensification of the struggle for markets among the capitalist groups. It is characteristic of the post-war crisis that it severed practically all the connections between the international market and the capitalist countries, replacing those connections by a certain chaos in relations. Now, with the temporary stabilisation of capitalism, this chaos is receding into the background, and the old connections of the international market are gradually being restored. Whereas a few years ago the problem was to restore the mills and factories and to recruit workers to work for the capitalists, the problem now is to secure markets and raw materials for the restored mills and factories. As a result the struggle for markets has assumed

new intensity, and victory in this struggle is going to that group of capitalists and that capitalist state whose goods are cheaper and whose level of technique is higher. And new forces are now entering the market: America, France, Japan, Germany, and Britain's dominions and colonies, which managed to develop their industry during the war and have now joined in the fight for markets. It is natural in view of all this that the easy extraction of profits from foreign markets, so long resorted to by Britain, has now become impossible. The old colonial method of monopolistic plundering of markets and sources of raw material has had to give way to the new method of capturing the market with the help of cheap goods. Hence the endeavour of British capital to restrict production, or at any rate not to expand it indiscriminately. Hence the vast army of unemployed in Britain as a permanent feature of recent years. Hence the threat of unemployment, which is exasperating the British workers and rousing their fighting spirit. Hence the lightning reaction, which the threat of a lock-out evoked among the workers in general and the miners in particular.

Thirdly. The third circumstance is the endeavour of British capital to secure reduced costs of production in British industry and a cheapening of commodities at the expense of the interests of the British working class. The fact that the miners were the target of the main blow in this case cannot be called an accident. British capital attacked the miners not only because the mining industry is badly equipped technically and is in need of "rationalisation," but primarily because the miners have always been, and still remain, the advanced detachment of the British proletariat. It was the strategy of British capital to curb this advanced detachment, to lower their wages and lengthen their working day, in order then, having settled accounts with this main detachment, to make the other detachments of the working class also toe the line. Hence the heroism with which the British miners are conducting their strike. Hence the unparalleled eagerness displayed by the British workers in supporting the miners by means of a general strike.

Fourthly. The fourth circumstance is that Britain is governed by the Conservative Party, the most bitter enemy of the working class. It goes without saying that any other bourgeois government would, in the main, have acted in the same way as the Conservative government to crush the working class. But there is also no doubt that only such sworn enemies of the working class as the Conservatives could have so lightly and cynically thrown down such an unparalleled challenge to the whole British working class as the Conservatives did when they threatened a lock-out. It can now be considered fully proven that the British Conservative Party not only wanted a lock-out and a strike, but that it had been preparing for them for nearly a year. Last July it postponed the attack on the miners because it considered the moment "inopportune." But it made preparations during the whole period since then, accumulating stocks of coal, organising strikebreakers and suitably working up public opinion, so as to launch an attack on the miners in April of this year. Only the Conservative Party could have taken such a perfidious step.

The Conservative Party wormed its way into power with the help of forged documents and provocations. It had no sooner come into office than it attacked Egypt, using every means of provocation. For a year now it has been waging direct war on the Chinese people, resorting to the tried and tested colonial methods of plunder and oppression. It is not sparing of means to make impossible the development of closer relations between the peoples of the Soviet Union and the peoples of Great Britain, steadily building up the elements of an eventual intervention. It is now attacking the working class of its own country, having for a whole year prepared for this attack with a zeal worthy of a better cause. The Conservative Party cannot exist without

conflicts inside and outside Britain. After this, can one be surprised that the British workers returned blow for blow?

Those, in the main, are the circumstances which made the strike in Britain inevitable.

WHY DID THE BRITISH GENERAL STRIKE FAIL?

The British general strike failed owing to a number of circumstances, of which the following, at least, should be mentioned:

Firstly. The British capitalists and the Conservative Party, as the course of the strike has shown, proved in general to be more experienced, more organised and more resolute, and therefore stronger, than the British workers and their leaders, as represented by the General Council and the so-called Labour Party. The leaders of the working class proved unequal to coping with the tasks of the working class.

Secondly. The British capitalists and the Conservative Party entered this gigantic social conflict fully armed and thoroughly prepared, whereas the leaders of the British labour movement were caught unawares by the mine-owners' lock-out, having done nothing or practically nothing in the way of preparatory work. It should be mentioned in this connection that only a week before the conflict the leaders of the working class were expressing their conviction that there would be no conflict.

Thirdly. The capitalists' general staff, the Conservative Party, waged the fight as a united and organised body, striking blows at the decisive points of the struggle, whereas the general staff of the labour movement—the T.U.C. General Council and its "political committee," the Labour Party—proved to be internally demoralised and corrupted. As we know, the heads of this general staff proved to be either downright traitors to the miners and the British working class in general (Thomas, Henderson, MacDonald and Co.), or spineless fellow-travellers of these traitors who feared a struggle and still more a victory of the working class (Purcell, Hicks and others).

How could it happen, it may be asked, that the powerful British proletariat, which fought with unexampled heroism, proved to have leaders who were either venal or cowardly, or simply spineless? That is a very important question. Such leaders did not spring up all at once. They grew out of the labour movement; they received a definite schooling as labour leaders in Britain, the schooling of that period when British capital was raking in super-profits and could shower favours on the labour leaders and use them for compromises with the British working class; whereby these leaders of the working class, becoming ever more closely identified with the bourgeoisie in their manner of life and station, became divorced from the mass of the workers, turned their backs on them and ceased to understand them. They are the kind of working-class leaders who are dazzled by the glamour of capitalism, who are overwhelmed by the might of capital, and who dreary of "getting on in the world" and associating with "men of substance." There is no doubt that these leaders—if I may call them that—are an echo of the past and do not suit the new situation. There is no doubt that in time they will be compelled to give way to new leaders who do correspond to the militant spirit and heroism of the British proletariat. Engels was right when he called such leaders bourgeoisified leaders of the working class. 3

Fourthly. The general staff of British capitalism, the Conservative Party, realised that the gigantic strike of the British workers was a fact of tremendous political importance, that such

a strike could be seriously fought only by measures of a political character, that the authority of the king, of the House of Commons and of the constitution would have to be invoked to crush the strike, and that it could not be brought to an end without mobilising the troops and proclaiming a state of emergency. The general staff of the British labour movement, the General Council, on the other hand, did not, or would not, realise this simple thing, or was afraid to admit it, and assured all and sundry that the general strike was a measure of an exclusively economic character, that it did not desire or intend to turn the struggle into a political struggle, that it was not thinking of striking at the general staff of British capital, the Conservative Party, and that it—the General Council—had no intention of raising the question of power.

Thereby the General Council doomed the strike to inevitable failure. For, as history has shown, a general strike which is not turned into a political struggle must inevitably fail.

Fifthly. The general staff of the British capitalists understood that international support of the British strike would be a mortal danger to the bourgeoisie. The General Council, on the other hand, did not understand, or pretended not to understand, that the strike of the British workers could only be won by means of international proletarian solidarity. Hence the refusal of the General Council to accept financial assistance from the workers of the Soviet Union⁴ and other countries.

Such a gigantic strike as the general strike in Britain could have yielded tangible results if, at least, two fundamental conditions had been observed, namely, if it had been turned into a political struggle, and if it had been made an action in the struggle of the proletarians of all the advanced countries against capital. But, in its own peculiar “wisdom,” the British General Council rejected both these two conditions, thereby predetermining the failure of the general strike.

Sixthly. There is no doubt that a role of no little importance was played by the more than equivocal behaviour of the Second International and the Amsterdam Federation of Trade Unions in the matter of aiding the British general strike. In point of fact, the platonic resolutions of these organisations of Social-Democrats on aiding the strike were actually tantamount, to a refusal of any financial aid. For in no other way than by the equivocal conduct of the Social-Democratic International is it possible to explain the fact that all the trade unions of Europe and America together donated not more than one-eighth of the amount of financial aid which the trade unions of the Soviet Union found it possible to afford their British brothers. I say nothing of aid of another kind, in the form of stopping the transport of coal, a matter in which the Amsterdam Federation of Trade Unions is literally acting as a strikebreaker.

Seventhly. There is likewise no doubt that the weakness of the British Communist Party played a role of no little importance in contributing to the failure of the general strike. It should be said that the British Communist Party is one of the best sections of the Communist International. It should be mentioned that throughout the general strike in Britain its attitude was absolutely correct. But it must also be admitted that its prestige among the British workers is still small. And this circumstance could not but play a fatal part in the course of the general strike.

Such are the circumstances, at any rate the chief ones, which we have been able to ascertain at the present time and which determined the undesirable outcome of the general strike in Britain.

LESSONS OF THE GENERAL STRIKE

What are the lessons of the general strike in Britain—at least, the most important of them? They are the following.

Firstly. The crisis in the British coal industry and the general strike connected with it bluntly raise the question of socialising the instruments and means of production in the coal industry, with the establishment of workers' control. That is a question of winning socialism. It scarcely needs proof that there are not and cannot be any other ways of radically solving the crisis in the coal industry other than the way proposed by the British Communist Party. The crisis in the coal industry and the general strike bring the British working class squarely up against the question of the practical realisation of socialism.

Secondly. The British working class could not but learn from its experience at first hand that the chief obstacle in the way to its goal is the political power of the capitalists, in this case, the Conservative Party and its government. Whereas the T.U.C. General Council feared like the plague to admit the inseparable connection between the economic struggle and the political struggle, the British workers cannot now fail to understand that, in their difficult struggle against organised capital, the basic question now is that of power, and that until it is settled, it is impossible to solve either the crisis in the coal industry or the crisis in the whole of British industry in general.

Thirdly. The course and outcome of the general strike cannot but convince the British working class that Parliament, the constitution, the king and the other attributes of bourgeois rule are nothing but a shield of the capitalist class against the proletariat. The strike tore the camouflage of a fetish and inviolable shrine both from Parliament and from the constitution. The workers will realise that the present constitution is a weapon of the bourgeoisie against the workers. The workers are bound to understand that they, too, need their own workers' constitution, as a weapon against the bourgeoisie. I think that the learning of this truth will be a most important achievement of the British working class.

Fourthly. The course and outcome of the strike cannot but convince the British working masses of the unsuitability of the old leaders, of the unsuitability of the old functionaries, who grew up in the school of the old British policy of compromise. They cannot but realise that the old leaders must be replaced by new, revolutionary leaders.

Fifthly. The British workers cannot but realise now that the miners of Britain are the advanced detachment of the British working class, and that it is therefore the concern of the entire British working class to support the miners' strike and ensure its victory. The whole course of the strike brings home to the British working class the absolutely unassailable truth of this lesson.

Sixthly. The British workers could not but be convinced in the difficult moment of the general strike, when the platforms and programmes of the various parties were being tested in action, that the only party capable of boldly and resolutely upholding the interests of the working class to the end is the Communist Party.

Such, in general, are the principal lessons of the general strike in Britain.

SOME CONCLUSIONS

I pass on to a few conclusions of practical importance.

The first question is that of the stabilisation of capitalism. The strike in Britain has shown that the resolution of the Communist International on the temporary and insecure character of stabilisation is absolutely correct.⁵ The attack of British capital on the British miners was an attempt to transform the temporary, insecure stabilisation into a firm and permanent one. That attempt did not succeed, and could not have succeeded. The British workers, who replied to that attempt by a gigantic strike, have shown the whole capitalist world that the firm stabilisation of capitalism in the conditions of the post-war period is impossible, that experiments like the British one are fraught with the danger of the destruction of the foundations of capitalism. But if it is wrong to assume that the stabilisation of capitalism is firm, it is equally wrong to assume the contrary, namely, that stabilisation has come to an end, that it has been done away with, and that we have now entered a period when revolutionary storms will reach their climax. The stabilisation of capitalism is temporary and insecure, but it is stabilisation nevertheless, and so far still remains.

Further, precisely because the present temporary and insecure stabilisation still remains, for that very reason capital will persist in attempts to attack the working class. Of course, the British strike should have taught the entire capitalist world how risky experiments like the one made by the Conservative Party in Britain are for the life and existence of capitalism. That the experiment will not be without its cost for the Conservative Party, that is scarcely open to doubt. Neither can it be doubted that this lesson will be taken into account by the capitalists of all countries. All the same, capital will attempt fresh attacks on the working class, because it senses its insecurity and cannot but feel the need to establish itself more securely. The task of the working class and of the Communist Parties is to prepare their forces to repel such attacks on the working class. The task of the Communist Parties is, while continuing the organisation of the united working-class front, to bend all their efforts to convert the attacks of the capitalists into a counter-attack of the working class, into a revolutionary offensive of the working class, into a struggle of the working class for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and for the abolition of capitalism.

Lastly, if the working class of Britain is to accomplish these immediate tasks, the first thing it must do is to get rid of its present leaders. You cannot go to war against the capitalists if you have such leaders as the Thomases and MacDonalds. You cannot hope for victory if you have traitors like Henderson and Clynes in your rear. The British working class must learn to replace such leaders by better ones. For one thing or the other: either the British working class will learn to dismiss the Thomases and MacDonalds from their posts, or it will no more see victory than it can see its own ears.

Those, comrades, are a few conclusions which suggest themselves.

Now permit me to turn to the events in Poland.

THE RECENT EVENTS IN POLAND

An opinion exists that the movement headed by Pilsudski is a revolutionary movement. It is said that Pilsudski is fighting for a revolutionary cause in Poland—for the peasants against the landlords, for the workers against the capitalists, for the freedom of the oppressed nationalities

in Poland against Polish chauvinism and fascism. Because of this, it is said, Pilsudski deserves to have the support of the Communists.

That is absolutely wrong, comrades!

Actually, what is going on in Poland at present is a struggle between two groups of the bourgeoisie: the big bourgeois group, headed by the Poznaners, and the petty-bourgeois group, headed by Pilsudski. The purpose of the struggle is not to defend the interests of the workers and peasants or the interests of the oppressed nationalities, but to consolidate and stabilise the bourgeois state. The struggle arises from a difference concerning the methods of consolidating the bourgeois state.

The fact of the matter is that the Polish state has entered a phase of complete disintegration. Its finances are going to pieces. The zloty is falling. Industry is in a state of paralysis. The non-Polish nationalities are oppressed. And up above, in the circles close to the ruling elements, there is a regular orgy of theft, as is admitted quite freely by spokesmen of all the various groups in the Sejm.⁶ The bourgeois classes are therefore faced with the dilemma: either the disintegration of the state goes so far that it opens the eyes of the workers and peasants and brings home to them the necessity of transforming the regime by a revolution against the landlords and capitalists; or the bourgeoisie must hurry up and stop the process of decay, put an end to the orgy of theft, and thus avert the probable outbreak of a revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants before it is too late.

Which of the bourgeois groups, the Pilsudski or the Poznan, is to undertake the stabilising of the Polish state?—that is the point at issue.

Undoubtedly, the workers and peasants link their aspirations for a radical improvement of their lot with Pilsudski's struggle. Undoubtedly, for this very reason the top section of the working class and the peasantry in one way or another support Pilsudski, as being the representative of strata of the petty bourgeoisie and petty nobility, in his struggle against the Poznaners, who represent the big capitalists and landlords. But undoubtedly also, at the present time the aspirations of certain sections of Poland's labouring classes are being utilised not for a revolution, but to consolidate the bourgeois state and the bourgeois order.

Of course, certain external factors are also playing their part here. Poland is a small country. It is linked financially with certain Entente circles. In the present deplorable state of its finances, bourgeois Poland cannot, of course, do without foreign loans. But the so-called Great Powers cannot finance a country in which the ruling circles unanimously admit that there is an orgy of theft in all branches of state administration. In order to obtain loans, the state administration must first be "improved," the orgy of theft must be stopped, some kind of guarantee must be provided that the interest on the loans will be paid, and so on. Hence the necessity for the "rationalisation" of the Polish state.

Such, in the main, are the internal and external factors which have determined the present struggle between the two principal bourgeois groups in Poland.

There are in Poland today a number of fundamental contradictions which, when they develop further, are bound to create a direct revolutionary situation in the country. These contradictions occur in three basic spheres: that of the working-class question, that of the peasant question, and that of the national question. All these contradictions may at once

become evident and cause an explosion if Poland embarks on a war adventure, if it is incapable of establishing good-neighbourly relations with the surrounding states. Can Pilsudski, can the motley Pilsudski group, resolve these contradictions? Can this petty-bourgeois group solve the working-class question? No, it cannot, for to do so it would have to come into fundamental conflict with the capitalist class, which it cannot and will not do under any circumstances if it does not want to forfeit the financial support of the Great Powers. Can this group solve the peasant question—for example, along the lines of confiscating the landlords' land? No, it cannot; and it will not do so if it does not want to bring about the complete disintegration of the commanding personnel of Pilsudski's army, which consists mostly of small and middle landlords. Can this group solve the national question in Poland along the lines of granting freedom of national self-determination to the oppressed nations: the Ukrainians, the Lithuanians, the Byelorussians, etc.? No, it cannot; and it will not do so if it does not want to forfeit all confidence in the eyes of those "Greater Poland" chauvinists and fascists who constitute the chief source from which Pilsudski's group derives its moral support.

What, then, remains for it to do?

Only one thing: after defeating the big bourgeois group militarily, to submit to the same group politically and drag at its tail—unless, of course, the Polish working class and the revolutionary section of the Polish peasantry in the near future set about the revolutionary transformation of the Polish state and drive out both groups of the Polish bourgeoisie, the Pilsudski group and the Poznan group.

That raises the question of the Polish Communist Party. How could it happen that the revolutionary discontent of a considerable section of the workers and peasants in Poland brought grist to the mill of Pilsudski, and not of the Polish Communist Party? Among other reasons, because the Polish Communist Party is weak, weak in the extreme, and because in the present struggle it has weakened itself still further by its incorrect attitude to Pilsudski's army, in consequence of which it has been unable to assume the lead of the revolutionary-minded masses.

Recently I read in our Soviet press an article on Polish affairs by Comrade Thälmann,⁷ member of the Central Committee of the German Communist Party. In that article Comrade Thälmann touches on the attitude of the Polish Communists in calling for support of Pilsudski's army, and criticises it as unrevolutionary. I have to admit, unfortunately, that Comrade Thälmann's criticism is absolutely correct. I have to admit that our Polish comrades committed a gross error in this instance.

That, comrades, is all I wanted to tell you about affairs in Britain in connection with the general strike and about the recent events in Poland. (Stormy applause.)

Notes

1. The general strike in Britain took place on May 3-12, 1926. More than five million organised workers in all the major branches of industry and transport took part in the strike.
2. This refers to Pilsudski's armed coup of May 12-13, 1926, by which he and his clique established a dictatorial regime in Poland and gradually carried out the fascination of the country.

3. See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *On Britain*, Moscow 1953

4. On receipt of the news of the general strike in Britain, the Presidium of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions, at a meeting on May 5, 1926, with the participation of representatives of the Central Committees of the trade unions resolved to call upon all members of trade unions in the U.S.S.R. to contribute one-quarter of a day's earnings in support of the British workers on strike, and that same day it remitted 250,000 rubles to the British T.U.C. General Council. On May 7 the A.U.C.C.T.U. sent to the General Council a further two million rubles collected by workers of the U.S.S.R. On May 9 the General Council informed the A.U.C.C.T.U. of its refusal to accept this money or any other support from the workers of the U.S.S.R.

5. This refers to the theses on "Immediate Problems of the International Communist Movement" adopted on March 15, 1926, by the Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I. (See Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Comintern. *Theses and Resolutions*, Giz, 1926, pp. 4-39.)

6. The groups in the Sejm were groups in the lower house of the Polish bourgeois parliament. In 1926 the deputies in the Sejm were divided into more than thirty groups, representing the interests of the various classes and intermediate sections of Polish society.

7. This refers to Ernst Thälmann's article, "The Tactics of the Polish Communist Party," printed in *Pravda*, No. 123, May 30, 1926.

Reply to the Greetings of the Workers of the Chief Railway Workshops in Tiflis June 8, 1926

Comrades, permit me first of all to tender my comradely thanks for the greetings conveyed to me here by the representatives of the workers.

I must say in all conscience, comrades, that I do not deserve a good half of the flattering things that have been said here about me. I am, it appears, a hero of the October Revolution, the leader of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the leader of the Communist International, a legendary warrior-knight and all the rest of it. That is absurd, comrades, and quite unnecessary exaggeration. It is the sort of thing that is usually said at the graveside of a departed revolutionary. But I have no intention of dying yet.

I must therefore give a true picture of what I was formerly, and to whom I owe my present position in our Party.

Comrade Arakel* said here that in the old days he regarded himself as one of my teachers, and myself as his pupil. That is perfectly true, comrades. I really was, and still am, one of the pupils of the advanced workers of the Tiflis railway workshops,

Let me turn back to the past.

I recall the year 1898, when I was first put in charge of a study circle of workers from the railway workshops. That was some twenty-eight years ago. I recall the days when in the home of Comrade Sturua, and in the presence of Djibladze (he was also one of my teachers at that time), Chodrishvili, Chkheidze, Bochorishvili, Ninua and other advanced workers of Tiflis, I received my first lessons in practical work. Compared with these comrades, I was then quite a young man. I may have been a little better-read than many of them were, but as a practical worker I was unquestionably a novice in those days. It was here, among these comrades, that I received my first baptism in the revolutionary struggle. It was here, among these comrades, that I became an apprentice in the art of revolution. As you see, my first teachers were Tiflis workers.

Permit me to tender them my sincere comradely thanks. (Applause.)

I recall, further, the years 1907-09, when, by the will of the Party, I was transferred to work in Baku. Three years of revolutionary activity among the workers in the oil industry steeled me as a practical fighter and as one of the local practical leaders. Association with such advanced workers in Baku as Vatssek, Saratovets, Fioletov and others, on the one hand, and the storm of acute conflicts between the workers and the oil owners, on the other, first taught me what it means to lead large masses of workers. It was there, in Baku, that I thus received my second baptism in the revolutionary struggle. There I became a journeyman in the art of revolution.

Permit me to tender my sincere comradely thanks to my Baku teachers. (Applause.)

Lastly, I recall the year 1917, when, by the will of the Party, after my wanderings from one prison and place of exile to another, I was transferred to Leningrad. There, in the society of Russian workers, and in direct contact with Comrade Lenin, the great teacher of the proletarians of all countries, in the storm of mighty clashes between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, in the conditions of the imperialist war, I first learnt what it means to be one of

the leaders of the great Party of the working class. There, in the society of Russian workers—the liberators of oppressed peoples and the pioneers of the proletarian struggle of all countries and all peoples—I received my third baptism in the revolutionary struggle. There, in Russia, under Lenin's guidance, I became a master workman in the art of revolution.

Permit me to tender my sincere comradely thanks to my Russian teachers and to bow my head in homage to the memory of my great teacher—Lenin. (Applause.)

From the rank of apprentice (Tiflis), to the rank of journeyman (Baku), and then to the rank of a master workman of our revolution (Leningrad)—such, comrades, was the school in which I passed my revolutionary apprenticeship.

Such, comrades, is the true picture of what I was and what I have become, if one is to speak without exaggeration and in all conscience. (Applause rising to a stormy ovation.)

Notes

1. A. Okuashvili

**The Anglo-Russian Unity Committee1
Speech Delivered at a Joint Plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control
Commission, C.P.S.U.(B.)2, July 15, 1926;
First published: J. Stalin, On the Opposition, Articles and Speeches, 1921-27, Moscow
and Leningrad, 1928;**

Comrades, we are passing through a period of the accumulation of forces, a period of winning over the masses and of preparing the proletariat for new battles. But the masses are in the trade unions. And in the West the trade unions, the majority of them, are now more or less reactionary. What, then, should be our attitude towards the trade unions? Should we, can we, as Communists, work in the reactionary trade unions? It is essentially this question that Trotsky put to us in his letter recently published in Pravda. There is nothing new, of course, in this question. It was raised before Trotsky by the "ultra-Lefts" in Germany, some five years ago. But Trotsky has seen fit to raise it again. How does he answer it? Permit me to quote a passage from Trotsky's letter:

"The entire present 'superstructure' of the British working class, in all its shades and groupings without exception, is an apparatus for putting a brake on the revolution. This presages for a long time to come the pressure of the spontaneous and semi-spontaneous movement on the framework of the old organisations and the formation of new, revolutionary organisations as the result of this pressure" (see Pravda, No. 119, May 26, 1926).

It follows from this that we ought not to work in the "old" organisations, if we do not want to "retard" the revolution. Either what is meant here is that we are already in the period of a direct revolutionary situation and ought at once to set up self-authorized organisations of the proletariat in place of the "old" ones, in place of the trade unions -- which, of course, is incorrect and foolish. Or what is meant here is that "for a long time to come" we ought to work to replace the old trade unions by "new, revolutionary organisations."

This is a signal to organise, in place of the existing trade unions, that same "Revolutionary Workers' Union" which the "ultra-Left" Communists in Germany advocated some five years ago, and which Comrade Lenin vigorously opposed in his pamphlet "Left-Wing" Communism, an Infantile Disorder. It is in point of fact a signal to replace the present trade unions by "new," supposedly "revolutionary" organisations, a signal, consequently, to withdraw from the trade unions.

Is that policy correct? It is fundamentally incorrect. It is fundamentally incorrect because it runs counter to the Leninist method of leading the masses. It is incorrect because, for all their reactionary character, the trade unions of the West are the most elementary organisations of the proletariat, those best understood by the most backward workers, and therefore the most comprehensive organisations of the proletariat. We cannot find our way to the masses, we cannot win them over if we by-pass these trade unions. To adopt Trotsky's standpoint would mean that the road to the vast masses would be barred to the Communists, that the working-class masses would be handed over to the tender mercies of Amsterdam³, to the tender mercies of the Sassenbachs and the Oudegeests.⁴

The oppositionists here have quoted Comrade Lenin. Allow me, too, to quote what Lenin said:

"We cannot but regard also as ridiculous and childish nonsense the pompous, very learned, and frightfully revolutionary talk of the German Lefts to the effect that Communists cannot and should not work in reactionary trade unions, that it is permissible to turn down such work, that it is necessary to leave the trade unions and to create without fail a brand-new, immaculate 'Workers' Union' invented by very nice (and, probably, for the most part very youthful) Communists" (see Vol. XXV, pp. 193-94).

And further:

"We wage the struggle against the 'labour aristocracy' in the name of the masses of the workers and in order to win them to our side; we wage the struggle against the opportunist and social-chauvinist leaders in order to win the working class to our side. To forget this most elementary and most self-evident truth would be stupid. And it is precisely this stupidity that the German 'Left' Communists are guilty of when, because of the reactionary and counter-revolutionary character of the trade-union top leadership, they jump to the conclusion that -- we must leave the trade unions!! that we must refuse to work in them!! that we must create new, artificial forms of labour organisation!! This is such unpardonable stupidity that it is equivalent to the greatest service the Communists could render the bourgeoisie" (ibid., p. 196).

I think, comrades, that comment is superfluous.

This raises the question of skipping over the reactionary character of the trade unions in the West, which has not yet been outlived. This question was brought forward at the rostrum here by Zinoviev. He quoted Martov and assured us that the point of view opposed to skipping over, the point of view that it is not permissible for Marxists to skip over and ignore the backwardness of the masses, the backwardness and reactionariness of their leaders, is a Menshevik point of view.

I affirm, comrades, that this unscrupulous manoeuvre of Zinoviev's in citing Martov is evidence of one thing only -- Zinoviev's complete departure from the Leninist line.

I shall endeavour to prove this in what follows.

Can we, as Leninists, as Marxists, at all skip over and ignore a movement that has not outlived its day, can we skip over and ignore the backwardness of the masses, can we turn our back on them and pass them by; or ought we to get rid of such features by carrying on an unrelaxing fight against them among the masses? That is one of the fundamental questions of communist policy, one of the fundamental questions of Leninist leadership of the masses. The oppositionists spoke here of Leninism. Let us turn to the prime source, to Lenin.

It was in April 1917. Lenin was in controversy with Kamenev. Lenin did not agree with Kamenev, who overestimated the role of petty-bourgeois democracy. But Lenin was not in agreement with Trotsky either, who underestimated the role of the peasant movement and "skipped over" the peasant movement in Russia. Here are Lenin's words:

"Trotskyism says: 'No tsar, but a workers' government.' That is incorrect. The petty bourgeoisie exists, and it cannot be left out of account. But it consists of two sections. The poorer section follows the working class" (see Lenin's speech in the minutes of the Petrograd Conference of April 1917, p. 175).

"Now, if we were to say, 'no tsar, but a dictatorship of the proletariat,' that would be skipping over * the petty bourgeoisie" (see Lenin's speech in the minutes of the All-Russian Conference of April 1917, p. 766).

And further:

"But are we not incurring the danger of succumbing to subjectivism, of desiring to 'skip over' the uncompleted bourgeois-democratic revolution -- which has not yet outlived the peasant movement -- to a socialist revolution? I should be incurring that danger if I had said: 'No tsar, but a workers' government.' But I did not say that; I said something else. . . . I absolutely insured myself in my theses against any skipping over the peasant movement, or the petty-bourgeois movement generally, which has not yet outlived its day, against any playing at the 'seizure of power' by a workers' government, against Blanquist adventurism in any shape or form, for I pointed directly to the experience of the Paris Commune" (see Vol. XX, p. 104).

That is clear, one would think. The theory of skipping over a movement which has not outlived its day is a Trotskyist theory. Lenin does not agree with this theory. He considers it an adventurist one.

And here are a few more quotations, this time from other writings -- from those of a "very prominent" Bolshevik whose name I do not want to mention for the present, but who also takes up arms against the skipping-over theory.

"In the question of the peasantry, which Trotsky is always trying to 'skip over,' we would have committed the most egregious blunders. Instead of the beginnings of a bond with the peasants, there would now be thoroughgoing estrangement from them."

Further:

"Such is the 'theoretical' foundation of Parvusism and Trotskyism. This 'theoretical' foundation was later minted into political slogans, such as: 'no tsar, but a workers' government.' This slogan sounds very plausible now that after a lapse of fifteen years we have achieved Soviet power in alliance with the peasantry. No tsar -- that's fine! A workers' government -- better still! But if it be recalled that this slogan was put forward in 1905, every Bolshevik will agree that at that time it meant 'skipping over' the peasantry altogether."

Further:

"But in 1905 the 'permanentists' wanted to foist on us the slogan: 'Down with the tsar and up with a workers' government!' But what about the peasantry? Does it not stare one in the face, this complete non-comprehension and ignoring of the peasantry in a country like Russia? If this is not 'skipping over' the peasantry, then what is it?"

Further:

"Failing to understand the role of the peasantry in Russia, 'skipping over' the peasantry in a peasant country, Trotskyism was all the more incapable of understanding the role of the peasantry in the international revolution."

Who, you will ask, is the author of these formidable passages against Trotskyism and the Trotskyist skipping-over theory? The author of these formidable passages is none other than Zinoviev. They are taken from his book Leninism, and from his article "Bolshevism or Trotskyism?"

How could it happen that a year ago Zinoviev realised the anti-Leninist character of the skipping-over theory, but has ceased to realise it now, a year later? The reason is that he was then, so to speak, a Leninist, but has now got himself hopelessly bogged, with one leg in Trotskyism and the other in Shlyapnikovism, in the "Workers' Opposition."7 And here he is, floundering between these two oppositions, and compelled now to speak here from this rostrum, quoting Martov. Against whom is he speaking? Against Lenin. And for whom is he speaking? For the Trotskyists.

To such depths has Zinoviev fallen.

It may be said that all this concerns the question of the peasantry, but has no bearing on the British trade unions. But that is not so, comrades. What has been said about the unsuitability in politics of the skipping-over theory has a direct bearing on the trade unions in Britain, and in Europe generally; it has a direct bearing on the question of leadership of the masses, on the question of the ways and means of emancipating them from the influence of reactionary, reformist leaders. Pursuing their skipping-over theory, Trotsky and Zinoviev are trying to skip over the backwardness, the reactionariness of the British trade unions, trying to get us to overthrow the General Council from Moscow, without the British trade-union masses. But we affirm that such a policy is stupidity, adventurism; that the reactionary leaders of the British trade-union movement must be overthrown by the British trade-union masses themselves, with our help ; that we must not skip over the reactionary character of the trade-union leaders, but must help the British trade-union masses to get rid of it.

You will see that there certainly is a connection between policy in general and policy towards the trade-union masses.

Has Lenin anything on this point?

Listen to this:

"The trade unions were a tremendous step forward for the working class in the early days of capitalist development, as marking the transition from the disunity and helplessness of the workers to the rudiments of class organisation. When the highest form of proletarian class association began to develop, viz., the revolutionary party of the proletariat (which will not deserve the name until it learns to bind the leaders with the class and the masses into one single indissoluble whole), the trade unions inevitably began to reveal certain reactionary features, a certain craft narrowness, a certain tendency to be non-political, a certain inertness, etc. But the development of the proletariat did not, and could not, proceed anywhere in the world otherwise than through the trade unions, through interaction between them and the party of the working class' (see Vol. XXV, p. 194). [Lenin, "Left-Wing" Communism, an Infantile Disorder. VI. Should Revolutionaries Work in Reactionary Trade Unions? (1920)]

And further:

"To fear this 'reactionariness,' to try to avoid it, to skip over it, is the height of folly, for it means fearing that role of the proletarian vanguard which consists in training, educating, enlightening and drawing into the new life the most backward strata and masses of the working class and peasantry" (ibid., p. 195).

That is how matters stand with the skipping-over theory as applied to the trade-union movement.

Zinoviev would have done better not to come forward here quoting Martov. He would have done better to say nothing about the skipping-over theory. That would have been much better for his own sake. There was no need for Zinoviev to swear by Trotsky: we know as it is that he has deserted Leninism for Trotskyism.

That is how matters stand, comrades, with the Trotskyist theory of skipping over the backwardness of the trade unions, the backwardness of the trade-union movement, and the backwardness of the mass movement in general.

Leninism is one thing, Trotskyism is another.

This brings us to the question of the Anglo-Russian Committee. It has been said here that the Anglo-Russian Committee is an agreement, a bloc between the trade unions of our country and the British trade unions. That is perfectly true. The Anglo-Russian Committee is the expression of a bloc, of an agreement between our unions and the British unions, and this bloc is not without its political character.

This bloc sets itself two tasks. The first is to establish contact between our trade unions and the British trade unions, to organise a united movement against the capitalist offensive to widen the fissure between Amsterdam and the British trade union movement, a fissure which exists and which we shall widen in every way, and, lastly, to bring about the conditions essential for ousting the reformists from the trade unions and for winning over the trade unions of the capitalist countries to the side of communism.

The second task of the bloc is to organise a broad movement of the working class against new imperialist wars in general, and against intervention in our country by (especially) the most powerful of the European imperialist powers, by Britain in particular.

The first task was discussed here at adequate length, and, therefore, I shall not dwell upon it. I should like to say a few words here about the second task, especially as regards intervention in our country by the British imperialists. Some of the oppositionists say that this second task of the bloc between our trade unions and the British is not worth talking about, that it is of no importance. Why, one asks? Why is it not worth talking about? Is not the task of safeguarding the security of the first Soviet Republic in the world, which is moreover the bulwark and base of the international revolution, a revolutionary task? Are our trade unions independent of the Party? Is our view that of the independence of our trade unions -- that the state is one thing, and the trade unions another? No, as Leninists, we do not and cannot hold that view. It should be the concern of every worker, of every worker organised in a trade union, to protect the first Soviet Republic in the world from intervention. And if in this the trade unions of our country have the support of the British trade unions, although they are reformist unions, is that not obviously something to be welcomed?

Those who think that our unions cannot deal with state matters go over to the standpoint of Menshevism. That is the standpoint of *Sotsialistichesky Vestnik*.⁸ It is not one we can accept. And if the reactionary trade unions of Britain are prepared to join with the revolutionary trade unions of our country in a bloc against the counter-revolutionary imperialists of their country, why should we not welcome such a bloc? I stress this aspect of the matter in order that our opposition may at last understand that in trying to torpedo the Anglo-Russian Committee it is playing into the hands of the interventionists.

Hence, the Anglo-Russian Committee is a bloc of our trade unions with the reactionary trade unions of Britain, the object of which is, firstly, to strengthen the connections between our trade unions and the trade-union movement of the West and to revolutionise the latter, and, secondly, to wage a struggle against imperialist wars in general, and intervention in particular.

But -- and this is a question of principle -- are political blocs with reactionary trade unions possible at all? Are such blocs permissible at all for Communists?

This question faces us squarely, and we have to answer it here. There are some people -- our oppositionists -- who consider such blocs impossible. The Central Committee of our Party, however, considers them permissible.

The oppositionists have invoked here the name of Lenin. Let us turn to Lenin:

"Capitalism would not be capitalism if the 'pure' proletariat were not surrounded by a mass of exceedingly motley intermediate types between the proletarian and the semi-proletarian (who earns his livelihood in part by the sale of his labour power), between the semi-proletarian and the small peasant (and the petty artisan, handicraft worker and small proprietor in general), between the small peasant and the middle peasant, and so on, and if the proletariat itself were not divided into more developed and less developed strata, if it were not divided according to place of birth, trade, sometimes according to religion, and so on. And from all this follows the necessity, the absolute necessity for the vanguard of the proletariat, for its class-conscious section, for the Communist Party, to resort to manoeuvres, arrangements and compromises with the various groups of proletarians, with the various parties of the workers and small proprietors. The whole point lies in knowing how to apply these tactics in order to raise, and not lower, the general level of proletarian political consciousness, revolutionary spirit, and ability to fight and win" (see Vol. XXV, p. 213).

And further:

"That the Hendersons, Clyneses, MacDonalds and Snowdens are hopelessly reactionary is true. It is equally true that they want to take power into their own hands (though, incidentally, they prefer a coalition with the bourgeoisie), that they want to 'rule' on the old bourgeois lines, and that when they do get into power they will unfailingly behave like the Scheidemanns and Noskes. All that is true. But it by no means follows that to support them is treachery to the revolution, but rather that in the interests of the revolution the working-class revolutionaries should give these gentlemen a certain amount of parliamentary support" (ibid., pp. 218-19).

Hence, it follows from what Lenin says that political agreements, political blocs between the Communists and reactionary leaders of the working class are quite possible and permissible.

Let Trotsky and Zinoviev bear this in mind.

But why are such agreements necessary at all?

In order to gain access to the working-class masses, in order to enlighten them as to the reactionary character of their political and trade-union leaders, in order to sever from the reactionary leaders the sections of the working class that are moving to the Left and becoming revolutionised, in order, consequently, to enhance the fighting ability of the working class as a whole.

Accordingly, such blocs may be formed only on two basic conditions, viz., that we are ensured freedom to criticise the reformist leaders, and that the necessary conditions for severing the masses from the reactionary leaders are ensured.

Here is what Lenin says on this score:

"The Communist Party should propose a 'compromise' to the Hendersons and Snowdens, an election agreement: let us together fight the alliance of Lloyd George and the Conservatives, let us divide the parliamentary seats in proportion to the number of votes cast by the workers for the Labour Party or for the Communists (not at the elections, but in a special vote), and let us retain complete liberty of agitation, propaganda and political activity. Without this last condition, of course, we cannot agree to a bloc, for it would be treachery; the British Communists must absolutely insist on and secure complete liberty to expose the Hendersons and the Snowdens in the same way as (for fifteen years, 1903-17) the Russian Bolsheviki insisted on and secured it in relation to the Russian Hendersons and Snowdens, i.e., the Mensheviki" (see Vol. XXV, p. 223).

And further:

"The petty-bourgeois democrats (including the Mensheviki) inevitably vacillate between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between bourgeois democracy and the Soviet system, between reformism and revolutionism between love for the workers and fear of the proletarian dictatorship, etc. The correct tactics for the Communists must be to utilise these vacillations, not to ignore them; and to utilise them calls for concessions to those elements which turn towards the proletariat -- whenever and to the extent that they turn towards the proletariat -- in addition to fighting those who turn towards the bourgeoisie. The result of the application of correct tactics is that Menshevism has disintegrated, and is increasingly disintegrating in our country, that the stubbornly opportunist leaders are being isolated, and that the best of the workers and the best elements among the petty-bourgeois democrats are being brought into our camp "

There you have the conditions without which no blocs or agreements with reactionary trade-union leaders are permissible.

Let the opposition bear that also in mind.

The question arises: Is the policy of our trade unions in conformity with the conditions Comrade Lenin speaks of?

I think that it is in full conformity. In the first place, we have completely reserved for ourselves full freedom to criticise the reformist leaders of the British working class and have availed ourselves of that freedom to a degree unequalled by any other Communist Party in the

world. In the second place, we have gained access to the British working-class masses and strengthened our ties with them. And in the third place, we are effectively severing, and have already severed, whole sections of the British working class from the reactionary leaders. I have in mind the rupture of the miners with the leaders of the General Council.

Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev have studiously avoided saying anything here about the conference of Russian and British miners in Berlin and about their declaration⁹. Yet, surely, that is a highly important fact of the recent period. Richardson, Cook, Smith, Richards -- what are they? Opportunists, reformists. Some of them are called Lefts, others Rights. All right! Which of them are more to the Left is something history will decide. It is very difficult for us to make this out just now -- the waters are dark and the clouds thick. But one thing is clear, and that is that we have severed these vacillating reformist leaders, who have the following of one million two hundred thousand striking miners, from the General Council and linked them with our trade unions. Is that not a fact? Why does the opposition say nothing about it?

Can it be that it does not rejoice at the success of our policy? And when Citrine now writes that the General Council and he are agreed to the Anglo-Russian Committee being convened, is that not a result of the fact that Schwartz and Akulov have succeeded in winning over Cook and Richardson, and that the General Council, being afraid of an open struggle with the miners, was therefore forced to agree to a meeting of the Anglo-Russian Committee? Who can deny that all these facts are evidence of the success of our policy, that all this is evidence of the utter bankruptcy of the policy of the opposition?

Hence, blocs with reactionary trade-union leaders are permissible. They are necessary, on certain conditions. Freedom of criticism is the first of them. Our Party is observing this condition. Severance of the working-class masses from the reactionary leaders is another condition. Our Party is observing this condition too. Our Party is right. The opposition is wrong.

The question arises: What more do Zinoviev and Trotsky want of us?

What they want is that our Soviet trade unions should either break with the Anglo-Russian Committee, or that they, acting from here, from Moscow, should overthrow the General Council. But that is stupid, comrades. To demand that we, acting from Moscow, and by-passing the British workers' trade unions, by-passing the British trade-union masses, by-passing the British trade-union officials, skipping over them, that we, acting from here, from Moscow, should overthrow the General Council -- is not that stupid, comrades?

They demand a demonstrative rupture. Is it difficult to understand that if we did that, the only result would be our own discomfiture? Is it difficult to understand that in the event of a rupture we lose contact with the British trade-union movement, we throw the British trade unions into the embraces of the Sassenbachs and Oudegeests, we shake the foundations of the united front tactics, and we delight the hearts of the Churchills and Thomases, without getting anything in return except discomfiture?

Trotsky takes as the starting point of his policy of theatrical gestures, not concrete human beings, not the concrete workers of flesh and blood who are living and struggling in Britain, but some sort of ideal and ethereal beings who are revolutionary from head to foot. Is it difficult, however, to understand that only persons devoid of common sense take ideal, ethereal beings as the starting point of their policy?

That is why we think that the policy of theatrical gestures, the policy of overthrowing the General Council from Moscow, by the efforts of Moscow alone, is a ridiculous and adventurist policy.

The policy of gestures has been the characteristic feature of Trotsky's whole policy ever since he joined our Party. We had a first application of this policy at the time of the Brest Peace, when Trotsky refused to sign the German-Russian peace agreement and countered it with a theatrical gesture, believing that a gesture was enough to rouse the proletarians of all countries against imperialism. That was a policy of gestures. And, comrades, you know very well how dear that gesture cost us. Into whose hands did that theatrical gesture play? Into the hands of the imperialists, the Mensheviks, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and all who were then trying to strangle the Soviet power, which at that time was not firmly established.

Now we are asked to adopt the same policy of theatrical gestures towards the Anglo-Russian Committee. They demand a demonstrative and theatrical rupture. But who would benefit from that theatrical gesture? Churchill and Chamberlain Sassenbach and Oudegeest. That is what they want. That is what they are waiting for. They, the Sassenbachs and Oudegeests, want us to make a demonstrative break with the British labour movement and thus render things easier for Amsterdam. They, the Churchills and Chamberlains, want the break in order to make it easier for them to launch intervention to provide them with a moral argument in favour of the interventionists.

These are the people into whose hands our oppositionists are playing.

No, comrades, we cannot adopt this adventurist course.

But such is the fate of "ultra-Left" phrasemongers. Their phrases are Leftist, but in practice it turns out that they are aiding the enemies of the working class. You go in on the Left and come out on the Right.

No, comrades, we shall not adopt this policy of theatrical gestures -- we shall no more adopt it today than we did at the time of the Brest Peace. We shall not adopt it because we do not want our Party to become a plaything in the hands of our enemies.

Notes

1. The Anglo-Russian Unity Committee was set up on the initiative of the A.U.C.C.T.U. at an Anglo-Soviet trade-union conference in London, April 6-8, 1925. It consisted of the chairmen and secretaries of the A.U.C.C.T.U. and the T.U.C. General Council and another three members from each of these organisations. The committee ceased to exist in the autumn of 1927 owing to the treacherous policy of the reactionary leaders of the British trade unions.

2. The joint plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission, C.P.S.U.(B.) was held July 14-23, 1926. It discussed a communication of the Political Bureau on its decisions in connection with the British general strike and the events in Poland and China, and reports on the results of the elections to the Soviets, on the case of Lashevich and others, and on Party unity, housing development, and the grain procurement campaign. At the plenum J. V. Stalin spoke on the Political Bureau's communication concerning the decisions taken by it in connection with the events in Britain, Poland and China, on the report of the Presidium of the C.C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.) on the case of Lashevich and others, on Party unity and on other questions. The plenum approved the activities of the Political Bureau of the C.C. and

of the C.P.S.U.(B.) delegation in the E.C.C.I. on the international question, and adopted a number of decisions on important questions of state and economic affairs, inner-Party life and the conditions of the workers. The plenum expelled Zinoviev from the Political Bureau of the C.C. (For the resolutions of the plenum, see Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums, Part II, 1953, pp. 148-69.)

3. This refers to the Amsterdam Trade Union International, founded in July 1919 at an international congress in Amsterdam. It included the reformist trade unions of the majority of the West-European countries and the American Federation of Labour. The Amsterdam International pursued a reformist policy, openly collaborated with the bourgeoisie in the International Labour Office and various commissions of the League of Nations, opposed a united front in the labour movement, and adopted a hostile attitude towards the Soviet Union, as a result of which its influence in the labour movement gradually declined. During the Second World War the Amsterdam International practically ceased to function, and, in December 1945, in connection with the foundation of the World Federation of Trade Unions, it was liquidated.

4. Sassenbach and Oudegeest were secretaries of the reformist Amsterdam Trade Union International and leaders of its Right wing.

5. See V. I. Lenin, Works, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 24, p. 123.

6. See V. I. Lenin, Works, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 24, p. 216.

7. The “Workers’ Opposition”—an anti-Party anarcho-syndicalist group in the R.C.P.(B.), headed by Shlyapnikov, Medvedyev and others. It was formed in the latter half of 1920 and fought the Leninist line of the Party. The Tenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) condemned the “Workers’ Opposition” and decided that propaganda of the ideas of the anarcho-syndicalist deviation was incompatible with membership of the Communist Party. The remnants of the defeated “Workers’ Opposition” subsequently joined the counter-revolutionary Trotskyists.

8. Sotsialistichesky Vestnik (Socialist Courier)—a magazine, organ of the Menshevik whiteguard émigrés, founded by Martov in February 1921. Until March 1933 it was published in Berlin, and from May of that year until June 1940 in Paris. It is now published in America and is the mouthpiece of the most reactionary imperialist circles.

9. The conference of representatives of the Miners’ Federation of Great Britain and the Miners’ Union of the U.S.S.R. was held in Berlin on July 7, 1926. It discussed continuation of the campaign in aid of the locked-out British miners. It adopted a declaration “To the Workers of the World,” appealing for energetic support of the British miners and it expressed the need for an early meeting of the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee. The conference decided on the expediency of setting up an Anglo-Soviet Miners’ Committee for maintaining mutual contact and for achieving united revolutionary action of the Miners’ Union of the U.S.S.R. and the International Miners’ Federation.

F. Dzerzhinsky
In Memory of F. Dzerzhinsky

First Frunze, now Dzerzhinsky.

The old Leninist Guard has lost another of its finest leaders and fighters. The Party has sustained another irreparable loss.

Standing now at Comrade Dzerzhinsky's bier and looking back at his whole life's path—prison, penal servitude and exile, the Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution, the restoration of the ruined transport system, the building of our young socialist industry—one feels that the characteristic of his seething life was a **FIERY ARDOUR**.

The October Revolution allotted him in an exacting post, that of head of the Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution. No name was more hated by the bourgeoisie than that of Dzerzhinsky, who repelled the blows of the enemies of the proletarian revolution with a hand of steel. "The terror of the bourgeoisie" was the name given in those days to Comrade Felix Dzerzhinsky.

When the "period of peace" began, Comrade Dzerzhinsky continued his seething activities. He applied his burning energy to putting in order the dislocated transport system, and then, as Chairman of the Supreme Council of National Economy, he worked with equal ardour to build up our industry. Never resting, never shunning the roughest work, gallantly contending with difficulties and overcoming them, and dedicating all his strength and energy to the task entrusted to him by the Party, he burnt out his life, working in the interests of the proletariat, and for the victory of communism.

Farewell, hero of October! Farewell, loyal son of the Party!

Farewell, builder of the unity and might of our Party!

J. V. STALIN
July 22, 1926

The Anglo-Russian Unity Committee

Speech Delivered at a Meeting of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. August 7, 1926;

Source: J. V. Stalin, Works Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1954, Vol. 8;

Comrades, even before Murphy's speech, the C.C., C.P.S.U. (B.) had received a letter from the Central Committee of the British Communist Party protesting against the declaration of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions¹ on the general strike in Britain. It seems to me that Murphy is repeating here the arguments of that letter. He put forward here chiefly formal considerations, one of them being that the disputed issues had not been the subject of joint discussion with the British Communist Party beforehand. I admit that this last point of Murphy's has some justification. The Comintern has indeed at times had to take decisions without preliminary agreement with the Central Committee of the British Communist Party. But there were extenuating circumstances: the urgency of some of the questions, the impossibility of getting in touch speedily with the C.C. of the British Communist Party, etc.

As to Murphy's other considerations and arguments relating to the A.U.C.C.T.U. and its declaration, it must be said that they are quite incorrect.

It is incorrect to assert that the A.U.C.C.T.U. committed a formal error in issuing the declaration, on the grounds that in doing so it was taking upon itself what was allegedly a function of the Profintern or the Comintern. The A.U.C.C.T.U. has as much right to issue a declaration of its own as any trade-union or other association. How can the A.U.C.C.T.U. be denied this elementary right?

Still more incorrect is the assertion that by its declaration the A.U.C.C.T.U. infringed the rights of the Profintern or the Comintern, that the Profintern and the Comintern are injured parties whose interests suffered damage. I must inform you that the A.U.C.C.T.U. issued its declaration with the knowledge and approval of the Profintern and the Comintern. That, indeed, explains why neither the Profintern nor the Comintern has any idea of accusing the A.U.C.C.T.U. of having infringed its rights. Therefore, when Murphy attacks the A.U.C.C.T.U. on this point, he is as a matter of fact attacking the E.C.C.I. and the Profintern.

Lastly, it must be regarded as absolutely impermissible on Murphy's part to assert as he did that the A.U.C.C.T.U.'s criticism of the General Council, and its declaration generally, constitute "interference" in the internal affairs of the British Communist Party; that the A.U.C.C.T.U., being a "national organisation," has no warrant for such "interference." It is most deplorable to hear Murphy repeating the "arguments" put forward by Pugh and Purcell at the Paris meeting of the Anglo-Russian Committee. These are precisely the "arguments" that Pugh, Purcell and Citrine advanced the other day against the A.U.C.C.T.U. delegation. That alone is an indication that Murphy is in the wrong. The substance, the essence of the matter must not be disregarded because of formal considerations. A Communist cannot behave in that way. The affairs of the British miners would be in much better shape and the incorrect actions of the General Council would have been exposed if, side by side with the A.U.C.C.T.U., the "national" trade union federations of other countries, those of France, Germany, etc., say, had also come forward with a criticism of the General Council. It is not as an error on the part of the A.U.C.C.T.U., but rather as a service to the British workers that the publication of its declaration criticising the General Council should be regarded.

That is all I wanted to say in connection with Murphy's report, taking into account mainly the formal aspect of the matter.

I might have confined myself to that, in so far as the issue concerns the formal aspect of the matter. But the fact is that Murphy did not confine himself to the formal aspect of the matter. He needed this formal aspect in order to secure certain substantial results of a non-formal character. Murphy's tactics consist in using formal grounds as a camouflage, and taking advantage of certain formal shortcomings in the activities of the E.C.C.I., in order to secure definite decisions here on matters of substance. It is therefore necessary to say a few words about the substance of Murphy's arguments.

What is Murphy really out for?

To put it crudely, what he is out for is to compel the A.U.C.C.T.U. to stop criticising the General Council publicly, to compel the A.U.C.C.T.U. to keep silent and "not to interfere" in the "affairs of the General Council."

Can the A.U.C.C.T.U., or our Party, or the Comintern agree to that?

No, it cannot. For what would compelling the A.U.C.C.T.U. to keep silent mean, how would its silence be understood, at a time when the General Council is working to isolate the British miners now on strike and is paving the way for their defeat? To keep silent under such circumstances would mean keeping silent about the sins of the General Council, keeping silent about its treachery. And to keep silent about the General Council's treachery, when it and the A.U.C.C.T.U. have joined in a bloc in the shape of the Anglo-Russian Committee, would be tacitly to approve its treachery, and, consequently, to share with the General Council the responsibility for the latter's treachery in the eyes of the labour movement of the whole world. Does it need further proof that the A.U.C.C.T.U. would be committing political and moral suicide if it were to take this course, if it were even for a moment to renounce public criticism of the General Council's treachery?

Judge for yourselves. In May, the General Council called off the general strike, betraying the British working class in general, and the British miners in particular. Throughout June and July, the General Council did not lift a finger to help the striking miners. More, it did everything in its power to pave the way for the miners' defeat, and thus punish the "recalcitrant" British Miners' Federation. In August, at the Paris meeting of the Anglo-Russian Committee, the General Council leaders refused to discuss the proposal of the A.U.C.C.T.U. representatives on assistance to the British miners, despite the fact that the General Council had raised no objection to the agenda proposed for the meeting by the A.U.C.C.T.U. We thus have a whole chain of betrayals on the part of the General Council, which has got involved in rotten diplomacy. But Murphy demands that the A.U.C.C.T.U. should close its eyes to all these outrages and put a seal on its lips! No, comrades, the A.U.C.C.T.U. cannot adopt this course, for it does not want to commit suicide.

Murphy thinks that it would have been more fitting if the declaration against the General Council had been issued by the Profintern, as an international organisation, and if the A.U.C.C.T.U., as a "national" organisation, had passed a brief resolution associating itself with the Profintern's declaration. Looked at from the purely formal angle, there is a certain architectural harmony of a departmental kind in Murphy's plan. Looked at from that angle, it has a certain justification. But looked at from the political angle, Murphy's plan will not stand criticism. There is no need to prove that it would not have had one-hundredth part of the political effect that the A.U.C.C.T.U.'s declaration has undoubtedly had, in the sense of exposing the General Council and politically educating the masses of the British workers. The

point is that the Profintern is less known to the British working class than is the A.U.C.C.T.U., it is less popular than the latter, and, consequently, carries far less weight. But it follows from this that the criticism of the General Council should have come precisely from the A.U.C.C.T.U., as the body enjoying greater prestige in the eyes of the British working class. No other course was possible, for it was necessary to hit the mark in exposing the treachery of the General Council. Judging by the howl raised by the reformist leaders of the British labour movement over the A.U.C.C.T.U.'s declaration, it may be said with confidence that the A.U.C.C.T.U. did hit the mark.

Murphy thinks that public criticism of the General Council by the A.U.C.C.T.U. may result in a rupture of the bloc with the General Council, in the break-up of the Anglo-Russian Committee. I think Murphy is mistaken. In view of the very active assistance the A.U.C.C.T.U.'s rendering the miners, a break-up of the Anglo-Russian Committee may be considered out of the question, or almost out of the question. This, in fact, explains why nobody fears a break-up of the Anglo-Russian Committee more than the representatives of the General Council majority, Purcell and Hicks. Both Purcell and Hicks, of course, will try to blackmail us with the danger of a rupture. But you must be capable of distinguishing between blackmail and the real danger of a rupture.

Besides, it should be borne in mind that for us the Anglo-Russian Committee is not an end in itself. We did not join, and shall not remain, in the Anglo-Russian Committee unconditionally; we joined it on definite conditions, included among them being the right of the A.U.C.C.T.U. freely to criticise the General Council, equally with the right of the General Council freely to criticise the A.U.C.C.T.U. We cannot renounce freedom of criticism for the sake of respectability and maintaining the bloc at all costs.

What is the underlying purpose of the bloc? It is to organise joint action of the members of the bloc against capital in the interests of the working class, and joint action of the members of the bloc against imperialist war and for peace among the peoples. But what if one of the parties to the bloc, or certain leaders of one of the parties, violate and betray the interests of the working class, and thus render joint action impossible? Surely, we are not expected to praise them for such errors? Consequently, what is necessary is mutual criticism, the elimination of errors by means of criticism, so as to restore the possibility of joint action in the interests of the working class. Hence, the Anglo-Russian Committee has meaning only if freedom of criticism is guaranteed.

It is said that criticism may result in discrediting certain reactionary trade-union leaders. Well, what of it? I see nothing bad in that. The working class stands only to gain by the old leaders who are betraying its interests being discredited and replaced by new leaders loyal to the cause of the working class. And the sooner such reactionary and unreliable leaders are removed from their posts and replaced by new and better leaders who are free from the reactionary ways of the old leaders, the better it will be.

This, however, does not mean that the power of the reactionary leaders can be broken at one stroke, that they can be isolated and replaced by new, revolutionary leaders at short notice.

Certain pseudo-Marxists think that one "revolutionary" gesture, one vociferous attack, is enough to break the power of reactionary leaders. Real Marxists do not, and cannot, have anything in common with such people.

Others think that it is enough for Communists to work out a correct line, and the broad masses of the workers will instantaneously turn away from the reactionaries and reformists and instantaneously rally around the Communist Party. That is quite wrong. Only non-Marxists can think that. In point of fact, a correct Party line and the understanding and acceptance of that line as correct by the masses are two things that are very far apart. For the Party to win the following of vast masses, a correct line is not enough; for that it is necessary, in addition, that the masses should become convinced through their own experience of the correctness of the line, that the masses should accept the Party's policy and slogans as their own policy and slogans, and that they should begin to put them into effect. Only on this condition can a party with a correct policy really become the guiding force of the class.

Was the policy of the British Communist Party correct during the general strike in Britain? Yes, it was. Why, then, did it not win the following of the millions of workers on strike? Because those masses were not yet convinced of the correctness of the Communist Party's policy. And it is not possible to convince the masses of the correctness of the Party's policy in a short time. Still less is it possible with the help of "revolutionary" gestures. It requires time and unremitting energetic work in exposing the reactionary leaders, in politically educating the backward masses of the working class, in promoting new cadres from the working class to leading posts.

From this it is easy to understand why the power of the reactionary leaders of the working class cannot be destroyed all at once, why this requires time and unremitting work in educating the vast masses of the working class.

But still less does it follow from this that the work of exposing the reactionary leaders must be dragged out over decades, or that the exposure can come of itself, of its own accord, without causing any offence to the reactionary leaders and without violating the "sacred rules" of respectability. No, comrades, nothing ever comes "of itself." The exposure of reactionary leaders and the political education of the masses must be done by you yourselves, the Communists, and by other political Left-wing leaders, through unremitting work for the political enlightenment of the masses. Only in that way can the work of revolutionising the broad masses of the workers be accelerated.

Lastly, one further remark in connection with Murphy's report. Murphy insistently harped on the specific features of the labour movement in Britain, on the role and significance of tradition in Britain, and, as it seems to me, he hinted that because of these specific features the ordinary Marxist methods of leadership may prove unsuitable in Britain. I think that Murphy is on a slippery path. Of course, the British labour movement has its specific features, and they must certainly be taken into account. But to elevate these specific features to a principle and make them the basis of activity is to adopt the standpoint of those people who proclaim that Marxism is inapplicable to British conditions. I do not think that Murphy has anything in common with such people. But I do want to say that he is near the fringe where the specifically British features begin to be elevated to a principle.

A word or two about Humboldt's speech. Humboldt, in raising an objection, says that criticism must not be empty and pointless. That is true. But what has that to do with the A.U.C.C.T.U. and the R.C.C.I., whose criticism is absolutely concrete? Was the criticism of the heroes of "Black Friday" empty criticism? Of course not, because now, when "Black Friday" has already become a matter of history, this criticism is being repeated by all and sundry. Why, then, should the criticism of the treachery of the General Council leaders during

the general strike and later, when the miners are continuing their strike, be called empty criticism? Where is the logic in that? Was the treachery at the time of the general strike less fatal than the treachery on "Black Friday"?

I am opposed to the method of criticism of individuals suggested by Humboldt if it is recommended as the basic method. I think that we should criticise reactionary leaders from the angle of their general line of leadership, and not of the individual peculiarities of the leaders themselves. I am not opposed to criticism of individuals as a subsidiary, auxiliary means. But I hold that the underlying basis of our criticism should be principles. Otherwise, instead of criticism from the standpoint of principle, we may just get squabbling and personal recrimination, which is bound to lower the level of our criticism to the detriment of our work.

Notes

1. The Declaration of the A.U.C.C.T.U.—the appeal “To the International Proletariat”—issued in connection with the betrayal of the British general strike by the reformist leaders of the Labour Party and of the T.U.C. General Council, was adopted by the Fourth Plenum of the A.U.C.C.T.U. on June 7, 1926. It was published in Pravda, No. 130, June 8, 1926.

2. The heroes of “Black Friday”—the reactionary British trade-union leaders—Thomas (railwaymen). Hodges (miners) and Williams (transport workers)—who called off the strike of railwaymen and transport workers in support of the striking miners which had been fixed for April 15, 1921, a day which, in consequence, came to be known among the British workers as “Black Friday.”

To the Editorial Board of the Daily Worker, Central Organ of the Workers Party of America¹

Dear Comrade Editor,

Please insert the following statement in your newspaper.

On August 14 the New York quasi-socialist weekly The New Leader 2 printed, without indicating the source, falsified concluding remarks from an alleged speech of mine, also falsified, at a plenum of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.).

I have neither the possibility nor the desire to read all the inventions of the bourgeois and semi-bourgeois newspapers concerning Soviet public men, and would not have paid attention to this latest falsehood of the press of the capitalists and their underlings.

However, a month after printing these falsified remarks The New Leader sent me a telegram in which it requested me to “confirm all July severe criticism of Zinoviev attributed to you in American newspaper reports of proceedings of Central Committee Russian Communist Party.”

Not considering it possible to enter into correspondence with an organ which itself fraudulently falsified “remarks” from my speech, and now has the audacity to ask me, with an air of innocence, about the genuineness of these “remarks,” I ask you to allow me to state through your newspaper that the report on the “remarks of Stalin,” published in The New Leader of August 14, 1926, has absolutely nothing in common with my speech at the plenum of the Central Committee, C.P.S.U.(B.), whether in content, form or tone, and that this report is thus a complete and ignorant falsification.

With communist greetings,
J. Stalin
21.IX.26

Notes

1. The Daily Worker—central organ of the Workers (Communist) Party of America, published in Chicago from January 1922 to January 1927, and since then in New York; at first under the title of The Worker, and from January 1924 the Daily Worker.
2. The New Leader—a weekly newspaper, the organ of the so-called Socialist Party of America, founded in January 1924.

Letter to Slepkov

I have read today your article in Pravda (No. 232, October 8, 1926). It is a good article, in my opinion. But there is one passage in it that is wrong and spoils the whole picture.

You write that only a year ago Trotsky “was stressing that the proletariat need have no doubt whatever that in our technically backward country we can build socialism, that we can with our own internal forces ensure the victorious advance of the socialist elements of our economy along the lines of NEP.” Further, you counterpose this statement to Smilga’s thesis that “in our technically backward country it is impossible to completely build socialism,” and you assert that Smilga and Trotsky contradict each other on this point.

That, of course, is not true, since there is no contradiction here.

In the first place, Trotsky has so far never said—neither in his pamphlet *Towards Socialism or Capitalism?* nor in his subsequent writings—that in our technically backward country we can completely build socialism. Building socialism and completely building socialism are two different things. Neither Zinoviev nor Kamenev deny, or ever have denied, that we can begin to build socialism in our country, for it would be sheer idiocy to deny the obvious fact that socialism is being built in our country. But they emphatically repudiate the thesis that we can completely build socialism. On this point Zinoviev, Kamenev, Trotsky, Smilga and the rest are united by their denial of Lenin’s thesis that we can completely build socialism, that we have “all that is necessary for building a complete socialist society.”¹ They are united by their belief that “building a complete socialist society” would be possible only in the event of the victory of the socialist revolution in the major countries of Europe. Hence, it is quite incorrect to counterpose Trotsky to Smilga as regards the question of completely building socialism in our country.

In the second place, accuracy requires it to be said that Trotsky has never stated that “in our technically backward country . . . we can with our own internal forces ensure the victorious advance of the socialist elements of our economy along the lines of NEP.” Trotsky’s phrase about the “historical music of growing socialism” is an empty diplomatic evasion of an affirmative answer to the question about victoriously building socialism in our country. Trotsky is here evading the question, and you take his evasion at its face value. That other phrase of Trotsky’s—that “there can be no grounds for fearing any surprises in so far as the internal factors of our economy are concerned”—is no answer to the question but slurs over it in a cowardly way. Trotsky may say that we are moving towards socialism. But he has never said, and will not say so long as he adheres to his present position, that we “can with our own internal forces ensure the victorious advance of the socialist elements of our economy along the lines of NEP,” that we can, consequently, arrive at socialism without the preliminary victory of socialism in the foremost European countries. On the other hand, Trotsky has repeatedly said the opposite of what you ascribe to him. Recall, for instance, his speech at the April plenum of the Central Committee (1926), where he denied the possibility in our country of that economic advance which is essential for the victorious building of socialism.

It follows, therefore, that you have inadvertently whitewashed Trotsky; you have, so to speak, libelled him.

J. Stalin
October 8, 1926

Notes

1. See V. I. Lenin Works, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 33, p. 428.

**Measures for Mitigating
the Inner-Party Struggle
Speech Delivered at a Meeting of the Political Bureau of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B)
October 11, 1926**

If we set aside minor issues, we can come straight to the crux of the matter.

What is the dispute about? It is about the results of the inner-Party struggle, in which the opposition has suffered defeat. It is not we, the Central Committee, but the opposition that started the struggle. The C.C. tried several times to dissuade the opposition from a discussion. At the April plenum and at the July plenum, the C.C. tried to dissuade it from starting an all-Union discussion, because such a discussion would sharpen the struggle, involve the danger of a split and cause our Party and government bodies to relax their constructive work for a couple of months at least.

In short, we have to sum up the results of the struggle started by the opposition, and to draw the appropriate conclusions.

It is beyond doubt that the opposition has suffered a severe defeat. It is also clear that in the ranks of the Party resentment against the opposition is growing. The question now is, can we allow the opposition leaders to remain members of the Central Committee, or not? That is now the chief question. It is hard to agree that people who support Shlyapnikov and Medvedyev should be in our Central Committee. It is hard to agree that people who support the struggle of Ruth Fischer, Urbahns and such people against the Comintern and against our Party should remain in the Central Committee.

Do we want the opposition leaders to remain in the Central Committee? I think we do. But if they are to remain, they must dissolve their faction, admit their errors and dissociate themselves from the brazen opportunists inside and outside our Party. The opposition must consent to these conditions if it desires peace in the Party.

What are our conditions?

The first point is that it must publicly declare that it will unreservedly obey the decisions of our Party bodies. Apparently, this point meets with no particular objection on the part of the opposition. In the old days it used to be customary among us Bolsheviks that if one section of the Party found itself in the minority, it not only obeyed the decisions of the majority and not only carried them out, but even made public speeches in defence of the Party's decisions. We are not demanding this of you just now, we are not demanding that you make speeches in support of a position which you do not agree with in principle. We are not demanding it, because we want to make things easier for you in your difficult position.

The second point is that the opposition must openly admit that its factional activity was erroneous and harmful to the Party. For is that not true? Why are the oppositionists renouncing factional activity, if it is not harmful? They offer to dissolve their faction, they renounce factional activity, they promise to order their supporters and followers, the members of their factions, to lay down their arms. Why? Obviously, because they tacitly admit that factional activity is erroneous and impermissible. Then why not say so openly? That is why we demand that the opposition openly admit that the factional activity it carried on during the recent period was impermissible and erroneous.

The third point is that it must dissociate itself from the Ossovskys, Medvedyevs and their like. This demand, in my opinion, is absolutely essential. Personally, I cannot now imagine members of the Central Committee carrying on a bloc with Ossovsky, against whose expulsion the opposition voted, or with Medvedyev, or Shlyapnikov. We want the opposition to dissociate itself from them. This will only facilitate the cause of peace in our Party.

The fourth point is that it must dissociate itself from Korsch, Maslow, Ruth Fischer, Urbahns, Weber and the rest. Why? Firstly, because these people are carrying on hooligan agitation against the Comintern and the C.P.S.U.(B.), and against our Soviet state. Secondly, because the leaders of this so-called “ultra-Left,” but actually opportunist, faction—Maslow and Ruth Fischer—have been expelled from the Party and the Comintern. Thirdly, because they all cling to the opposition in the C.P.S.U.(B.) and proclaim their solidarity with it. The sooner the opposition dissociates itself from such riff-raff, the better it will be both for the opposition and for the Comintern.

The last point is that it must not support the factional fight against the Comintern line which is being waged by various opportunist groups within the sections of the Comintern.

Such are the conditions of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.). Now about the conditions put forward by the opposition.

The opposition demands that the C.C. should carry out four points.

First point. “Propaganda in support of the resolutions of the Fourteenth Congress and subsequent decisions of the Party should be conducted in positive form, without those who think differently being accused of Menshevism, etc.” How is this point to be understood? If the opposition is suggesting that the Central Committee shall damp down its propaganda against the opposition in such a way that it refrains from making clear—at the forthcoming Fifteenth Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.) for instance—its line, based on principle, directed against the errors of the opposition, then that is something we cannot agree to. But if it is a matter of the tone of the criticism, that, of course, can be more or less softened. As regards criticism of the opposition’s errors of principle, that must certainly continue in full force, because the opposition refuses to repudiate its errors of principle.

The second point is about the right to uphold their views in their Party units. This demand is unnecessary, because that always was a right of Party members, and remains so. One may and should uphold one’s views in the Party unit, but it must be done in such a way as not to convert business-like criticism into an all-Union discussion.

The third point is that the cases of those expelled from the Party should be reviewed. The Central Committee has no desire to expel people from the Party. Expulsion is resorted to when there is no alternative. Take Smirnov, who was expelled—he was cautioned several times, and only then was he expelled. If he were to say that he recognises his errors, if he were to conduct himself loyally, the decision of the Central Control Commission might be commuted. But far from acting loyally, far from acknowledging his errors, he has flung mud at the Party in his statement. Obviously, Smirnov’s case cannot be reconsidered when he behaves in this way.

In general, the Party cannot review the decisions taken in regard to persons who have been expelled but who do not acknowledge their errors.

The fourth point is that “before the congress the opposition must be given the opportunity to lay its views before the Party.” The opposition has this right as a matter of course. The opposition cannot fail to know that the Rules make it incumbent on the Central Committee to issue a discussion sheet before a Party congress. This demand of the opposition, therefore, cannot be called a demand, since the Central Committee does not deny the necessity of issuing a discussion sheet before the Party congress.

**The Opposition Bloc
in the C.P.S.U.(B.)**

Theses for the Fifteenth All-Union Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.).

Adopted by the Conference and Endorsed by the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.)¹

The characteristic feature of the present period is the intensification of the struggle between the capitalist countries and our country, on the one hand, and between the socialist elements and the capitalist elements within our country, on the other.

While the attempts of world capital to encircle our country economically, to isolate it politically, to establish a masked blockade, and, lastly, to exact outright vengeance for the help given by the workers of the U.S.S.R. to the workers engaged in struggle in the West and to the oppressed peoples in the East, are creating difficulties of an external order, the fact that our country has passed from the period of restoration to a period of the reconstruction of industry on a new technical basis, and the consequent intensification of the struggle between the capitalist and socialist elements in our economy, are creating difficulties of an internal order.

The Party is aware of these difficulties and is in a position to overcome them. It is already overcoming them with the aid of the vast masses of the proletariat, and is confidently leading the country along the road to socialism. But not all sections of our Party believe in the possibility of further progress. There are sections in our Party—numerically small, it is true—which, being scared by the difficulties, are a prey to weariness and wavering, fall into despair and cultivate a spirit of pessimism, are infected by disbelief in the creative powers of the proletariat, and are coming to have a capitulatory mentality.

In this sense, the present period of radical change is to some extent reminiscent of the period of radical change of October 1917. Just as then, in October 1917, the complicated situation and the difficulties of the transition from a bourgeois to a proletarian revolution engendered in one section of the Party vacillation, defeatism and disbelief in the possibility of the proletariat taking power and retaining it (Kamenev, Zinoviev), so now, in the present period of radical change, the difficulties of the transition to the new phase of socialist construction are engendering in certain circles of our Party vacillation, disbelief in the possibility of the socialist elements in our country being victorious over the capitalist elements, disbelief in the possibility of victoriously building socialism in the U.S.S.R.

The opposition bloc is an expression of this spirit of pessimism and defeatism in the ranks of one section of our Party.

The Party is aware of the difficulties and is in a position to overcome them. But to fight these difficulties successfully requires, above all, that the pessimistic spirit and defeatist mentality in the ranks of one section of the Party shall be overcome.

In its statement of October 16, 1926, the opposition bloc renounces factionalism and dissociates itself from openly Menshevik groups inside and outside the C.P.S.U.(B.); but at the same time it declares that in principle it maintains its former stand, that it does not renounce its errors in matters of principle, and that it will defend these erroneous views within the limits permitted by the Party Rules.

It follows from this that the opposition bloc intends to go on cultivating a spirit of pessimism and capitulation in the Party, intends to go on propagating its erroneous views in the Party.

Hence, the immediate task of the Party is to expose the untenability in principle of the basic views of the opposition bloc, to make it clear that they are incompatible with the principles of Leninism, and to wage a determined ideological struggle against the opposition bloc's errors in matters of principle with a view to overcoming them completely.

I

THE PASSING OVER OF THE "NEW OPPOSITION" TO TROTSKYISM ON THE BASIC QUESTION OF THE CHARACTER AND PROSPECTS OF OUR REVOLUTION

The Party holds that our revolution is a socialist revolution, that the October Revolution is not merely a signal, an impulse, a point of departure for the socialist revolution in the West, but that at the same time it is, firstly, a base for the further development of the world revolutionary movement, and, secondly, it ushers in a period of transition from capitalism to socialism in the U.S.S.R. (dictatorship of the proletariat), during which the proletariat, if it pursues a correct policy towards the peasantry, can and will successfully build a complete socialist society, provided, of course, the power of the international revolutionary movement, on the one hand, and the power of the proletariat of the U.S.S.R., on the other, are great enough to protect the U.S.S.R. from armed imperialist intervention.

Trotskyism holds an entirely different view of the character and prospects of our revolution. In spite of the fact that in October 1917 the Trotskyists marched together with the Party, they held, and still hold, that in itself, and by its very nature, our revolution is not a socialist one; that the October Revolution is merely a signal, an impulse, a point of departure for the socialist revolution in the West; that if the world revolution is delayed and a victorious socialist revolution in the West does not come about in the very near future, proletarian power in Russia is bound to fall or to degenerate (which is one and the same thing) under the impact of inevitable clashes between the proletariat and the peasantry.

Whereas the Party, in organising the October Revolution, held that "the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country taken separately," and that "the victorious proletariat of that country, having expropriated the capitalists and organised socialist production," can and should stand up "against the rest of the world, the capitalist world, attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries, raising revolts in those countries against the capitalists, and in the event of necessity coming out even with armed force against the exploiting classes and their states" (Lenin, Vol. XVIII, pp. 232-33) the Trotskyists, on the other hand, although they co-operated with the Bolsheviks in the October period, held that "it would be hopeless to think . . . that, for example, a revolutionary Russia could hold out in the face of a conservative Europe" (Trotsky, Vol. 111, Part 1, p. 90, Peace Programme, first published in August 1917).

Whereas our Party holds that the Soviet Union possesses "all that is necessary and sufficient" "for the building of a complete socialist society" (Lenin, On Co-operation), the Trotskyists, on the contrary, hold that "real progress of a socialist economy in Russia will become possible only after the victory of the proletariat in the major European countries" (Trotsky, Vol. III, Part 1, p. 93, "Postscript" to Peace Programme, written in 1922).

Whereas our Party holds that “ten or twenty years of correct relations with the peasantry, and victory on a world scale is assured“ (Lenin, plan of the pamphlet *The Tax in Kind*), 2 the Trotskyists, on the contrary, hold that the proletariat cannot have correct relations with the peasantry until the victory of the world revolution; that, having taken power, the proletariat “would come into hostile collision not only with all the bourgeois groupings which supported the proletariat during the first stages of its revolutionary struggle, but also with the broad masses of the peasantry with whose assistance it came into power,” and that “the contradictions in the position of a workers’ government in a backward country with an overwhelmingly peasant population can be solved only on an international scale, in the arena of the world proletarian revolution” (Trotsky, in the “Preface,” written in 1922, to his book *The Year 1905*).

The conference notes that these views of Trotsky and his followers on the basic question of the character and prospects of our revolution are totally at variance with the views of our Party, with Leninism.

The conference considers that these views—minimising the historical role and the importance of our revolution as a base for the further development of the world revolutionary movement, and tending to weaken the determination of the Soviet proletariat to go on building socialism, and therefore to hinder the unleashing of the forces of international revolution—thereby run counter to the principles of genuine internationalism and to the fundamental line of the Communist International.

The conference considers that these views of Trotsky and his followers directly approximate to the views of Social-Democracy, as represented by its present leader, Otto Bauer, who asserts that “in Russia, where the proletariat is only a small minority of the nation, it can maintain its rule only temporarily,” that “it must inevitably lose it again as soon as the peasant masses of the nation are culturally mature enough to take power into their own hands,” that “the temporary rule of industrial socialism in agrarian Russia is only a beacon summoning the proletariat of the industrial West to battle,” and that “only with the conquest of political power by the proletariat of the industrial West can the rule of industrial socialism be durably established” in Russia (see O. Bauer, *Bolshevism or Social-Democracy?*, in German).

The conference therefore qualifies these views of Trotsky and his followers as a Social-Democratic deviation in our Party on the basic question of the character and prospects of our revolution.

The principal fact in the development of inner-Party relations in the C.P.S.U.(B.) since the Fourteenth Congress (which condemned the basic views of the “New Opposition”) is that the “New Opposition” (Zinoviev, Kamenev), which formerly contended against Trotskyism, against the Social-Democratic deviation in our Party, has now gone over to the ideological standpoint of Trotskyism, that it has wholly and completely surrendered to Trotskyism the positions, common to the Party, to which it formerly adhered, and is now coming out with as much ardour for Trotskyism, as it formerly came out against it.

The “New Opposition’s” passing over to Trotskyism was determined by two main circumstances:

a) the weariness, vacillation, and spirit of pessimism and defeatism, alien to the proletariat, among the adherents of the “New Opposition” in face of the new difficulties of the present

period of radical change; furthermore, Kamenev's and Zinoviev's present vacillation and defeatism arose not by accident, but as a repetition, a recurrence of the vacillation and pessimism which they displayed nine years ago, in October 1917, in face of the difficulties of that period of radical change;

b) the complete defeat of the "New Opposition" at the Fourteenth Congress, and the resulting endeavour to unite at all costs with the Trotskyists, in order, by combining the two groups—the Trotskyists and the "New Opposition"—to compensate for the weakness of these groups and their isolation from the proletarian masses, all the more because the ideological views of Trotskyism fully harmonised with the present spirit of pessimism of the "New Opposition."

To this, too, must be attributed the fact that the opposition bloc has become a rallying centre for all the miscellaneous bankrupt trends inside and outside the C.P.S.U.(B.) which have been condemned by the Party and the Comintern—from the "Democratic Centralists"³ and the "Workers' Opposition" in the C.P.S.U.(B.) to the "ultra-Left" opportunists in Germany and the Liquidators of the Souvarine variety⁴ in France.

Hence the unscrupulousness in choice of means and unprincipledness in policy which form the basis of the bloc of the Trotskyists and the "New Opposition," and without which they could not have brought together these diverse anti-Party trends.

Thus, the Trotskyists, on the one hand, and the "New Opposition," on the other, quite naturally joined forces on the common platform of a Social-Democratic deviation and an unprincipled union of diverse anti-Party elements in the fight against the Party, thereby forming an opposition bloc which represents something like a recurrence—in a new form—of the August Bloc (1912-14).

II

THE PRACTICAL PLATFORM OF THE OPPOSITION BLOC

The practical platform of the opposition bloc is a direct sequel to the basic error of this bloc on the character and prospects of our revolution.

The major features of the opposition bloc's practical platform may be summed up in the following principal points:

a) Questions of the international movement. The Party holds that the advanced capitalist countries are, on the whole, in a state of partial, temporary stabilisation; that the present period is an inter-revolutionary one, making it incumbent on the Communist Parties to prepare the proletariat for the coming revolution; that the offensive launched by capital in a vain effort to consolidate the stabilisation cannot but evoke an answering struggle on the part of the working class and the uniting of its forces against capital; that the Communist Parties must intervene in this intensifying class struggle and turn the attacks of capital into counter-attacks of the proletariat, with a view to establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat; that in order to achieve these aims the Communist Parties must win over the vast masses of the working class which still adhere to the reformist trade unions and the Second International; that, consequently, united front tactics are necessary and obligatory for the Communist Parties.

The opposition bloc starts out from entirely different premises. Having no faith in the internal forces of our revolution, and falling into despair owing to the delay of the world revolution,

the opposition bloc slips away from the basis of a Marxist analysis of the class forces of the revolution to one consisting of “ultra-Left” self-deception and “revolutionary” adventurism; it denies the existence of a partial stabilisation of capitalism and, consequently, inclines towards putschism.

Hence the opposition’s demand for a revision of the united front tactics and the break-up of the Anglo-Russian Committee, its failure to understand the role of the trade unions and its call to replace the latter by new, “revolutionary” proletarian organisations of its own invention.

Hence the opposition bloc’s support of the “ultra-Left” ranters and opportunists in the Communist International (in the German Party, for example).

The conference considers that the policy of the opposition bloc in the international sphere is not in conformity with the interests of the international revolutionary movement.

b) The proletariat and the peasantry in the U.S.S.R. The Party holds that “the supreme principle of the dictatorship is the maintenance of the alliance of the proletariat and peasantry in order that the proletariat may retain its leading role and state power” (Lenin, Vol. XXVI, p. 460); that the proletariat can and should be the leader of the main mass of the peasantry in the economic sphere, in the sphere of socialist construction, just as in October 1917 it was the leader of the peasantry in the political sphere, in overthrowing the power of the bourgeoisie and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat; that industrialisation of the country can be carried out only if it is based upon a steady improvement of the material conditions of the majority of the peasantry (the poor and middle peasants), who constitute the principal market for our industry, and that, therefore, our economic policy (price policy, tax policy, etc.) must be such as strengthens the bond between industry and peasant economy and maintains the alliance between the working class and the main mass of the peasantry.

The opposition bloc starts out from entirely different premises. Abandoning the fundamental line of Leninism in the peasant question, not believing that the proletariat can be the leader of the peasantry in the work of socialist construction, and regarding the peasantry in the main as a hostile environment, the opposition bloc proposes economic and financial measures capable only of disrupting the bond between town and country, of shattering the alliance between the working class and the peasantry, and thus undermining all possibility of real industrialisation. Such, for example, are: a) the opposition’s proposal to raise the wholesale prices of manufactured goods, which would be bound to lead to an increase of retail prices, to the impoverishment of the poor peasants and a considerable section of the middle peasants, to a contraction of the home market, to discord between the proletariat and the peasantry, to a fall in the exchange rate of the chervonets and, in the final analysis, to a decline in real wages; b) the opposition’s proposal that the peasantry should be taxed to the maximum, which would be bound to result in a rift in the alliance between the workers and the peasants.

The conference considers that the policy of the opposition bloc towards the peasantry is not in conformity with the interests of the country’s industrialisation and of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

c) A fight against the Party apparatus under the guise of fighting bureaucracy in the Party. The Party takes as its starting point that the Party apparatus and the mass of the Party members constitute an integral whole, that the Party apparatus (Central Committee, Central Control Commission, Oblast Party committees, gubernia committees, okrug committees, uyezd

committees, bureaus of Party units, etc.) embodies the leading element of the Party as a whole, that the Party apparatus comprises the finest members of the proletariat, who may be and should be criticised for errors, who may be and should be “freshened up,” but who cannot be vilified without the risk of disrupting the Party and leaving it defenceless.

The opposition bloc, on the other hand, starts out by counterposing the mass of the Party members to the Party apparatus, tries to minimise the leading role of the Party apparatus, reducing its functions to registration and propaganda, incites the mass of the Party members against the Party apparatus, and thus discredits the latter, weakening its position in regard to leading the state.

The conference considers that this policy of the opposition bloc, a policy which has nothing in common with Leninism, can only result in the Party being disarmed in its fight against bureaucracy in the state apparatus, for a real transformation of this apparatus, and hence for strengthening the dictatorship of the proletariat.

d) A fight against the “regime” in the Party under the guise of fighting for inner-Party democracy. The Party takes as its starting point that “whoever weakens in the least the iron discipline of the Party of the proletariat (especially during the time of its dictatorship), actually aids the bourgeoisie against the proletariat” (Lenin, Vol. XXV, p. 190); that inner-Party democracy is necessary not in order to weaken and shatter proletarian discipline in the Party, but in order to strengthen and consolidate it, and that without iron discipline in the Party, without a firm regime in the Party, backed by the sympathy and support of the vast masses of the proletariat, the dictatorship of the proletariat is impossible.

The opposition bloc, on the other hand, starts out by counterposing inner-Party democracy to Party discipline, confuses freedom of groups and factions with inner-Party democracy, and tries to make use of such democracy to shatter Party discipline and undermine the unity of the Party. It is natural that the opposition bloc’s call for a fight against the “regime” in the Party, which leads in practice to advocacy of freedom of groups and factions in the Party, should be a call that is taken up with fervour by the anti-proletarian elements in our country as a means of salvation from the regime of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The conference considers that the fight of the opposition bloc against the “regime” in the Party, a fight which has nothing in common with the organisational principles of Leninism, can only result in undermining the unity of the Party, weakening the dictatorship of the proletariat and unleashing the anti-proletarian forces in the country that are striving to undermine and shatter the dictatorship.

One of the means chosen by the opposition bloc for disrupting Party discipline and aggravating the struggle within the Party is the method of an all-Union discussion, such as it tried to force upon the Party in October of this year. While considering it necessary that questions of disagreement should be freely discussed in the theoretical journals of our Party, and while recognising the right of every Party member freely to criticise shortcomings in our Party work, the conference at the same time calls attention to the words of Lenin, who said that our Party is not a debating society but the fighting organisation of the proletariat. The conference considers that an all-Union discussion may be recognised as necessary only on condition: a) that such necessity is recognised by at least several local Party organisations of a gubernia or oblast level; b) that there is not a sufficiently firm majority in the Central Committee on major questions of Party policy; c) that, although there may be a firm majority

holding a definite opinion in the C.C., the latter nevertheless considers it necessary to test the correctness of its policy through a general Party discussion. Moreover, in all such cases an all-Union discussion may be begun and carried through only after a decision of the C.C. to that effect.

The conference notes that not one of these conditions existed when the opposition bloc demanded the opening of an all-Union discussion.

The conference therefore considers that the Central Committee of the Party acted quite rightly in deciding that a discussion was inexpedient and in condemning the opposition bloc for its attempt to force upon the Party an all-Union discussion on issues which had already been decided by the Party.

Summing up its analysis of the practical platform of the opposition bloc, the conference finds that this platform marks the opposition bloc's departure from the class line of the proletarian revolution on cardinal issues of international and home policy.

III

THE "REVOLUTIONARY" WORDS AND OPPORTUNIST DEEDS OF THE OPPOSITION BLOC

It is a characteristic feature of the opposition bloc that, being in, fact the expression of a Social-Democratic deviation in our Party, and advocating what is in fact an opportunist policy, it tries, nevertheless, to clothe its pronouncements in revolutionary phraseology, to criticise the Party "from the Left" and to disguise itself in a "Left" garb. The reason for this is that the communist proletarians, to whom the opposition bloc is chiefly trying to appeal, are the most revolutionary proletarians in the world, and that, having been brought up in the spirit of revolutionary traditions, they would simply not listen to critics who are avowed Rights; and so, in order to palm off its opportunist wares, the opposition bloc is compelled to clap a revolutionary label on them, being well aware that only by such a ruse can it attract the attention of the revolutionary proletarians.

But since, nevertheless, the opposition bloc is the vehicle of a Social-Democratic deviation, since in fact it advocates an opportunist policy, its words and its deeds must inevitably conflict. Hence the inherently contradictory nature of the activities of the opposition bloc. Hence the divergence between its words and its deeds, between its revolutionary phrases and its opportunist actions.

The opposition noisily criticises the Party and the Comintern "from the Left," and at the same time it calls for a revision of the united front tactics, the breakup of the Anglo-Russian Committee, withdrawal from the trade unions and their replacement by new, "revolutionary" organisations, thinking that all this will advance the revolution, whereas in fact the result would be to aid Thomas and Oudegeest, sever the Communist Parties from the trade unions, weaken the position of world communism and, consequently, retard the revolutionary movement. In words—"revolutionaries," but in deeds—abettors of the Thomases and Oudegeests.

The opposition with much clamour "dresses down" the Party "from the Left," and at the same time it demands the raising of wholesale prices of manufactured goods, thinking thereby to accelerate industrialisation, whereas in fact the result would be to disorganise the home market, shatter the bond between industry and peasant economy, cause a fall in the exchange

rate of the chervonets and in real wages, and, consequently, wreck all possibility of industrialisation. In words—industrialisers, but in deeds—abettors of the opponents of industrialisation.

The opposition accuses the Party of being unwilling to fight against bureaucracy in the state apparatus, and at the same time it proposes that wholesale prices should be raised, evidently thinking that raising wholesale prices has no bearing on the question of bureaucracy in the state apparatus, whereas in fact it turns out that the result must be completely to bureaucratise the state economic apparatus, since high wholesale prices are the surest means for causing industry to wilt, for converting it into a hothouse plant and for bureaucratising the economic apparatus. In words—opponents of bureaucracy, but in deeds—advocates and promoters of bureaucratising the state apparatus.

The opposition raises a hue and cry against private capital, and at the same time it proposes that state capital should be withdrawn from the sphere of circulation, for the benefit of industry, thinking thereby to undermine private capital, whereas in fact the result would be to strengthen private capital in every way, since the withdrawal of state capital from circulation, which is private capital's principal sphere of operation, cannot fail to put trade completely under the control of private capital. In words—a fight against private capital, but in deeds—aid for private capital.

The opposition raises a cry about degeneration of the Party apparatus, but in fact it turns out that when the Central Committee raises the question of the expulsion of one of the Communists who have really degenerated, Mr. Ossovsky, the opposition displays maximum loyalty to this gentleman and votes against his expulsion. In words—opponents of degeneration, but in deeds—abettors and defenders of degeneration.

The opposition raised a cry about inner-Party democracy, and at the same time it demanded an all-Union discussion, thinking thereby to put inner-Party democracy into effect, whereas in fact it turned out that, by forcing a discussion upon the overwhelming majority of the Party on behalf of a tiny minority, the opposition was guilty of an act of gross violation of all democracy. In words—for inner-Party democracy, but in deeds—the violation of the fundamental principles of all democracy.

In the present period of acute class struggle, there can be only one of two possible policies in the working-class movement: either the policy of Menshevism, or the policy of Leninism. The attempts of the opposition bloc to occupy a middle position between these two opposite lines, under cover of “Left,” “revolutionary” phraseology and while intensifying criticism of the C.P.S.U.(B.), were bound to lead, and have actually led, to the opposition bloc slithering into the camp of the opponents of Leninism, into the camp of Menshevism.

The enemies of the C.P.S.U.(B.) and of the Comintern know just what value is to be attached to the “revolutionary” phraseology of the opposition bloc. Paying no attention to it, therefore, as being of no significance, they unanimously praise the opposition bloc for its unrevolutionary deeds, and take up the opposition's slogan of a fight against the main line of the C.P.S.U.(B.) and the Comintern as their own slogan. It cannot be considered accidental that the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Cadets, the Russian Mensheviks and the German “Left” Social-Democrats have all found it possible to express openly their sympathy with the fight of the opposition bloc against our Party, since they calculate that this fight will lead to a

split, and that a split will unleash the anti-proletarian forces in our country, to the glee of the enemies of the revolution.

The conference considers that the Party must pay special attention to tearing off the “revolutionary” mask from the opposition bloc and showing up the Tatter’s opportunist nature.

The conference considers that the Party must protect the unity of its ranks like the apple of its eye, considering that the unity of our Party is the chief antidote to all counter-revolutionary attempts on the part of the enemies of the revolution.

IV

CONCLUSIONS

Summing up the stage of the inner-Party struggle that has been passed through, the Fifteenth Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.) notes that in this struggle the Party has shown its immense ideological growth, it has unhesitatingly rejected the basic views of the opposition and has scored a swift and decisive victory over the opposition bloc, compelling the latter publicly to renounce factionalism and to dissociate itself from the openly opportunist groups inside and outside the C.P.S.U.(B.).

The conference notes that the attempts of the opposition bloc to force a discussion upon the Party and undermine its unity have resulted in the Party masses rallying still more solidly around the Central Committee, thus isolating the opposition and ensuring real unity in the ranks of our Party.

The conference considers that only with the active support of the broad mass of the Party members was the Central Committee able to achieve these successes, that the activity and political understanding displayed by the Party masses in the struggle against the disruptive work of the opposition bloc are the best proofs that the Party is functioning and developing on the basis of genuine inner-Party democracy.

Fully approving the policy of the Central Committee in its struggle to ensure unity, the conference considers that the next tasks of the Party should be:

- 1) To see to it that the minimum conditions arrived at as necessary for the unity of the Party shall be actually observed.
- 2) To wage a determined ideological struggle against the Social-Democratic deviation in our Party, explaining to the masses the erroneousness of the basic views of the opposition bloc and bringing to light the opportunist content of these views, whatever the “revolutionary” phrases under which they are disguised.
- 3) To work to ensure that the opposition bloc acknowledges the erroneousness of its views.
- 4) To safeguard the unity of the Party in every way, checking all attempts to revive factionalism and to violate discipline.

Notes

1. The theses on “The Opposition Bloc in the C.P.S.U.(B.)” were written by J. V. Stalin, at the request of the Political Bureau of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.), between October 21 and 25, 1926.

They were approved by the Political Bureau and on October 26 were discussed and adopted by a joint plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.). On November 3 the theses were unanimously adopted by the Fifteenth All-Union Party Conference as a decision of the conference, and on the same day were endorsed by a joint plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.) (see Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums, Part II, 1953, pp. 209-20).

2. For Lenin's "Plan of the Pamphlet The Tax in Kind," see Works, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 32, pp. 299-307.

3. "Democratic Centralists"—an anti-Party group, headed by Saprnov and Ossinsky, which existed in the R.C.P.(B.). It arose in the period of War Communism. The group denied the leading role of the Party in the Soviets, opposed one-man management and personal responsibility of factory directors, opposed Lenin's line on organisational questions, and demanded freedom for groups in the Party. The Ninth and Tenth Party Congresses condemned the "Democratic Centralists" as an anti-Party group. Together with active members of the Trotskyist opposition, the group was expelled from the Party by the Fifteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) in 1927.

4. "Liquidators of the Souvarine variety"—followers of the Trotskyist Boris Souvarine, a former member of the C.C. of the French Communist Party. At the Seventh Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I., in 1926, he was expelled from the Communist International for counter-revolutionary propaganda against the Soviet Union and the Comintern.

The Social-Democratic Deviation in our Party
Report Delivered at the Fifteenth All-Union Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.)1
November 1, 1926

I

The Stages of Development of the Opposition Bloc

Comrades, the first question that has to be dealt with in the report concerns the formation of the opposition bloc, the stages of its development, and, lastly, its collapse, which has already begun. This theme, in my opinion, is essential as an introduction to the substance of the theses on the opposition bloc.

Already at the Fourteenth Party Congress Zinoviev gave the signal for rallying all the opposition trends and for uniting them into a single force. You, comrades, who are delegates at this conference probably remember that speech of Zinoviev's. There cannot be any doubt that such a call was bound to meet with a response among the Trotskyists, who from the very first held the opinion that groups should be more or less unrestricted, and that they should more or less unite for the purpose of carrying on a fight against the basic line of the Party, with which Trotsky had long been dissatisfied.

That was the preparatory work, so to speak, for the formation of the bloc.

1. The First Stage

The opposition took the first serious step towards forming a bloc at the time of the April plenum of the Central Committee,² in connection with Rykov's theses on the economic situation. Full understanding between the "New Opposition" and the Trotskyists had not yet been reached at that time, but that in the main the bloc was already formed—of that there could be no doubt. Comrades who have read the verbatim report of the April plenum will know that that is quite true. In the main, the two groups had already managed to come to an understanding, but there were reservations, owing to which they were obliged to submit two parallel series of amendments to Rykov's theses, instead of common amendments of the whole opposition. One series of amendments came from the "New Opposition," headed by Kamenev, and the other series from the Trotskyist group. But that in the main they were hitting at the same mark, and that the plenum was already saying that they were reviving the August Bloc in a new form, is an undoubted fact.

What were the reservations made at that time? Here is what Trotsky said then:

"I consider the defect of Comrade Kamenev's amendments is that they, as it were, treat differentiation in the countryside to a certain extent independently of industrialisation. Yet the significance and social importance of peasant differentiation and its tempo are determined by the progress and tempo of industrialisation in relation to the countryside as a whole."

A reservation of no little importance.

In reply to this, Kamenev in his turn made a reservation in regard to the Trotskyists:

"I am not able," he said, "to associate myself with that part of them (i.e., Trotsky's amendments to Rykov's draft resolution) which assesses the past economic policy of the Party, which I supported one hundred per cent."

The “New Opposition” was not pleased at Trotsky criticising the economic policy which Kamenev had directed during the preceding period. And Trotsky, for his part, was not pleased at the “New Opposition” separating the question of peasant differentiation from the question of industrialisation.

2. The Second Stage

The second stage was the July plenum of the Central Committee.³ At that plenum we already had a formally established bloc, a bloc without reservations. Trotsky’s reservations had been withdrawn and shelved; so had Kamenev’s. Now they already had a joint “declaration,” which is well known to you all, comrades, as an anti-Party document. Such were the characteristic features of the second stage in the development of the opposition bloc.

The bloc was constructed and given shape in that period not only on the basis of a mutual withdrawal of amendments, but also on the basis of a mutual “amnesty.” We had at that time Zinoviev’s interesting statement to the effect that the opposition, its main core in 1923—in other words, the Trotskyists—was right regarding the degeneration of the Party, that is, the main plank of the practical platform of Trotskyism, which follows from its fundamental line. On the other hand, we had the no less interesting statement of Trotsky’s to the effect that his Lessons of October—which had been levelled specifically against Kamenev and Zinoviev as the Party’s “Right wing” that was now repeating the October errors—had been a mistake, that the beginning of the Right deviation in the Party and of the degeneration had to be ascribed not to Kamenev and Zinoviev, but to, let us say, Stalin.

Here is what Zinoviev said in July of this year:

“We say that there can now be no doubt whatever that, as the evolution of the directing line of the faction (i.e., the majority of the Central Committee) has shown, the main core of the 1923 opposition correctly warned against the danger of a shift from the proletarian line, and against the ominous growth of the apparatus regime.”

In other words, Zinoviev’s recent assertions, and the resolution of the Thirteenth Congress⁴, stating that Trotsky was revising Leninism, and that Trotskyism was a petty-bourgeois deviation, were all a mistake, a misunderstanding, and that the danger lay not in Trotskyism, but in the Central Committee.

That is a most unprincipled “amnesty” of Trotskyism.

On the other hand, Trotsky declared in July:

“There is no doubt that in the Lessons of October I associated the opportunist shifts in policy with the names of Zinoviev and Kamenev. As experience of the ideological struggle in the Central Committee testifies, that was a gross mistake. This mistake is to be explained by the fact that I had had no opportunity of following the ideological struggle among the seven and of ascertaining in time that the opportunist shifts proceeded from the group headed by Comrade Stalin, in opposition to Comrades Zinoviev and Kamenev.”

This means that Trotsky was publicly repudiating his much-talked-of Lessons of October, thereby issuing an “amnesty” to Zinoviev and Kamenev in return for the “amnesty” he had received from them.

A direct and unconcealed unprincipled deal!

Hence, a withdrawal of the April reservations and a mutual “amnesty” at the expense of the principles of the Party—these were the factors which determined the full shaping of the bloc, as an anti-Party bloc.

3. The Third Stage

The third stage in the development of the bloc was the opposition’s open attacks on the Party at the end of September and in the beginning of October of this year in Moscow and Leningrad, the period when the leaders of the bloc, having had their holidays in the South and gained fresh vigour, returned to the centre and launched a direct attack on the Party. Before passing from underground forms to open forms of struggle against the Party, they, it appears, declared here in the Political Bureau (I myself was away from Moscow at the time): “We’ll show you. We are going to address workers’ meetings; let the workers decide who’s right. We’ll show you!” And they began to make the rounds of the Party units. But, as you know, the outcome of this move was deplorable for the opposition. You know that they suffered defeat. You know from the press that both in Leningrad and Moscow, both in the industrial and in the non-industrial areas of the Soviet Union, the opposition bloc met with a determined rebuff from the mass of the Party members. How many votes it received and how many were cast for the Central Committee, I shall not repeat here; you know that from the press. One thing is clear: that the expectations of the opposition bloc were not fulfilled. From that moment the opposition made a turn in favour of peace in the Party. The opposition’s defeat, evidently, did not fail to have its effect. That was on October 4, when the opposition submitted to the Central Committee its statement about peace, and when for the first time, after the abuse and assaults, we heard words from the opposition resembling the words of Party people—it was time to stop “inner-Party strife” and to organise “joint work.”

Thus the opposition was compelled by its defeat to face the question that the Central Committee had repeatedly called upon it to face—the question of peace in the Party.

Naturally, the Central Committee, true to the directives of the Fourteenth Congress on the need for unity, readily agreed to the opposition’s proposal, although it knew that the proposal was not altogether sincere.

4. The Fourth Stage

The fourth stage was the period when the opposition leaders drew up their “statement” of October 16 of this year. It is usually described as a capitulation. I shall not describe it in sharp terms, but it is clear that the statement is evidence not of any victories of the opposition bloc, but of its defeat. I shall not recount the history of our negotiations, comrades. A verbatim record of the negotiations was made, and you can learn all about them from it. I should like to dwell on one incident alone. The opposition bloc wanted to declare in the first paragraph of its “statement” that it still adhered to its views, and not simply that, but that it adhered to its old opinions “in their entirety.” We tried to persuade the opposition bloc not to insist on this. Why? For two reasons.

Firstly, for the reason that if the opposition, having renounced factionalism and with it the theory and practice of freedom of factions, had dissociated itself from Ossovsky, the “Workers’ Opposition,” and the Maslow-Urbahns group, that meant that it had renounced not

only factional methods of struggle, but also some of its political opinions. Could the opposition bloc say after this that it still adhered to its erroneous views, to its ideological opinions, “in their entirety”? Of course not.

Secondly, we told the opposition that it was not in its own interest to shout that they, the oppositionists, adhered to their old opinions, and “in their entirety” at that, since the workers would have every justification for saying: “So the oppositionists want to go on scrapping! That means they haven’t been whacked enough yet and will have to be given some more.” (Laughter, cries: “Quite right!”) However, they did not agree with us and only accepted the proposal to delete the words “in their entirety,” retaining the phrase about adhering to their old opinions. Well, they have made their bed and will have to lie in it. (Voices: “Quite right!”)

5. Lenin and the Question of Blocs in the Party

Zinoviev said recently that the Central Committee’s condemnation of their bloc was unwarranted, since supposedly Ilyich had approved in general of blocs in the Party. I must say, comrades, that Zinoviev’s statement is totally at variance with Lenin’s position. Lenin never approved of blocs in the Party indiscriminately. Lenin was in favour only of revolutionary blocs, based on principle, against the Mensheviks, Liquidators and Otzovists. Lenin always fought against unprincipled and anti-Party blocs in the Party. Does not everyone know that for three years Lenin fought against Trotsky’s August Bloc, as being an anti-Party and unprincipled bloc, until complete victory over it was achieved. Ilyich was never in favour of blocs indiscriminately. He was in favour only of such blocs in the Party as were based on principle, in the first place, and, in the second place, had the purpose of strengthening the Party against the Liquidators, against the Mensheviks, against vacillating elements. The history of our Party knows of one such bloc, the bloc of the Leninists and the Plekhanovists (this was in 1910-12) against the bloc of the Liquidators when the anti-Party August Bloc was formed, which included Potresov and other Liquidators, Alexinsky and other Otzovists, and which was headed by Trotsky. There was one bloc, an anti-Party bloc, the unprincipled and adventurist August Bloc; and there was another bloc, the bloc of the Leninists with the Plekhanovists, that is, the revolutionary Mensheviks (at that time Plekhanov was a revolutionary Menshevik). That is the kind of bloc that Lenin recognised. And we all recognise such blocs.

If a bloc within the Party enhances the fighting capacity of the Party and helps it to advance, we are for such a bloc. But your bloc, worthy oppositionists—can it be said that this bloc of yours enhances the fighting capacity of our Party? Can it be said that this bloc of yours is based on principle? What principles unite you with the Medvedyev group, let us say? What principles unite you with, let us say, the Souvarine group in France or the Maslow group in Germany? What principles unite you, the “New Opposition,” who only recently regarded Trotskyism as a variety of Menshevism, with the Trotskyists, who only recently regarded the leaders of the “New Opposition” as opportunists?

And then, can it be said that your bloc works in the interest and for the good of the Party, and not against the Party? Can it be said that it has enhanced the fighting capacity and revolutionary spirit of our Party even one iota? Why, all the world now knows that during the six or eight months your bloc has existed you have been trying to drag the Party back, back to “revolutionary” phrasemongering and unprincipledness, that you have been trying to disintegrate the Party and reduce it to a state of paralysis, to split it.

No, comrades, there is nothing in common between the opposition bloc and the bloc which Lenin concluded with the Plekhanovists in 1910 against the opportunists' August Bloc. On the contrary, the present opposition bloc is in the main reminiscent of Trotsky's August Bloc both by its unprincipledness and by its opportunist basis.

Thus, in forming such a bloc, the oppositionists have departed from the basic line which Lenin strove to pursue. Lenin always told us that the most correct policy is a policy based on principle. The opposition, on the contrary, when it banded itself together in one group, decided that the most correct policy is an unprincipled policy.

For that reason the opposition bloc cannot exist for long; it is inevitably bound to disintegrate and fall to pieces.

Such are the stages of development of the opposition bloc.

6. The Process of Decomposition of the Opposition Bloc

What is the state of the opposition bloc today? It may be described as a state of gradual disintegration, as a state of the gradual falling away of its component elements, as a state of decomposition. That is the only way the present state of the opposition bloc can be described. And that was only to be expected, because an unprincipled bloc, an opportunist bloc, cannot exist for long within the ranks of our Party. We already know that the Maslow-Urbahns group is falling away from the opposition bloc. Yesterday we heard that Medvedyev and Shlyapnikov have recanted their errors and are leaving the bloc. We know, further, that there is also a rift within the bloc, that is, between the "new" opposition and the "old," and it should make itself felt at this conference.

It turns out, therefore, that they formed a bloc, and formed it with great pomp, but the result has been the opposite of what they expected from it. Arithmetically, of course, they should have obtained an increase, for adding forces together should yield an increase; but the oppositionists forgot that, besides arithmetic, there is also algebra, and that in algebra adding forces together does not always result in an increase (laughter), because the result depends not only on adding forces together, but on the signs that stand in front of the items. (Prolonged applause.) It turns out that they are good at arithmetic but bad at algebra, with the result that by adding their forces together, far from having increased their army, they have reduced it to a minimum, to a state of collapse.

Wherein lay the strength of the Zinoviev group? In the fact that it waged a determined fight against the fundamentals of Trotskyism. But as soon as the Zinoviev group gave up its fight against Trotskyism, it, so to speak, emasculated itself, rendered itself powerless.

Wherein lay the strength of the Trotsky group?

In the fact that it waged a determined fight against the errors of Zinoviev and Kamenev in October 1917 and against the repetition of those errors today. But as soon as the Trotsky group gave up its fight against the Zinoviev-Kamenev deviation, it emasculated itself, rendered itself powerless.

The result is the adding together of emasculated forces. (Laughter, prolonged applause.)

Obviously, nothing was to be got from this but discomfiture. Obviously, the more honest elements of Zinoviev's group were bound after this to part ways with Zinoviev, just as the better elements among the Trotskyists were bound to desert Trotsky.

7. What is the Opposition Bloc Counting on?

What are the prospects of the opposition? What are they counting on? I think that they are counting on a deterioration of the situation in the country and in the Party. Just now they are winding up their factional activity, because the times are "hard" for them. But if they do not renounce their fundamental views, if they have decided to adhere to their old opinions, it means that they will temporise, wait for "better times," when they have accumulated strength and are again in a position to come out against the Party. Of that there can be no doubt whatever.

Recently, one of the oppositionists who had come over to the side of the Party, a worker named Andreyev, gave us some interesting information about the opposition's plans which it is necessary, in my opinion, to mention at this conference. Here is what Comrade Yaroslavsky told us in his report at the October plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission:

"Andreyev, who had been active in the Opposition for a fairly long time, in the end arrived at the conviction that he could not work with it any longer. What chiefly decided him was two things he had heard the opposition say: the first was that it had found itself up against a 'reactionary' mood of the working class, and the second was that the economic situation had proved not so bad as it had thought."

I think that Andreyev, formerly an oppositionist and now pro-Party, has disclosed what the opposition believes at heart but does not venture to say aloud. It evidently senses that the economic situation is now better than it anticipated, and that the mood of the workers is not as bad as it would have liked it to be. Hence their policy of temporarily winding up their "work." It is clear that if later on the economic situation becomes somewhat more tense—as the oppositionists are convinced it will—and the mood of the workers deteriorates as a result—as they are also convinced it will—they will lose no time in resuming their "work," in resuming their old ideological opinions, which they have not abandoned, and in launching an open fight against the Party.

Such, comrades, are the prospects of the opposition bloc, which is disintegrating, but which has not yet disintegrated completely, and perhaps will not do so soon unless there is a determined and ruthless fight by the Party.

But since they are preparing for a struggle, and are only waiting for "better times" to resume their open fight against the Party, the Party must not be caught napping. Hence the tasks of the Party are: to wage a determined ideological struggle against the erroneous views of the opposition, to which it still adheres; to expose the opportunist nature of these ideas no matter what "revolutionary" phraseology is used to disguise them; and to work in such a way that the opposition is compelled to renounce its errors for fear of being routed utterly and completely.

II

The Principal Error of the Opposition Bloc

I pass to the second question, comrades, that of the principal error of the opposition bloc on the basic question of the character and prospects of our revolution.

The basic question on which the Party and the opposition bloc are divided is that of the possibility of the victory of socialism in our country, or, what is the same thing, that of the character and prospects of our revolution.

That is not a new question: it was more or less thoroughly discussed, by the way, at the conference of April 1925, the Fourteenth Conference. Now, in a new situation, it has sprung up again and we shall have to consider it closely. And since at the recent joint meeting of the plenums of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission, Trotsky and Kamenev levelled the charge that the theses on the opposition bloc set forth their views incorrectly, I am compelled in my report to adduce a number of documents and quotations confirming the basic propositions of the theses on the opposition bloc. I apologise in advance, comrades, but I am compelled to do this.

We are faced with three questions:

- 1) Is the victory of socialism possible in our country, bearing in mind that it is so far the only country of the dictatorship of the proletariat, that the proletarian revolution has not yet been victorious in other countries, and that the tempo of the world revolution has slowed down?
- 2) If this victory is possible, can it be called a complete victory, a final victory?
- 3) If such a victory cannot be called final, then what conditions are necessary in order that it may become final?

Such are the three questions which are combined in the general question of the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country, that is to say, in our country.

1. Preliminary Remarks

How did the Marxists answer this question formerly, in the forties, say, or in the fifties and sixties of the last century, in the period in general when monopoly capitalism did not yet exist, when the law of uneven development of capitalism had not yet been discovered and could not have been discovered, and when, consequently, the question of the victory of socialism in individual countries was not yet presented from the angle from which it was presented subsequently? At that time all of us, Marxists, beginning with Marx and Engels, were of the opinion that the victory of socialism in one country taken separately was impossible, that for socialism to be victorious, a simultaneous revolution was necessary in a number of countries, at least in a number of the most developed, civilised countries. And at the time that was correct. In illustration of this view, I should like to quote a characteristic passage from Engels's outline "The Principles of Communism," where the question is put in the sharpest possible form. This outline subsequently served as the basis for the Communist Manifesto. It was written in 1847. Here is what Engels says in this outline, which was published only a few years ago:

"Can this revolution (i.e., the proletarian revolution—J. St.) take place in one country alone?"

“Answer: No. Large-scale industry has, by the very fact that it has created a world market, bound all the nations of the earth, and notably the civilised nations, so closely together, that each depends on what is happening in the others. Further, in all the civilised countries it has evened up social development to such an extent that in all of them the bourgeoisie and the proletariat have become the two decisive classes of society, and the struggle between them the major struggle of our times. Therefore, the communist revolution will not be simply a national revolution, but will take place simultaneously in all the civilised countries, that is, at least in England, America, France and Germany. In each of these countries it will develop faster or more slowly depending on which has the more developed industry, the bigger accumulation of wealth, or the greater productive forces. It will therefore be slowest and hardest to accomplish in Germany, and fastest and easiest in England. It will also have a big influence on the other countries of the world, and will completely change and greatly accelerate their previous course of development. It is a universal revolution, and therefore will have a universal terrain”* (F. Engels, “The Principles of Communism.” See *Kommunistisches Manifest*, State Publishing House, 1923, p. 317).

That was written in the forties of the last century, when monopoly capitalism did not yet exist. It is characteristic that there is not even a mention here of Russia; Russia is left out altogether. And that is quite understandable, since at that time Russia with its revolutionary proletariat, Russia as a revolutionary force, did not yet exist and could not have existed.

Was what is said here, in this quotation, correct in the conditions of pre-monopoly capitalism, in the period when Engels wrote it? Yes, it was correct.

Is this opinion correct now, in the new conditions, the conditions of monopoly capitalism and proletarian revolution? No, it is no longer correct.

In the old period, the period of pre-monopoly capitalism, the pre-imperialist period, when the globe had not yet been divided up among financial groups, when the forcible redivision of an already divided world was not yet a matter of life or death for capitalism, when unevenness of economic development was not, and could not be, as sharply marked as it became later, when the contradictions of capitalism had not yet reached that degree of development at which they convert flourishing capitalism into moribund capitalism thus opening up the possibility of the victory of socialism in individual countries—in that old period the formula of Engels was undeniably correct. In the new period, the period of the development of imperialism, when the unevenness of development of the capitalist countries has become the decisive factor in imperialist development, when inevitable conflicts and wars among the imperialists weaken the imperialist front and make it possible for it to be breached in individual countries, when the law of uneven development discovered by Lenin has become the starting point for the theory of the victory of socialism in individual countries—in these conditions the old formula of Engels becomes incorrect and must inevitably be replaced by another formula, one that affirms the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country.

Lenin’s greatness as the continuer of the work of Marx and Engels consists precisely in the fact that he was never a slave to the letter of Marxism. In his investigations he followed the precept repeatedly uttered by Marx that Marxism is not a dogma, but a guide to action. Lenin knew this and, drawing a strict distinction between the letter and the essence of Marxism, he never regarded Marxism as a dogma but endeavoured to apply Marxism, as a fundamental method, in the new circumstances of capitalist development. Lenin’s greatness consists precisely in the fact that he openly and honestly, without any hesitation, raised the question of

the necessity for a new formula about the possibility of the victory of the proletarian revolution in individual countries, undeterred by the fact that the opportunists of all countries would cling to the old formula and try to use the names of Marx and Engels as a screen for their opportunist activity.

On the other hand, it would be strange to expect of Marx and Engels, geniuses though they were, that they, fifty or sixty years prior to developed monopoly capitalism, should have been able to foresee accurately all the potentialities of the class struggle of the proletariat which have shown themselves in the period of monopoly, imperialist capitalism.

And this was not the first instance where Lenin, basing himself on the method of Marx, continued the work of Marx and Engels without clinging to the letter of Marxism. I have in mind another and similar instance—namely; the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat. We know that on this question Marx expressed the opinion, that the dictatorship of the proletariat—as the smashing of the old state apparatus, and the creation of a new one, of a new, proletarian state—is an essential stage in the advance towards socialism in the continental countries making an exception in the case of England and America, since in those countries, Marx said, militarism and bureaucracy were weakly developed, or not developed at all, and, consequently, some other, “peaceful” path of transition to socialism was possible. That was quite correct in the seventies. (Ryazanov: “It was not correct even then.”) I think that in the seventies, when militarism was not so developed in England and America as it became subsequently, that proposition was absolutely correct. You may convince yourselves of that from the chapter in Comrade Lenin’s pamphlet *The Tax in Kind* 5 where he says that in the seventies in England it was not excluded that socialism might develop by way of an agreement between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie of that country, where the proletariat constituted the majority and where the bourgeoisie was accustomed to making compromises, where militarism was weak, and where bureaucracy was weak. But while that proposition was correct in the seventies of the last century, it became incorrect after the nineteenth century, in the period of imperialism, when England became no less bureaucratic and no less, if not more, militaristic than any of the countries of the continent. Comrade Lenin therefore says in his pamphlet *The State and Revolution* that Marx’s reservation as regards the continent is now invalid,⁶ since new conditions have arisen which render superfluous, the exception made in the case of England.

Lenin’s greatness consists precisely in the fact that he did not allow himself to be help prisoner by the letter of Marxism, that he was able to grasp the essence of Marxism and use it as a starting point for developing further the teachings of Marx and Engels.

That, comrades, is how the question of the victory of the socialist revolution in individual countries stood in the pre-imperialist, pre-monopoly period of capitalism.

2. Leninism or Trotskyism?

Lenin was the first Marxist who made a really Marxist analysis of imperialism, as a new and last phase of capitalism, who presented the question of the possibility of the victory of socialism in individual capitalist countries in a new way and answered it in the affirmative. I have in mind Lenin’s pamphlet *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*. I have in mind also his article “The United States of Europe Slogan,” which appeared in 1915. I have in mind the controversy between Trotsky and Lenin over the slogan of a United States of Europe, or of

the whole world, in which Lenin first advanced the thesis that the victory of socialism in one country is possible.

Here is what Lenin wrote in that article:

“As a separate slogan, however, the slogan of a United States of the World would hardly be a correct one, firstly, because it merges with socialism; secondly, because it may give rise to a wrong interpretation in the sense of the impossibility of the victory of socialism in a single country and about the relation of such a country to the rest. Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism. Hence, the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country taken separately. The victorious proletariat of that country, having expropriated the capitalists and organised socialist production, would stand up against the rest of the world, the capitalist world, attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries, raising revolts in those countries against the capitalists, and in the event of necessity coming out even with armed force against the exploiting classes and their states.” . . . For “the free union of nations in socialism is impossible without a more or less prolonged and stubborn struggle of the socialist republics against the backward states” (see Vol. XVIII, pp. 232-33).

That is what Lenin wrote in 1915.

What is this law of uneven development of capitalism whose operation under the conditions of imperialism leads to the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country?

Speaking of this law, Lenin held that the old, pre-monopoly capitalism has already passed into imperialism; that world economy is developing in the conditions of a frenzied struggle between the leading imperialist groups for territory, markets, raw materials, etc.; that the division of the world into spheres of influence of imperialist groups is already completed; that the development of the capitalist countries does not proceed evenly, not in such a way that one country follows after another or advances parallel with it, but spasmodically, through some countries which had previously outstripped the others being pushed back and new countries advancing to the forefront; that this manner of development of the capitalist countries inevitably engenders conflicts and wars between the capitalist powers for a fresh redivision of an already divided world; that these conflicts and wars lead to the weakening of imperialism; that owing to this the world imperialist front becomes easily liable to be breached in individual countries; and that, because of this, the victory of socialism in individual countries becomes possible.

We know that quite recently Britain was ahead of all the other imperialist states. We also know that Germany then began to overtake Britain, and demanded a “place in the sun” at the expense of other countries and, in the first place, at the expense of Britain. We know that it was precisely as a result of this circumstance that the imperialist war (1914-18) arose. Now, after the imperialist war, America has spurred far ahead and outdistanced both Britain and the other European powers. It can scarcely be doubted that this contains the seeds of new great conflicts and wars.

The fact that in consequence of the imperialist war the imperialist front was breached in Russia is evidence that, in the present-day conditions of capitalist development, the chain of the imperialist front will not necessarily break in the country where industry is most

developed, but where the chain is weakest, where the proletariat has an important ally—such as the peasantry, for instance—in the fight against imperialist rule, as was the case in Russia.

It is quite possible that in the future the chain of the imperialist front will break in one of the countries—India, say—where the proletariat has an important ally in the shape of a powerful revolutionary liberation movement.

In affirming the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country, Lenin, as we know, was in controversy with Trotsky, in the first place, and also with the Social-Democrats.

How did Trotsky react to Lenin's article and to his thesis that the victory of socialism is possible in one country?

Here is what Trotsky wrote then (in 1915) in reply to Lenin's article:

“The only more or less concrete historical argument,” says Trotsky, “advanced against the slogan of a United States of Europe was formulated in the Swiss Sotsial-Demokrat (at that time the central organ of the Bolsheviks, where Lenin's above-mentioned article was printed—J. St.) in the following sentence. ‘Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism.’ From this the Sotsial-Demokrat draws the conclusion that the victory of socialism is possible in one country, and that therefore there is no reason to make the dictatorship of the proletariat in each separate country contingent upon the establishment of a United States of Europe. That capitalist development in different countries is uneven is an absolutely incontrovertible argument. But this unevenness is itself extremely uneven. The capitalist level of Britain, Austria, Germany or France is not identical. But in comparison with Africa and Asia all these countries represent capitalist ‘Europe,’ which has grown ripe for the social revolution. That no country in its struggle must ‘wait’ for others, is an elementary thought which it is useful and necessary to reiterate in order that the idea of concurrent international action may not be replaced by the idea of temporising international inaction. Without waiting for the others, we begin and continue the struggle nationally, in the full confidence that our initiative will give art impetus to the struggle in other countries; but if this should not occur, it would be hopeless to think—as historical experience and theoretical considerations testify—that, for example, a revolutionary Russia could holdout in the face of a conservative Europe, or that a socialist Germany could exist in isolation in a capitalist world” * (see Trotsky's Works, Vol. III, Part 1, pp. 89-90).

That is what Trotsky wrote in 1915 in the Paris newspaper *Nashe Slovo*,⁷ the article being subsequently reprinted in Russia in a collection of Trotsky's articles entitled *Peace Programme*, first published in August 1917.

You see that in these two passages, Lenin's and Trotsky's, two entirely different theses stand contrasted. Whereas Lenin considers that the victory of socialism in one country is possible, that the proletariat when it has seized power can not only retain it, but can even go further, having expropriated the capitalists and organised a socialist economy, so as to render effective support to the proletarians of capitalist countries, Trotsky, on the contrary, considers that if a victorious revolution in one country does not very soon call forth a victorious revolution in other countries, the proletariat of the victorious country will not be able even to retain power (let alone organise a socialist economy); for, Trotsky says, it is hopeless to think that a revolutionary government in Russia can hold out in the face of a conservative Europe.

These are two entirely different points of view, two entirely different lines. With Lenin, a proletariat which has taken power represents a most active force displaying the highest initiative, which organises a socialist economy and goes further and supports the proletarians of other countries. With Trotsky, on the contrary, a proletariat which has taken power becomes a semi-passive force which requires immediate assistance in the shape of an immediate victory of socialism in other countries, and which feels itself, as it were, in a temporary encampment and in peril of immediately losing power. But if the victory of the revolution in other countries should not ensue immediately—what then? Then, chuck up the job. (A voice from the audience: “And run to cover.”) Yes, and run to cover. That is perfectly correct. (Laughter.)

It may be said that this divergence between Lenin and Trotsky is a thing of the past, that later, in the course of the work, it might have been reduced to a minimum and even wiped out altogether. Yes, it might have been reduced to a minimum and even wiped out. But, unfortunately, neither of these things happened. On the contrary, this divergence remained in full force right down to Comrade Lenin’s death. It exists even now, as you can see for yourselves. I affirm that, on the contrary, this divergence between Lenin and Trotsky, and the controversy it gave rise to, continued all the time; articles on the subject by Lenin and Trotsky appeared one after another, and the concealed controversy continued, it is true without mention of names.

Here are some facts on this score.

In 1921, when we introduced NEP, Lenin again raised the question of the possibility of the victory of socialism, this time in the more concrete form of the possibility of laying a socialist foundation for our economy along the lines of NEP. You will recall that when NEP was introduced in 1921, Lenin was accused by a section of our Party, especially by the “Workers’ Opposition,” that, by introducing NEP, he was swerving from the path of socialism. It was evidently in reply to this that Lenin repeatedly declared in his speeches and articles of that time that we were introducing NEP not as a departure from our course, but as a continuation of it under the new conditions, with a view to laying “a socialist foundation for our economy,” “together with the peasantry,” and “under the leadership of the working class” (see Lenin’s *The Tax in Kind* and other articles on the subject of NEP).

As though in reply to this, Trotsky, in January 1922, published a “Preface” to his book *The Year 1905*, where he declared that in our country building socialism together with the peasantry was unfeasible, because the life of our country would be a series of hostile collisions between the working class and the peasantry until the proletariat was victorious in the West.

Here is what Trotsky said in his “Preface”:

“Having assumed power, the proletariat would come into hostile collision* not only with all the bourgeois groupings which supported the proletariat during the first stages of its revolutionary struggle, but also with the broad masses of the peasantry with whose assistance it came into power. The contradictions in the position of a workers’ government in a backward country with an overwhelmingly peasant population can be solved only on an international scale, in the arena of the world proletarian revolution” (Trotsky, in the “Preface,” written in 1922, to his book *The Year 1905*).

Here, too, as you see, two different theses stand contrasted. Whereas Lenin grants the possibility of laying a socialist foundation for our economy together with the peasantry and under the leadership of the working class, Trotsky, on the contrary, holds that it is impossible for the proletariat to lead the peasantry and for them to work together in laying a socialist foundation, since the political life of the country will be a series of hostile collisions between the workers' government and the peasant majority, and that these collisions can only be solved in the arena of the world revolution.

Further, we have Lenin's speech at the plenary meeting of the Moscow Soviet a year later, in 1922, where he again reverts to the question of building socialism in our country. He says:

“Socialism is no longer a matter of the distant future, or an abstract picture, or an icon. We still retain our old bad opinion of icons. We have dragged socialism into everyday life, and here we must find our way. This is the task of our day, the task of our epoch. Permit me to conclude by expressing the conviction that, difficult as this task may be, new as it may be compared with our previous task, and no matter how many difficulties it may entail, we shall all—not in one day, but in the course of several years—all of us together fulfil it whatever happens so that NEP Russia will become socialist Russia” (see Vol. XXVII, p. 366).

As though in answer to this, or perhaps in explanation of what he had said in the passage from him quoted above, Trotsky published in 1922 a “Postscript” to his pamphlet Peace Programme, where he says:

“The assertion reiterated several times in the Peace Programme that a proletarian revolution cannot culminate victoriously within national bounds may perhaps seem to some readers to have been refuted by the nearly five years' experience of our Soviet Republic. But such a conclusion would be unwarranted. The fact that the workers' state has held out against the whole world in one country, and a backward country at that, testifies to the colossal might of the proletariat, which in other, more advanced, more civilised countries will be truly capable of performing miracles. But while we have held our ground as a state politically and militarily, we have not, arrived, or even begun to arrive, at the creation of a socialist society. . . . As long as the bourgeoisie remains in power in the other European countries we shall be compelled, in our struggle against economic isolation, to strive for agreement with the capitalist world; at the same time it may be said with certainty that these agreements may at best help us to mitigate some of our economic ills, to take one or another step forward, but real progress of a socialist economy in Russia will become possible only after the victory* of the proletariat in the major European countries” (see Trotsky's Works, Vol. III, Part 1, pp. 92-93).

Here, too, as you see, two antithetical theses, Lenin's and Trotsky's, stand contrasted. Whereas Lenin considers that we have already dragged socialism into everyday life and that, in spite of the difficulties, we are fully in a position to turn NLP Russia into socialist Russia, Trotsky, on the contrary, believes that not only are we unable to turn present Russia into socialist Russia, but that we cannot even achieve real progress of socialist economy until the proletariat is victorious in other countries.

Lastly, we have Comrade Lenin's notes in the shape of the articles “On Co-operation” and “Our Revolution” (directed against Sukhanov) which he wrote before his death, and which have been left to us as his political testament. These notes are remarkable for the fact that in them Lenin again raises the question of the possibility of the victory of socialism in our

country, and gives us formulations which leave no room for any doubt whatever. Here is what he says in his notes “Our Revolution”:

“. . . Infinitely hackneyed is the argument that they (the heroes of the Second International—J. St.) learned by rote during the development of West-European Social-Democracy, namely, that we are not yet ripe for socialism, that, as certain ‘learned’ gentlemen among them express it, the objective economic prerequisites for socialism do not exist in our country. And to none of them does it occur to ask himself: But what about a people that found itself in a revolutionary situation such as that created during the first imperialist war? Might it not, under the influence of the hopelessness of its situation, fling itself into a struggle that offered it some chance, at least., of securing conditions, not quite ordinary, for the further development of its civilisation. . . .

“If a definite level of culture is required for the building of socialism (although nobody can say just what that definite ‘level of culture’ is), why cannot we begin by first achieving the prerequisites for the definite level of culture in a revolutionary way, and then, on the basis of the workers’ and peasants’ government and the Soviet system, proceed to overtake the other nations? . . .

“You say that civilisation is necessary for the creation of socialism. Very good. But why could we not first, create such prerequisites of civilisation in our country as the expulsion of the landlords and the Russian capitalists, and then start moving towards socialism? In what books have you read that such variations of the customary, historical, procedure are impermissible or impossible?” (see Lenin, Vol. XXVII, pp. 399-401).

And here is what Lenin says in the articles “On Co-operation”:

“As a matter of fact, state power over all large-scale means of production, state power in the hands of the proletariat, the alliance of this proletariat with the many millions of small and very small peasants, the assured leadership of the peasantry by the proletariat, etc.—is not this all that is necessary for building a complete socialist society from the co-operatives, from the cooperatives alone, which we formerly looked down upon as huckstering and which from a certain aspect we have the right to look down upon as such now, under NEP. Is this not all that is necessary for building a complete socialist society? This is not yet the building of socialist society, but it is all that is necessary and sufficient for this building”* (see Lenin, Vol. XXVII, p. 392).

And so, we have in this way two lines on the basic question of the possibility of victoriously building socialism in our country, of the possibility of the victory of the socialist elements in our economy over the capitalist elements—for, comrades, the possibility of the victory of socialism in our country means nothing more nor less than the possibility of the victory of the socialist elements in our economy over the capitalist elements—we have the line of Lenin and Leninism, in the first place, and the line of Trotsky and Trotskyism, in the second place. Leninism answers this question in the affirmative. Trotskyism, on the contrary, denies the possibility of the victory of socialism in our country through the internal forces of our revolution. While the first line is the line of our Party, the second line is an approximation to the views of Social-Democracy.

That is why it is said in the draft theses on the opposition bloc that Trotskyism is a Social-Democratic deviation in our Party.

But from this it follows incontestably that our revolution is a socialist revolution, that it represents not, only a signal, an impulse, a starting point for the world revolution, but also a base, a necessary and sufficient base, for the building of a complete socialist society in our country.

And so, we can and must defeat the capitalist elements in our economy, we can and must build a socialist society in our country. But can that victory be termed complete, final? No, it cannot. We can defeat our capitalists, we are in a position to build and complete the building of socialism, but that does not mean that we are in a position by doing so to guarantee the land of the dictatorship of the proletariat against dangers from outside, against the danger of intervention, and, consequently, of restoration, re-establishment of the old order. We are not living on an island. We are living within a capitalist encirclement. The fact that we are building socialism, and thereby revolutionising the workers of the capitalist countries, cannot but evoke the hatred and enmity of the whole capitalist world. To think that the capitalist world can look on indifferently at our successes on the economic front, successes which are revolutionising the working class of the whole world, is to harbour an illusion. Therefore, so long as we remain within a capitalist encirclement, so long as the proletariat is not victorious in a number of countries at least, we cannot regard our victory as final; consequently, no matter what successes we may achieve in our constructive work, we cannot consider the land of the dictatorship of the proletariat guaranteed against dangers from outside. Therefore, to achieve final victory we must ensure that the present capitalist encirclement is replaced by a socialist encirclement, that the proletariat is victorious at least in several other countries. Only then can our victory be regarded as final.

That is why we regard the victory of socialism in our country not as an end in itself, not as something self-sufficient, but as an aid, a means, a path towards the victory of the proletarian revolution in other countries.

Here is what Comrade Lenin wrote on this score:

“We are living,” Lenin says, “not merely in a state, but in a system of states, and the existence of the Soviet Republic side by side with imperialist states for a long time is unthinkable. One or the other must triumph in the end. And before that end comes, a series of frightful collisions between the Soviet Republic and the bourgeois states will be inevitable. That means that if the ruling class, the proletariat, wants to, and will hold sway, it must prove this by its military organisation also” (see Vol. XXIV, p. 122).

It follows from this that the danger of armed intervention exists, and will continue to exist for a long time to come.

Whether the capitalists are just now in a position to undertake serious intervention against the Soviet Republic is another question. That remains to be seen. Here much depends on the behaviour of the workers of the capitalist countries, on their sympathy for the land of the proletarian dictatorship, on how far they are devoted to the cause of socialism. That at the present time the workers of the capitalist countries cannot support our revolution with a revolution against their own capitalists is so far a fact. But that the capitalists are not in a position to rouse “their” workers for a war against our republic is also a fact. And to make war on the land of the dictatorship of the proletariat without the workers is something which capitalism cannot do nowadays without incurring mortal risk. That is evident from the numerous workers’ delegations which come to our country to verify our work in building

socialism. It is evident from the profound sympathy which the working class of the whole world cherishes for the Soviet Republic. It is on this sympathy that the international position of our republic now rests. Without it we should be having now a number of fresh attempts at intervention, our constructive work would be interrupted, and we should not be having a period of "respite."

But if the capitalist world is not in a position to undertake armed intervention against our country just now, that does not mean that it will never be in a position to do so. At any rate, the capitalists are not asleep; they are doing their utmost to weaken the international position of our republic and to prepare the way for intervention. Therefore, neither attempts at intervention, nor the consequent possibility of the restoration of the old order in our country, can be regarded as excluded.

Hence Lenin is right in saying:

"As long as our Soviet Republic remains an isolated borderland of the entire capitalist world, just so long will it be quite ludicrously fantastic and utopian to hope . . . for the disappearance of all danger. Of course, as long as such fundamental opposites remain, dangers will remain too, and we cannot escape them" (see Vol. XXVI, p. 29).

That is why Lenin says:

"Final victory can be achieved only on a world scale, and only by the joint efforts of the workers of all countries" (see Vol. XXVI, p. 9).

And so, what is the victory of socialism in our country?

It means achieving the dictatorship of the proletariat and completely building socialism, thus overcoming the capitalist elements in our economy through the internal forces of our revolution.

And what is the final victory of socialism in our country?

It means the creation of a full guarantee against intervention and attempts at restoration, by means of a victorious socialist revolution in several countries at least.

While the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country means the possibility of resolving internal contradictions, which can be completely overcome by one country (meaning by that, of course, our country), the possibility of the final victory of socialism implies the possibility of resolving the external contradictions between the country of socialism and the capitalist countries, contradictions which can be overcome only as the result of a proletarian revolution in several countries.

Anyone who confuses these two categories of contradictions is either a hopeless muddle-head or an incorrigible opportunist.

Such is the basic line of our Party.

3. The Resolution of the Fourteenth Conference of the R.C.P.(B.)

This line of our Party was first officially formulated in the resolution of the Fourteenth Conference on the international situation, the stabilisation of capitalism, and the building of socialism in one country. I consider that resolution one of the most important documents in the history of our Party, not only because it represents a grand demonstration in support of the Leninist line on the question of building socialism in our country, but, also because it is at the same time a direct condemnation of Trotskyism. I think that it would not be superfluous to mention the most important points of this resolution, which, strangely enough, was adopted on the report of Zinoviev. (Commotion in the hall.)

Here is what the resolution says about the victory of socialism in one country:

“Generally, the victory of socialism in one country (not the sense of final victory) is unquestionably possible.”* 8

On the question of the final victory of socialism, the resolution says:

“... The existence of two directly opposite social systems gives rise to the constant menace of capitalist blockade, of other forms of economic pressure, of armed intervention, of restoration. Consequently, the only guarantee of the final victory of socialism,, i.e., the guarantee against restoration, is a victorious socialist revolution in a number of countries.” 9

And here is what the resolution says about building a complete socialist society, and about Trotskyism:

“It by no means follows from this that it is impossible to build a complete socialist society in a backward country like Russia without the ‘state aid’ (Trotsky) of countries more developed technically and economically. An integral part of Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution is the assertion that ‘real progress of a socialist economy in Russia will become possible only after the victory of the proletariat in the major European countries’ (Trotsky, 1922)—an assertion which in the present period condemns the proletariat of the U.S.S.R. to fatalistic passivity. In opposition to such ‘theories,’ Comrade Lenin wrote: ‘Infinitely hackneyed is the argument, that they learned by rote during the development of West-European Social Democracy, namely, that we are not yet ripe for socialism, that, as certain “learned” gentlemen among them express it, the objective economic prerequisites for socialism do not exist in our country’” (Notes on Sukhanov). (Resolution of the Fourteenth Conference of the R.C.P.(B.) on “The Tasks of the Comintern and the R.C.P.(B.) in Connection with the Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I.”10)

I think that these basic points of the Fourteenth Conference resolution need no explanation. It could not have been put more clearly and definitely. Particularly deserving of attention is the passage in the resolution which places Trotskyism on a par with Sukhanovism. And what is Sukhanovism? We know from Lenin’s articles against Sukhanov that Sukhanovism is a variety of Social-Democracy, of Menshevism. This needs to be especially stressed in order that it may be understood why Zinoviev, who defended this resolution at the Fourteenth Conference, later departed from it and adhered to the standpoint of Trotsky, with whom he has now formed a bloc.

Further, in connection with the international situation the resolution notes two deviations from the basic line of the Party which might be a source of danger to the latter.

Here is what the resolution says about these dangers:

“In connection with the existing situation in the international arena, two dangers may threaten our Party in the present period: 1) a deviation towards passivity, arising from too broad an interpretation of the stabilisation of capitalism to be observed here and there, and from the slowing down of the tempo of the international revolution—the absence of a sufficient impulse to energetic and systematic work in building a socialist society in the U.S.S.R. despite the slowing down of the tempo of the international revolution, and 2) a deviation towards national narrow-mindedness, forgetfulness of the duties of international proletarian revolutionaries, an unconscious disregard for the intimate dependence of the fate of the U.S.S.R. on the international proletarian revolution, which is developing, although slowly, a failure to understand that not only does the international movement need the existence, consolidation and strengthening of the first proletarian state in the world, but also that the dictatorship of the proletariat in the U.S.S.R. needs the aid of the international proletariat.” (Resolution of the Fourteenth Conference of the R.C.P.(B.) on “The Tasks of the Comintern and the R.C.P.(B.) in Connection with the Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.P.”)

It is clear from this quotation that in speaking of the first deviation the Fourteenth Conference had in mind the deviation towards disbelief in the victory of socialist construction in our country, a deviation prevalent among the Trotskyists. Speaking of the second deviation, the conference had in mind the deviation towards forgetfulness of the international prospects of our revolution which to a certain extent prevails among some of our officials in the field of foreign policy, who sometimes tend to go over to the standpoint of establishing “spheres of influence” in dependent countries.

By stigmatising both these deviations, the Party as a whole and its Central Committee declared war on the dangers arising from them.

Such are the facts.

How could it happen that Zinoviev, who put the case for the Fourteenth Conference resolution in a special report, subsequently departed from the line of this resolution, which is at the same time the line of Leninism? How could it happen that, on departing from Leninism, he hurled at the Party the ludicrous charge of national narrow-mindedness, using it as a screen to cover up his departure from Leninism?—a trick which I shall endeavour to explain to you now, comrades.

4. The Passing Over of the “New Opposition” to Trotskyism

The divergence between the present leaders of the “New Opposition,” Kamenev and Zinoviev, and the Central Committee of our Party over the question of building socialism in our country first assumed open form on the eve of the Fourteenth Conference. I am referring to one of the meetings of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee on the eve of the conference, where Kamenev and Zinoviev attempted to advocate a peculiar point of view on this question, one that has nothing in common with the line of the Party and in all fundamentals coincides with the position of Sukhanov.

Here is what the Moscow Committee of the R.C.P. (B.) wrote in this connection in reply to the statement of the former Leningrad top leadership in December 1925, that is, seven months later:

“Recently, in the Political Bureau, Kamenev and Zinoviev advocated the point of view that we cannot cope with the internal difficulties due to our technical and economic backwardness unless an international revolution comes to our rescue. We, however, with the majority of the members of the Central Committee, think that we can build socialism, are building it, and will completely build it, notwithstanding our technical backwardness and in spite of it. We think that the work of building will proceed far more slowly, of course, than in the conditions of a world victory; nevertheless, we are making progress and will continue to do so. We also believe that the view held by Kamenev and Zinoviev expresses disbelief in the internal forces of our working class and of the peasant masses who follow its lead. We believe that it is a departure from the Leninist position” (see “Reply”).

I must observe, comrades, that Kamenev and Zinoviev did not even attempt to refute the Moscow Committee’s statement, which was printed in Pravda during the early sittings of the Fourteenth Congress, thereby tacitly admitting that the charges the Moscow Committee levelled against them correspond to the facts.

At the Fourteenth Conference itself, Kamenev and Zinoviev formally acknowledged the correctness of the Party’s line as regards building socialism in our country. They were evidently compelled to do so because their standpoint had found no sympathy among the members of the Central Committee. More than that, as I have already said, Zinoviev even put the case for the Fourteenth Conference resolution—which, as you have had the opportunity to convince yourselves, expresses the line of our Party—in a special report at the Fourteenth Conference. But subsequent events showed that Zinoviev and Kamenev had supported the Party line at the Fourteenth Conference only formally, outwardly, while actually continuing to adhere to their own opinion. In this respect, the appearance in September 1925 of Zinoviev’s book *Leninism* constituted an “event” which drew a dividing line between the Zinoviev who put the case for the Party line at the Fourteenth Conference and the Zinoviev who has departed from the Party line, from Leninism, for the ideological position of Trotskyism. Here is what Zinoviev writes in his book:

“By the final victory of socialism is meant, at least: 1) the abolition of classes, and therefore 2) the abolition of the dictatorship of one class, in this case the dictatorship of the proletariat.” . . . “In order to get a clearer idea of how the question stands here, in the U.S.S.R., in the year 1925,” says Zinoviev further, “we must distinguish between two things: 1) the assured possibility of engaging in building socialism—such a possibility, it stands to reason, is quite conceivable within the limits of one country; and 2) the final construction and consolidation of socialism, i.e., the achievement of a socialist system, of a socialist society” (see Zinoviev’s *Leninism*, pp. 291 and 293).

Here, as you see, everything is muddled up and turned upside down. According to Zinoviev, what is meant by victory—that is, the victory of socialism in one country—is having the possibility of building socialism, but not the possibility of completely building it. To engage in building, but with the certainty that we shall not be able to complete what we are building. That, it appears, is what Zinoviev means by the victory of socialism in one country. (Laughter.) As to the question of completely building a socialist society, he confuses it with the question of final victory, thus demonstrating his complete lack of understanding of the whole question of the victory of socialism in our country. To engage in building a socialist economy, knowing that it cannot be completely built—that is the depth to which Zinoviev has sunk.

It need hardly be said that this attitude is totally at variance with the fundamental line of Leninism on the question of building socialism. It need hardly be said that such an attitude, which tends to weaken the proletariat's will to build socialism in our country, and therefore to retard the outbreak of the revolution in other countries, turns upside down the very principles of internationalism. It is an attitude which directly approaches, and extends a hand to, the ideological position of Trotskyism.

The same must be said of Zinoviev's statements at the Fourteenth Congress in December 1925. Here is what he said there, criticising Yakovlev:

"Take a look, for instance, at what Comrade Yakovlev went so far as to say at the last Kursk Gubernia Party Conference. He asks: 'Is it possible for us, surrounded as we are on all sides by capitalist enemies, to completely build socialism in one country under such conditions?' And he answers: 'On the basis of all that has been said we have the right to say not only that we are building socialism, but that in spite of the fact that for the time being we are alone, that for the time being we are the only Soviet country, the only Soviet state in the world, we shall completely build socialism' (Kurskaya Pravda, No. 279, December 8, 1925). "Is this the Leninist method of presenting the question," Zinoviev asks, "does not this smack of national narrow-mindedness?"* (Zinoviev, Reply to the discussion at the Fourteenth Party Congress.)

It follows that, because Yakovlev in the main upheld the line of the Party and of Leninism, he has earned the charge of national narrow-mindedness. It follows that to uphold the Party line, as formulated in the Fourteenth Conference resolution, is to be guilty of national narrow-mindedness. People would say of that: what a depth to sink to! Therein lies the whole trick that Zinoviev is playing, which consists in levelling the ludicrous charge of national narrow-mindedness at the Leninists in an endeavour to cover up his own departure from Leninism.

The theses on the opposition bloc are therefore telling the exact truth when they assert that the "New Opposition" has passed over to Trotskyism on the basic question of the possibility of the victory of socialism in our country, or on—what is the same thing—the question of the character and prospects of our revolution.

It should be observed here that, formally, Kamenev holds a somewhat special position on this question. It is a fact that both at the Fourteenth Party Conference and at the Fourteenth Party Congress, Kamenev, unlike Zinoviev, publicly proclaimed his solidarity with the Party line on the question of building socialism in our country. Nevertheless, the Fourteenth Party Congress did not take Kamenev's statement seriously, did not take his word for it, and in its resolution on the Central Committee's report it included him in the group of people who had departed from Leninism. Why? Because Kamenev refused, saw no need, to back his statement of solidarity with the Party line with action. And what does backing his statement with action mean? It means breaking with those who are waging a fight against the Party line. The Party knows plenty of cases where people who declared in words their solidarity with the Party at the same time continued to maintain political friendship with elements who were waging a fight against the Party. Lenin used to say in cases like this that such "supporters" of the Party line are worse than opponents. We know, for example, that in the period of the imperialist war Trotsky repeatedly professed his solidarity with, and loyalty to, the principles of internationalism. But Lenin called him at that time an "abettor of the social-chauvinists." Why? Because, while professing internationalism, Trotsky at the same time refused to break with Kautsky and Martov, Potresov and Chkheidze. And Lenin, of course, was right. Do you

want your statement to be taken seriously?—then back it with action, and give up political friendship with people who are waging a fight against the Party line.

That is why I think that Kamenev's statements about his solidarity with the Party line on the question of building socialism cannot be taken seriously, seeing that he declines to back his word with action and continues to remain in a bloc with the Trotskyists.

5. Trotsky's Evasion. Smilga. Radek

All this, it may be said, is good and correct, but are there no grounds or documents showing that the leaders of the opposition bloc would not be unwilling to turn away from the Social-Democratic deviation and return to Leninism? Take, for example, Trotsky's book *Towards Socialism or Capitalism?* Is not this book a sign that Trotsky is not unwilling to renounce his errors of principle? Some even think that Trotsky in this book really has renounced, or is trying to renounce, his errors of principle. I, sinner that I am, suffer from a certain scepticism on this point (laughter), and I must say that, unfortunately, such assumptions are absolutely unwarranted by the facts.

Here, for instance, is the most salient passage in Trotsky's *Towards Socialism or Capitalism?*

“The State Planning Commission (Gosplan) has published a tabulated summary of the ‘control’ figures for the national economy of the U.S.S.R. in the year 1925/26. All this sounds very dry and, so to speak, bureaucratic. But in these dry statistical columns and the almost equally dry and terse explanations to them, we hear the splendid historical music of growing socialism” (L. Trotsky, *Towards Socialism or Capitalism?*, Planovoye Khozyaistvo Publishing House, 1925, p. 1).

What is this “splendid historical music of growing socialism”? What is the meaning of this “splendid” phrase, if it has any meaning at all? Does it give an answer, or even a hint of an answer, to the question whether the victory of socialism is possible in our country? One might have spoken of the historical music of growing socialism both in 1917, when we overthrew the bourgeoisie, and in 1920, when we ejected the interventionists from our country. For it really was the splendid historical music of growing socialism when we overthrew the bourgeoisie in 1917 and drove out the interventionists and thereby furnished the whole world with splendid evidence of the strength and might of growing socialism in our country. But has it, can it have, any bearing at all on the question of the possibility of victoriously building socialism in our country? We can, Trotsky says, move towards socialism. But can we arrive at socialism?—that is the question. To move towards socialism knowing that you cannot arrive there—is that not folly? No, comrades, Trotsky's “splendid” phrase about the music and the rest of it is not an answer to the question, but a lawyer's subterfuge and a “musical” evasion of the question. (Voices from the audience: “Quite right!”)

I think that this splendid and musical evasion of Trotsky's may be put on a par with the evasion he resorted to in his pamphlet *The New Course*, when defining Leninism. Please listen to this:

“Leninism, as a system of revolutionary action, presumes a revolutionary instinct trained by reflection and experience which, in the social sphere, is equivalent to muscular sensation in physical labour” (L. Trotsky, *The New Course*, Krasnaya Nov Publishing House, 1924, p. 47).

Leninism as “muscular sensation in physical labour.” New and original and very profound, is it not? Can you make head or tail of it? (Laughter.) All that is very colourful and musical, and, if you like, even splendid. Only one “trifle” is lacking: a simple and understandable definition of Leninism.

It was just such instances of Trotsky’s special fondness for musical phrases that Lenin had in mind when he wrote, for example, the following bitter but truthful words about him:

“All that glitters is not gold. There is much glitter and sound in Trotsky’s phrases, but they are meaningless” (see Vol. XVII, p. 383).

So much for Trotsky’s *Towards Socialism or Capitalism?*, which was published in 1925.

As to more recent times, 1926, for instance, we have a document signed by Trotsky of September 1926 which leaves no doubt whatever that he continues to adhere to his view, which has been repudiated by the Party. I have in mind Trotsky’s letter to the oppositionists.

Here is what this document says:

“The Leningrad opposition promptly raised the alarm the slurring over of differentiation in the countryside, at the increase of the kulaks and the growth of their influence not only on the elemental economic processes, but also on the policy of the Soviet Government; at the fact that in the ranks of our own Party there has arisen, under Bukharin’s patronage, a school of theory which clearly reflects the pressure of the elemental forces of the petty bourgeoisie in our economy; the Leningrad opposition vigorously opposed the theory of socialism in one country, as being a theoretical justification of national narrow-mindedness. . . .”* (From the appendices to the verbatim report of the sittings of the Political Bureau of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.), October 8 and 11, 1926, on the question of the inner-Party situation.)

Here, in this document signed by Trotsky, everything is admitted: the fact that the leaders of the “New Opposition” have deserted Leninism for Trotskyism, and the fact that Trotsky continues to adhere fully and unreservedly to his old position, which is a Social-Democratic deviation in our Party.

Well, and what about the other leaders of the opposition bloc—Smilga or Radek, for example? These people, I think, are also leaders of the opposition bloc. Smilga and Radek—don’t they rank as leaders? How do they appraise the position of the Party, the position of Leninism, on the question of building socialism in our country? Here is what Smilga, for instance, said in September 1926 in the Communist Academy:

“I affirm,” he said, “that he (Bukharin—J. St.) is completely under the sway of the rehabilitation ideology, that he takes it as proven that the economic backwardness of our country cannot be an obstacle to completely building a socialist system in Russia. . . . I consider that, inasmuch as we are engaged in socialist construction, we are certainly building socialism. But, the question arises: does the rehabilitation period furnish any basis for testing and revising the cardinal tenet of Marxism and Leninism, which is that socialism cannot be completely built in one, technically backward country?”* (Smilga’s speech in the Communist Academy on the control figures, September 26, 1926).

That, as you see, is also a “position” which fully coincides with Mr. Sukhanov’s on the basic question of the character and prospects of our revolution. Is it not true that Smilga’s position fully corresponds with Trotsky’s, which I have called, and rightly called, the position of a Social-Democratic deviation? (Voices: “Quite right!”)

Can the opposition bloc be held answerable for such pronouncements of Smilga’s? It can, and must. Has the opposition bloc ever attempted to repudiate Smilga? No, it has not. On the contrary, it has given him every encouragement in his pronouncements in the Communist Academy.

Then there is the other leader, Radek, who, along with Smilga, delivered a speech in the Communist Academy and reduced us to “dust and ashes.” (Laughter.) We have a document which shows that Radek scoffed and jeered at the theory that socialism can be built in our country, called it a theory of building socialism “in one uyezd,” or even “in one street.” And when comrades in the audience interjected that this theory is “Lenin’s idea,” Radek retorted:

“You haven’t read Lenin very carefully. If Vladimir Ilyich were alive today he would say that it is a Shchedrin idea. In Shchedrin’s *The Pompadours* there is a unique pompadour who had the idea of building liberalism in one uyezd” (Radek’s speech in the Communist Academy).

Can Radek’s vulgar liberalistic scoffing at the idea of building socialism in one country be regarded as anything but a complete rupture with Leninism? Is the opposition bloc answerable for this vulgar sally of Radek’s? It certainly is. Why, then, does it not repudiate it? Because the opposition bloc has no intention of abandoning its position of departure from Leninism.

6. The Decisive Importance of the Question of the Prospects of our Constructive Work

It may be asked: why all these disputes over the character and prospects of our revolution? Why these disputes over what will or may happen in the future? Would it not be better to cast all these disputes aside and get down to practical work?

I consider, comrades, that such a formulation of the question is fundamentally wrong.

We cannot move forward without knowing where we are to move to, without knowing the aim of our movement. We cannot build without prospects, without the certainty that having begun to build a socialist economy we can complete it. Without clear prospects, without clear aims, the Party cannot direct the work of construction. We cannot live according to Bernstein’s prescription: “The movement is everything, the aim is nothing.” On the contrary, as revolutionaries, we must subordinate our forward movement, our practical work, to the basic class aim of the proletariat’s constructive work. If not, we shall certainly and inevitably land in the quagmire of opportunism.

Further, if the prospects of our constructive work are not clear, if there is no certainty that the building of socialism can be completed, the working masses cannot consciously participate in this constructive work, and cannot consciously lead the peasantry. If there is no certainty that the building of socialism can be completed, there can be no will to build socialism. Who wants to build knowing that he cannot complete what he is building? Hence, the absence of socialist prospects for our constructive work certainly and inevitably leads to the proletariat’s will to build being weakened.

Further, if the proletariat's will to build socialism is weakened, that is bound to have the effect of strengthening the capitalist elements in our economy. For what does building socialism mean, if not overcoming the capitalist elements in our economy? Pessimistic and defeatist sentiments in the working class are bound to fire the capitalist elements' hopes of restoring the old order. Whoever fails to appreciate the decisive importance of the socialist prospects of our constructive work assists the capitalist elements in our economy, fosters a spirit of capitulation.

Lastly, if the proletariat's will to victory over the capitalist elements in our economy is weakened, thus hindering our socialist constructive work, that is bound to delay the outbreak of the international revolution in all countries. It should not be forgotten that the world proletariat is watching our work of economic construction and our achievements on this front with the hope that we shall emerge victorious from this struggle, that we shall succeed in completely building socialism. The innumerable workers' delegations that come to our country from the West and probe every corner of our constructive work indicate that our struggle on the front of constructive work is of tremendous international significance from the point of view of revolutionising the proletarians of all countries. Whoever attempts to do away with the socialist prospects of our constructive work is attempting to extinguish in the international proletariat the hope that we shall be victorious, and whoever extinguishes that hope is violating the elementary demands of proletarian internationalism. Lenin was a thousand times right when he said:

“At the present time we are exercising our main influence on the international revolution by our economic policy. All eyes are turned on the Soviet Russian Republic, the eyes of all toilers in all countries of the world without exception and without exaggeration. . . . That is the field to which the struggle has been transferred on a world-wide scale. If we solve this problem, we shall have won on an international scale surely and finally. That is why questions of economic construction assume absolutely exceptional significance for us. On this front we must win victory by slow, gradual—it cannot be fast—but steady progress upward and forward”* (see Vol. XXVI, pp. 410-11).

That is why I think that our disputes over the possibility of the victory of socialism in our country are of cardinal importance, because in these disputes we are hammering out and deciding the answer to the question of the prospects of our work, of its class aims, of its basic line in the period immediately ahead.

That is why I think that the question of the socialist prospects of our constructive work is of prime importance for us.

7. The Political Prospects of the Opposition Bloc

The political prospects of the opposition bloc spring from its basic error regarding the character and prospects of our revolution.

Since the international revolution is delayed, and the opposition has no faith in the internal forces of our revolution, it has two alternative prospects before it:

Either the degeneration of the Party and the state apparatus, the actual retirement of the “finest elements” of communism (i.e., the opposition) from the government and the formation from

these elements of a new, “purely proletarian” party standing in opposition to the official, not “purely” proletarian Party (Ossovsky’s prospect);

Or attempts to pass off its own impatience as reality, denial of the partial stabilisation of capitalism, and “super-human,” “heroic” leaps and incursions both into the sphere of domestic policy (super-industrialisation), and into the sphere of foreign policy (“ultra-Left” phrases and gestures).

I think that of all the oppositionists, Ossovsky is the boldest and most courageous. If the opposition bloc was courageous and consistent, it ought to take the line of Ossovsky. But since it lacks both consistency and courage, it tends to take the path of the second prospect, the path of “super-human” leaps and “heroic” incursions into the objective course of events.

Hence the denial of the partial stabilisation of capitalism, the call to keep aloof from or even to withdraw from the trade unions in the West, the demand that the Anglo-Russian Committee should be wrecked, the demand that our country should be industrialised in a mere six months, and so on.

Hence the adventurist policy of the opposition bloc.

Of particular importance in this connection is the opposition bloc’s theory (it is also the theory of Trotskyism) of skipping over the peasantry here, in our country, in the matter of industrialising our country, and of skipping over the reactionary character of the trade unions there, in the West, especially in connection with the strike in Britain.

The opposition bloc thinks that a party has only to work out a correct line, and it will become a mass party immediately and instantaneously, will be able immediately and instantaneously to lead the masses into decisive battles. The opposition bloc fails to understand that such an attitude towards leading the masses has nothing in common with the views of Leninism.

Were Lenin’s April Theses on the Soviet revolution, issued in the spring of 1917, correct? 11
Yes, they were. Why, then, did Lenin not call at that time for the immediate overthrow of the Kerensky Government? Why did he combat the “ultra-Left” groups in our Party that put forward the slogan of immediate overthrow of the Provisional Government? Because Lenin knew that for carrying out a revolution it is not enough to have a correct Party line. Because Lenin knew that for carrying out a revolution a further circumstance is required, namely, that the masses, the broad mass of the workers, shall have been convinced through their own experience that the Party’s line is correct. And this, in its turn, requires time, and indefatigable work by the Party among the masses, indefatigable work to convince them that the Party’s line is correct. For this very reason, at the same time as he issued his revolutionary April Theses, Lenin issued the slogan for “patient” propaganda among the masses to convince them of the correctness of those theses. Eight months were spent on that patient work. But they were revolutionary months, which are equal at least to years of ordinary, “constitutional” times. We won the October Revolution because we were able to distinguish between a correct Party line and recognition of the correctness of the line by the masses. That the oppositionist heroes of “super-human” leaps cannot and will not understand.

Was the position of the British Communist Party during the strike in Britain a correct one? Yes, in the main it was. Why, then, did not the Party succeed at once in securing the following of the vast masses of the British working class? Because it did not succeed, and could not

have succeeded, in convincing the masses in so short a time of the correctness of its line. Because between the time when a party works out a correct line and the time when it succeeds in winning the following of the vast masses, there lies a more or less prolonged interval, during which the party has to work indefatigably to convince the masses of the correctness of its policy. That interval cannot be skipped over. It is foolish to think that it can be skipped over. It can only be outlived and overcome by means of patient work for the political education of the masses.

These elementary truths of the Leninist leadership of the masses the opposition bloc does not understand, and that is one of the sources of its political errors.

Here is one of numerous specimens of Trotsky's policy of "super-human" leaps and desperate gestures:

"Should the Russian proletariat find itself in power," Trotsky once said, "if only as the result of a temporary conjuncture of circumstances in our bourgeois revolution, it will encounter the organised hostility of world reaction and a readiness for organised support on the part of the world proletariat. Left to its own resources, the working class of Russia will inevitably be crushed by counter-revolution the moment the peasantry turns its back on it. It will have no alternative but to link the fate of its political rule, and, hence, the fate of the whole Russian revolution, with the fate of the socialist revolution in Europe. That colossal state-political power given it by a temporary conjuncture of circumstances in the Russian bourgeois revolution it will cast into the scales of the class struggle of the entire capitalist world. With state power in its hands, with counter-revolution behind it and European reaction in front of it, it will issue to its confreres the world over the old battle-cry, which this time will be a call for the last attack: 'Workers of all countries, unite!'"* (Trotsky, Results and Prospects, p. 80.)

How do you like that? The proletariat, it appears, must take power in Russia; but having taken power, it is bound to fall foul of the peasantry, and having fallen foul of the peasantry, it will have to hurl itself into a desperate clash with the world bourgeoisie, having "counter-revolution behind it" and "European reaction" in front of it.

That in this "scheme" of Trotsky's there is plenty of the "musical," the "super-human" and the "desperately splendid," we can well agree. But that there is nothing Marxist or revolutionary about it, that what we have here is just empty playing at revolution and sheer political adventurism—of that there can be no doubt either.

Yet it is undeniable that this "scheme" of Trotsky's is a direct expression of the present political prospects of the opposition bloc, the outcome and fruit of Trotsky's theory of "skipping over" forms of the movement which have not yet outlived their day.

III

The Political and Organisational Errors of the Opposition Bloc

The political and organisational errors of the opposition bloc are a direct sequel to its main error in the basic question of the character and prospects of our revolution.

When I speak of the political and organisational errors of the opposition, I have in mind such questions as that of the hegemony of the proletariat in the work of economic construction, the question of industrialisation, the question of the Party apparatus and the "regime" in the Party, etc.

The Party holds that, in its policy in general, and in its economic policy in particular, it is impossible to divorce industry from agriculture, that the development of these two basic branches of economy must be along the line of combining, uniting them in a socialist economy. Hence our method, the socialist method of industrialising the country through the steady improvement of the living standards of the labouring masses, including the main mass of the peasantry, as being the principal base for the development of industrialisation. I speak of the socialist method of industrialisation, in contrast to the capitalist method of industrialisation, which is effected through the impoverishment of the vast masses of the labouring sections of the population.

What is the principal demerit of the capitalist method of industrialisation? It is that it leads to the interests of industrialisation being set at variance with the interests of the labouring masses, to an aggravation of the internal contradictions in the country, to the impoverishment of the vast masses of the workers and peasants, and to the utilisation of profits not for the improvement of the living and cultural standards of the broad masses of the people at home, but for export of capital and extension of the base of capitalist exploitation both at home and abroad.

What is the principal merit of the socialist method of industrialisation? It is that it leads to unity between the interests of industrialisation and the interests of the main mass of the labouring sections of the population, that it leads not to the impoverishment of the vast masses, but to an improvement of their living standards, not to an aggravation of the internal contradictions, but to the latter being evened out and overcome, and that it steadily enlarges the home market and increases its absorbing capacity, thus creating a solid domestic base for the development of industrialisation.

Hence, the main mass of the peasantry is directly interested in the socialist way of industrialisation. Hence the possibility and necessity of achieving the hegemony of the proletariat in relation to the peasantry in the work of socialist construction in general, and of industrialising the country in particular.

Hence the idea of a bond between socialist industry and peasant economy, primarily through the mass organisation of the peasantry in co-operatives, and the idea of the leading role of industry in relation to agriculture.

Hence our taxation policy and the policy of lowering prices of manufactured goods, etc., which take into account the need to maintain economic co-operation between the proletariat and the peasantry, the need to strengthen the alliance between the workers and the peasants.

The opposition bloc, on the contrary, starts out by counterposing industry to agriculture, and tends to take the path of divorcing industry from agriculture. It fails to realise and refuses to recognise that industry cannot be advanced if the interests of agriculture are ignored or violated. It fails to understand that while industry is the leading element in the national economy, agriculture in its turn is the base on which our industry can develop.

Hence its view of peasant economy as a “colony,” as something which has to be “exploited” by the proletarian state (Preobrazhensky).

Hence its fear of a good harvest (Trotsky), as a factor supposedly capable of disorganising our economy.

Hence the peculiar policy of the opposition bloc, a policy which tends towards sharpening the internal contradictions between industry and agriculture, and towards capitalist methods of industrialising the country.

Would you like to hear Preobrazhensky, for instance, who is one of the leaders of the opposition bloc? Here is what he says in one of his articles:

“The more a country that is passing to a socialist organisation of production is economically backward, petty-bourgeois, and of a peasant character . . . the more it has to rely for socialist accumulation on the exploitation of pre-socialist forms of economy. . . . On the other hand, the more a country where the socialist revolution has triumphed is economically and industrially developed . . . and the more the proletariat of that, country finds it necessary to minimise unequal exchange of its products for the products of the colonies, i.e., to minimise exploitation of the latter, the more will it rely for socialist accumulation on the productive basis of the socialist forms, i.e., on the surplus product of its own industry and its own agriculture” (E. Preobrazhensky’s article, “The Fundamental Law of Socialist Accumulation” in *Vestnik Komakademii*, 1924, No. 8).

It scarcely needs proof that Preobrazhensky tends towards regarding the interests of our industry and the interests of the peasant economy of our country as being in irreconcilable contradiction, and hence towards capitalist methods of industrialisation.

I consider that, in likening peasant economy to a “colony” and trying to make the relations between the proletariat and the peasantry take the form of relations of exploitation, Preobrazhensky, without himself realising it, is undermining or trying to undermine, all possibility of socialist industrialisation.

I affirm that this policy is totally at variance with the policy of the Party, which bases industrialisation on economic co-operation between the proletariat and the peasantry.

The same thing, or very much the same thing, must be said of Trotsky, who is afraid of a “good harvest” and apparently thinks that it would be a danger to the economic development of our country. Here, for instance, is what he said at the April plenum:

“In these conditions (Trotsky is referring to the conditions of the present disproportion—J. St.), a good harvest, i.e., a potential increase of agricultural commodity surpluses, may become a factor which, far from accelerating the rate of economic development towards socialism, would disorganise the economy by worsening mutual relations between town and country, and, within the town itself, between the consumer and the state. Practically speaking, a good harvest—with manufactured goods in short supply—may lead to increased distillation of grain into illicit liquor and longer queues in the towns. Politically, it would mean a struggle of the peasant against the foreign trade monopoly, i.e., against socialist industry.”* (Verbatim report of the sittings of the April plenum of the Central Committee, Trotsky’s amendments to Rykov’s draft resolution, p. 164.)

One has only to contrast this more than strange statement of Trotsky’s with Comrade Lenin’s statement, during the period when the goods famine was at its worst, that a good harvest would be the “salvation of the state,” ^{sup class="anote">12} to realise how wholly incorrect Trotsky’s statement is.

Trotsky, apparently, does not accept the thesis that in our country industrialisation can develop only through the gradual improvement of the living standards of the labouring masses in the countryside.

Trotsky, apparently, holds that industrialisation in our country must take place through some kind of, so to speak, “bad harvest.”

Hence the practical proposals of the opposition bloc—that wholesale prices should be raised, that the peasantry should be more heavily taxed, etc.—proposals which, instead of strengthening economic co-operation between the proletariat and the peasantry, would disrupt it; which, instead of preparing the conditions for the hegemony of the proletariat in economic constructive work, would undermine them; which, instead of furthering the bond between industry and peasant economy, would create estrangement between them.

A few words on differentiation of the peasantry. Everyone knows the outcry and panic raised by the opposition about a growth of differentiation. Everyone knows that no one raised a greater panic over the growth of small private capital in the countryside than the opposition. But what is really happening? What is happening is this:

In the first place, the facts show that in our country differentiation among the peasantry is proceeding in very peculiar forms—not through the “melting away” of the middle peasant, but, on the contrary, through an increase in his numbers, while the extreme poles are considerably diminishing. Moreover, such factors as the nationalisation of the land, the mass organisation of the peasantry in co-operatives, our taxation policy, etc., cannot but set definite limits and bounds to the differentiation itself.

In the second place—and this is the chief thing—the growth of small private capital in the countryside is counter-balanced, and more than counter-balanced, by so decisive a factor as the development of our industry, which strengthens the position of the proletariat and of the socialist forms of economy, and which constitutes the principal antidote to private capital in every shape and form.

All these circumstances have apparently escaped the notice of the “New Opposition,” and it continues from force of habit to cry out and raise panic over private capital in the countryside.

It will not be superfluous, perhaps, to remind the opposition of Lenin’s words on this subject. Here is what Comrade Lenin says about it:

“Every improvement in the position of large-scale production, the possibility of starting a few big factories, strengthens the position of the proletariat to such an extent that there are no grounds whatever for fearing the elemental forces of the petty bourgeoisie, even if its numbers grow. It is not the growth of the petty bourgeoisie and of small capital that is to be feared. What is to be feared is the too long continuance of the state of extreme hunger, want and shortage of produce, which is resulting in completely sapping the strength of the proletariat and making it impossible for it to withstand the elemental forces of petty-bourgeois vacillation and despair. That is more terrible. If the quantity of produce increases, no development of the petty bourgeoisie will be much of a disadvantage, inasmuch as it, promotes the development of large-scale industry . . . ” (see Vol. XXVI, p. 256).

Will the oppositionists ever realise that their panic over differentiation and private capital in the countryside is the reverse side of their disbelief in the possibility of the victorious building of socialism in our country?

A few words about the opposition's fight against the Party apparatus and the "regime" in the Party.

What does the opposition's fight against the Party apparatus—which is the directing core of our Party—actually amount to? It scarcely needs proof that in the final analysis it amounts to an attempt to disorganise the Party leadership and to disarm the Party in its fight for improving the state apparatus; for ridding the latter of bureaucracy and for its leadership of the state apparatus.

What does the opposition's fight against the "regime" in the Party lead to? It leads to undermining that iron discipline in the Party without which the dictatorship of the proletariat is unthinkable, and, in the final analysis, to shaking the foundations of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The Party is therefore right when it affirms that the opposition's political and organisational errors are a reflection of the pressure exerted by the non-proletarian elements on our Party and on the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Such, comrades, are the political and organisational errors of the opposition bloc.

IV

Some Conclusions

At the recent plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission,¹³ Trotsky declared that if the conference adopted the theses on the opposition bloc the inevitable outcome would be the expulsion of the opposition leaders from the Party. I must declare, comrades, that this statement of Trotsky's is devoid of all foundation, that it is false. I must declare that the adoption of the theses on the opposition bloc can have only one purpose: the waging of a determined struggle against the opposition's errors of principle with a view to eliminating them completely.

Everyone knows that the Tenth Congress of our Party adopted a resolution on the anarcho-syndicalist deviation.¹⁴ And what is the anarcho-syndicalist deviation? No one will say that the anarcho-syndicalist deviation is "better" than the Social-Democratic deviation. But from the fact that a resolution on the anarcho-syndicalist deviation was adopted, nobody has yet drawn the conclusion that the members of the "Workers' Opposition" must necessarily be expelled from the Party.

Trotsky cannot but know that the Thirteenth Congress of our Party proclaimed Trotskyism a "downright petty-bourgeois deviation." But nobody has so far held that the adoption of that resolution must necessarily lead to the expulsion of the leaders of the Trotskyist opposition from the Party.

Here is the relevant passage from the Thirteenth Congress resolution:

"In the present 'opposition' we have not only an attempt to revise Bolshevism, not only a direct departure from Leninism, but also a downright petty-bourgeois deviation.* There can

be no doubt whatever that this ‘opposition’ objectively reflects the pressure exerted by the petty bourgeoisie on the position of the proletarian Party and on its policy.” (From the resolution of the Thirteenth Congress.)

Let Trotsky tell us in what way a petty-bourgeois deviation is better than a Social-Democratic deviation. Is it so hard to grasp that a Social-Democratic deviation is a variety of petty-bourgeois deviation? Is it so hard to grasp that when we speak of a Social-Democratic deviation, we are only putting more precisely what was said in our Thirteenth Congress resolution? We by no means declare that the leaders of the opposition bloc are Social-Democrats. We only say that a Social-Democratic deviation is to be observed in the opposition bloc, and we give it notice that it is still not too late to abandon this deviation, and we call on it to do so.

And here is what the resolution of the C.C. and C.C.C. of January 1925 says about Trotskyism¹⁵:

“In point of fact, present-day Trotskyism is a falsification of communism in the nature of an approximation to the ‘European’ types of pseudo-Marxism, that is, in the final analysis, in the nature of ‘European’ Social-Democracy.” (From the resolution of the plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C., January 17, 1925.)

I must say that both these resolutions were in the main drafted by Zinoviev. Yet neither the Party as a whole, nor even Zinoviev in particular, drew the conclusion that the leaders of the Trotskyist opposition must be expelled from the Party.

Perhaps it will not be superfluous to mention what Kamenev said about Trotskyism, which he bracketed with Menshevism? Listen to this:

“Trotskyism has always been the most plausible and most carefully camouflaged form of Menshevism, one most adapted to deceiving precisely the revolutionary-minded section of the workers.” (L. Kamenev’s article, “The Party and Trotskyism,” in the symposium For Leninism, p. 51.)

All these facts are as well known to Trotsky as to any of its. Yet nobody has suggested expelling Trotsky and his followers on the basis of the resolutions, say, of the Thirteenth Congress.

That is why I think that Trotsky’s statement at the plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C. was insincere and false.

When the October plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C. basically approved the theses on the opposition bloc, what it had in mind was not repressive measures but the necessity of waging an ideological struggle against the opposition’s errors of principle, which the opposition has not renounced to this day, and in defence of which it intends, as it tells us in its “statement” of October 16, to go on fighting within the framework of the Party Rules. In acting in this way, the plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C. took as its starting point that a struggle against the opposition’s errors of principle is the only way of eliminating these errors, and that their elimination is the only path towards real unity in the Party. By routing the opposition bloc and compelling it to renounce factionalism, the Party secured that necessary minimum without which unity in the Party is impossible. That, of course, is quite a lot. But it, is not enough. In

order to secure full unity, it is necessary to go one step further and get the opposition bloc to renounce its errors of principle, and thus protect the Party and Leninism from assaults and attempts at revision.

That is the first conclusion.

By repudiating the fundamental position of the opposition bloc and rebuffing its attempts to start a new discussion, the mass of the Party members said: "This is not the moment for talk; the time has come to get down squarely to the work of socialist construction." Hence the conclusion: less talk, more creative and positive work, forward to socialist construction!

That is the second conclusion.

And a third conclusion is that in the course of the inner-Party struggle and of repelling the opposition's assaults on the Party, the Party has become more firmly united than ever, on the basis of the socialist prospects of our constructive work.

That is the third conclusion.

A party united on the basis of the socialist prospects of our constructive work is the very lever we need at the present time in order to advance the building of socialism in our country.

This lever we have fashioned in the course of the struggle against the opposition bloc.

The struggle has united our Party around its Central Committee on the basis of the socialist prospects of our constructive work. The conference must seal this unity by unanimously adopting, as I hope it will, the theses submitted to it by the Central Committee.

I have no doubt that the conference will perform this task with credit. (Stormy and prolonged applause. All the delegates rise. An ovation.)

Notes

1. The Fifteenth Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.), held October 2-November 3, 1926, discussed the following questions: the international situation; the economic position of the country and the tasks of the Party; the results of the work and the current tasks of the trade unions; the opposition and the inner-Party situation. The conference approved the policy of the Central Committee and unanimously adopted the theses of J. V. Stalin's report on "The Opposition Bloc in the C.P.S.U.(B.)," which characterised the Trotsky-Zinoviev opposition bloc as a Social-Democratic deviation in the ranks of the Bolshevik Party and as an auxiliary detachment of the Second International in the international labour movement. The conference gave shape to and completed the arming of the Party with the idea of the victory of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. and called for a determined struggle for the unity of the Party and the exposure of the Trotsky-Zinoviev bloc.

2. This refers to the joint plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.), held April 6-9, 1926.

3. This refers to the joint plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.), held July 14-23, 1926.

4. This refers to the resolution on "Results of the Discussion and the Petty-Bourgeois Deviation in the Party," adopted by the Thirteenth Conference of the R.C.P.(B.) and endorsed

by the Thirteenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) as a resolution of the congress (see Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums, Part I, 1953, pp. 778-86).

* My italics.—J. St.

5. The chapter of Lenin's *The Tax in Kind* is entitled "The Contemporary Economy of Russia" (see V. I. Lenin, Works, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 32, pp. 308-19).

6. See V. I. Lenin, Works, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 25, p. 387

* My italics.—J. St.

7. *Nashe Slovo* (Our Word)—a Menshevik-Trotskyist newspaper published in Paris from January 1915 to September 1916.

* My italics.—J. St.

* My italics.—J. St.

* My italics.—J. St.

* My italics.—J. St.

8. See Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums, Part II, 1953, p. 48.

9. See Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums, Part II, 1953, p. 49.

10. See Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums, Part II, 1953, p. 49.

* My italics.—J. St.

* My italics.—J. St.

* My italics.—J. St.

* My italics.—J. St.

11. See V. I. Lenin, Works, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 24, pp. 1-7.

* My italics.—J. St.

* My italics.—J. St.

12. See V. I. Lenin, Works, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 32, p. 204.

13. The reference is to the joint plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.), held October 23 and 26, 1926. The plenum discussed filling the vacancy in the C.C. caused by the death of F. E. Dzerzhinsky, questions to be submitted for discussion at the Fifteenth All-Union Party Conference, a communication of the C.C. Political Bureau and the C.C.C. in connection with the Political Bureau's resolution of October 4 on the factional activity of the Trotsky-Zinoviev opposition bloc since the July joint plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.), and J. V. Stalin's theses on "The Opposition Bloc in the C.P.S.U.(B.)." On October 26, J. V. Stalin delivered a speech at the plenum in support of the theses.

14. See Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums, Part I, 1953, pp. 530-33.

* My italics.—J. St.

15. This refers to the resolution adopted at a joint sitting of the plenums of the C.C. and C.C.C., R.C.P.(B.) on January 17, 1925, following a communication made by J. V. Stalin on resolutions of local Party organisations in connection with Trotsky's action (see Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums, Part I, 1953, pp. 913-21, and J. V. Stalin, Works, Vol. 7, pp. 6-10).

**Reply to the Discussion
on the Report on
“The Social-Democratic Deviation in our Party”
November 3, 1926**

I
Some General Questions

1. Marxism is not a Dogma, but a Guide to Action

Comrades, I said in my report that Marxism is not a dogma, but a guide to action, that Engels’s well-known formula of the forties of the last century was correct in its time, but has become inadequate today. I said that, in view of this, it must be replaced by Lenin’s formula, which says that in the new conditions of the development of capitalism and of the class struggle of the proletariat, the victory of socialism in individual countries is quite possible and probable.

That statement of mine was challenged during the discussion. Zinoviev was particularly assiduous in this respect. I am therefore compelled to revert to this question and deal with it in greater detail.

I think that Zinoviev has not read Engels’s “The Principles of Communism,” or if he has, he has not understood them. Otherwise, he would not have raised objections; he would have realised that Social-Democracy is now clutching at Engels’s old formula in its fight against Leninism; he would have understood that, in following in the footsteps of the Social-Democrats, he might be laying himself open to a certain danger of “degeneration.”

Here is what Engels says in “The Principles of Communism,”¹ which is an exposition of individual propositions in the form of questions and answers.

“Question: Will it be possible to abolish private property at one stroke?

“Answer: No, just as little as it will be possible at one stroke to multiply the existing productive forces to the extent required for the establishment of communal production. Consequently, the proletarian revolution,* which in all probability is coming, will only gradually remodel present society, and only after that can it abolish private property, when the necessary quantity of means of production has been created.

“Question: What will be the course of development of this revolution?

“Answer: First of all it will establish a democratic system and thereby, directly or indirectly, the political rule of the proletariat.”

What is evidently meant here is the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. You know, comrades, that this point has already been carried out in our country, and pretty thoroughly. (Voices: “True!” “Quite right!”)

Further:

“Democracy would be quite useless to the proletariat if it were not used forthwith as a means of carrying out further measures for launching a direct assault on private property and safeguarding the existence of the proletariat. The chief of these measures, which already necessarily follow from the existing conditions, are:

“1) Restriction of private property by means of a progressive tax, a heavy inheritance tax, abolition of inheritance by collateral lines (brothers, nephews, etc.), compulsory loans, etc.”

You know that these measures have been, or are being, carried out in our country pretty thoroughly.

Further:

“2) Gradual expropriation of the owners of land, factories, railways and shipping, partly through competition on the part of state industry, partly directly with compensation paid in assignats.”

You know that these measures too were carried out by us in the early years of our revolution.

Further:

“3) Confiscation of the property of all émigrés and of rebels against the majority of the people.”

As you know, we have confiscated and confiscated—so much so that there is nothing more to be done. (Laughter.)

Further:

“4) Organisation of labour or the providing of employment to proletarians on national estates and in national factories and workshops, so that competition among the workers will be abolished, and the factory-owners, as far as any of them are left, will be compelled to pay just as high wages as the state.”

As you know, we are following this course and we are achieving a number of victories by it, and in the main we are carrying out this point quite successfully.

Further:

“5) Equal obligation to labour for all members of society until private property is completely abolished. Formation of industrial armies, especially for agriculture.”

You know that we tried this course in the period of War Communism, in the form of organising labour armies. But we did not achieve great results by it. We then proceeded to attain the same object by roundabout ways, and there is no reason to doubt that we shall achieve decisive successes in this field.

Further:

“6) Centralisation of the credit system and the money market in the hands of the state through a National Bank with state capital, and the suppression of all private banks and bankers.”

This too, comrades, we have already carried out in the main, as you very well know.

Further:

“7) Multiplication of national factories, workshops, railways and shipping, cultivation of all untilled land and improved cultivation of already tilled land, as the capital and labour power at the disposal of the nation multiply.”

You know that this also is being carried out and that we are making good progress, which is being substantially furthered by the fact that we have nationalised the land and the main branches of industry.

Further:

“8) Education of all children, from the moment they can dispense with their mothers’ care, in national institutions and at the cost of the nation.”

This we are accomplishing, but are still very far from having accomplished, since, owing to the ruinous effects of war and intervention, we are not yet in a position to place the education of all the children in the country under the care of the state.

Further:

“9) Erection of great palaces on the national estates to serve as common homes for communes of citizens, which engage both in industry and in agriculture, and which combine the advantages of both urban and rural life, without the one-sidedness and disadvantages of either.”

This evidently refers to a large-scale solution of the housing problem. You know that we are going ahead with this work, and if it has not yet been carried out in the main, and probably will not be speedily carried out, it is because, owing to the ruined state of industry we inherited, we have not yet succeeded, and could not possibly have succeeded, in accumulating sufficient funds for extensive housing construction.

Further:

“10) Demolition of all insanitary and badly built houses and city areas.”

This point is an integral part of the previous one, and therefore what was said of the latter also applies to it.

Further

“11) Equal inheritance rights for children whether born in or out of wedlock.”

I think it may be said that we are carrying out this point satisfactorily.

And, the last point:

“12) Concentration of all means of transport in the hands of the nation.”

You know that this point we have already carried out in full.

That, comrades, is the programme of proletarian revolution set forth by Engels in his “The Principles of Communism.”

You will see, comrades, that nine-tenths of this programme has already been accomplished by our revolution.

Further:

“Question: Can this revolution (i.e., the revolution mentioned above—J. St.) take place in one country alone?”

“Answer: No. Large-scale industry has, by the very fact that it has created a world market, bound all the nations of the earth, and notably the civilised nations, so closely together, that each depends on what is happening in the others. Further, in all the civilised countries it has evened up social development to such an extent that in all of them the bourgeoisie and the proletariat have become the two decisive classes of society, and the struggle between them the major struggle of our times. Therefore, the communist revolution will not be simply a national revolution, but will take place simultaneously in all the civilised countries, that is, at least in England, America, France and Germany” . . .* (see F. Engels, “The Principles of Communism”).

That is how the matter stands, comrades.

Engels said that a proletarian revolution with the programme set forth above could not take place in one separate country. But the fact is that, in the new conditions of the class struggle of the proletariat, the conditions of imperialism, we have in the main already accomplished such a revolution in one separate country, in our country, having carried out nine-tenths of its programme.

Zinoviev may say that we made a mistake in carrying out this programme, in carrying out these points. (Laughter.) It may well be that in carrying out these points, we have been guilty of a certain “national narrow-mindedness.” (Laughter.) That may very well be. But one thing is nevertheless clear, namely, that what Engels in the forties of the last century, in the conditions of pre-monopoly capitalism, considered impracticable and impossible for one country, became practicable and possible in our country in the conditions of imperialism.

Of course, if Engels were alive, he would not cling to the old formula. On the contrary, he would heartily welcome our revolution, and would say: “To the devil with all old formulas! Long live the victorious revolution in the U.S.S.R.!” (Applause.)

But that is not the way the gentry of the Social-Democratic camp see it. They cling to Engels’s old formula in order to use it as a screen and facilitate their fight against our revolution, against the Bolsheviks. That is their affair, of course. Only the sad thing is that

Zinoviev is trying to ape these gentry, and in the present case is taking the Social-Democratic path.

In quoting Engels's formula and examining it in detail I had three considerations in mind:

firstly, to make the question as clear as possible by contrasting Lenin's formula on the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country to Engels's formula, which was the most extreme and sharp expression of the view held by the Marxists of the old period;

secondly, to expose the reformism and anti-revolutionary character of Social-Democracy, which tries to hide its opportunism by referring to Engels's old formula;

thirdly, to show that Lenin was the first to settle the question of the victory of socialism in one country.

It has to be admitted, comrades, that it was Lenin, and no one else, who discovered the truth that the victory of socialism in one country is possible. Lenin must not be robbed of what belongs to him by right. One must not fear the truth, one must have the courage to tell the truth, one must have the courage to say frankly that Lenin was the first of the Marxists to present the question of the victory of socialism in one country in a new way, and to answer it in the affirmative.

By this I do not mean that Lenin, as a thinker, was superior to Marx or Engels. By this I mean only two things:

firstly, that it cannot be expected of Engels or Marx, however great their genius as thinkers, that they should have foreseen in the period of pre-monopoly capitalism all the potentialities of the class struggle of the proletariat and the proletarian revolution that were revealed more than half a century later, in the period of developed monopoly capitalism;

secondly, that there is nothing surprising in the fact that Lenin, as a brilliant disciple of Engels and Marx, was able to note the new potentialities of the proletarian revolution in the new conditions of capitalist development, and thus discovered the truth that the victory of socialism in one country is possible.

One must know how to distinguish between the letter and the essence of Marxism, between its various propositions and its method. Lenin succeeded in discovering the truth that the victory of socialism is possible in one country because he did not regard Marxism as a dogma, but as a guide to action, because he was not a slave of the letter and was able to grasp what was primary and basic in Marxism.

Here is what Lenin said on this score in his pamphlet "Left-Wing" Communism, an Infantile Disorder:

"Our theory is not a dogma, but, a guide to action, said Marx and Engels; and it is the greatest mistake, the greatest crime on the part of such 'patented' Marxists as Karl Kautsky, Otto Bauer, etc., that they have not understood this, have been unable to apply it at crucial moments of the proletarian revolution" (see Vol. XXV, p. 211).

That is the path, the path of Marx, Engels and Lenin, which we are following, and which we must continue to follow if we want to remain revolutionaries to the end.

It is because Leninism has kept to this path, and continues to do so, that it has held its own as the Marxism of the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution. To depart from this path means to land in the quagmire of opportunism. To deviate from this path means to drag at the tail of Social-Democracy—which is exactly what has happened in this instance to Zinoviev.

Zinoviev declared here that Marx and Engels subsequently toned down Engels's old formula and granted the possibility of the proletarian revolution beginning in individual countries. He quoted the words of Engels that "the Frenchman will begin it and the German will finish it."⁴ All that is true. That is something which nowadays every Soviet-Party School student knows. But it is not the point at issue just now. It is one thing to say: Begin the revolution, for in the very near future you will be supported by a victorious revolution in other countries, and in the event of such a victory in other countries, you may count on victory. That is one thing. It is another thing to say: Begin the revolution and go ahead with it in the knowledge that even if a victory of the revolution in other countries does not come to your aid in the near future, the conditions of the struggle now, in the period of developed imperialism, are such that you can be victorious all the same, and so later start the fire of revolution in other countries. That is another thing.

And if I quoted Engels's old formula, it was not in order to evade the fact that Engels and Marx subsequently toned down this sharp and extreme formula, but in order:

- a) to make the question clear by contrasting the two opposite formulas;
- b) to reveal the opportunism of Social-Democracy, which tries to hide behind Engels's old formula;
- c) to show that Lenin was the first to present the question of the victory of socialism in one country in a new way and to answer it in the affirmative.

So you see, comrades, that I was right when I said that Zinoviev had not read "The Principles of Communism" or that, if he had, he had not understood them, since he interpreted Engels's old formula in the SocialDemocratic manner, and had thus slid into opportunism.

2. Some Remarks of Lenin on the Dictatorship of the Proletariat

Further, I said in my report that we have a more or less similar instance in connection with the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the conditions of developed imperialism. I said that as regards the dictatorship of the proletariat, understood as the smashing of the old bourgeois state apparatus and the building of a new, proletarian one, Marx in his day (the seventies of the nineteenth century) made an exception in the case of Britain, and probably also of America, where militarism and bureaucracy were little developed at that time, and where at that time there was a possibility of achieving the political rule of the proletariat by other means, "peaceful" means. I said that this exception, or reservation, made by Marx in the case of Britain and America was correct at the time, but, in Lenin's opinion, has become incorrect and superfluous in the present conditions of developed imperialism, when militarism and bureaucracy are flourishing in Britain and America in the same way as in other countries.

Permit me, comrades, to turn to Marx. Here is what he wrote in his letter to Kugelmann in April 1871:

“ . . . If you look at the last chapter of my Eighteenth Brumaire, you will find that I say that the next attempt of the French revolution will be no longer, as before, to transfer the bureaucratic-military machine from one hand to another, but to smash it . . . , and this is the preliminary condition for every real people’s revolution on the continent.* And this is what our heroic party comrades in Paris are attempting.” (I quote from Lenin’s *The State and Revolution*, Vol. XXI, p. 394.)

That is what Marx wrote in 1871.

As we know, this passage was pounced upon by Social-Democrats of every brand, and by Kautsky in the first place, who asserted that a forcible revolution of the proletariat was not necessarily the method of advance towards socialism, that the dictatorship of the proletariat must not necessarily be understood as meaning the smashing of the old bourgeois state apparatus and the building of a new, proletarian one, and that therefore what the proletariat had to strive for was a peaceful path of transition from capitalism to socialism.

How did Comrade Lenin react to this? Here is what he wrote on this score in his book *The State and Revolution*:

“It is interesting to note, in particular, two points in the above-quoted argument of Marx. First, he confines his conclusion to the continent. This was understandable in 1871, when England was still the model of a purely capitalist country, but without militarism and, to a considerable degree, without a bureaucracy. Hence, Marx excluded England, where a revolution, even a people’s revolution, then seemed possible, and indeed was possible, without the preliminary condition of destroying the ‘ready-made state machinery.’

“Today,* in 1917, in the epoch of the first great imperialist war, this qualification made by Marx is no longer valid.* Both Britain and America, the biggest and the last representatives—in the whole world—of Anglo-Saxon ‘liberty’ in the sense that they had no militarism and bureaucracy, have completely sunk into the all-European filthy, bloody morass of bureaucratic-military institutions which subordinate everything to themselves and trample everything underfoot. Today, in Britain and in America, too, ‘the preliminary condition for every real people’s revolution.’ is the smashing, the destruction of the ‘ready-made state machinery’ (perfected in those countries, between 1914 and 1917, up to the ‘European’ general imperialist standard)” (see Vol. XXI, p. 395).

As you see, we have here an instance which is more or less similar to the one I spoke of in my report in connection with Engels’s old formula about the victory of socialism.

The reservation, or exception, made by Marx in the case of England and America was justified so long as there was no developed militarism and no developed bureaucracy in those countries. This reservation, in Lenin’s opinion, became invalid in the new conditions of monopoly capitalism, when militarism and bureaucracy had developed in Britain and America to at least as great a degree as in the countries of the European Continent. Hence, a forcible revolution of the proletariat, the dictatorship of the proletariat, is an inevitable and indispensable condition for the advance towards socialism in all imperialist countries without exception.

Hence, when the opportunists of all countries cling to this reservation made by Marx conditionally and campaign against the dictatorship of the proletariat, it is not Marxism they are advocating, but, their own opportunist cause.

Lenin arrived at this conclusion because he knew how to distinguish between the letter and the essence of Marxism, because he regarded Marxism not as a dogma, but as a guide to action.

It would be strange to expect that Marx should have foreseen several decades in advance all the diverse potentialities of the future development of capitalism and the class struggle. But it would be stranger still to wonder at the fact that Lenin observed and drew general conclusions about those potentialities in the new conditions of the development of capitalism, when those potentialities had appeared and developed to a more than sufficient degree.

An interjection was made here by somebody, in the audience, I think it was Ryazanov, to the effect that the reservation made by Marx in the case of England and America is not only incorrect in the present conditions of the class struggle, but was incorrect even in the conditions prevailing at the time Marx made it. I do not agree with Ryazanov. I think that Ryazanov is mistaken. At, all events, Lenin is of a different opinion, and declares quite positively that Marx was right in making this reservation in the case of England and America in the seventies.

Here is what Lenin writes about in his this pamphlet *The Tax in Kind*:

“In our controversy with Bukharin in the Central Executive Committee, he remarked, among other things, that on the question of high salaries for specialists ‘we’ are ‘more to the Right than Lenin,’ for we see here no deviation from principle, bearing in mind the words of Marx that under certain conditions it would be more expedient for the working class to ‘buy off this gang’ (that is, the gang of capitalists, i.e., to buy out from the bourgeoisie the land, factories, mills and other means of production). This is an extremely interesting remark.” “. . . Consider Marx’s idea carefully. Marx was discussing England of the seventies of the last century, of the culminating period in the development of pre-monopoly capitalism, he was discussing a country in which there was less militarism and bureaucracy than in any other, a country in which there was then the greatest possibility of a ‘peaceful’ victory for socialism in the sense of the workers ‘buying off’ the bourgeoisie. And Marx said: Under certain conditions the workers will certainly not refuse to buy off the bourgeoisie. Marx did not commit himself—or the future leaders of the socialist revolution—as regards the forms, methods and ways of bringing about the revolution; for he understood perfectly well what a vast number of new problems would arise, how the whole situation would change in the course of the revolution, and how often and considerably it would change in the course of the revolution. Well, and in Soviet Russia after power has been seized by the proletariat, after the armed resistance and sabotage of the exploiters have been crushed—is it not obvious that certain conditions have arisen that are similar to those which might have arisen in Britain half a century ago had it then begun a peaceful transition to socialism? The submission of the capitalists to the workers in Britain could have been assured then owing to the following circumstances: 1) the absolute preponderance of workers, proletarians, among the population owing to the absence of a peasantry (in Britain in the seventies there were signs which allowed one to hope for an extremely rapid spread of socialism among the agricultural labourers); 2) the excellent organisation of the proletariat in trade unions (Britain was at that time the leading country in the world in this respect); 3) the comparatively high level of culture of the proletariat, which

had been trained by centuries of development of political liberty; 4) the old habit of the splendidly organised British capitalists of settling political and economic questions by compromise—at that time the British capitalists were better organised than the capitalists of any country in the world (this superiority has now passed to Germany). Those were the circumstances at that time in which the idea could arise that the peaceful submission* of the British capitalists to the workers was possible. . . . Marx was profoundly right when he taught the workers that it was important to preserve the organisation of large-scale production precisely for the purpose of facilitating the transition to socialism, and that the idea of paying the capitalists well, of buying them off, was quite permissible if (by way of an exception, and Britain then was an exception) circumstances should so develop as to compel* the capitalists to submit peacefully and to come over to socialism in a cultured and organised fashion, on condition that they were paid compensation” (see Vol. XXVI, pp. 327-29).

Obviously, it is Lenin that is right here, and not Ryazanov.

3. The Unevenness of Development of the Capitalist Countries

I said in my report that Lenin discovered and demonstrated the law of the unevenness of economic and political development of the capitalist countries, and that on the basis of this law, and of the fact that the unevenness was developing and becoming more pronounced, Lenin arrived at the idea that the victory of socialism in one country is possible. This thesis of Lenin’s was contested by Trotsky and Zinoviev. Trotsky said that it is incorrect theoretically. And Zinoviev, together with Trotsky, asserted that formerly, in the period of pre-monopoly capitalism, the unevenness of development was greater than it is now, in the period of monopoly capitalism, and that therefore the idea of the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country cannot be linked with the law of the unevenness of capitalist development.

That Trotsky objects to Lenin’s theoretical thesis concerning the law of uneven development is not at all surprising, for it is well known. that this law refutes Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution.

Furthermore, Trotsky is obviously tending to a philistine point of view here. He confuses the economic inequality of the various countries in the past—an inequality which did not always, and could not, lead to their spasmodic development—with the unevenness of economic and political development in the period of imperialism, when the economic inequality of countries is less than it was in the past, but the unevenness of economic and political development is incomparably greater than before and manifests itself more sharply than before; moreover it necessarily and inevitably leads to spasmodic development, to a situation in which countries which were industrially backward in a more or less short period overtake countries which had gone ahead, and this cannot but create the pre-conditions for gigantic imperialist wars and the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country.

It scarcely needs proof that this muddling of two different concepts does not, and cannot, testify to a high level of “theoretical” knowledge on Trotsky’s part.

But I cannot understand Zinoviev, who after all was a Bolshevik and had some inkling of Bolshevism. How can it be asserted that the unevenness of development was formerly greater than it is now, in the conditions of monopoly capitalism, without running the risk of landing in the quagmire of ultra-imperialism and Kautskyism? How can it be asserted that the idea of the victory of socialism in one country is not linked with the law of uneven development? Is it

not known that it was precisely from the law of uneven development that Lenin deduced this idea? What, for example, do the following words of Lenin indicate?

“Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism. Hence,* the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country taken separately” (see Vol. XVIII, p. 232).

What does the law of uneven development proceed from?

It proceeds from the fact that:

- 1) the old, pre-monopoly capitalism has grown into and developed into monopoly capitalism, into imperialism;
- 2) the division of the world into spheres of influence of imperialist groups and states is already completed;
- 3) world economic development is proceeding in the midst of a desperate, a mortal struggle of the imperialist groups for markets, raw materials, and the expansion of old spheres of influence;
- 4) this development is not even, but spasmodic; states that have run on ahead being ousted from the markets; and new states coming to the fore;
- 5) this manner of development results from some imperialist groups being able rapidly to develop technique, lower the cost of commodities and seize markets to the detriment of other imperialist groups;
- 6) periodical redivisions of the already divided world thus become an absolute necessity;
- 7) such redivisions may therefore be effected only by forcible means, by the testing of the strength of this or that imperialist group by force;
- 8) this cannot but lead to sharp conflicts and gigantic wars between the imperialist groups;
- 9) this state of affairs inevitably leads to the mutual weakening of the imperialists and creates the possibility of the imperialist front being breached in individual countries;
- 10) the possibility of the imperialist front being breached in individual countries cannot but create favourable conditions for the victory of socialism in one country.

What is it that accentuates the unevenness and lends decisive significance to the uneven development in the conditions of imperialism?

Two main circumstances:

Firstly, that the division of the world among the imperialist groups is completed, that such a thing as “vacant” territory no longer exists anywhere, and that redivision of the already divided world through imperialist wars is an absolute necessity for the achievement of economic “equilibrium.”

Secondly, that the colossal and hitherto unparalleled development of technique, in the broad meaning of the word, makes it easier for certain imperialist groups to overtake and outstrip others in the struggle; for markets, for seizing sources of raw material, etc.

But these circumstances developed and reached their climax only in the period of developed imperialism. And it could not be otherwise, because only in the period of imperialism could the division of the world be completed, and only in the period of developed imperialism did the colossal technical possibilities show themselves.

It is to this that must be attributed the fact that, whereas formerly Britain was able to keep ahead of all other countries industrially and to leave them lagging behind for more than a hundred years, later, in the period of monopoly capitalism, Germany required only about a couple of decades to begin to outstrip Britain, while America required even less to overtake the European countries.

How, after this, can it be asserted that the unevenness of development was formerly greater than it is now, and that the idea of the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country is not linked with the law of uneven development of capitalism in the period of imperialism?

Is it not clear that only philistines in matters of theory can confuse the economic inequality of the industrial countries in the past with the law of uneven economic and political development, which assumed particular force and acuteness only in the period of developed monopoly capitalism?

Is it not clear that only complete ignorance in the field of Leninism could have prompted Zinoviev and his friends to put forward their more than strange objections to Lenin's propositions connected with the law of uneven economic and political development of the capitalist countries?

II

Kamenev Clears the Way for Trotsky

What was the basic intention of Kamenev's speech at this conference? Disregarding certain minor points and Kamenev's usual diplomacy, it will be seen that its intention was to help Trotsky to defend his position, to help him in his fight against Leninism on the basic question of the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country.

With this aim in view, Kamenev took upon himself the "job" of proving that the principal article (1915) in which Lenin dealt with the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country had no reference to Russia; that when Lenin spoke of such a possibility, it was not Russia he had in mind but other capitalist countries. Kamenev took upon himself this dubious "job" in order thereby to clear the way for Trotsky, whose "scheme" is, and cannot but be, shot to pieces by Lenin's article written in 1915.

To put it crudely, Kamenev assumed the role of Trotsky's yardman (laughter), sweeping the way clear for him. It is sad, of course, to see the director of the Lenin Institute in the role of Trotsky's yardman—not because there is anything demeaning in the work of a yardman, but because Kamenev, who is undoubtedly a skilled man, might, I think, have taken upon himself a more highly skilled job. (Laughter.) But he assumed this role voluntarily; and, of course, he had every right to do so, so there is nothing to be done about it.

Let us now see how Kamenev performed this more than strange job.

Kamenev asserted in his speech that Lenin's basic proposition in his article of 1915, affirming the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country, a proposition which defined the whole line of our revolution and of our constructive work, did not and could not relate to Russia; that when Lenin spoke of the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country, it was not Russia he had in mind but only other capitalist countries. That is incredible and monstrous. It sounds very much like downright slander of Comrade Lenin. But Kamenev, apparently, cares very little what the Party may think of this falsification of Lenin. His one concern is to clear the way for Trotsky at any price.

How does he try to substantiate this strange assertion?

He says that Comrade Lenin, two weeks after this article of his, issued his well-known theses³ on the character of the impending revolution in Russia, in which he said that the task of the Marxists was confined to securing the victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia; and that Lenin said this because he supposedly held the view that the revolution in Russia was bound to stop short at its bourgeois phase and not grow over into a socialist revolution. Well, and since Lenin's article on the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country dealt not with the bourgeois, but with the socialist revolution, it is obvious that Lenin could not have had Russia in mind in that article.

Hence, according to Kamenev it follows that Lenin understood the scope of the Russian revolution in the way that a Left bourgeois revolutionary does, or a reformist of the Social-Democratic type, who hold the opinion that the bourgeois revolution should not grow over into a socialist revolution, and that between the bourgeois revolution and the socialist revolution there should be a long historical gap, a long interruption, an interval, lasting several decades at least, during which capitalism will flourish and the proletariat languish in misery.

It follows that when Lenin wrote his article in 1915, he was not thinking of, did not desire, and was not striving for an immediate transition from the victory of the bourgeois revolution to a socialist revolution.

You will say that this is incredible and monstrous. Yes, Kamenev's assertion really is incredible and monstrous. But Kamenev is not to be put out by that.

Allow me to quote a few documents which show that Kamenev is grossly falsifying Comrade Lenin in regard to this question.

Here is what Comrade Lenin wrote of the character of the Russian revolution as early as 1905, when its scope was not, and could not be, so powerful as it became later, as a result of the imperialist war, by February 1917:

“From the democratic revolution we shall at once,* and just to the extent of our strength, the strength of the class-conscious and organised proletariat, begin to pass to the socialist revolution” (see Vol. VIII, p. 186).

This passage is quoted from an article of Lenin's which appeared in September 1905.

Does Kamenev know of the existence of this article? I consider that the director of the Lenin Institute ought to know of its existence.

It therefore follows that Lenin conceived the victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution not as the end of the proletariat's struggle and of the revolution in general, but as the first stage and a transitional step to the socialist revolution.

But perhaps Lenin subsequently changed his opinion of the character and scope of the Russian revolution? Let us take another document. I am referring to an article of Lenin's which appeared in 1915, in November, three months after the publication of his basic article on the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country. This is what he says there:

“The proletariat is fighting, and will fight valiantly, to capture power, for a republic, for the confiscation of the land, that is, for the enlistment of the peasantry and the utilisation to the utmost of its revolutionary forces, for the participation of the ‘non-proletarian masses of the people’ in liberating bourgeois Russia from military-feudal ‘imperialism’ (=tsarism). And the proletariat will immediately* take advantage of this liberation of bourgeois Russia from tsarism, from the agrarian power of the landlords, not to aid the rich peasants in their struggle against the rural worker, but to bring about the socialist revolution¹⁴ in alliance with the proletarians of Europe” (see Vol. XVIII, p. 313).

You see that here, as in the previous quotation, in 1905 and in 1915 alike, Lenin held that the bourgeois revolution in Russia must grow over into a socialist revolution, that the victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia would be the first stage of the Russian revolution, necessary in order to pass immediately to its second stage, the socialist revolution.

Well, and what about Lenin's theses of 1915, to which Kamenev referred in his speech, and which speak of the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia? Do not these theses contradict the idea of the growing over of the bourgeois revolution into a socialist revolution? Of course not. On the contrary, the underlying idea of these theses is precisely the growing over of the bourgeois revolution into a socialist revolution, the passing of the first stage of the Russian revolution into the second stage. In the first place, Lenin did not say in these theses that the scope of the Russian revolution and the tasks of the Marxists in Russia were confined to overthrowing the tsar and the landlords, that is, to the tasks of a bourgeois-democratic revolution. In the second place, Lenin limited himself in these theses to describing the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution because he regarded that revolution as the first stage and the immediate task of the Russian Marxists. In the third place, Lenin held that the Russian Marxists should begin the accomplishment of their tasks not with the second stage (as Trotsky proposed with his scheme of “no tsar, but a workers' government.”), but with the first stage, the bourgeois-democratic stage of the revolution.

Is there any contradiction here, even the shadow of a contradiction, with the idea of the growing over of the bourgeois revolution into a socialist revolution? Obviously, not.

It follows, then, that Kamenev has flagrantly misrepresented Lenin's position.

But we have witnesses against Kamenev not only in the shape of documents of Lenin's. We also have witnesses in the shape of living persons, such as Trotsky, for instance, or the Fourteenth Conference of our Party, or, lastly, strange as it, may seem, Kamenev and Zinoviev themselves.

We know that Lenin's article on the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country was published in 1915. We know that Trotsky, who at that time carried on a controversy with Comrade Lenin on the question of the victory of socialism in one country, immediately, that is, in the same year 1915, replied to this article with a special critical article. What did Trotsky say then, in 1915, in his critical article? How did he assess Comrade Lenin's article? Did he understand it to mean that when speaking of the victory of socialism in one country, Lenin did not have Russia in mind, or did he understand it differently, in the way, say, that all of us understand it now? Here is a passage from Trotsky's article:

“The only more or less concrete historical argument advanced against the slogan of a United States of Europe was formulated in the Swiss Sotsial-Demokrat (at that time the central organ of the Bolsheviks, where Lenin's above-mentioned article was printed—J. St.) in the following sentence. ‘Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism.’ From this the Sotsial-Demokrat draws the conclusion that the victory of socialism is possible in one country, and that therefore there is no reason to make the dictatorship of the proletariat in each separate country contingent upon the establishment of a United States of Europe. . . . That no country in its struggle must ‘wait’ for others, is an elementary thought; which it is useful and necessary to reiterate in order that the idea of concurrent international action may not be replaced by the idea of temporising international inaction. Without waiting for the others, we begin and continue the struggle nationally, in the full confidence that our initiative will give an impetus to the struggle in other countries; but if this should not occur, it would be hopeless to think—as historical experience and theoretical considerations testify—that, for example, a revolutionary Russia could hold out in the face of a conservative Europe,* or that a socialist Germany could exist in isolation in a capitalist world” (see Trotsky's Works, Vol, III, Part 1, pp. 89-90).

It follows that Trotsky at that time understood Lenin's article not in the way that Kamenev is now trying to “understand” it, but as Lenin understood it, as the Party understands it, and as we all understand it, otherwise Trotsky would not have fortified himself in his controversy with Lenin by an argument based on Russia.

It follows that Trotsky is here, in this passage, testifying against his present ally, Kamenev.

Why, then, did he not speak against Kamenev at this conference? Why did Trotsky not declare here publicly and honestly that Kamenev was flagrantly distorting Lenin? Does Trotsky think that his silence in this matter can be described as a model of honest controversy? The reason why Trotsky did not speak here against Kamenev is that he evidently did not want to get himself involved in the dubious “business” of directly slandering Lenin—be preferred to leave this sordid work to Kamenev.

And how does the Party, as represented, for instance, by its Fourteenth Conference, regard the matter? Here is what is said in the Fourteenth Conference resolution dealing with the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country:

“From, the ‘unevenness of economic and political development, which is an absolute law of capitalism,’ Comrade Lenin rightly deduced two things: a) the possibility of ‘the victory of socialism first, in a few or even in one capitalist country taken separately,’ and b) the possibility that these few countries, or even one country, will not necessarily be the countries of the most developed capitalism (see, in particular, the notes on Sukhanov). The experience of the Russian revolution has demonstrated* that not only is such a first victory in one country

possible, but, given a number of favourable circumstances, this first country where the proletarian revolution is victorious may (if it receives a certain amount of support from the international proletariat) maintain itself and consolidate its position for a long time, even if this support should not assume the form of direct proletarian revolutions in other countries.” (From the resolution of the fourteenth Party Conference on “The Tasks of the Gornintern and the R.C.P.(B.) in Connection with the Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I.”⁴)

It follows that the Party as a whole, as represented by its Fourteenth Conference, testifies against Kamenev, against his assertion that Lenin, in his article on the victory of socialism in one country, did not have Russia in mind. Otherwise, the conference would not have said that “the experience of the Russian revolution has demonstrated” the correctness of Lenin’s article on the victory of socialism in one country.

It follows that the Fourteenth Conference understood Comrade Lenin’s article as he himself understood it, as Trotsky understood it, and as we all understand it.

And what was the attitude of Kamenev and Zinoviev to this resolution of the Fourteenth Conference? Is it not a fact that the resolution was drafted and approved unanimously by a commission which included Zinoviev and Kamenev? Is it not a fact that Kamenev was the chairman at the Fourteenth Conference, which adopted this resolution unanimously, and that it was Zinoviev who made the report on the resolution? How is it to be explained that Kamenev and Zinoviev voted for this resolution, for all its clauses? Is it not obvious that at that time Kamenev understood Lenin’s article, a quotation from which was directly included in the Fourteenth Conference resolution, differently from the way he is trying to “understand” it now? Which Kamenev are we to believe, the one who was chairman at the Fourteenth Conference and voted for the Fourteenth Conference resolution, or the one who comes forward here, at the Fifteenth Conference, as Trotsky’s yardman?

It follows that the Kamenev of the period of the Fourteenth Conference testifies against the Kamenev of the period of the Fifteenth Conference.

And why does Zinoviev keep silent and make no attempt to correct Kamenev who flagrantly misrepresents both Lenin’s article of 1915 and the resolution of the Fourteenth Conference? Is it not a fact that none other than Zinoviev put the case for the Fourteenth Conference resolution on the victory of socialism in one country?

It follows that Zinoviev’s hands are not quite clean. (Voices: “Quite unclean!”) Can this be called honest controversy?

It follows that Kamenev and Zinoviev are now beyond honest controversy.

And the conclusion? The conclusion is that Kamenev has failed in the role of Trotsky’s yardman. He has not justified Trotsky’s hopes.

III

An Incredible Muddle, or Zinoviev on Revolutionary Spirit and Internationalism

I pass now to Zinoviev. If Kamenev’s whole speech was an attempt to clear the way for Trotsky, Zinoviev made it his task to prove that the opposition leaders are the only revolutionaries and the only internationalists in the whole world.

Let us analyse his “arguments.”

He takes Bukharin’s statement that when examining questions of an internal order (the building of socialism) one must abstract oneself methodologically from questions of an external order, compares this proposition of Bukharin’s with what the theses on the opposition bloc say about the possibility of the victory of socialism in our country, and arrives at the conclusion that Bukharin and the Central Committee, which in the main approved the theses, are forgetting the international tasks of our revolution, the interests of the international revolution.

Is all that true? It is all nonsense, comrades. The secret is that methodology is one of Zinoviev’s weak points; he gets muddled over the simplest things, and makes out his own muddle to be the real state of affairs. Bukharin says that the question of building socialism must not be confused with the question of creating a guarantee as regards intervention against our country, that internal questions must not be confused with external questions. Bukharin does not say that internal questions are not connected with external, international questions. All he says is that the former must not be confused with the latter. That is a primary and elementary requirement of methodology. Who is to blame, if Zinoviev does not understand elementary questions of methodology?

We hold that our country exhibits two categories of contradictions: contradictions of an internal order and contradictions of an external order. The internal contradictions consist primarily of the struggle between the socialist, and the capitalist elements. We say that we can overcome these contradictions by our own efforts, that we can defeat the capitalist elements in our economy, draw the main mass of the peasantry into the work of socialist construction, and completely build a socialist society.

The external contradictions consist of the struggle between the land of socialism and its capitalist encirclement. We say that we cannot resolve these contradictions by our own efforts alone, that in order to resolve them the victory of socialism is necessary in several countries at least. It is precisely for this reason that we say that the victory of socialism in one country is not an end in itself, but an aid, a means and an instrument for the victory of the proletarian revolution in all countries.

Is all that true? Let Zinoviev prove that it is not.

Zinoviev’s trouble is that he does not see the difference between these two categories of contradictions, that he muddles the two preposterously and slakes out his own muddle to be “genuine” internationalism, believing that whoever abstracts himself methodologically from questions of an external order when examining questions of an internal order is forgetting the interests of the international revolution.

That is very funny, but he really ought to understand that it is unconvincing.

As to the theses, which allegedly ignore the international element in our revolution, one has only to read them to realise that Zinoviev has again got into a muddle. Here is what is said in the theses:

“The Party holds that our revolution is a socialist. revolution, that, the October Revolution is not merely a signal, an impulse, a point of departure for the socialist revolution in the West,

but that at the same time it is, firstly, a base for the further development of the world revolutionary movement, and, secondly, it ushers in a period of transition from capitalism to socialism in the U.S.S.R. (dictatorship of the proletariat), during which the proletariat, if it pursues a correct policy towards the peasantry, can, and will, successfully build a complete socialist society, provided, of course, the power of the international revolutionary movement, on the one hand, and the power of the proletariat of the U.S.S.R. on the other, are great enough to protect the U.S.S.R. from armed imperialist intervention.”**

As you see, the international element has been fully and completely taken into account in the theses.

Further, Zinoviev, and Trotsky as well, quote passages from the works of Lenin to the effect that “the complete victory of the socialist revolution in one country is inconceivable, and requires the most active cooperation of several advanced countries at least,” and in some strange way they arrive at the conclusion that it is beyond the power of our proletariat to completely build socialism in one country. But that is a sheer muddle, comrades! Has the Party ever said that the complete victory, the final victory of socialism is possible in our country, that, it is within the power of the proletariat of one country? Let, them tell us where and when it has said so. Does not the Party say, has it not always said, together with Lenin, that the complete and final victory of socialism is possible only if socialism is victorious in several countries? Has not the Party explained scores and hundreds of times that the victory of socialism in one country must: not be confused with the complete and final victory of socialism?

The Party has always held that the victory of socialism in one country signifies the possibility of completely building socialism in that country, and that this task can be accomplished by the efforts of one country alone, whereas the complete victory of socialism signifies a guarantee against intervention and restoration, and that this task can be accomplished only in the event of the victory of the revolution in several countries. How is it possible then to confuse the two tasks so preposterously? Who is to blame if Zinoviev, and Trotsky as well, so preposterously confuse the victory of socialism in one country with the complete and final victory of socialism? Why, they have only to read the resolution of the Fourteenth Conference, where this question is explained with an exactitude that could satisfy even a Soviet-Party School student.

Zinoviev, and Trotsky as well, put forward a number of quotations from Lenin’s works of the period of the Brest Peace, where it is said that our revolution may be crushed by external enemies. But is it so bard to understand that these quotations have no bearing on the question of the possibility of building socialism in our country? Comrade Lenin says that we are not guaranteed against the possibility of intervention, and that is quite right. But has the Party ever said that we can guarantee our country against the danger of intervention by our own efforts alone? Has not our Party always affirmed, and does it not continue to affirm, that a guarantee against intervention can be provided only by the victory of the proletarian revolution in several countries? How is it possible on these grounds to assert that it is beyond the power of our proletariat to completely build socialism in our country? Is it not time to stop this deliberate muddling of the external questions, questions of the direct struggle against the world bourgeoisie, with the question of building socialism in our country, with the question of victory over our capitalist elements at home?

Further, Zinoviev puts forward a quotation from the Communist Manifesto: “United action, of the leading civilised countries at least, is one of the first conditions for the emancipation of the proletariat”—compares this quotation with a quotation from one of Comrade Lenin’s manuscripts where it is said that “the victory of socialism requires the joint efforts of the workers in several advanced countries”—and arrives at the conclusion that our Party has gone counter to these generally accepted and incontrovertible propositions, and has forgotten the international conditions for the victory of the proletarian revolution. Well, is not that ludicrous, comrades? Where and when did our Party ever under-estimate the decisive importance of the international efforts of the working class, and of the international conditions for the victory of the revolution in our country? And what is the Comintern, if not an expression of the uniting of the efforts of the proletarians not only of the advanced countries, but of all the countries of the world, both for the world revolution and for the development of our revolution? And who took the initiative in founding the Comintern, and who constitutes its advanced detachment, if not our Party? And what is the trade-union united front policy, if not the uniting of the efforts of the workers not only of the advanced countries, but of all countries in general? Who can deny the prime role of our Party in promoting the trade-union united front policy throughout the world? Is it not a fact that our revolution has always supported, and continues to support, the development of the revolution in all countries? Is it not a fact, that the workers of all countries have supported, and continue to support, our revolution by their sympathy for it and by their struggle against attempts at intervention? What is that, if not a uniting of the efforts of the workers of all countries for the sake of the victory of our revolution? And what about the struggle of the British workers against Curzon in connection with his notorious Note⁵? And what about the support the workers of the U.S.S.R. rendered the British coal miners? I could put forward a number of other well-known facts of a similar nature if it were necessary, comrades.

Where, then, in all this is there any forgetfulness of the international tasks of our revolution?

What then is the secret here? The secret is that Zinoviev is trying to substitute the question of joint efforts by the proletarians of all countries to achieve the victory of socialism in our country for the cardinal question of the possibility of completely building socialism in our country without the state support of the European proletariat, the cardinal question whether, under present-day international conditions, proletarian rule in Russia can hold out, in the face of a conservative Europe.

Trotsky, Zinoviev’s present teacher, says:

“It would be hopeless to think . . . that, for example, a revolutionary Russia could hold out in the face of a conservative Europe” (Trotsky, Vol. III, Part 1, p. 90).

Trotsky, Zinoviev’s present teacher, says:

“Without direct state support from the European proletariat, the working class of Russia will not be able to maintain itself in power and to transform its temporary rule into a lasting socialist dictatorship. This we cannot doubt for an instant” (see *Our Revolution*, p. 278).

Consequently, Zinoviev substitutes the question of joint efforts by the workers of Europe and Russia for the question of the victory of socialism in our country, given the victory of the proletariat in Europe (“state support from the European proletariat”).

That is the point, and that is what our dispute is about.

Zinoviev, by putting forward quotations from Lenin's works and from the Communist Manifesto, is trying to substitute one question for another.

That is the secret of Zinoviev's exercises on the theme of our Party's "forgetfulness" of the international tasks of our revolution.

That is the secret of Zinoviev's tricks, confusion and muddle.

And this incredible confusion, this mish-mash and muddle in his own mind, Zinoviev has the "modesty" to palm off as the "genuine" revolutionary spirit and "genuine" internationalism of the opposition bloc.

Ludicrous, is it not, comrades?

No, to be an international revolutionary nowadays, when one is in the ranks of our Party, it is necessary in every possible way to strengthen and support our Party, which is also the advanced detachment of the Comintern. But the oppositionists are trying to disrupt and discredit our Party.

To be an internationalist nowadays, it is necessary in every possible way to strengthen and support the Communist International. But the oppositionists are trying to disintegrate and disrupt it, by supporting and instructing all kinds of Maslows and Souvarines.

It is time to realise that one cannot be a revolutionary and internationalist if one is at war with our Party, which is the advanced detachment of the Communist International. (Applause.)

It is time to realise that, in making war on the Comintern, the oppositionists have ceased to be revolutionaries and internationalists. (Applause.)

It is time to realise that the oppositionists are not revolutionaries and internationalists, but chatterers about revolution and internationalism. (Applause.)

It is time to realise that they are not revolutionaries in deed, but revolutionary phrasemongers and posers for the cinema screen. (Laughter, applause.)

It is time to realise that they are not revolutionaries in deed, but cinema revolutionaries. (Laughter, applause.)

IV

Trotsky Falsifies Lenin

1. Trotsky's Conjuring Tricks, or the Question of "Permanent Revolution"

I pass now to Trotsky's speech.

Trotsky declared that the theory of permanent revolution has no bearing on the question under discussion—the character and prospects of our revolution.

That is very strange, to say the least of it. How does it come about? Is not the theory of permanent revolution a theory of the motive forces of the revolution? Is it not true that the theory of permanent revolution deals primarily with the motive forces of our revolution? Well, and what is the question of the character and prospects of our revolution, if not a question of its motive forces? How can it be said that the theory of permanent revolution has no bearing on the question under discussion? That is not true, comrades. It is sleight-of-hand, a conjuring trick. It is an attempt to cover up one's tracks, to dodge the issue. Vain effort! It is no use your trying to dodge the issue—you won't succeed

In another part of his speech Trotsky tried to "hint" that he had long ceased to attach any serious importance to the theory of permanent revolution. And Kamenev, in his speech, "gave it to be understood" that Trotsky is perhaps not averse to abandon the theory of permanent revolution, if he has not abandoned it already.

A miracle—nothing less!

Let us examine the matter. Is it true that the theory of permanent revolution has no bearing on the question under discussion, and if it is not true, can Kamenev be believed when he says that Trotsky attaches no importance to the theory of permanent revolution, and has almost repudiated it?

Let us turn to the documents. I have in mind, first of all, Trotsky's letter to Comrade Olminsky in December 1921, which was published in the press in 1925—a letter which Trotsky has never attempted to repudiate and has not repudiated to this day, either directly or indirectly, and which therefore remains in full force. What does this letter say about permanent revolution?

Listen:

"I by no means consider that in my disagreements with the Bolsheviks I was wrong on all points. I was wrong—and fundamentally wrong—in my assessment of the Menshevik faction, inasmuch as I overrated its revolutionary potentialities and hoped that it would be possible to isolate and eliminate its Right wing. However, this fundamental error arose from the fact that I approached both factions, the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, from the standpoint of the idea of permanent revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, whereas both the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks at that time adhered to the view-point of a bourgeois revolution and a democratic republic. I considered that in principle the disagreements between the two factions were not so very profound, and I hoped (and I expressed this hope repeatedly in letters and speeches) that the very course of the revolution would lead the two factions to the position of permanent revolution and conquest of power by the working class, as in fact partially happened in 1905. (Comrade Lenin's preface to Kautsky's article on the motive forces of the Russian revolution, and the whole line of the newspaper *Nachalo*.)

"I consider that my assessment of the motive forces of the revolution was absolutely right, but that the inferences I drew from it in regard to the two factions were certainly wrong. Bolshevism alone, thanks to the irreconcilable line it took, concentrated in its ranks the really revolutionary elements both of the old intelligentsia and of the advanced section of the working class. Only thanks to the fact that Bolshevism succeeded in creating this revolutionarily-welded organisation was such a rapid turn from the revolutionary-democratic to the revolutionary-socialist position possible.

“Even now I could without any difficulty divide my polemical articles against the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks into two categories: those devoted to an analysis of the internal forces of the revolution and its prospects (in Rosa Luxemburg’s Polish theoretical organ, *Neue Zeit*), and those devoted to an assessment of the factions among the Russian Social-Democrats, their conflict, etc. The articles of the first category I could re-publish even now without amendment, since they fully and completely coincide with the position of our Party, beginning with 1917. The articles of the second category are obviously mistaken, and are not worth republishing” (see Lenin on Trotsky, 1925, with a foreword by Comrade Olminsky).

What do we get from this?

It turns out that Trotsky was mistaken on questions of organisation, but that on the questions of the assessment of our revolution and on the question of permanent revolution he was right and has remained right.

True, Trotsky cannot but know that Lenin fought against the theory of permanent revolution to the end of his life. But that does not worry Trotsky.

It turns out, further, that both factions, the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks, ought to have arrived at the theory of permanent revolution, but actually only the Bolsheviks did so, because they had a compact revolutionarily-welded organisation of workers and members of the old intelligentsia; and they arrived at it not at once, but “beginning with 1917.”

It turns out, lastly, that the theory of permanent revolution “fully and completely coincided with the position of our Party, beginning with 1917.”

Now judge for yourselves, does that look as if Trotsky does not attach much importance to the theory of permanent revolution? No, it does not. On the contrary, if the theory of permanent revolution really did coincide, “beginning with 1917,” with the position of the Party, then only one inference can be drawn from this, namely, that Trotsky considered this theory, and continues to consider it, of decisive importance for our whole Party.

But what is meant by the word “coincided”? How could Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution have coincided with the position of our Party, when it is known that our Party, in the person of Lenin, combated this theory all the time?

One thing or the other: either our Party did not have a theory of its own, and was later compelled by the course of events to accept Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution; or it did have a theory of its own, but that theory was imperceptibly ousted by Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution, “beginning with 1917.”

This “enigma” was later explained for us by Trotsky in his “Preface,” written in 1922, to his book *The Year 1905*. Having expounded the substance of the theory of permanent revolution and given an analysis of his assessment of our revolution from the standpoint of this theory, Trotsky arrived at the following conclusion:

“Although after a lapse of twelve years, this assessment was wholly confirmed” (Trotsky, *The Year 1905*, “Preface”).

In other words, the theory of permanent revolution, “constructed” by Trotsky in 1905, was “wholly confirmed” in 1917, twelve years later.

But how could it be confirmed? And the Bolsheviks—where did they vanish to? Did they really go in for revolution without having any theory of their own? Were they really capable only of welding together the revolutionary intelligentsia and the revolutionary workers? And then, on what foundation, on the basis of what principles did they weld the workers together? Surely, the Bolsheviks had some theory, some estimate of the revolution, some estimate of its motive forces? Did our Party really have no other theory than the theory of permanent revolution?

Judge for yourselves. We, the Bolsheviks, existed and developed without any perspective and without any revolutionary theory; we existed in that way from 1903 to 1917; and then, “beginning with 1917,” we imperceptibly swallowed the theory of permanent revolution and rose to our feet. Undoubtedly, that is a very interesting fairy-tale. But how could it have happened imperceptibly, without a struggle, without an upheaval in the Party? How could it have occurred so simply, for no apparent reason? Surely, everybody knows that Lenin and his Party fought the theory of permanent revolution from its first appearance.

Incidentally, this “enigma” is explained for us by Trotsky in another document. I have in mind the “Note,” written in 1922, to Trotsky’s article “Our Differences.”

Here is the relevant passage from this article of Trotsky’s:

“Whereas the Mensheviks, proceeding from the abstraction: ‘our revolution is a bourgeois one,’ arrive at the idea of adapting the whole tactics of the proletariat to the behaviour of the liberal bourgeoisie, right down to permitting the latter to conquer state power, the Bolsheviks, proceeding from an equally empty abstraction—‘a democratic, not a socialist dictatorship,’ arrive at the idea of the bourgeois-democratic self-limitation of the proletariat when it is in possession of state power. True, the difference between them in this matter is very considerable: whereas the anti-revolutionary aspects of Menshevism are fully apparent already, the anti-revolutionary features of Bolshevism threaten tremendous danger only in the event of a revolutionary victory” (Trotsky, *The Year 1905*, p. 285).

It follows that not only Menshevism had its antirevolutionary aspects; Bolshevism also was not free from “anti-revolutionary features,” which threatened “tremendous danger only in the event of a revolutionary victory.”

Did the Bolsheviks later emancipate themselves from the “anti-revolutionary features” of Bolshevism? And if so, how?

This “enigma” is explained for us by Trotsky in his “Note” to the article “Our Differences.”

Listen:

“This, as we know, did not occur, because, under the guidance of Comrade Lenin, Bolshevism rearmed itself ideologically (not without an internal struggle) on this cardinal issue in the spring of 1917, that is, prior to the conquest of power” (Trotsky, *The Year 1905*, p. 285).

And so, the Bolsheviks “rearmed” themselves, “beginning with 1917,” on the basis of the theory of permanent revolution; as a result of which the Bolsheviks saved themselves from the “anti-revolutionary features of Bolshevism”; and, lastly, the theory of permanent revolution was thus “wholly confirmed.” Such is Trotsky’s conclusion.

But what happened to Leninism, to the theory of Bolshevism, to the Bolshevik estimate of our revolution and its motive forces, etc.? Either they were not “wholly confirmed,” or they were not “confirmed” at all, or else they vanished into thin air, making way for the theory of permanent revolution to “rearm” the Party.

And so, once upon a time there were people known as the Bolsheviks who somehow managed, “beginning” with 1903, to “weld” together a party, but who had no revolutionary theory. So they drifted and drifted, “beginning” with 1903, until somehow they managed to reach the year 1917. Then, having espied Trotsky with his theory of permanent revolution, they decided to “rearm themselves,” and, “having rearmed themselves,” they lost the last remnants of Leninism, of Lenin’s theory of revolution, thus bringing about the “full coincidence” of the theory of permanent revolution with the “position” of our Party.

That is a very interesting fairy-tale, comrades. It, if you like, is one of the splendid conjuring tricks you may see at the circus. But this is not a circus; it is a conference of our Party. Nor, after all, have we hired Trotsky as a circus artist. Then why these conjuring tricks?

What was Comrade Lenin’s opinion of Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution? Here is what he wrote about it in one of his articles, where he ridiculed it as an “original” and “fine” theory:

“To elucidate the correlation of classes in the impending revolution is a major problem of the revolutionary party. . . . Trotsky solves this problem incorrectly in *Nashe Slovo*, where he reiterates his ‘original’ theory of the year 1905 and refuses to reflect on the reasons why for ten whole years actual developments have ignored this fine theory.

“This original theory of Trotsky’s borrows from the Bolsheviks their call for a resolute revolutionary struggle by the proletariat and for the conquest of political power by the latter, and from the Mensheviks the ‘denial’ of the role of the peasantry.” . . . , Thereby “Trotsky is in fact helping the liberal labour politicians in Russia who understand ‘denial’ of the role of the peasantry to mean refusal to rouse the peasants to revolution!” (See Vol. XVIII, pp. 317-18.)

It follows that in Lenin’s opinion the theory of permanent revolution is a semi-Menshevik theory which ignores the revolutionary role of the peasantry in the Russian revolution.

The incomprehensible thing is how this semi-Menshevik theory could “fully and completely coincide” with the position of our Party, even if “beginning with 1917.”

And what is our Party’s estimate of the theory of permanent revolution? Here is what the resolution of the Fourteenth Party Conference says of it:

“An integral part of Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution is the assertion that ‘real progress of a socialist economy in Russia will become possible only after the victory of the proletariat in the major European countries’ (Trotsky, 1922)—an assertion which in the present, period would condemn the proletariat of the U.S.S.R., to fatalistic passivity. In

opposition to such ‘theories,’ Comrade Lenin wrote: ‘Infinitely hackneyed is the argument that they learned by rote during the development of West-European Social-Democracy, namely, that we are not yet ripe for socialism, that, as certain “learned” gentlemen among them express it, the objective economic prerequisites for socialism do not exist in our country’” (Notes on Sukhanov). (Resolution off the Fourteenth Party Conference.6)

It follows that the theory of permanent revolution is the same as the Sukhanovism which Comrade Lenin in his notes “Our Revolution” brands as Social-Democracy.

The incomprehensible thing is how such a theory could “rearm” our Bolshevik Party.

Kamenev, in his speech, “gave it to be understood” that Trotsky is abandoning his theory of permanent revolution, and in confirmation of this he quoted the following more than ambiguous passage from Trotsky’s latest letter, of September 1926, to the oppositionists:

“We hold that, as experience has incontrovertibly proved that, whenever any of us differed with Lenin on any question of principle, Vladimir Ilyich was unquestionably in the right.”

But Kamenev refrained from mentioning that after this, in the same letter, Trotsky made the following statement, which nullifies the preceding one:

“The Leningrad opposition vigorously opposed the theory of socialism in one country, as being a theoretical justification of national narrow-mindedness” (see Trotsky’s letter of September 1926, appended to the verbatim report of the sittings of the Political Bureau of the C.C., C P.S.U.(B.), October 8 and 11, 1926)

What value can Trotsky’s first, ambiguous and noncommittal statement have in face of his second statement, which nullifies the first?

What is the theory of permanent revolution? It is a denial of Lenin’s “theory of socialism in one country.”

What is Lenin’s “theory of socialism in one country”? It is a denial of Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution.

Is it not obvious that when Kamenev quoted the first passage from Trotsky’s letter and kept silent about the second, he was trying to mislead and deceive our Party?

But it is not so easy to deceive our Party.

2. Juggling with Quotations, or Trotsky Falsifies Leninism

Did you notice, comrades, that Trotsky’s whole speech was plentifully larded with the most diverse quotations from Lenin’s works? One reads these quotations torn from various articles of Lenin, and one fails to understand what Trotsky’s main object is: whether to fortify his own position by means of them, or to “catch out” Comrade Lenin as “contradicting” himself. He cited one batch of quotations from Lenin’s works which say that the danger of intervention can be overcome only by the victory of the revolution in several countries, evidently thinking thereby to “expose” the Party. But he does not realise, or will not realise, that these quotations testify not against the Party’s position, but for it and against his own position, because the

Party's estimate of the relative importance of the danger from abroad fully agrees with Lenin's line. Trotsky cited another batch of quotations which say that the complete victory of socialism is impossible without the victory of the revolution in several countries, and he tried to juggle with these quotations in every possible way. But he does not realise, or will not realise, that the complete victory of socialism (guarantee against intervention) must not be confused with the victory of socialism in general (the complete building of a socialist society); he does not realise, or will not realise, that these quotations from the works of Lenin testify not against the Party, but for it and against his own position.

But while citing a heap of all kinds of irrelevant quotations, Trotsky refused to deal with Lenin's basic article on the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country (1915), evidently assuming that Kamenev's speech had satisfactorily disposed of this article for him. But it can now be taken as definitely proved that Kamenev failed in the role, and that Comrade Lenin's article retains all its validity.

Trotsky, further, quoted a passage from Comrade Lenin's article which says that there was no disagreement between them over the peasant question as far as current policy was concerned. He forgot to say, however, that this article of Lenin's not only does not resolve, but does not even touch upon the disagreements between Trotsky and Lenin over the peasant question in connection with the possibility of building a complete socialist society in our country.

That, indeed, explains why Trotsky's operations with the quotations became empty jugglery.

Trotsky tried to prove the "coincidence" of his view with that of Lenin's on the question of the possibility of completely building a socialist society in our country through the internal forces of our revolution. But how can you prove the unprovable?

How can Lenin's thesis that "the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country taken separately"⁷ be reconciled with Trotsky's thesis that "it would be hopeless to think . . . that, for example, a revolutionary Russia could hold out in the face of a conservative Europe"?

How, further, can Lenin's thesis that "the victorious proletariat of that country (that is, of one country—J. St.), having expropriated the capitalists and organised socialist production, would stand up against the rest of the world, the capitalist, world"⁸ be reconciled with Trotsky's thesis that "without direct state* support from the European proletariat, the working class of Russia will not be able to maintain itself in power and to transform its temporary rule into a lasting socialist dictatorship"?

How, lastly, can Lenin's thesis that "only an agreement with the peasantry can save the socialist revolution in Russia as long as the revolution in other countries has not taken place"⁹ be reconciled with Trotsky's thesis that "the contradictions in the position of a workers' government in a backward country with an overwhelmingly peasant population can be solved only on an international scale, in the arena of the world proletarian revolution"?

Furthermore, in what way actually does Trotsky's attitude to the question of the victory of socialism in our country differ from that of the Menshevik O. Bauer, who says that:

"In Russia, where the proletariat is only a small minority of the nation, it can maintain its rule only temporarily," that "it must inevitably lose it again as soon as the peasant masses of the

nation are culturally mature enough to take power into their own hands,” and that “only with the conquest of political power by the proletariat of the industrial West can the rule of industrial socialism be durably established” in Russia?

Is it not clear that Trotsky is closer to Bauer than to Lenin? And is it not true that Trotsky’s attitude is that of a Social-Democratic deviation, that Trotsky, in point of fact, denies the socialist character of our revolution?

Trotsky tried to vindicate his thesis—that it would be impossible for a proletarian regime to hold out in the face of a conservative Europe—by arguing that present-day Europe is not conservative but more or less liberal, and that if Europe were really conservative, it would be impossible for the proletariat of our country to retain power. But is it difficult to realise that Trotsky has got himself entangled here wholly and utterly? What shall we call, for example, present-day Italy, or Britain, or France—conservative or liberal? What is the present-day United States of America—is it a conservative or a liberal country? And what significance can this “subtle” and ludicrous stressing of the difference between a conservative and a “liberal” Europe have for the integrity and safety of our republic? Were not republican France and democratic America as active in intervening in our country at the time of Kolchak and Denikin as monarchist and conservative Britain?

Trotsky devoted quite a considerable part of his speech to the question of the middle peasant. He quoted a passage from Lenin’s writings of the 1906 period, where Lenin predicted that after the victory of the bourgeois revolution a section of the middle peasantry might go over to the side of the counter-revolution, apparently trying to prove in this way that this quotation “coincides” with his own attitude towards the question of the peasantry after the victory of the socialist revolution. It is not difficult to realise that Trotsky here is comparing things that are incomparable. Trotsky is inclined to regard the middle peasantry as a “thing-in-itself,” as something permanent and unalterable. But that was never the way the Bolsheviks looked on the middle peasantry.

Trotsky has apparently forgotten that the Bolsheviks had three plans in relation to the main mass of the peasantry: one for the period of the bourgeois revolution, the second for the period of the proletarian revolution, and the third for the period following the consolidation of Soviet power.

In the first period the Bolsheviks said: together with all the peasantry, against the tsar and the landlords, while neutralising the liberal bourgeoisie, for a bourgeois-democratic revolution.

In the second period the Bolsheviks said: together with the poor peasantry, against the bourgeoisie and the kulaks, while neutralising the middle peasantry, for a socialist revolution. And what does neutralising the middle peasantry mean? It means keeping it under the political surveillance of the proletariat, not trusting it, and taking every measure to prevent it, from getting out of hand.

In the third period, the period we are in now, the Bolsheviks say: together with the poor peasantry, in firm alliance with the middle peasantry, and against the capitalist elements of our economy in town and countryside, for the victory of socialist construction.

Whoever confuses these three plans, these three different lines, which reflect three different periods in our revolution, understands nothing of Bolshevism.

Lenin was absolutely right when he said that after the victory of the bourgeois revolution part of the middle peasantry would go over to the counter-revolution. That is exactly what happened in the period, for instance, of the “Ufa Government,”¹⁰ when part of the Volga middle peasants went over to the counter-revolution, to the kulaks, while the greater part vacillated between the revolution and the counter-revolution. And it could not have been otherwise. It is in the very nature of the middle peasant, just because he is a middle peasant, to temporise and vacillate and say: “Who knows who will get the upper hand; better wait and see.” Only after the first substantial victories over the internal counter-revolution, and especially after the consolidation of the Soviet regime, did the middle peasant definitely begin to swing to the side of the Soviet regime, evidently deciding that there had to be some sort of authority, that the Bolshevik regime was strong, and that the only way out was to work with it. It was precisely in that period that Comrade Lenin Lettered the prophetic words: “We have entered a phase of socialist construction in which we must draw up concrete and detailed basic rules and instructions which have been tested by the experience of our work in the countryside, and by which we must be guided in order to achieve a stable alliance with the middle peasantry” (speech at the Eighth Congress of the Party, Vol. XXIV, p. 114).

That is how matters stand with the question of the middle peasants.

Trotsky’s mistake is that he approaches the question of the middle peasantry metaphysically, that he regards the middle peasantry as a “thing-in-itself,” and therefore muddles the question and distorts and falsifies Leninism.

Lastly, the point is not at all that there still may be, and will be, contradictions and conflicts between the proletariat and a certain section of the middle peasants. The disagreement between the Party and the opposition is not at all over this. The disagreement lies in the fact that, whereas the Party considers that these contradictions and possible conflicts can be fully overcome by the forces of our revolution alone, Trotsky and the opposition consider that these contradictions and conflicts can be overcome “only on an international scale, in the arena of the world proletarian revolution.”

Trotsky juggles with quotations in an effort to put these disagreements out of sight. But I have already said that he will not succeed in deceiving our Party.

And the conclusion? The conclusion is that one must be a dialectician, not a conjuror. You would do well, worthy oppositionists, to take a lesson in dialectics from Comrade Lenin, to read his works—it would be of benefit to you. (Applause, laughter.)

3. “Trifles” and Curiosities

Trotsky rebuked me, as the author of the theses, because they speak of the revolution as “in itself” a socialist revolution. Trotsky considers that such an attitude towards the revolution is metaphysical. I can by no means agree with that.

Why do the theses speak of the revolution as “in itself” a socialist revolution? Because this stresses the utter difference between the views of our Party and the views of the opposition in appraising our revolution.

In what does this difference consist? In the fact that our Party regards our revolution as a socialist revolution, as a revolution representing a certain independent force that is capable of

waging a struggle against the capitalist world, whereas the opposition regards our revolution as a gratuitous supplement to the future proletarian revolution which has not yet won victory in the West, as an “appendage” to the future revolution in the West, as something which has no independent strength of its own. One has only to compare Lenin’s estimate of the proletarian dictatorship in our country with that given by the opposition bloc to see the vast gulf between them. Whereas Lenin regards the proletarian dictatorship as a force capable of the utmost initiative which, after organising a socialist economy, should then come forward in direct support of the world proletariat and for the struggle against the capitalist world, the opposition, on the contrary, regards the proletarian dictatorship in our country as a passive force, which lives in fear of immediately losing power “in the face of a conservative Europe.”

Is it not obvious that the word “metaphysics” was brought into play in order to cover up the deficiency of the opposition’s Social-Democratic estimate of our revolution?

Trotsky further said that I had replaced the inexact and incorrect formulation of the question of the victory of socialism in one country given in 1924 in my book *The Foundations of Leninism*, by another, more exact and correct formulation. Trotsky, apparently, is displeased with that—but why, on what grounds, he did not say. What can be wrong with my correcting an inexact formulation and replacing it by an exact one? I by no means regard myself as infallible. I think the Party only stands to gain if a comrade who has made a mistake later recognises it and corrects it. What is Trotsky really after in stressing this point? Perhaps he is anxious to follow a good example and to set about, at long last, correcting his own numerous errors? (Applause, laughter.) Very well, I am prepared to help him in that, if my help is needed; I am prepared to spur him on and assist him. (Applause, laughter.) But it is evidently some other aim that Trotsky is pursuing. If that is so, I must say that his attempt is futile.

Trotsky assured us in his speech that he is not such a bad Communist as spokesmen of the Party majority make him out to be. He quoted a number of passages from his articles indicating that he, Trotsky, recognised and continues to recognise the “socialist character” of our work, that he does not deny the “socialist character” of our state industry, and so on and so forth. What do you think of that for news! Trotsky would not dare to go so far as to deny the socialist character of our work, of our state industry, and so on. The fact of that is now admitted by everybody, even by the New York stock exchange, even by our Nepmen, to say nothing of O. Bauer. Everyone, enemies and friends alike, now sees that we are building industry not in the way the capitalists build it, that we are introducing certain new elements into the development of our economic and political life which have nothing in common with capitalism.

No, that is not the point now, worthy oppositionists.

Matters now are more serious than the opposition bloc may think them.

The point now is not the socialist character of our industry, but the complete building of a socialist economy as a whole, despite the capitalist encirclement, despite the fact that we have enemies, internal and external, who are waiting for the collapse of the proletarian dictatorship. The point is to achieve the complete triumph of Leninism in our Party.

It is not a matter now of trifles and curiosities. You cannot now fob the Party off with trifles and curiosities. The Party now demands something more of the opposition.

Either you display the courage and ability openly and sincerely to renounce your errors of principle; or you do not, and then the Party will qualify your position as it deserves—as a Social-Democratic deviation.

One or the other.

It is for the oppositionists to make their choice. (Voices: “Quite right!” Applause.)

V

The Practical Platform of the Opposition.

The Demands of the Party

From juggling with quotations the opposition leaders tried to pass to disagreements of a practical character. Trotsky and Kamenev, as well as Zinoviev, attempted to formulate these disagreements, and they asserted that it was not the theoretical, but the practical disagreements that were important. I must say, however, that not one of the formulations of our disagreements given by the opposition at this conference is marked by objectivity or completeness.

You want to know what our practical disagreements are? You want to know what the Party demands of you?

Listen:

1) The Party cannot and will not tolerate any longer that every time you find yourselves in the minority you go out into the street, proclaim a crisis in the Party, and set up a commotion in it. That the Party will not tolerate any longer. (Voices: “Quite right!” Applause.)

2) The Party cannot and will not tolerate that you, having lost hope of securing a majority in our Party, rake together and assemble all kinds of disgruntled elements as material for a new party. That the Party cannot and will not tolerate. (Applause.)

3) The Party cannot and will not tolerate that, while defaming the Party’s directing apparatus and breaking the regime in the Party, breaking its iron discipline, you unite all the trends condemned by the Party and form them into a new party, on the plea of freedom of factions. That the Party will not tolerate. (Applause.)

4) We know that we have great difficulties to contend with in the building of socialism. We see these difficulties, and are able to overcome them. We would welcome any assistance from the opposition in overcoming these difficulties. But the Party cannot, and will not tolerate that you make attempts to exploit these difficulties for undermining our position, for attacks and assaults on the Party. (Applause.)

5) The Party realises better than all the oppositions put together that industrialisation can be promoted and socialism completely built only if there is a continuous improvement in the material and cultural standards of the working class. The Party is adopting, and will continue to adopt, all possible measures to ensure that the material and cultural standards of the working class continuously improve. But the Party cannot and will not tolerate that the opposition comes out into the street with demagogic statements calling for an immediate 30-40 per cent increase in wages, since it knows for a fact that industry cannot stand such an increase at the present moment, since it knows for a fact that the purpose of these demagogic

pronouncements is not to improve the condition of the working class, but to foment discontent among the backward sections of the working people and to organise discontent against the Party, against the vanguard of the working class. That the Party cannot and will not tolerate. (Voices: “Quite right!” Applause.)

6) The Party cannot and will not tolerate that the opposition continues to undermine the foundations of the bond between the workers and peasants, the foundations of the alliance between the workers and peasants, carrying on propaganda for an increase of wholesale prices and heavier taxation of the peasantry, and endeavouring to “construct” the relations between the proletariat and peasantry not as relations of economic co-operation, but as relations of exploitation of the peasantry by the proletarian state. That the Party cannot and will not tolerate. (Applause.)

7) The Party cannot and will not tolerate that the oppositionists continue to spread ideological confusion in the Party, to exaggerate our difficulties, to foster a defeatist spirit, to preach the impossibility of completely building socialism in our country, and thereby to undermine the foundations of Leninism. That the Party cannot and will not tolerate. (Voices: “Quite right!” Applause.)

8) The Party cannot and will not tolerate—although this is a matter not only for it, but for all the sections of the Comintern—that you continue to stir up trouble in the Comintern, to corrupt its sections and to discredit its leadership. That the Party cannot and will not tolerate. (Applause.)

That is what our practical disagreements are.

That is the essence of the political and practical platform of the opposition bloc, and that is what our Party is now combating.

Trotsky, while expounding certain points of this platform in his speech and carefully concealing the others, asked: what is there Social-Democratic in this? A strange question! And I ask: what is there of a communist character in this platform of the opposition bloc? What is there in it which is not Social-Democratic? Is it not obvious that the practical platform of the opposition bloc follows the line of departure from Leninism, of approach to Social-Democracy?

You wanted, worthy oppositionists, to know what the Party demands of you? Now you know what it demands of you.

Either you observe these conditions, which are at the same time the conditions for the complete unity of our Party; or you do not—and then the Party, which gave you a beating yesterday, will proceed to finish you off tomorrow. (Applause.)

VI

Conclusion

What are the conclusions, the results, of our inner-Party struggle?

I have here the document of September 1926 signed by Trotsky. This document is remarkable for the fact that there is in it something in the nature of an attempt to anticipate the results of

the inner-Party struggle, something in the nature of an attempt to prophesy, to outline, the prospects of our inner-Party struggle. This document states:

“The united opposition demonstrated in April and July, and will demonstrate in October, that the unity of its views only grows stronger under the influence of the gross and disloyal persecution to which it is being subjected, and the Party will come to realise that only on the basis of the views of the united opposition is there a way out of the present severe crisis” (see Trotsky’s letter to the oppositionists, September 1926, appended to the verbatim report of the sittings of the Political Bureau, October 8 and 11, 1926).

As you see, this is almost a prediction. (A voice: “Yes, almost!”) It is almost a prophecy of the true Marxist type, a forecast for two whole months ahead. (Laughter.)

Of course, there is a slight exaggeration in it. (Laughter.) It speaks, for instance, of the present severe crisis in our Party. But we, thank God, are alive and flourishing and haven’t even noticed any crisis. There is, of course, something in the nature of a crisis—only not in the Party, but in a certain faction known as the opposition bloc. But, after all, a crisis in a tiny faction cannot be represented as a crisis in a party a million strong.

Trotsky’s document says further that the opposition bloc is growing stronger, and will grow still stronger in the future. I think that there is a slight exaggeration here too. (Laughter.) The fact cannot be denied that the opposition bloc is disintegrating, that its best elements are breaking away from it, that it is suffocating in its internal contradictions. Is it not a fact that Comrade Krupskaya, for instance, is leaving the opposition bloc? (Stormy applause.) Is that accidental?

Trotsky’s document says, lastly, that only on the basis of the views of the united opposition is there a way out of the present crisis. I think that here also Trotsky is slightly exaggerating. (Laughter.) The oppositionists cannot but know that the Party has become united and firmly welded not on the basis of the views of the opposition bloc, but in a fight against those views, on the basis of the socialist prospects of our constructive work. The exaggeration in Trotsky’s document is glaring.

But if we leave aside all the exaggerations in Trotsky’s document, it does look, comrades, as if nothing remains of his prophecy. (General laughter.)

As you see, the conclusion proves to be the opposite of the conclusion that Trotsky outlined in his prophecy.

I am concluding, comrades.

Zinoviev once boasted that he knew how to put his ear to the ground (laughter), and that when he put his ear to the ground he could hear the footsteps of history. It may very well be that this is actually so. But one thing has to be admitted, and that is that Zinoviev, while able to put his ear to the ground and hear the footsteps of history, sometimes fails to hear certain “trifles.” It may be that the opposition is actually able to put its ear to the ground and hear such wonderful things as the footsteps of history. But one has to admit that, while able to hear such wonderful things, it has failed to hear such a “trifle” as that the Party has long ago turned its back on it, and that the opposition is on the rocks. That they have failed to hear. (Voices: “Quite right!”)

What follows from this? It follows that something is obviously wrong with the opposition's ears. (Laughter.)

Hence my advice: Worthy oppositionists, get your ears attended to! (Stormy and prolonged applause. The delegates rise from their seats, applauding as Comrade Stalin leaves the rostrum.)

Notes

1. F. Engels, "Grundsätze des Kommunismus." See Marx-Engels, Gesamtausgabe, Abt. I, Bd. 6, S. 503-22.

* My italics.—J. St.

* My italics.—J. St.

2. Lenin's words are quoted from his report on "The Activities of the Council of People's Commissars" made at the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets (see V.I. Lenin, Works, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 26, p. 429). See also Engels's letter to Paul Lafargue of June 2, 1894 (Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Works, Russ. ed., Vol. XXIX, p. 311).

* My italics.—J. St.

* My italics.—J. St.

* My italics.—J. St.

* My italics.—J. St.

* My italics.—J. St.

* My italics.—J. St.

3. This refers to V. I. Lenin's article "A Few Theses" (see Works, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 21, pp. 366-68).

* My italics.—J. St.

* My italics.—J. St.

* My italics.—J. St.

* My italics.—J. St.

* My italics.—J. St.

4. See Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums, Part II, 1953, p. 46.

** See pp. 227-28 in this volume.—Ed.

5. This refers to the Note of the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Curzon, of May 8, 1923, which contained the threat of a new intervention against the U.S.S.R.

6. See Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums, Part I, 1953, pp. 530-33.

7. See V. I. Lenin, Works, 4th Russ, ed., Vol. 21, p. 311.

8. See V. I. Lenin, Works, 4th Russ, ed., Vol. 21, p. 311.

* My italics.—J. St.

9. See V. I. Lenin, Works, 4th Russ, ed., Vol. 21, p. 192.

10. The “Ufa Government.” was a counter-revolutionary organisation which called itself the “All-Russian Provisional Government” (Directory). It was formed in Ufa on September 23, 1918, at a conference of representatives of whiteguard “governments,” Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and intervening foreign powers. It existed until November 18, 1918.

The Prospects of the Revolution in China
Speech Delivered in the Chinese Commission of the E.C.C.I.
November 30, 1926

Comrades, before passing to the subject under discussion, I think it necessary to say that I am not in possession of the exhaustive material on the Chinese question necessary for giving a full picture of the revolution in China. Hence I am compelled to confine myself to some general remarks of a fundamental character that have a direct bearing on the basic trend of the Chinese revolution.

I have the theses of Petrov, the theses of Mif, two reports by Tang Ping-shan and the observations of Rafes on the Chinese question. In my opinion, all these documents, in spite of their merits, suffer from the grave defect that they ignore a number of cardinal questions of the revolution in China. I think it is necessary above all to draw attention to these shortcomings. For this reason my remarks will at the same time be of a critical nature.

I

CHARACTER OF THE REVOLUTION IN CHINA

Lenin said that the Chinese would soon be having their 1905. Some comrades understood this to mean that there would have to be a repetition among the Chinese of exactly the same thing that took place here in Russia in 1905. That is not true, comrades. Lenin by no means said that the Chinese revolution would be a replica of the 1905 Revolution in Russia. All he said was that the Chinese would have their 1905. This means that, besides the general features of the 1905 Revolution, the Chinese revolution would have its own specific features, which would be bound to lay its special impress on the revolution in China.

What are these specific features?

The first specific feature is that, while the Chinese revolution is a bourgeois-democratic revolution, it is at the same time a revolution of national liberation spearheaded against the domination of foreign imperialism in China. It is in this, above all, that it differs from the 1905 Revolution in Russia. The point is that the rule of imperialism in China is manifested not only in its military might, but primarily in the fact that the main threads of industry in China, the railways, mills and factories, mines, banks, etc., are owned or controlled by foreign imperialists. But it follows from this that the questions of the fight against foreign imperialism and its Chinese agents cannot but play an important role in the Chinese revolution. This fact directly links the Chinese revolution with the revolutions of the proletarians of all countries against imperialism.

The second specific feature of the Chinese revolution is that the national big bourgeoisie in China is weak in the extreme, incomparably weaker than the Russian bourgeoisie was in the period of 1905. That is understandable. Since the main threads of industry are concentrated in the hands of foreign imperialists, the national big bourgeoisie in China cannot but be weak and backward. In this respect Mif is quite right in his remark about the weakness of the national bourgeoisie in China as one of the characteristic facts of the Chinese revolution. But it follows from this that the role of initiator and guide of the Chinese revolution, the role of leader of the Chinese peasantry, must inevitably fall to the Chinese proletariat and its party.

Nor should a third specific feature of the Chinese revolution be overlooked, namely, that side by side with China the Soviet Union exists and is developing, and its revolutionary experience

and aid cannot but facilitate the struggle of the Chinese proletariat against imperialism and against medieval and feudal survivals in China.

Such are the principal specific features of the Chinese revolution, which determine its character and trend.

II

IMPERIALISM AND IMPERIALIST INTERVENTION IN CHINA

The first defect of the theses submitted is that they ignore or under-estimate the question of imperialist intervention in China. A study of the theses might lead one to think that at the present moment there is, properly speaking, no imperialist intervention in China, that there is only a struggle between Northerners and Southerners, or between one group of generals and another group of generals. Furthermore, there is a tendency to understand by intervention a state of affairs marked by the incursion of foreign troops into Chinese territory, and that if that is not the case, then there is no intervention.

That is a profound mistake, comrades. Intervention is by no means confined to the incursion of troops, and the incursion of troops by no means constitutes the principal feature of intervention. In the present-day conditions of the revolutionary movement in the capitalist countries, when the direct incursion of foreign troops may give rise to protests and conflicts, intervention assumes more flexible and more camouflaged forms. In the conditions prevailing today, imperialism prefers to intervene in a dependent country by organising civil war there, by financing counter-revolutionary forces against the revolution, by giving moral and financial support to its Chinese agents against the revolution. The imperialists were inclined to depict the struggle of Denikin and Kolchak, Yudenich and Wrangel against the revolution in Russia as an exclusively internal struggle. But we all know—and not only we, but the whole world—that behind these counter-revolutionary Russian generals stood the imperialists of Britain and America, France and Japan, without whose support a serious civil war in Russia would have been quite impossible. The same must be said of China. The struggle of Wu Peifu, Sun Chuan-fang, Chang Tsolin and Chang Tsung-chang against the revolution in China would be simply impossible if these counterrevolutionary generals were not instigated by the imperialists of all countries, if the latter did not supply them with money, arms, instructors, “advisers,” etc.

Wherein lies the strength of the Canton troops? In the fact that they are inspired by an ideal, by enthusiasm, in the struggle for liberation from imperialism; in the fact that they are bringing China liberation. Wherein lies the strength of the counter-revolutionary generals in China? In the fact that they are backed by the imperialists of all countries, by the owners of all the railways, concessions, mills and factories, banks and commercial houses in China.

Hence, it is not only, or even not so much, a matter of the incursion of foreign troops, as of the support which the imperialists of all countries are rendering the counter-revolutionaries in China. Intervention through the hands of others—that is where the root of imperialist intervention now lies.

Therefore, imperialist intervention in China is an indubitable fact, and it is against this that the Chinese revolution is spearheaded.

Therefore, whoever ignores or under-estimates the fact of imperialist intervention in China, ignores or under-estimates the chief and most fundamental thing in China.

It is said that the Japanese imperialists are showing certain symptoms of “good will” towards the Cantonese and the Chinese revolution in general. It is said that the American imperialists are not lagging behind the Japanese in this respect. That is self-deception, comrades. One must know how to distinguish between the essence of the policy of the imperialists, including that of the Japanese and American imperialists, and its disguises. Lenin often said that it is hard to impose upon revolutionaries with the club or the fist, but that it is sometimes very easy to take them in with blandishments. That truth of Lenin’s should never be forgotten, comrades. At all events, it is clear that the Japanese and American imperialists have pretty well realised its value. It is therefore necessary to draw a strict distinction between blandishments and praise bestowed on the Cantonese and the fact that the imperialists who are most generous with blandishments are those who cling most tightly to “their” concessions and railways in China, and that they will not consent to relinquish them at any price.

III

THE REVOLUTIONARY ARMY IN CHINA

My second remark in connection with the theses submitted concerns the question of the revolutionary army in China. The fact of the matter is that the question of the army is ignored or under-estimated in the theses. (A voice from the audience: “Quite right!”) That is their second defect. The northward advance of the Cantonese is usually regarded not as an expansion of the Chinese revolution, but as a struggle of the Canton generals against Wu Peifu and Sun Chuan-fang, as a struggle for supremacy of some generals against others. That is a profound mistake, comrades. The revolutionary armies in China are a most important factor in the struggle of the Chinese workers and peasants for their emancipation. Is it accidental that until May or June of this year the situation in China was regarded as the rule of reaction, which set in after the defeat of Fen Yuhsiang’s armies, but that later on, in the summer of this year, the victorious Canton troops had only to advance northward and occupy Hupeh for the whole picture to change radically in favour of the revolution? No, it is not accidental. For the advance of the Cantonese means a blow at imperialism, a blow at its agents in China; it means freedom of assembly, freedom to strike, freedom of the press, and freedom to organise for all the revolutionary elements in China in general, and for the workers in particular. That is what constitutes the specific feature and supreme importance of the revolutionary army in China.

Formerly, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, revolutions usually began with an uprising of the people for the most part unarmed or poorly armed, who came into collision with the army of the old regime, which they tried to demoralise or at least to win in part to their own side. That was the typical form of the revolutionary outbreaks in the past. That is what happened here in Russia in 1905. In China things have taken a different course. In China, the troops of the old government are confronted not by an unarmed people, but by an armed people, in the shape of its revolutionary army. In China the armed revolution is fighting the armed counter-revolution. That is one of the specific features and one of the advantages of the Chinese revolution. And therein lies the special significance of the revolutionary army in China.

That is why it is an impermissible shortcoming of the theses submitted that they underestimate the revolutionary army.

But it follows from this that the Communists in China must devote special attention to work in the army.

In the first place, the Communists in China must in every way intensify political work in the army, and ensure that the army becomes a real and exemplary vehicle of the ideas of the Chinese revolution. That is particularly necessary because all kinds of generals who have nothing in common with the Kuomintang are now attaching themselves to the Cantonese, as a force which is routing the enemies of the Chinese people; and in attaching themselves to the Cantonese they are introducing demoralisation into the army. The only way to neutralise such “allies” or to make them genuine Kuomintangists is to intensify political work and to establish revolutionary control over them. Unless this is done, the army may find itself in a very difficult situation.

In the second place, the Chinese revolutionaries, including the Communists, must undertake a thorough study of the art of war. They must not regard it as something secondary, because nowadays it is a cardinal factor in the Chinese revolution. The Chinese revolutionaries, and hence the Communists also, must study the art of war, in order gradually to come to the fore and occupy various leading posts in the revolutionary army. That is the guarantee that the revolutionary army in China will advance along the right road, straight to its goal. Unless this is done, wavering and vacillation may become inevitable in the army.

IV

CHARACTER OF THE FUTURE GOVERNMENT IN CHINA

My third remark concerns the fact that the theses say nothing, or do not say enough, about the character of the future revolutionary government in China. Mif, in his theses, comes close to the subject, and that is to his credit. But having come close to it, he for some reason became frightened and did not venture to bring matters to a conclusion. Mif thinks that the future revolutionary government in China will be a government of the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie, under the leadership of the proletariat. What does that mean? At the time of the February revolution in 1917, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries were also petty-bourgeois parties and to a certain extent revolutionary. Does this mean that the future revolutionary government in China will be a Socialist-Revolutionary-Menshevik government? No, it does not. Why? Because the Socialist-Revolutionary-Menshevik government was in actual fact an imperialist government, while the future revolutionary government in China cannot but be an anti-imperialist government. The difference here is fundamental.

The MacDonald government was even a “labour” government, but it was an imperialist government all the same, because it based itself on the preservation of British imperialist rule, in India and Egypt, for example. As compared with the MacDonald government, the future revolutionary government in China will have the advantage of being an anti-imperialist government.

The point lies not only in the bourgeois-democratic character of the Canton government, which is the embryo of the future all-China revolutionary government; the point is above all that this government is, and cannot but be, an anti-imperialist government, that every advance it makes is a blow at world imperialism—and, consequently, a blow which benefits the world revolutionary movement.

Lenin was right when he said that, whereas formerly, before the advent of the era of world revolution, the national-liberation movement was part of the general democratic movement, now, after the victory of the Soviet revolution in Russia and the advent of the era of world revolution, the national-liberation movement is part of the world proletarian revolution.

This specific feature Mif did not take into account.

I think that the future revolutionary government in China will in general resemble in character the government we used to talk about in our country in 1905, that is, something in the nature of a democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, with the difference, however, that it will be first and foremost an anti-imperialist government.

It will be a government transitional to a non-capitalist, or, more exactly, a socialist development of China.

That is the direction that the revolution in China should take.

This course of development of the revolution is facilitated by three circumstances:

firstly, by the fact that, the revolution in China, being a revolution of national liberation, will be spearheaded against imperialism and its agents in China;

secondly, by the fact that the national big bourgeoisie in China is weak, weaker than the national bourgeoisie was in Russia in the period of 1905, which facilitates the hegemony of the proletariat and the leadership of the Chinese peasantry by the proletarian party;

thirdly, by the fact that the revolution in China will develop in circumstances that will make it possible to draw upon the experience and assistance of the victorious revolution in the Soviet Union.

Whether this course will end in absolute and certain victory will depend upon many circumstances. But one thing at any rate is clear, and that is that the struggle for precisely this course of the Chinese revolution is the basic task of the Chinese Communists. From this follows the task of the Chinese Communists as regards their attitude to the Kuomintang and to the future revolutionary government in China. It is said that the Chinese Communists should withdraw from the Kuomintang. That would be wrong, comrades. The withdrawal of the Chinese Communists from the Kuomintang at the present time would be a profound mistake. The whole course, character and prospects of the Chinese revolution undoubtedly testify in favour of the Chinese Communists remaining in the Kuomintang and intensifying their work in it.

But can the Chinese Communist Party participate in the future revolutionary government? It not only can, but must do so. The course, character and prospects of the revolution in China are eloquent testimony in favour of the Chinese Communist Party taking part in the future revolutionary government of China.

Therein lies one of the essential guarantees of the establishment in fact of the hegemony of the Chinese proletariat.

V

THE PEASANT QUESTION IN CHINA

My fourth remark concerns the question of the peasantry in China. Mif thinks that the slogan for forming Soviets—namely, peasant Soviets in the Chinese countryside—should be issued immediately. In my opinion, that would be a mistake. Mif is running too far ahead. One cannot build Soviets in the countryside and avoid the industrial centres of China. But the

establishment of Soviets in the industrial centres of China is not at present on the order of the day. Moreover, it must be borne in mind that Soviets cannot be considered out of connection with the surrounding situation. Soviets—in this case peasant Soviets—could only be organised if China were at the peak period of a peasant movement which was smashing the old order of things and building a new power, on the calculation that the industrial centres of China had already burst the dam and had entered the phase of establishing the power of the Soviets. Can it be said that the Chinese peasantry and the Chinese revolution in general have already entered this phase? No, it cannot. Consequently, to speak of Soviets now would be running too far ahead. Consequently, the question that should be raised now is not that of Soviets, but of the formation of peasant committees. I have in mind peasant committees elected by the peasants, committees capable of formulating the basic demands of the peasantry and which would take all measures to secure the realisation of these demands in a revolutionary way. These peasant committees should serve as the axis around which the revolution in the countryside develops.

I know that there are Kuomintangists and even Chinese Communists who do not consider it possible to unleash revolution in the countryside, since they fear that, if the peasantry were drawn into the revolution it would disrupt the united anti-imperialist front. That is a profound error, comrades. The more quickly and thoroughly the Chinese peasantry is drawn into the revolution, the stronger and more powerful the anti-imperialist front in China will be. The authors of the theses, especially Tang Ping-shan and Rafes, are quite right in maintaining that the immediate satisfaction of a number of the most urgent demands of the peasants is an essential condition for the victory of the Chinese revolution. I think it is high time to break down that inertness and that “neutrality” towards the peasantry which are to be observed in the actions of certain Kuomintang elements. I think that both the Chinese Communist Party and the Kuomintang, and hence the Canton government, should pass from words to deeds without delay and raise the question of satisfying at once the most vital demands of the peasantry.

What the perspectives should be in this regard, and how far it is possible and necessary to go, depends on the course of the revolution. I think that in the long run matters should go as far as the nationalisation of the land. At all events, we cannot repudiate such a slogan as that of nationalisation of the land.

What are the ways and means that the Chinese revolutionaries must adopt to rouse the vast peasant masses of China to revolution?

I think that in the given conditions one can only speak of three ways.

The first way is by the formation of peasant committees and by the Chinese revolutionaries entering these committees in order to influence the peasantry. (A voice from the audience: “What about the peasant associations?”) I think that the peasant associations will group themselves around the peasant committees, or will be converted into peasant committees, vested with the necessary measure of authority for the realisation of the peasants’ demands. I have already spoken about this way. But this way is not enough. It would be ridiculous to think that there are sufficient revolutionaries in China for this task. China has roughly 400 million inhabitants. Of them, about 350 million are Chinese. And of them, more than nine-tenths are peasants. Anyone who thinks that some tens of thousands of Chinese revolutionaries can cover this ocean of peasants is making a mistake. Consequently, additional ways are needed.

The second way is by influencing the peasantry through the apparatus of the new people's revolutionary government. There is no doubt that in the newly liberated provinces a new government will be set up of the type of the Canton government. There is no doubt that this authority and its apparatus will have to set about satisfying the most urgent demands of the peasantry if it really wants to advance the revolution. Well then, the task of the Communists and of the Chinese revolutionaries in general is to penetrate the apparatus of the new government, to bring this apparatus closer to the peasant masses, and by means of it to help the peasant masses to secure the satisfaction of their urgent demands, either by expropriating the landlords' land, or by reducing taxation and rents—according to circumstances.

The third way is by influencing the peasantry through the revolutionary army. I have already spoken of the great importance of the revolutionary army in the Chinese revolution. The revolutionary army of China is the force which first penetrates new provinces, which first passes through densely populated peasant areas, and by which above all the peasant forms his judgment of the new government, of its good or bad qualities. It depends primarily on the behaviour of the revolutionary army, on its attitude towards the peasantry and towards the landlords, on its readiness to aid the peasants, what the attitude of the peasantry will be towards the new government, the Kuomintang and the Chinese revolution generally. If it is borne in mind that quite a number of dubious elements have attached themselves to the revolutionary army of China, and that they may change the complexion of the army for the worse, it will be understood how great is the importance of the political complexion of the army and its, so to speak, peasant policy in the eyes of the peasantry. The Chinese Communists and the Chinese revolutionaries generally must, therefore take every measure to neutralise the anti-peasant elements in the army, to preserve the army's revolutionary spirit, and to ensure that the army assists the peasants and rouses them to revolution.

We are told that the revolutionary army is welcomed in China with open arms, but that later, when it installs itself, a certain disillusionment sets in. The same thing happened here in the Soviet Union during the Civil War. The explanation is that when the army liberates new provinces and installs itself in them, it has in some way or other to feed itself at the expense of the local population. We, Soviet revolutionaries, usually succeeded in counter-balancing these disadvantages by endeavouring through the army to assist the peasants against the landlord elements. The Chinese revolutionaries must also learn how to counter-balance these disadvantages by conducting a correct peasant policy through the army.

VI

THE PROLETARIAT AND THE HEGEMONY OF THE PROLETARIAT IN CHINA

My fifth remark concerns the question of the Chinese proletariat. In my opinion, the theses do not sufficiently stress the role and significance of the working class in China. Rafe asks, on whom should the Chinese Communists orientate themselves—on the Lefts or the Kuomintang centre? That is a strange question. I think that the Chinese Communists should orientate themselves first and foremost on the proletariat, and should orientate the leaders of the Chinese liberation movement on the revolution. That is the only correct way to put the question. I know that among the Chinese Communists there are comrades who do not approve of workers going on strike for an improvement of their material conditions and legal status, and who try to dissuade the workers from striking. (A voice: "That happened in Canton and Shanghai.") That is a great mistake, comrades. It is a very serious under-estimation of the role and importance of the Chinese proletariat. This fact should be noted in the theses as something decidedly objectionable. It would be a great mistake if the Chinese Communists failed to take advantage of the present favourable situation to assist the workers to improve

their material conditions and legal status, even through strikes. Otherwise, what purpose does the revolution in China serve? The proletariat cannot be a leading force if during strikes its sons are flogged and tortured by agents of imperialism. These medieval outrages must be stopped at all costs, in order to heighten the sense of power and dignity among the Chinese proletarians, and to make them capable of leading the revolutionary movement. Without this, the victory of the revolution in China is inconceivable. Therefore, a due place must be given in the theses to the economic and legal demands of the Chinese working class aimed at substantially improving its conditions. (Mif: "It is mentioned in the theses.") Yes, it is mentioned in the theses, but, unfortunately, these demands are not given sufficient prominence.

VII

THE QUESTION OF THE YOUTH IN CHINA

My sixth remark concerns the question of the youth in China. It is strange that this question has not been taken into account in the theses. Yet it is now of the utmost importance in China. Tang Ping-shan's reports touch upon this question, but, unfortunately, do not give it sufficient, prominence. The question of the youth is one of primary importance in China today. The student youth (the revolutionary students), the working-class youth, the peasant youth—all this constitutes a force that could advance the revolution with giant strides, if it was subordinated to the ideological and political influence of the Kuomintang.* It should be borne in mind that no one suffers from imperialist oppression so deeply and keenly, or is so acutely and painfully aware of the necessity to fight against it, as the Chinese youth. The Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese revolutionaries should take this circumstance fully into account and intensify their work among the youth to the utmost. The youth must be given its place in the theses on the Chinese question.

VIII

SOME CONCLUSIONS

I should like to mention certain conclusions—with regard to the struggle against imperialism in China, and with regard to the peasant question.

There is no doubt that the Chinese Communist Party cannot now confine itself to demanding the abolition of the unequal treaties. That is a demand which is upheld now by even such a counter-revolutionary as Chang Hsueh-liang. Obviously, the Chinese Communist Party must go farther than that.

It is necessary, further, to consider—as a perspective—the nationalisation of the railways. This is necessary, and should be worked for.

It is necessary, further, to have in mind the perspective of nationalising the most important mills and factories. In this connection, the question arises first of all of nationalising those enterprises the owners of which display particular hostility and particular aggressiveness towards the Chinese people. It is necessary also to give prominence to the peasant question, linking it with the prospects of the revolution in China. I think that what has to be worked for in the long run is the confiscation of the landlords' land for the benefit of the peasants and the nationalisation of the land.

The rest is self-evident.

Those, comrades, are all the remarks that I desired to make.

Notes

1. Note. Such a policy was correct in the conditions prevailing at the time, since the Kuomintang then represented a bloc of the Communists and more or less Left-wing Kuomintangists, which conducted an anti-imperialist revolutionary policy. Later on this policy was abandoned as no longer in conformity with the interests of the Chinese revolution, since the Kuomintang had deserted the revolution and later became the centre of the struggle against it, while the Communists withdrew from the Kuomintang and broke off relations with it.

Volume 8

Biographical Chronicle

BIOGRAPHICAL CHRONICLE

(January-November 1926)

January 1

J. V. Stalin directs the work of the plenum of the Central Committee, C.P.S.U.(B.), where he speaks on organisational questions.

J. V. Stalin is elected by the plenum to the Political Bureau, Organising Bureau and Secretariat of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.), and appointed General Secretary of the Party.

The plenum decided to prolong J. V. Stalin's credentials as a delegate of the C.P.S.U.(B.) to the Executive Committee of the Communist International (E.C.C.I.).

January 5

J. V. Stalin informs V. M. Molotov, N. M. Shvernik, S. M. Kirov and others in Leningrad of the resolution passed on January 5, 1926, by the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.), exposing the factional activity of the Leningrad Gubernia Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.).

January 8

J. V. Stalin directs a meeting of the C.P.S.U.(B.) delegation to the E.C.C.I.

January 16

J. V. Stalin has a talk with representatives of the American Communist Party delegation to the Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I.

January 19

J. V. Stalin has a talk with students of the Institute of Red Professors.

January 22

J. V. Stalin delivers speeches at a meeting of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. on "The Fight against Right and 'Ultra-Left' Deviations."

January 25

J. V. Stalin completes his work Concerning Questions of Leninism, which was published as a separate pamphlet on February 6, and printed in the magazine Bolshevik, No. 3, February 15, 1926.

February 5

J. V. Stalin has a talk with members of the Chinese Communist Party delegation to the Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I.

February 6-8

J. V. Stalin is elected by special Party conferences of the Volodarsky, Moskovsko-Narvsky and other districts of Leningrad as their first delegate to the Twenty-Third Special Leningrad Gubernia Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.).

February 9

J. V. Stalin replies to a letter from P. F. Boltnev, V. I. Efremov and V. I. Ivlev on “The Peasantry as an Ally of the Working Class.”

February 10

Leningradskaya Pravda, No. 33, publishes the sixth chapter—“The Question of the Victory of Socialism in One Country”—of J. V. Stalin’s work Concerning Questions of Leninism.

J. V. Stalin replies to a letter of T. M. Pokoyev, chairman of the Poor Peasants’ Committee, Bobrinets District, Ukr.S.S.R. on “The Possibility of Building Socialism in Our Country.”

February 12

J. V. Stalin is elected by the Twenty-Third Special Leningrad Gubernia Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.) as a member of the Leningrad Gubernia Party Committee.

February 17-March 15

J. V. Stalin takes part in the work of the Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I.

February 17

At the first sitting of the Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I., J. V. Stalin is elected to the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. plenum and to the Political, Eastern, and French Commissions of the plenum.

February 19

J. V. Stalin writes a letter to the members of the delegation of the C.P.S.U.(B.) in the E.C.C.I. in which he exposes Zinoviev who distorted the decisions of the Fourteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) when making the opening speech at the Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I. J. V. Stalin has a talk with representatives of the German and French Communist Party delegations to the Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I.

February 20

The Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I. elects J. V. Stalin chairman of its German Commission.

February 21

At a meeting of the Bureau of the C.P.S.U.(B.) delegation to the Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I., J. V. Stalin reports that the German delegation is dissatisfied with Zinoviev’s speech at the plenum.

February 23

The newspaper Kommunist, No. 43, organ of the Central Committee and Kharkov Okrug Committee of the Ukrainian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), prints a statement in memory of G. I. Kotovsky, written by J. V. Stalin.

J. V. Stalin attends a ceremonial meeting in the Bolshoi Theatre in honour of the Eighth Anniversary of the Red Army.

February 27

Publication of J. V. Stalin’s collection of writings entitled Questions of Leninism.

March 3

J. V. Stalin speaks at a meeting of the Bureau of the C.P.S.U.(B.) delegation to the Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I. on the ideological struggle against the “ultra-Lefts” in the German Communist Party.

March 6

J. V. Stalin speaks in the French Commission of the Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I. on the situation in the French Communist Party.

At a meeting of the Bureau of the C.P.S.U.(B.) delegation to the Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I., J. V. Stalin opposes a proposal by Zinoviev that adherents of the “New Opposition” should be drawn into the work of the E.C.C.I.

March 7

Pravda, No. 55, publishes greetings from J. V. Stalin to working women and women toilers throughout the world in connection with the sixteenth celebration of International Communist Women’s Day.

March 8

At a meeting of the German Commission of the Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I., J. V. Stalin delivers a speech on the fight against the “ultra-Lefts” in the German Communist Party.

March 15

At a meeting of the Organising Bureau of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.), J. V. Stalin delivers speeches on the plan of work of the Organising Bureau for March-August 1926 and on the elections to the Soviets.

March 16

J. V. Stalin has a talk with representatives of the German and French Communist Party delegations to the Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I.

March 17

The E.C.C.I. elects J. V. Stalin a member of its Presidium.

J. V. Stalin has a talk with representatives of the German Communist Party delegation to the Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I.

March 23

The newspapers Pravda and Komsomolskaya Pravda, Nos. 66, print a message of greetings by J. V. Stalin to the Seventh Congress of the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League.

April 3

The Political Bureau of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.) appoints J. V. Stalin a member of the Commission of the Political Bureau for drafting the theses on “The Economic Situation and Economic Policy” to be submitted for discussion at the April plenum of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.).

April 5

At a meeting of the Commission of the Political Bureau of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.), J. V. Stalin speaks in support of the theses on “The Economic Situation and Economic Policy.”

April 6-9

J. V. Stalin directs the work of the plenum of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.).

April 9

At the morning sitting of the plenum of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.), J. V. Stalin delivers a report on "The Economic Situation and Economic Policy."

At the evening sitting, J. V. Stalin delivers a report on "The Plan of Work of the Political Bureau and the C.C. Plenum for 1926."

April 12

J. V. Stalin delivers a report on the results of the work of the April plenum of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.) at a plenum of the Leningrad Gubernia Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.).

April 13

J. V. Stalin delivers a report on "The Economic Situation of the Soviet Union and the Policy of the Party" at a meeting of the active of the Leningrad organisation of the C.P.S.U.(B.).

April 20

J. V. Stalin has a talk with a delegation from the Stalin Factory (Bolshevo, Moscow Gubernia), which has come to invite him to their May Day celebration.

April 21

J. V. Stalin replies to a letter of Klara Zetkin on the organisation Workers' International Relief (WIR).

Publication of J. V. Stalin's pamphlet The Economic Situation of the Soviet Union.

April 25

Pravda, No. 95, publishes an appeal signed by J. V. Stalin, Secretary of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.) and V. V. Kuibyshev, Chairman of the C.C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.), addressed to all Party organisations and Party control commissions and to Party members engaged in economic, co-operative, trade, banking and other institutions, on the fight for a regime of economy.

April 26

J. V. Stalin writes a letter to L. M. Kaganovich and the other members of the Political Bureau of the C.C., Ukrainian Communist Party (Bolsheviks).

April 30

J. V. Stalin writes a letter to the members of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.) in which he exposes Zinoviev's factional activity.

May 1

J. V. Stalin is present at the military parade of the Moscow Garrison and demonstration of the working people of Moscow in the Red Square.

May 5

J. V. Stalin has an interview with members of the press.

May 7

At a meeting of the Bureau of the C.P.S.U.(B.) delegation to the E.C.C.I., J. V. Stalin speaks on D. Z. Manuilsky's article "Menshevism Inside-Out and Social-Fascism," which was printed in the magazine *Kommunistichesky Internatsional* (Communist International), No. 4 (53), April 1926.

May 8

J. V. Stalin writes a letter to the members of the C.P.S.U.(B.) delegation to the E.C.C.I. exposing Zinoviev's factional activity in the Comintern.

May 11

J. V. Stalin informs the representatives of the A.U.C.C.T.U. in Paris and Berlin of the British T.U.C. General Council's refusal to accept financial aid from the workers of the U.S.S.R. for the British miners on strike.

May 15

J. V. Stalin writes a second letter to the members of the C.P.S.U.(B.) delegation to the E.C.C.I. exposing Zinoviev's factional activity in the Comintern.

May 16

J. V. Stalin and V. M. Molotov have an interview with members of the press at the headquarters of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.).

J. V. Stalin has a talk with leading officials of the Central Committee of the All- Union Leninist Young Communist League and of the Young Communist International (Y.C.I.).

June 1

J. V. Stalin arrives in Tiflis.

June 2

J. V. Stalin inspects the Zemo-Avchaly hydroelectric power station and afterwards writes in the visitors' book in Georgian: "Long live our work of construction and the workers, technicians and engineers engaged in it!" This message was published in the newspapers *Zarya Vostoka*, No. 1191, June 3 and *Pravda*, No. 133, June 12, 1926.

June 3

J. V. Stalin writes a letter to V. M. Molotov exposing the splitting, capitulatory policy of Trotsky and Zinoviev, and defining the basic line of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.) in foreign policy.

J. V. Stalin attends a performance in the Tiflis State Opera House. During the interval he had a talk with M. Balanchivadze, the composer, about his opera "Tamar Tsbieri" and about Georgian opera music, and points to the influence of Russian composers, notably Chaikovsky, on Georgian composers.

June 8

At a meeting of the workers of the chief railway workshops in Tiflis, J. V. Stalin delivers a report on "The British Strike and the Events in Poland," and replies to the greetings of the workers of the railway workshops. The report and the reply were published in the newspapers *Zarya Vostoka*, No. 1197, June 10, and *Pravda*, No. 136, June 16, 1926.

June 13

Bakinsky Rabochy (Baku Worker), No. 135, publishes J. V. Stalin's reply to an invitation from the workers of Baku to visit their city.

June

J. V. Stalin is elected a member of the Communist Academy.

July 4

J. V. Stalin leaves the Caucasus for Moscow.

July 8

On the occasion of the appearance of its 1,000th issue, J. V. Stalin sends a message of congratulation to the newspaper Rabochaya Pravda (Workers' Truth), organ of the Central Committee and Tiflis Committee of the Georgian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), the Georgian Trade Union Council, and the Tiflis Soviet of Workers', Peasants', and Red Army Deputies, the message being printed in that issue of the newspaper.

July 14-23

J. V. Stalin directs the work of the joint plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.).

July 14

At the joint plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.), J. V. Stalin speaks on the question of wages.

July 15

J. V. Stalin delivers a speech at the joint plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.) on a communication made by the Political Bureau on the decisions adopted by it in connection with the events in Britain, Poland and China.

July 22

1 a.m.

J. V. Stalin stands in the guard of honour at the bier of F. E. Dzerzhinsky in the House of Trade Unions.

Pravda, No. 166, publishes a statement by J. V. Stalin in memory of F. E. Dzerzhinsky.

At the morning sitting of the joint plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.), J. V. Stalin delivers a speech on the report of the Presidium of the C.C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.) on the case of Lashevich and others and on Party unity.

5.30 p.m.

J. V. Stalin takes part as pall bearer in carrying the coffin with the body of F. E. Dzerzhinsky out of the House of Trade Unions.

July 24

J. V. Stalin has a talk with officials of the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission—the Joint State Political Administration, in connection with the death of F. E. Dzerzhinsky.

July 27

J. V. Stalin has a talk with representatives of the Polish Communist Party.

July 28

J . V. Stalin has a talk with a representative of the British Labour Party visiting the U.S.S.R.

J . V. Stalin has a talk with a representative of the Finnish Communist Party.

August 6

J . V. Stalin replies to a letter from a representative of the Communist Party of India.

August 7

At a meeting of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I., J . V. Stalin delivers a speech on “The Anglo-Russian Committee.”

August 13

J . V. Stalin writes a letter to the members of the C.C. and C.C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.) in which he exposes the anti-Party conduct of Trotsky and Zinoviev at the July joint plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.).

September 21

J . V. Stalin sends a cable to the editorial board of the Daily Worker, central organ of the Workers Party of America.

October 8

J . V. Stalin writes a letter to Slepkov in connection with the latter’s article printed in Pravda of October 8, 1926.

October 11

J . V. Stalin delivers a speech at a meeting of the Political Bureau of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.) on “Measures for Mitigating the Inner-Party Struggle.”

October 19

An enlarged plenum of the Leningrad Gubernia Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) elects J . V. Stalin a delegate to the Fifteenth All-Union Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.).

Between October 21 and 25

At the request of the Political Bureau of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.), J . V. Stalin writes the theses on “The Opposition Bloc in the C.P.S.U.(B.).”

October 22

The Presidium of the E.C.C.I. appoints J . V. Stalin to report on the Russian question at the Seventh Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I.

October 23

A joint plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.) appoints J . V. Stalin to make a report at the Fifteenth All-Union Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.) on “The Opposition and the inner-Party Situation.”

October 25

The Political Bureau of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.) approves J . V. Stalin’s theses on “The Opposition Bloc in the C.P.S.U.(B.)” for submission to the October joint plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.).

October 26

The newspapers Pravda and Izvestia, Nos. 247, publish J. V. Stalin's theses on "The Opposition Bloc in the C.P.S.U.(B.)."

At the joint plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C. C.P.S.U.(B.), J. V. Stalin delivers a speech in support of the theses on "The Opposition Bloc in the C.P.S.U.(B.)." The plenum endorses the theses for submission to the Fifteenth All-Union Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.).

October 26 - November 3

J. V. Stalin directs the work of the Fifteenth All-Union Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.).

November 1

At the Fifteenth All-Union Conference of the C.P.S.U. (B.), J. V. Stalin delivers a report on "The Opposition and the Inner-Party Situation." The report was published in Pravda and Izvestia, Nos. 206, 257, November 5 and 6, 1926.

November 3

At the Fifteenth All-Union Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.), J. V. Stalin replies to the discussion on his report on "The Opposition and the Inner-Party Situation." The reply to the discussion was published in Pravda and Izvestia, Nos. 262, November 12, 1926.

November 6

J. V. Stalin writes a reply to the editorial board of Leningradskaya Pravda declining to give his consent to the publication of his conversation with Professor Jerome Davis of Yale University, a report of which was published in garbled form in the newspaper The New York American.

November 7

J. V. Stalin attends the military parade of the Moscow Garrison and demonstration of the working people of Moscow in the Red Square.

November 15

J. V. Stalin's report and reply to the discussion at the Fifteenth All-Union Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.) are published in pamphlet form under the title The Social-Democratic Deviation in Our Party.

November 20

At a meeting of the Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, J. V. Stalin communicates the plan of his report on "The Internal Situation in the C.P.S.U.(B.);" for the Seventh Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I.

November 22 - December 16

J. V. Stalin takes part in the work of the Seventh Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I.

November 22

At its first sitting, the Seventh Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I. elects J. V. Stalin a member of its Presidium and of its Political Commission.

November 29-30

J. V. Stalin directs the work of a meeting of the Bureau of the C.P.S.U.(B.) delegation to the Seventh Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I.

November 30

J. V. Stalin delivers a speech in the Chinese Commission of the Seventh Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I. on “The Prospects of the Revolution in China.”