

The Draft Program of the Comintern

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS ISSUE
5. SOVIETS AND REVOLUTION.

In the February resolution of the E.C.C.I. the representative of the Comintern, Comrade N., "and others", are made responsible for the "absence of an ELECTED Soviet in Canton as an organ of insurrection". (Emphasis in the original). This charge is in our opinion a surprising admission.

In the report of Pravda written on the basis of first hand documents (No. 31) it was stated that there was a Soviet government established in Canton. But it said nothing about the fact that the Canton Soviet was NOT an elected organ, that is, that it was not a SOVIET—for how can there be 1905 and other years without daring to approach a Soviet which has not been elected? We learn this from the resolution. Let us reflect for a moment. The E.C.C.I. tells us now that a Soviet is necessary in an armed insurrection, but by no means before that. But when the date for the insurrection is set there is no Soviet. To set up an elected Soviet is not at all an easy matter. It is necessary that the masses should know from experience what a Soviet is, that they understand its form, that they should have learned something in the past about the election of Soviets. Of this there was no sign in China as the slogan of Soviets was declared to be a Trotskyist slogan precisely in the period when it should have become the nerve center of the entire movement. When, however, later, a date was fixed for an insurrection so as to skip over their own defeats, they simultaneously had to APPOINT a Soviet. If we were not to expose this error to the very end, the slogan of Soviets might be turned into a strangling noose of the revolution.

A Letter to the Russian Workers

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bureaucratic caste bound together by a solidarity of privilege. In order to defend the October Revolution, the Soviet Republic and the revolutionary name of the Bolshevik-Leninists, I told the whole world the truth about Stalin and the Stalinists. I reminded them again that Lenin in his maturely considered "Testament" described Stalin as disloyal. That word is understood in all the languages of the world. It means an untrustworthy or dishonest man who is guided in his activities by bad motives, a man whom you cannot trust. That is how Lenin characterized Stalin, and we see again how correct Lenin's warning was. There is no worse crime for a revolutionist than to deceive his Party, to poison with lies the mind of the working class. And that is at present Stalin's chief occupation. He is deceiving the Comintern and the international working class, attributing to the Opposition counter-revolutionary intentions and activities in relation to Soviet power. Exactly because of his inward inclination to that kind of activity, Lenin called Stalin disloyal. Exactly for that reason Lenin proposed to the Party that Stalin should be removed from his post. So much the more necessary now, after all that has happened, to explain to the whole world in what consists Stalin's disloyalty—that is, his perfidy and dishonesty in relation to the Opposition.

The "American Dollars"

5. The slanderers (Yaroslavsky and the other agents of Stalin) are raising a great noise on the subject of American dollars. Otherwise it would hardly be worth while to stoop to this rubbish. But the most vicious bourgeois newspapers take satisfaction in spreading Yaroslavsky's dirt. In order to leave nothing unclear I will therefore tell you about the dollars.

I gave my articles to an American press agency in Paris. Lenin and I, dozens of times, have given interviews and written expositions of our views on one question or another to such agencies. Thanks to my banishment and the mysterious circumstances of it, the interest in this matter throughout the world was colossal. The agency counted on a good profit. It offered me half of the income. I answered that I personally would not take a cent of it, but

A Criticism of Fundamentals

By L. D. Trotsky

Lenin explained to the Mensheviks in his time that the main task hitherto of the Soviets is to organize or to help to organize the capture of power so that on the morrow after the victory it may become the machinery of that power. The epigones—not disciples, but epigones—draw from this the conclusion that Soviets may be organized only when the 12th hour has struck. On the basis of

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Lenin's broad generalization they wrote post factum a short prescription which does not serve the interests of the revolution but to its detriment.

Before the Bolshevik Soviets in October 1917 captured power the S. R. and Menshevik Soviets had existed for nine months. Twelve years prior to that the first revolutionary Soviets existed in Petersburg and Moscow and many other towns. Before the Soviet of 1905 embraced the factories and plants of the capital there was a printers' Soviet in Moscow during the printers' strike, and a few months prior to that, in May 1905, a mass strike in Ivanovo-Voznesensk set up a leading committee which already contained all the principal

features of a Soviet of deputies. Between the first experiment of setting up a Soviet of deputies and the gigantic experiment of setting up a Soviet Government, more than 12 years rolled by. Of course, such a period is not absolutely essential for all countries, including China. But to think that the Chinese workers are capable of organizing Soviets on the basis of a short prescription which substitutes Lenin's broad generalization means the substitution of an impotent and importunate pedantry for dialectic revolutionary action. Soviets must be set up not on the eve of uprisings, not under the watchword of immediate capture of power—for if the matter has reached the point of the capture of power, if the masses are prepared for an armed insurrection WITHOUT A SOVIET it means that there have been other organizational forms and methods which made possible the performance of the preparatory work to ensure the success of the uprising, the question of Soviets becomes of secondary importance and reduces itself to a question of organizational technique or still less to a question of name. The task of the Soviets is not merely to issue the call for the insurrection or to carry that insurrection out, but TO LEAD THE MASSES TOWARD THE INSURRECTION THROUGH THE NECESSARY PHASES. At first the Soviet rallies the masses not to the slogan of an armed insurrection, but to partial slogans, so that only later, step by step, they are brought towards the insurrection without scattering them on the road and without allowing the vanguard to become isolated from the class.

TO BE CONTINUED

ership. Stalin has done this, relying upon the bureaucracy, upon new petty-bourgeois circles, upon the State apparatus, upon the G. P. U., and upon the financial resources of the State. This has been carried through not only in the U. S. S. R., but also in Germany, in France, in Italy, in Belgium, in the United States, in the Scandinavian countries—in a word, in almost every country in the world. Only a blind man could fail to understand the meaning of the fact that the closest colleagues and comrades-in-arms of Lenin in the Russian Communist Party and the whole Comintern, all the leaders of the Communist Parties in the first hard years, all the participants and leaders of the first four Congresses, almost to a man, have been removed from their posts, slandered and expelled. This mad struggle with the Leninist leadership was necessary to the Stalinists in order to carry through an anti-Leninist policy.

When they were pounding the Bolshevik-Leninists, they reassured the Party by saying that it would now be monolithic. You know that the Party is now more split-up than ever. And this is not the end either. There is no salvation on the Stalinist road. You can adopt either an Ustrilovist—that is a consistently Thermidorian policy—or a Leninist policy. The Centrist position of Stalin inevitably leads to an accumulation of enormous economic and political difficulties and to the continual decimation and destruction of the Party.

It is still not too late to alter the course. It is necessary abruptly to change the policy and the Party regime in the spirit of the Opposition Platform. It is necessary to put an end to the shameful persecution of the best revolutionary Leninists in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and in the whole world. It is necessary to restore the Leninist leadership. It is necessary to condemn and root out the disloyal, that is, untrustworthy and dishonest, methods of the Stalin apparatus. The Opposition is ready with all its force to help the proletarian kernel of the Party to fulfill this vital task. Rabid persecution, dishonest slanders and government repressions cannot dim our loyalty to the October Revolution or to the international party of Lenin. We will remain true to them both to the end—in the Stalinist prisons, in exile and in banishment.

With Bolshevik greetings,

L. TROTSKY

Constantinople,
March 27th 1929

The Stalin-Rykov Wage Policy

A Leaflet of the Russian Leninist-Bolsheviks

COMRADES! WORKERS!

"Just as the best factory with a first class motor and first class machines is at a standstill when the mechanism that connects the motor with the machines is damaged, so also is a catastrophe to our socialist construction inevitable when the connecting mechanism between the Communist Party and the masses, the trade unions, is badly constructed. (From Lenin's resolution on the trade union at the 11th Party Congress.)

In connection with the concluded labor of the Eighth Trade Union Congress of U.S.S.R., every worker must ask himself the question: Has this connecting mechanism worked properly? The false policy of the leadership has brought the country to an extremely difficult economic condition. The material level of the life of the working class has fallen, the position of the classes antagonistic to the dictatorship has been strengthened.

The Bolshevik-Leninists have exposed the mistakes of the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on more than one occasion, and pointed out their disastrous consequences. The Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. replied to these warnings with imprisonment and exile to the worst parts of Siberia and Middle Asia. But the Leninist truth cannot be killed by exile and imprisonment. This truth appears in every nook and cranny of our economic and political life.

The real wage of the workers—we are assured by the Supreme Trade Union Council—has risen 7.7 percent in the last year. This is delusion.

In its offices, the Supreme Trade Union Council proceeded from the price list in the calculations of real wages. But every worker knows from his own experience that the goods in the government and cooperative stores are not sufficient and that—willy-nilly—one must pay three times as dearly for goods at the private tradesman.

The Supreme Trade Union Council does not reckon with this over-payment. In October 1927, when the Supreme Trade Union Council fought against the demands of the Bolshevik-Leninists for an increase in wages, they assured us that thanks to government measures the price of goods would be lowered and the cost of living would thereby be decreased. In reality, however, the contrary occurred: the budget index of the Soviet Union has risen 9.3 percent according to official figures. (Ekonimicheskoye Obozreniye, No. 8) In the last eight months a further change for the worse set in when prices became higher. The second industrial loan lowered the nominal wage another 8.3 percent. The industrialization of the country is being placed completely on the shoulders of the workers. This can be best demonstrated when the sources for the funds allocated for industry are established.

Out of the billion rubles, 800,000,000 rubles come out of the profit made by lowering the cost price by 7 percent, which is, however, under the conditions of our technique and rationalization, combined with the greatest pressure on the muscle energy of the workers.

The second half of the funds allocated by the budget for industry consists of inner-industrial accumulations and of money taken directly from the working class. To this belong the 350,000,000 rubles collected among the working masses in the Industrial Loan, the deductions from the profits of industry, and so on and so forth. Thus nine-tenths of all funds allocated for large capital investments are raised at the cost of the working class.

Productivity increased 28 percent in the last two years according to the figures of the Supreme Trade Union Council. For 1928-1929 a further increase of 17 percent is foreseen.

The Leninist Opposition always pointed out the necessity of raising productivity but it has fought and is fighting against raising productivity at the cost of the intensification of labor to the point of physical exhaustion of the workers. The number of illnesses, of accidents, grows from year to year. Even the Supreme Trade Union Council must acknowledge in its report that "the rationalization carried through by industry is often not accompanied at all by the necessary safety measures. This condition, for example, is to be noticed in the naphtha, anthracite, chemical and to a certain extent in the metal industries," and we might add, in all other branches of industry.

Unemployment grows from year to year. Since

July 1, 1926, the number of unemployed members of the unions increased by 653,300 men and amounted to 1,812,000 men on July 1, 1928—and without the unions with seasonal workers the increase amounts to 81.3 percent. (Seasonal workers in the sugar industry, agriculture, building trades, and son on.) In the unions composed only of industrial workers, unemployment increased 228,600 and presented an army of 551,000 on July 1, 1928.

At the last Plenary Session of the Supreme Trade Union Council, Kradal, member of the presidium of the Supreme Economic Council, declared that the further increase of productivity by 17.5 percent will involve the decrease of the number of workers by 90,000; this line must call forth the greatest uneasiness as to the fate of the working class of the U.S.S.R.

The insignificant aid rendered the unemployed in the state budget is constantly cut down: In 1926-1927 8 million rubles were utilized for this purpose, in 1928-1929 7,200,000 rubles are being assigned for it, that is, with a substantial increase in the number of unemployed the allocated sum has decreased even in relation to 1926-1927. In the final analysis the support of the unemployed worker must be borne by the working part of the family, and the worker's budget, which even without this is heavily taxed, is constantly diminished. The position of the young workers is worsened by various measures, by decreasing the number of schools of the factory youth, and so on.

Wage agreements have actually ceased to exist. The workers are robbed of the possibility of attending conferences on wage questions. The bureaucratic agreement between the heads of the Supreme Trade Union Councils and the Central Committees of the unions with the Supreme Economic Council has replaced the wage agreement.

The new system of normalizing labor makes the unlawful position of the workers legal; from now on the standard of work is no longer connected with the wage agreements; the pressure on the muscle power of the workers will be strengthened in the course of the whole year.

The living conditions of the workers are growing worse. The consumption of alcohol grows in a frightful degree. All the assurances that the production of alcohol will be decreased are lies. In 1927-1928 there were 52,890,000 dekaliters, more than were estimated in the program, namely 49,200,000 dekaliters. And for 1928-1929 an additional 4 and some odd million dekaliters are foreseen. (See Briuchanov's report at the session of the C.E.C.)

Stalin, Tomsy and other "leaders" of the Party were forced to conduct a struggle against alcohol in words. And at the same time, the share of profits from alcohol production increased in the 1928-1929 budget by 200,000,000 rubles, or 30 percent higher than in the 1927-1928 budget. Words say one thing and deeds another.

The so-called wage reforms have led to a decline in the nominal wage in a series of industries. In the entire textile industry 3 per cent of the workers were bit by these measures, in the wool industry 7.7 percent, in the leather industry 11 to 20 percent of the workers. (Report of the Supreme Trade Union Council to the Eighth Congress of the Trade Unions, page 329.)

Housing conditions of the workers remain as unsatisfactory as before. Less money was collected for the building of houses in 1928-1929 than in 1927-1928; instead of 90 million rubles, only 70 million rubles, or a fall of 22 percent. However, the budget provides a greater expenditure for the apparatus.

In a few words, that is what the conditions of

In the Next Issue:

The next issue of the Militant will contain: New and hitherto unpublished material from Comrade Trotsky.

A detailed review of the conference of the Opposition.

The Situation in the Canadian Party by Comrade Maurice Spector.

First-hand information on the Russian Party conference just concluded and what actually happened behind the scenes.

the working class looks like. The Supreme Trade Union Council has done nothing on its part to improve the position of the workers. The attempts of the Opposition to correct the line of the Supreme Trade Union Council, remained without results. The Bolshevik-Leninists in the trade unions are thrown out of work and sent into exile.

The fate of the proletarian dictatorship depends on the victory of the Leninists. Objectively, the present leaders of the C.P.S.U. are leading to the abyss. The working class of the U.S.S.R. must find the strength to straighten out the line of the leadership of the Party.

December 1928.

Bolshevik-Leninists (Opposition.)

More about the T. U. E. L.

Our Minneapolis comrades have just pointed out that the case of comrade Arne Swabek's arbitrary removal—without charges or notification—from the executive committee of the Trade Union Educational League is not an isolated one. Among the signers of the call for the Cleveland Conference of the T. U. E. L. we do not find the names of comrades C. R. Hedlund or Carl Skoglund, both of whom are on the national committee of the Railroad Section, to which they had been unanimously elected at the last National Conference. Both comrades are noted leaders of the left wing and progressive movement in the railroad unions, Hedlund in the Locomotive Engineers and Skoglund in the Railway Carmen. They were not notified of any "crime" they committed, no charges were presented against them, and they were not even informed of their removal.

Who removed them? Not the committee of which they are members, for it has not met on the matter. The removal was decided on by the Stalinite Political Bureau of the Party, and was carried out readily by Otto Wangerin, secretary of the Railroad Committee, an ostensibly non-Party organization. The bureaucrats are determined to wreck any movement rather than permit a supporter of the Communist Opposition to participate in its work. They intend to make every left wing and non-Party movement a hopeless sect, a tail to the Stalinite factional kite.

This is the sure road to ruin! We are sure that the high standing enjoyed by comrades Skoglund and Hedlund will not be impaired in the eyes of the progressive railroad workers by the Stalinite ukase. But the Fosters, Lovestones, Gitlows and Wangerins will have to answer to the left wing workers for their criminal work of disruption.

Form Opposition Group in China

The Militant has just received the first information about the Communist Opposition that has been organized in the Chinese Communist Party. A letter from China states—we quote it as it was written in English—"Chinese Oppositionists. We are deeply believed that with continuing achievement, Chinese revolution will go on according to the way of Leninism. But we are youngest in the world. We want the moral and material assistance from the international Oppositionists. We shall tell you about the present conditions as much as can, when received the letter from you."

The appearance of the first organized movement in the Chinese Party basing itself on the platform of the International Opposition led by Comrade Trotsky will be joyfully greeted by every revolutionary fighter. Especially in China did the revisionist line of Stalin-Bucharin-Martov cause the greatest damage to the revolutionary movement by enslaving the proletariat and the peasantry under the yoke of the bourgeoisie under Chiang Kai-Shek, Wang Chin Wei and Co. The struggle of the Opposition gains new strength, among the revolutionary elements with every new blow of persecution dealt it by the Stalinite apparatus!

TWO FABLES

A FABLE BY KRYLOV: A toll-worm ox was returning from a heavy day of plowing in the field. Its hide was covered with grime and sweat. Its eyes were dry with earth. Its feet dragged along heavily. And on its back stood a tiny flea. Passers-by, seeing the flea on the ox, asked the flea: What have you been doing, where do you come from? The flea said: Ah! My job! (Oh we were plowing!)

A FABLE BY MOISSAYE J. OIGIN: "We toil. We are a far-flung brotherhood of toilers. We bend our backs in the black coal caverns of Pennsylvania and Illinois. We wound our fingers with the cotton threads of the North Carolina textile mills. We scorch our faces in the lurid fires of the Ruhr steel crucibles. We poison our breath with jungle vapors of tropical rubber plantation. We freeze the soul out of our hungry bodies in the sullen wastes of Alaska. We toil." (May Day article, Daily Workers, May 1, 1929.)

Akh, Moissaye, mi pakhali!