

The Draft Program of the Comintern

CONTINUED FROM LAST ISSUE

Revolutionary patriotism can be only of a class character. It begins as patriotism to the party organization, to the trade union, and rises to national patriotism when the proletariat has captured power. Wherever the workers have power patriotism is a revolutionary duty. But that patriotism must be an inseparable part of revolutionary internationalism. The invincible conviction that the main class aim even less so than partial aims cannot be realized by national means or within national boundaries, constitutes the heart of revolutionary internationalism. If, however, the final aim has been realized within national boundaries by the efforts of a national proletariat then the backbone of internationalism has been broken. The theory of the possibility to realize socialism in one country destroys the inner connection of the patriotism of the victorious proletariat with the defeatism of the proletariat of the bourgeois countries. The proletariat of the advanced capitalist countries is still on the road to power. How and in what manner it will march towards it depends fully and entirely on the question as to whether it considers the building up of socialist society a national or an international task.

If it is at all possible to realize socialism in one country then one can believe in that theory not only AFTER the conquest of power but also "prior" to it. If socialism can be realized within the national boundaries of backward Russia, then there is the more reason to believe that it can be realized in advanced Germany. Tomorrow the leaders of the Communist Party of Germany will surely bring forward this theory. The Draft Program empowers them to do so. The day after tomorrow the French Party will have its turn. That will be the beginning of the downfall of the Comintern along the lines of social patriotism. The Communist Party of any capitalist country which will have become imbued with the idea that its particular country possesses all the "necessary and sufficient" prerequisites for the independent construction of a "complete socialist society" will in substance in no respect differ from the revolutionary social democrats who also began not with Noske but who definitely stumbled on August 4, 1914, on this very same question.

If they say that the very existence of the U.S. S. R. is a guarantee against social patriotism because in relation to a Workers' Republic patriotism is a revolutionary duty, in this one-sided utilization of a correct idea is expressed national narrow-mindedness. Those who say so have in mind only the U.S.S.R., closing their eyes to the entire proletariat of the world. To lead the proletariat to the idea of defeatism in relation to the bourgeois State is possible only by an international orientation in the program on the main question and by a merciless resistance to social patriotic contraband which is now still masked but which seeks to establish a theoretical nest for itself in the program of Lenin's International.

It is not yet too late to return to the path of Marx and Lenin. It is this return that opens up the only conceivable road to progress. To bring about this safety turn we address this criticism of the draft program to the Sixth Congress of the Comintern.

The results and prospects of the Chinese Revolution—its lessons for the Eastern countries and for the whole of the Comintern

Bolshevism and Menshevism and the left wing of German and international social democracy took definite shape on the analysis of the experiences, mistakes and tendencies of the 1905 revolution. An analysis of the experiences of the Chinese Revolution is now of no less importance for the international proletariat.

This analysis, however, has not yet even begun—it is prohibited. The official literature gives hurried arrangements of facts to suit the resolutions of the E.C.C.I., the baseness of which has been thoroughly revealed. The draft program cuts down the sharpest points of the Chinese problem, but, in the main, perpetuates the destructive line of the E.C.C.I. on the Chinese question. Instead of an analysis of the greatest historical process, we find a literary defence of the bankrupt schemes.

A CRITICISM OF FUNDAMENTALS

By L. D. TROTSKY

I. ON THE NATURE OF THE COLONIAL BOURGEOISIE

The draft program says:

"Temporary agreements" (with the bourgeoisie) "may be made only insofar as they will not hamper the revolutionary organization of the workers and peasants and are genuinely fighting against imperialism."

This loose statement is based on a recognition of the ability of the colonial bourgeoisie TO WAGE A REAL struggle against imperialism and at the same time NOT TO INTERFERE WITH THE REVOLUTIONARY ORGANISATION of the workers and peasants. This is a defense and sanctioning of the entire policy in relation to the Kuomintang which the E.C.C.I. always interpreted as a "temporary agreement" whilst it was in reality a political enslavement of the proletariat to the bourgeoisie. To have a clear understanding of the statement quoted above we will quote an evaluation of the colonial bourgeoisie given by Bucharin, one of the authors of the draft. Basing himself on the "anti-imperialist content" of the colonial revolutions, Bucharin said:

"The liberal bourgeoisie in China has in the course of years, and not months, played an objective revolutionary role, and then it has exhausted itself. That was not at all a 'one-day' policy of the type of the Russian liberal revolution of 1905."

Everything here is wrong from the beginning to end.

Lenin really insisted that one must strictly distinguish between an oppressed and oppressor bourgeois nation. From this arise the very important advantages, for instance, in relation to war between an imperialist and a colonial country. For a pacifist such a war is a war as any other; for a Communist a war of a colonial nation against an imperialist nation is a bourgeois revolutionary war. Lenin thus RAISED the national liberation movement, the colonial insurrections and wars of the oppressed nations, to the level of the bourgeois democratic revolutions, particularly of the period prior to the Russian revolution of 1905. But Lenin did not at all rank the national liberation wars ABOVE bourgeois democratic revolutions as this is now done by Bucharin, who has turned an angle of 180 degrees. Lenin insisted on a distinction between a bourgeois oppressed and bourgeois oppressor country. But Lenin nowhere raised and never could raise the question from the viewpoint that the bourgeoisie of a colonial or a semi-colonial country in an epoch of struggle for national liberation must be more progressive and more revolutionary than the bourgeoisie of a non-colonial country in the epoch of the democratic revolution. Theoretically this does not follow from anything, historically this is not confirmed. No matter how pitiful, for instance, Russian liberalism appeared to be, and no matter how much of a hybrid its left half-petty-bourgeois democracy, the Social Revolutionaries and Mensheviks appeared to be—it is hardly possible to say that Chinese liberation and Chinese bourgeois democracy proved to be on a higher level or more revolutionary than the Russian.

To conceive that from the fact of colonial oppression there must inevitably arise a revolutionary national bourgeoisie means to imitate the main error of Menshevism which held that the Russian bourgeoisie must be revolutionary because of the autocratic feudal yoke.

The question of the nature and policy of the bourgeoisie is determined by the entire internal class structure of a nation waging the revolutionary struggle; the historical epoch in which that struggle develops; the degree of economic, political and military dependence of the national bourgeoisie upon world imperialism in its entirety or upon one of its parts; and, finally, which is the most important, the degree of class activity of the native proletariat and the state of its connections with the international revolutionary movement.

The democratic or national liberation revolution may promise the bourgeoisie an opportunity to deepen and broaden its chance for exploitation. Independent action of the proletariat on the revolutionary arena threatens to deprive the bourgeoisie

of the possibility to exploit altogether.

Let us look at some facts.

The present inspirers of the Comintern have untiringly repeated that Chiang Kai-shek waged a war "against imperialism whilst Kerensky marched hand in hand with the imperialists and that hence it was necessary to wage an irreconcilable struggle against Kerensky, while it was necessary to support Chiang Kai-shek.

Kerensky's relations with imperialism cannot be disputed. One can go even still further back and point out that the Russian bourgeoisie "overthrew" Nicholas II with the sanction of the British and French imperialism. Not only Miliukov and Kerensky supported the war waged by Lloyd George and Poincaré, but Lloyd George and Poincaré supported Miliukov's and Kerensky's revolution against the czar, and later against the workers and peasants. Of this there can be absolutely no doubt.

But how do matters stand in this connection in China? The "February" revolution in China took place in 1911. That revolution was a great and progressive event although it was accomplished with the direct participation of the imperialists. Sun Yat Sen, in his memoirs, relates how his organization relied in all its work on the "support" of the imperialist States—either Japan, France or America. If Kerensky in 1917 continued to take part in the imperialist war, the Chinese bourgeoisie, the "national", "revolutionary" etc. bourgeoisie, supported Wilson's intervention in the war with the hope that the Entente would help to emancipate China. In 1918 Sun Yat Sen addressed to the governments of the Entente his project of economic development and political emancipation of China. There is no occasion for saying that the Chinese bourgeoisie in its struggle against the Manchu Dynasty, displayed any higher revolutionary qualities than the Russian bourgeoisie in the struggle against czarism or that there is a fundamental difference between Chiang Kai-shek and Kerensky's attitude to imperialism.

But Chiang Kai-shek, says the E.C.C.I., nevertheless fought against imperialism. To imagine this means to see facts in too brilliant a light. Chiang Kai-shek waged war against the Chinese militarists, the agents of ONE of the imperialist powers. This is not quite the same as to wage a war against imperialism. Even Tang Pin-san understood this. In his report to the Seventh Plenum of the E.C.C.I. (it was at the end of 1926) Tang Pin-san characterized the policy of the Kuomintang center headed by Chiang Kai-shek as follows:

"In the sphere of international policy it occupies a passive position in the full meaning of that word. It is inclined to fight only against British imperialism; so far as the Japanese imperialists, however, are concerned, it is under certain conditions ready to make a compromise with them." (Stenographic Report at the Seventh Plenum.)

The attitude of the Kuomintang to imperialism was from the very outset not revolutionary but opportunistic through and through. It endeavored to drive out the agents of some imperialist powers so as to compromise later with the same or other imperialist powers on more favorable terms for the Chinese bourgeoisie. That is all. One must measure not the attitude of every given national bourgeoisie to imperialism in general, but its attitude to the immediate historical tasks of the respective nation. The Russian bourgeoisie was a bourgeoisie of an imperialist oppressor nation. The Chinese bourgeoisie a bourgeoisie of an oppressed colonial country. The overthrow of feudal czarism was a progressive task in old Russia. The overthrow of the imperialist yoke is a progressive historical mission in China. But the attitude of the Chinese bourgeoisie in relation to imperialism, the proletariat and the peasantry, was not more revolutionary than that of the Russian, but, if you wish, even more vile and reactionary.

TO BE CONTINUED

CABARET AND DANCE
Arranged by the Proletarian Dramatic Club
for the benefit of
THE MILITANT
and
THE PROLETAR
Organs of the Communist Opposition
Saturday Evening, January 26, 1929
at 323 East 79th Street, New York
Tickets in advance 50c :: At the door 60c.

Lenin's Last Words to the Party

The Testament of Lenin Sent to the Central Committee of the Communist Party and Suppressed by the Stalin Regime.

BY the stability of the Central Committee, of which I spoke before, I mean measures to prevent a split, so far as such measures can be taken. For, of course, the White Guard in Russia (I think it was S. E. Oldenburg) was right when, in the first place, in his play against Soviet Russia he banked on the hope of a split in our party, and when, in the second place, he banked for that split on serious disagreements in our party.

"Our party rests upon two classes, and for that reason its instability is possible, and if there cannot exist an agreement between those classes its fall is inevitable. In such an event it would be useless to take any measures or in general to discuss the stability of our Central Committee. In such an event no measures would prove capable of preventing a split. But I trust that is too remote a future, and too improbable an event, to talk about.

"I have in mind stability as a guarantee against a split in the near future, and I intend to examine here a series of considerations of a purely personal character.

"I think that the fundamental factor in the matter of stability—from this point of view—is such members of the Central Committee as Stalin and Trotsky. The relation between them constitutes, in my opinion, a big half of the danger of that split, which might be avoided, and the avoidance of which might be promoted, in my opinion, by raising the number of members of the Central Committee to fifty or one hundred.

"Comrade Stalin, having become General Secre-

tary, has concentrated an enormous power in his hands; and I am not sure that he always knows how to use that power with sufficient caution. On the other hand Comrade Trotsky, as was proved by his struggle against the Central Committee in connection with the question of the People's Commissariat of Ways of Communication, is distinguished not only by his exceptional abilities—personally he is, to be sure, the most able man in the present Central Committee; but also by his too far-reaching self-confidence and a disposition to be too much attracted by the purely administrative side of affairs.

"These two qualities of the two most able leaders of the present Central Committee might, quite innocently, lead to a split; if our party does not take measures to prevent it, a split might arise unexpectedly.

"I will not further characterize the other members of the Central Committee as to their personal qualities. I will only remind you that the October episode of Zinoviev and Kamenev was not, of course, accidental, but that it ought as little to be used against them personally as the non-Bolshevism of Trotsky.

"Of the younger members of the Central Committee, I want to say a few words about Bucharin and Piatakov. They are, in my opinion, the most able forces (among the youngest), and in regard to them it is necessary to bear in mind the following: Bucharin is not only the most valuable and biggest theoretician of the Party, but also may legitimately be considered the favorite of the whole party; but his theoretical views can only

with the very greatest doubt be regarded as fully Marxist, for there is something scholastic in him (he never has learned, and I think never has fully understood, the dialectic).

"And then Piatakov—a man undoubtedly distinguished in will and ability, but too much given over to administration and the administrative side of things to be relied on in a serious political question.

"Of course, both these remarks are made by me merely with a view of the present time, or supposing that these two able and loyal workers may not find an occasion to supplement their knowledge and correct their one-sidedness.

"December, 25, 1922.

"Postscript: Stalin is too rude, and this fault, entirely supportable in relations among us Communists, becomes insupportable in the office of General Secretary. Therefore, I propose to the Comrades to find a way to remove Stalin from that position and appoint to it another man who in all respects differs from Stalin only in superiority—namely, more patient, more loyal, more polite and more attentive to comrades, less capricious, etc. This circumstance may seem an insignificant trifle, but I think that from the point of view of preventing a split and from the point of view of the relation between Stalin and Trotsky which I discussed above, it is not a trifle, or it is such a trifle as may acquire a decisive significance.

"LENIN.

"Jan. 4, 1923."

The New Needle Trades Workers' Union

THE recent formation of the new Needle Trades Industrial Union marks a turning point in the protracted struggle in the needle trades and is a step of great historic significance for the American labor movement as a whole. The policy of organizing the unorganized into new unions, of answering the destruction of the old unions by the bosses and the reactionaries with the formation of new unions under left wing leadership, will be given here its test of fire.

Under the present conditions and relation of forces the prerequisites for the success of this policy are greater in the Needle Trades than in any other industry. It is there that the party and left wing have the broadest and most conscious support of the working masses, the product of the advanced class consciousness of these workers and of the active leadership of the Party and left wing in mighty struggles. It is in the needle trades also that the treason and the bankruptcy of not only the old-line reactionaries, but of the so-called "socialist" labor leaders has been most clearly demonstrated in practice. The left wing has shown itself to the masses here as the sole leader and organizer of the daily struggle as well as the herald of the coming fight for liberation from the yoke of capitalism.

The Needle Trade Industrial Union faces the gigantic task of building anew on the ruins of the old organizations. It was the destruction of the old unions in the Fur and Ladies Garment trades which placed the formation of the new union categorically on the agenda. This destruction was accomplished by the united front of the Bosses, the A. F. of L., the police and the "Socialist" betrayers. The smashing of the once powerful Furriers Union and the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, the loss of union standards, the intensified exploitation and the general worsening of the lot of the workers are the direct fruit of this reactionary united front. The unceasing exposition of this incontestable fact is one of the most necessary phases of the task of building the new union.

An accessory cause of the setbacks the workers received and of the failure of the left wing to deal heavier and more decisive blows to the bosses and their labor agents has been the stubborn opportunism, the illusions and vacillations of the left wing leaders. The stratum of this leadership, Gold, Zimmerman, Wortis, etc., constitute a faction whose practices have been a constant obstacle to the development and execution of a fighting Communist policy which alone is able to mobilize the fur resources of the masses for their struggle. Al-

most every opportunist prejudice from craft union conceptions to the theory that a struggle cannot be carried on against the bosses and the right wing leaders at the same time, from a complete misapprehension of the class role of the police (to speak mildly) to illusions regarding deals with this or that group of fakers, has found expression in the course of this faction of leaders. To this can be added the survivals of odious trade union bureaucratic and "business agent" relations with the rank and file. The struggle for a true Communist policy—the only fighting policy—was and is a struggle against the tactics and policies of this group.

The formation of the New Union is late. It was indicated by the whole situation months ago. The delay was due solely to the conservatism of the Party leaders in the needle trades in which, as in all their costly opportunist blunders, they were fully supported by the opportunist leadership of the Party which turned the whole control over to them in a conscienceless factional bargain, entrenched them in every way, shielded them from criticism and stifled the opposition movement of the rank and file Communist fighters in the needle trades. The amalgamation of the two left wing unions and the formation of the new union was forced upon them by the Opposition in which fight we had a united front with the Foster group. The Party leadership, of which the faction of Gold and Zimmerman are the trade union representatives, resisted, held back and sabotaged to the last. It was only the unceasing fight of the combined Opposition, the correctness of which was being proven by events, which brought about the amalgamation and the organization of the new union even at this late day.

The workers will pay for this delay as they have to pay for every opportunist error of leadership. The new union begins its career with handicaps and difficulties that might have been avoided.

These handicaps, however, can soon be overcome by a vigorous policy in the ensuing period. The step taken is an indubitably correct one. Indeed, it was the only step consistent with a fighting policy under given circumstances. By it, the heroic workers of the needle trades who have written glorious pages of labor history in the recent years, again attract the attention of the labor movement as a whole. The conscious workers throughout the entire country look to them again to prove that the left wing is invincible, that it is able to turn the destruction of the old unions into a rejuvenated movement on a sounder basis. Their victory in the great battle to establish their new

union will be a victory for the American working class and will have a great effect on its future.

There is no need to minimize the enormous difficulties in their path. A Communist policy will enable the left wing to triumph over them. The bosses will fight them by every means: therefore an education of the masses on the class role of the police, a mobilization of the masses against them and a ruthless war on all illusions about them. The right wing socialist fakers will fight them: therefore an unceasing exposure of their hypocritical "peace" manoeuvres, and an education of the masses to hate and distrust them as agents of the bosses.

Every conscious worker must support the new Needle Trades Industrial Union with all his strength. This means for the Communist militants within the union a two-fold task: on the one hand to fight in the vanguard of the Union against the employers and their labor agents; on the other hand to firmly organize the forces of the Communist left wing within the Party fraction and thereby irresistibly steer the new union on the path of revolutionary tactics in all its activities and struggles.

Appeal to the Convention

New York, N. Y. January 12, 1928.

To the Central Executive Committee,
Workers (Communist) Party of America,
Comrades:

We hereby send you notice of our intention to appeal to the forthcoming Convention of the Party against the expulsion of all the comrades standing on the Platform of the Opposition.

We desire to appear personally at the Convention to present our Appeal. This is in accordance with the Party Constitution and with the established practices and traditions of the movement. The decision of the Political Committee on our expulsion recognized this right. Even the trades union bureaucracy, whose expulsion methods you have copied, have also recognized the right of expelled members to present their appeals in person to the Conventions. A case in point is the recent Convention of the Carpenters' Union where comrade Rosen was given the floor to appeal against his expulsion.

Please notify us of the time and place of the Convention sessions where our appeal will be heard.

James P. Cannon. Martin Abern
Arne Swaback. Max Shachtman