

which transpires and is even being completed in one country. We have now a "theory" which teaches that it is possible to build up Socialism in one country and that the inter-relationships of that country with the capitalist world can be built on the basis of "neutralization" of the world bourgeoisie (Stalin). Advancing this essentially national-reformist and not revolutionary international point of view, the necessity for the slogan of a United States of Europe falls away or is at least diminished. But this slogan is, from our viewpoint, important and vitally necessary precisely because it condemns the idea of an isolated socialist development. For the proletariat of every European country, even to a greater extent than for the U.S.S.R.—the difference is only of degree—it will be of the most vital necessity to carry the revolution to the neighbouring countries and to support insurrections in them with arms in hand not because of abstract international solidarity, which is in itself unable to move the classes, but because of the vital considerations which Lenin has formulated hundreds of times—namely, without **TIMELY** aid from the international revolution we will not be able to hold out. The slogan of the Soviet United States corresponds with the dynamics of the proletarian revolution which does not break out simultaneously in all countries, but passes on from country to country and requires closest class contact among them, especially on European territory, both with the object of defense against the most powerful foreign foes, and with economic objects.

One may, it is true, try to object, declaring that since the period of the Ruhr crisis which was the very last impulse for the adoption of that slogan, the latter has not played a big role in the agitation of the Communist Parties of Europe and has, so to speak, not taken root. But this is fully true also of the slogans of a Workers Soviet Government, etc., i. e., of all slogans to be used **ON THE VERY EVE OF REVOLUTION**. This may be explained by the fact that since the end of 1923, notwithstanding the mistaken political expectations of the Fifth Congress, the revolutionary movement on the European continent has been on the decline. But that is exactly why it is detrimental to build a program, or some of its parts, under the impressions received only in that period. It was not by mere accident that, despite all prejudices, the slogan of a Soviet United States of Europe was accepted precisely in 1923 when a revolutionary outburst was expected in Germany and when the question of State inter-relationships in Europe assumed an exceedingly burning character. Every new accentuation of the European, and, particularly, the world crisis, is grave enough to be able to raise the main political problems, and to advance again the slogan of the United States of Europe. It is therefore fundamentally wrong to keep silent over the slogan without having rejected it, that is, to keep it somewhere in reserve, to be used "in emergency." On questions of principle the keeping in reserve policy does not hold good.

3. THE CRITERION OF INTERNATIONALISM

The draft, as we already know, is making an effort to proceed in its construction from the viewpoint of world economy and its inner tendencies—a thing which deserves recognition. The *Pravda* is absolutely right when it says that therein lies the basic and fundamental difference between us and national patriotic Social Democracy. Only by taking world economy, which dominates over all its parts, as a basis can a program of the international proletarian Party be built. But precisely in analysing the main tendencies of world development the draft displays not only an incompleteness, which depreciates its value, as has already been pointed out above, but also falls into gross one-sidedness leading to grave blunders.

The draft refers many times, and not always in the proper place, to the law of uneven development of capitalism as to the main and almost all-determining law of that development. Many mistakes in the draft including the fundamental error, are theoretically based on the one-sided and mistaken non-Marxian and non-Leninist interpretation of the law of uneven development.

In the first chapter the draft says:

"Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism. This unevenness becomes still more accentuated and intensified in the epoch of imperialism."

This is true. This formula in part condemns Stalin's formulation of the question, according to which Marx and Engels did not know the law of uneven development and that it was first discovered by Lenin. On September 15, 1925, Stalin

wrote that Trotsky has no reason to refer to Engels who wrote at a time "when THERE COULD BE NO QUESTION of the knowledge of the law of uneven development of capitalist countries." Unbelievable as these words may be, Stalin, one of the authors of the draft, has nevertheless repeated them more than once. The text of the draft, as we have seen, has taken a step forward in this respect. If however, we leave aside the correction of this elementary mistake, what is said in the draft about the law of uneven development is in essence one-sided and insufficient.

It would have been more correct first of all to say that the whole history of mankind is governed by the law of uneven development. Capitalism finds various sections of mankind at diverse stages of development with grave internal contradictions in each one of them. Great diversity in the various levels, and extraordinary unevenness in the rate of development of the different parts of mankind in the various periods of time, is the **STARTING POINT** of capitalism. The latter gains mastery gradually over the inherited unevenness. It breaks and alters it, employing thereby its own methods and its own ways. In contradistinction to the economic system which preceded it, capitalism is constantly aiming at economic expansion, at the penetration of new territories, the mitigation of economic differences, the conversion of hemmed-in provincial and national economies into a system of financial inter-relationships and thereby brings about their **approchement** and equalizes the economic and cultural levels of the most progressive and backward countries. Without this main process, the relative levelling out of, at first, Europe with Great Britain and then America with Europe, the industrialization of the colonies, the diminishing distance between India and Great Britain, with all the consequences arising from the enumerated processes upon which is based not only the program of the Communist International, but also its very existence, would be inconceivable. By bringing the countries economically nearer to each other and levelling out their state of development, capitalism acts however, by methods of its OWN, that is by anarchistic methods which constantly undermine its own work by playing up one country against another and one branch of industry against another, developing some parts of world economy, while hampering and throwing back the development of some of its other parts. Only the merging of these two main tendencies—the centrifugal and centripetal, the levelling and equalizing tendencies which equally arise from the nature of capitalism—explains to us the live texture of the historical process of the last centuries.

Imperialism, thanks to the universality, penetrability and mobility, and the break-neck rapidity in the formation of finance capital as the driving force of imperialism, lends vigor to both of these tendencies. Imperialism links up incomparably more rapidly and more deeply the individual national and continental units into one, bringing them into closest and most vital dependence upon each other and rendering their economic methods, social forms and levels of development more identical. It attains this "aim" at the same time by means of such antagonist methods, such jumps, and such flights on the backward countries and districts, that the unification and levelling of world economy effected by it is upset by themselves even more rapidly and in a more convulsive manner than in preceding epochs. Only such a dialectical and not purely mechanical understanding of the law of uneven development can make possible the avoidance of the fundamental error which the draft program, submitted to the Sixth Congress, has failed to avoid.

Right after the one-sided characteristic of the law of uneven development pointed out by us, the draft program says:

"From this it follows that the international proletarian revolution must not be regarded as a single simultaneous and universal act. The victory of socialism is at first possible in a few or even in one capitalist country."

That the international revolutions of the proletariat cannot be a simultaneous act, of this, it goes without saying, there can in general be no dispute among grown-up people after the experience of the October Revolution effected by the proletariat of a backward country under pressure of historical necessity, without having in the least waited for the proletariat of the advanced countries "to even out the front." To that extent the reference to the law of uneven development is absolutely correct and quite in place. But matters stand quite differently with the second half of the deduction—namely, the meaningless state-

ment that the victory of Socialism is possible "in one capitalist country." To prove its point the draft program simply says—"From this it follows." One gets the impression that it follows from the law of uneven development. But it does not follow at all. "From this follows" something quite the contrary. If the historical process would be such that some countries develop not only unevenly, but even **INDEPENDENTLY OF EACH OTHER**, isolated from each other, then from the law of uneven development would no doubt follow the possibility of the building up of Socialism in one capitalist country—at first in the most advanced country and then, as they mature, in the more backward ones. That was the customary, so to say, average idea of the transition to Socialism within the ranks of pre-war social democracy. This idea was precisely the theoretical basis of social patriotism. Of course the draft program does not hold this view. But it is inclined towards it.

The theoretical error of the draft lies in the fact that it seeks to deduct from the law of uneven development something which the law does not imply and cannot imply. Uneven or sporadic development of various countries constantly upsets but by no means **ELIMINATES** the growing economic ties and inter-dependence of these countries which the very next day after four years of hellish war were compelled to exchange their coal, bread and oil for powder and suspenders. On this basic question, the draft expresses the idea that historical development proceeds only on the basis of sporadic jumps while the economic basis which gives rise to these jumps, and upon which they occur, is entirely left out of sight by the authors of the draft, or is forcefully eliminated by them. This is done with the sole object of defending the undefendable theory of Socialism in one country.

After what has been said, it is not difficult to understand that the only correct way to formulate the question would be that Marx and Engels had even prior to the imperialist epoch arrived at the conclusion that on the one hand unevenness, i. e., sporadic historical development, stretches the proletarian revolution through a whole epoch in the course of which the nations will enter the revolutionary flood one after another, while, on the other hand, the organic inter-dependence of the various countries, the developing international division of labor, excludes the possibility of building up Socialism in one country, the more so now in the present epoch when imperialism has developed, deepened and sharpened both these antagonistic tendencies and has rendered the Marxian doctrine that the Socialist revolution can begin only on a national basis while the building up of a Socialist society with national boundaries is impossible, **DOUBLY AND TREBLY TRUE**. On this question, Lenin merely developed and put in concrete terms Marxist formulations and Marx's answer to this question.

Our Party program is entirely based on the underlying international conditions of the October revolution and Socialist construction. To prove this, one would only have to copy the theoretical part of our program. Here we will merely point out that when at the Eighth Congress of the Party, the late Podbelsky alluded that some formulations of the program refer only to the revolution in Russia, Lenin replied in his concluding speech on the question of the Party program (March 19, 1919) the following:

"Podbelsky raised objections to the paragraph which speaks of the **PENDING** social revolution. His argument is obviously unfounded because **IN OUR PROGRAM IT IS A QUESTION OF THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION ON AN INTERNATIONAL SCALE**."—(Vol. 16, page 113).

It will not be out of place to point out here that at about the same time Lenin suggested that our Party change its name from Communist Party of Russia to Communist Party so as to emphasize still further that it is a party of **INTERNATIONAL REVOLUTION**. I was the only one voting for that motion at the C. C. However, he did not bring the matter before the Congress in view of the foundation of the Third International. This position proves that there could not even have been a thought of Socialism in one country at that time. That alone is the reason why the Party program does not condemn this "theory" but merely **EXCLUDES** it.

But the Young Communist League program which was adopted two years later had to issue a direct warning against home-bred illusions and narrow-mindedness on the question of proletarian revolution, with the object of training the youth in the spirit of internationalism. But we will still speak of this later. —(TO BE CONTINUED)

The Right Danger in the American Party

THE main danger in the American Party comes from the right. This is due to the changing objective conditions of the class struggle in the United States and the opportunist political line of the Lovestone group which is the majority of the Central Committee.

The maturing inner contradictions of American capitalism and the leftward drift of the masses produce a turning point in the class struggle. From a long period of retreat before the onslaught of capital the American workers are passing over into a period of defense and resistance preliminary to a higher phase of offensive and aggressive struggle against capitalist exploitation.

In this period of increasing sharpness of class relations and class struggles in the United States, requiring a reorientation of the Party's perspectives to changing conditions and a reformulation of Party policy toward more aggressiveness, initiative and militancy, we confront the danger of holding on to old perspectives, outworn policies and methods of work, which prevent the full unfolding of the Party's leadership in the developing struggles.

The danger in such a period as we are entering in the United States comes from the right. This danger becomes real and actual because the Lovestone group, which constitutes the majority in the Central Committee, refuses to orientate itself to the changing conditions of struggle and pursues an opportunist line, as will be proven in the following points.

I.—Overestimation of the Reserve Powers of American Imperialism.

Two basic factors determine the condition of American capitalism in the present period: 1) The maturing inner contradictions of American capitalism (disproportion between the rate of expansion of productive capacity and rate of growth of volume of production, disproportion between the growth of production and consumption, unemployment, the contradictions of rationalization, capital export, polarization of wealth and poverty, etc.) are beginning to produce **qualitative changes** in the whole economic system; 2) These inner contradictions are maturing in the surroundings of a declining world capitalism and the Socialist growth of the U.S.S.R. which sharpen, intensify and accelerate the development of the contradictions of American capitalism, hastening the coming of its downfall.

An analysis of the degree of ripeness of those contradictions, will show that American capitalism is about to reach the **apex of growth** and that further expansion leads American capitalism to further and more drastic attacks upon the standards of life of the American masses and to an attempt at an armed redivision of the world market and spheres of imperialist domination, both of which only further intensify these contradictions leading to the downfall of American imperialism.

In the light of the above, the present economic depression must inevitably become the forerunner of a deep-going crisis, even though American capitalism may succeed in postponing its coming with the help of the reserve powers which it still enjoys. This depression cannot be viewed merely as a "normal" cyclical depression having only slight and passing effects. On the contrary, because of the qualitative changes which are taking place in American capitalist economy every such cyclical depression intensifies to the highest degree the contradictions of capitalism, undermines deeper the entire structure, eventually leading to deep-going crises.

The Lovestone group has an entirely different conception of the position and present phase of American capitalism. This conception is marked by the following characteristics:

1. The main emphasis upon the tendencies making for the growth and power of American capitalism.
2. Totally inadequate emphasis upon the force and cumulative effect of the contradictions of American capitalism, which are already producing qualitative changes.
3. The Lovestone group sees no qualitative changes taking place in American capitalism.
4. Lack of proper evaluation of the inner contradictions of American capitalism as distinct from the undermining effects of the declining world capitalism and the growth of the U.S.S.R.
5. Viewing the coming of deep-going crises in America mainly as a result of the disintegrating influences of declining world capitalism, relegating to the background the effects of the inner contradictions of American capitalism.
6. Following the lead of bourgeois economists in

evaluating the present depression only as a "recession." On this the Lovestone group persisted as late as February, 1928.

7. Accepting the "theory of spottiness" of the capitalist press and capitalist economists to explain the nature of the present depression and refusal to see its special characteristic as a forerunner of a deep-going crisis.

8. Underestimation of the great significance in the imperialist epoch of the strikingly uneven development of industry (coal, oil, textiles, etc.) in connection with other inner contradictions of American capitalism.

9. Failure to understand the processes of rationalization, the menacing nature of the movement designated as capitalist-engineering-efficiency-socialism and the integration of the labor aristocracy and bureaucracy into the imperialist machine of American capitalism.

10. Failure to understand the full effects of the rationalization drive upon the workers particularly as represented by the large extent of wage cuts, especially piece rates.

11. Assuming that the course of American imperialism will proceed mainly along the lines of development of British capitalism and failure to understand the basically different present world situation.

The totality of these characteristics make for a dangerously opportunist conception of present-day American capitalism and for a grave overestimation of its reserve powers.

This tendency of the Lovestone group finds its expression in the original draft of the February thesis, the C.E.C. plenum resolution of May 1927, and in the writing and speeches of Comrades Lovestone, Pepper, Wolfe, Nearing, etc., etc.

II.—Underestimation of the Leftward Drift of the Masses.

The murderous effects of the rationalization drive of American capitalism upon the masses (4,000,000 unemployed, speed-up, wage-cuts, etc.), the sharpening imperialist aggression of the American ruling class (Nicaragua, China, Philippines, etc.), the success of Socialist construction in the U.S.S.R., the systematic breakdown of the effects of capitalist and reformist propaganda, are all producing a widespread leftward drift of the masses in the United States.

There is a general growth of discontent, militancy and readiness to struggle among the semi-skilled and unskilled workers (the bulk of the American proletariat). A process of widespread and general radicalization is taking place in all industries among the most exploited sections of the workers.

This leftward or radicalization drift of the masses came to most active expression in the struggle of the mining, textile, and needle trades workers, and in the widespread foment and prospects for struggle in the automobile, shoe, oil, meat packing, rubber, and other industries.

The April letter of the E.C.C.I. to our Party characterizes this general leftward drift as "a rapidly growing participation of the workers in mass struggles."

Similar signs of foment and leftward development are shown among the working farmers who continue to suffer under the effects of the agricultural crisis which though somewhat retarded, has not been liquidated.

This leftward drift means a **definite break in the mood of the American masses**. A break from passivity and retreat to increasing militancy and struggle.

The Lovestone group does not share this point of view. Its conception of the mood of the American masses is marked by the following characteristics:

1. Failure to see the break in the mood of the

American masses and the coming of a turning point in the class struggle.

2. Denial of the existence of a widespread and general leftward or radicalization drift among the bulk of the American workers, covering it up with a demagogic and false charge against the minority that it believes in a deep-going "revolutionary" radicalization of the "entire" American working class.

3. Carrying over into the question of the mood of the masses the bourgeois "theory of spottiness," insisting upon the "spotty" nature of radicalization in the sense that it is found **only** among the workers in the mining, textile and needle industries.

4. Failure to recognize a leftward drift among the working farmers. Failure to develop an effective agrarian program. Failure to treat the agricultural workers as part of the proletariat!

5. Instead of taking advantage of the obvious manifestations of the radicalization drift of the masses, the Lovestone group underestimates it, and continually and systematically (in speeches, articles, resolutions, etc.) issues warnings and concentrates its attack against those who are seeking to attract the Party's attention and orientate its policy on the growing favorable condition for struggle resulting from this radicalization.

The sum of these characteristics constitute a serious underestimation of the leftward drift of the American masses.

III.—Lack of Perspective of Struggle.

The growing aggressiveness of American capitalism, internally against the masses, externally against its imperialist rivals, chiefly England, and the leftward drift of the masses, constitute the main basis for a perspective of sharpening class struggle and an increasing degree of leadership of our Party in the struggles of the masses. This follows from a correct analysis of the diminishing reserve powers of American capitalism and the growing leftward drift of the masses.

The E.C.C.I. letter to our Party of April 13, 1928, states in the following way this perspective of struggle in America:

"Amid an atmosphere of growing deep depression developing towards a crisis and more acute and aggressive policy on the part of American imperialism at home and abroad (naval budget, persecution of the workers through injunctions, Nicaragua, Philippines, Mexico and so on); and under conditions of a rapidly growing participation of the workers in mass struggles, as shown by the heroic struggle of the miners in Pennsylvania and Ohio, by the Passaic textile workers strike, the fight in the needle trades, the historic Sacco-Vanzetti agitation; the Workers' (Communist) Party, which has already played the leading role in these struggles, and was able also to take a prominent part in the miners' struggle in Colorado, has now as its major task to mobilize and organize the workers under its banner against the capitalist offensive and against the reformist supporters of capitalism, namely, the American Federation of Labor, and the Socialist Party of America." (TO BE CONTINUED)

OUR NEXT ISSUE

The next issue of *The Militant* will contain: Another installment of Trotsky's Criticism of the Draft Program of the Communist International. A review of the Presidential election results. Another section of the "Right Danger in the American Party." An article on trade union questions. Reports and comment on the struggle against bureaucratic expulsions of Communists from the Party. More documents of the Russian Opposition; and other material and comment for the Party discussion.

CIRCULATE THE MILITANT

The Militant, official Organ of the Opposition Group in the Communist Party of America, which makes its appearance with this issue, will be published twice a month. It will print regularly the suppressed writings of Trotsky, Radek, Zinoviev and other leaders of the International Communist movement as well as timely articles and editorials on the American situation which are denied publication in the official Party Press. The material published in *The Militant* cannot be secured from any other source.

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