

mintern with the methods proclaimed by the last Plenum of the E. C. C. I." You can hardly believe your eyes when you read it.

The "methods" of the February Plenum of the E. C. C. I. consist first of all of the approval of Article 58 and of the assertion that the Bolshevik-Leninists "are banking on the fall of the Soviet power." Can it be that the resolution on the Opposition is of less historical significance than the resolution on the second ballot in France, or the dubious hodge-podge on whether or not the British Communist Party should take part in the Labor Party? How can that be forgotten? Can I be admitted to the Comintern if I am deeply convinced that in voting for the Chinese resolution the February Plenum dealt another mortal blow to the Chinese proletariat, and that in voting for the resolution on the Opposition gives the worst, most reactionary and self-debasing expression of the treacherous, bureaucratic methods of "leading" the Party?

14. The theses of the February Plenum put the question of "temporary agreements with liberals in colonial countries" word for word just as the draft of the program puts it; but the draft of the program, under a radical form, sanctifies the Kuo Min Tangiade.

15. On the theory of stages, on the theory of dually composed Parties, on the theory of socialism in a single country, Radek's theses say that these are "tails" that should be removed. It is as if the Marxist man has already emerged full grown out of the Centrist monkey, but with one superfluous organ: "the tail." The good teacher and preceptor hints: Please hide your tail and all will be well. But that is to embellish the reality in a flagrant manner.

#### THE "VALUE" OF THE C. I. PROGRAM

16. The general appraisal of the draft of the program by the theses is incorrect, that is, it is exceedingly good - natured. Contradictory, eclectic scholastic, full of patches, the draft of the program is no good at all.

17. The general principle indications of Radek's theses on the question of partial or transitional demands are quite correct. It is high time that these general considerations were translated into a more concrete language, that is, for us to attempt to outline a plan for transitional demands which would apply to countries of different types.

18. On the question of the Thermidor, Radek's theses quite unexpectedly say: "I shall not discuss here the question of knowing to what extent analogies of the French and Russian revolutions can be made." What does that mean? The question of the Thermidor we formulated together with the author of the theses and with his participation. Analogies should be made within the strict limits of those aims

for which they are visualized. Lenin compared the Brest-Litovsk peace with the peace of Tilsit. Maretski could have explained to Lenin that the class conditions of the Tilsit peace were entirely different, as he explained to us the difference between the class nature of the French and our own Revolution. We then called Maretski by the name he deserved. We took the Thermidor as a classic example of a partial counter-revolutionary coup d'Etat accomplished as yet completely under the revolutionary banner, but already having at bottom a decisive character. No one has ever named or offered a clearer, more striking and more richly instructive historical analogy for explaining the dangers of degeneration. A tremendous international polemic has developed and continues around the question of the Thermidor. What political sense, then, has the above-mentioned unexpected doubt about knowing to what point analogies between the French and Russian revolutions can be established? Are we sitting in a society of Marxist historians and discussing historical analogies in general? No, we are carrying on a political fight in which we have made use of the analogy with the Thermidor a hundred times, within definite limits indicated by us.

19. "If history will prove," Radek's theses say, "that a number of Party leaders with whom we crossed swords yesterday are better than the theories which they defended, then no one will be more pleased than we." That sounds awfully chivalrous: Noble leaders first cross swords and then they weep tears of reconciliation on each other's bosom. But here is the rub: How can leaders of the proletariat be better than their theories? We Marxists have been accustomed to appraise leaders by their theory, through their theory, by the ability of leaders to understand and apply it. Now it would seem that there may be excellent leaders who are accidentally armed with reactionary theories on almost all the basic questions.

20. "The support we give to the move that has begun," Radek's theses declared, "should consist of fighting ruthlessly... against all the evils against which the Party is now mobilized." Not that alone. The pitiless unmasking in each practical matter or theoretical question of the half-measures and confusion of Centrism — there is the most important part of support of any progressive steps of Centrism.

#### THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

21. I do not stop to consider a whole number of less weighty and specific observations. I confine myself only to pointing out the supplement to the theses which is devoted to the Chinese revolution. This supplement is written in such a way as if we were approaching the question privately for the

first time, as if we had not carried on a correspondence with Preobrazhensky: the theses have not a word to say in reply to a single one of my considerations. But that is not yet the worst. What is worse is that Radek's theses are written as if here had never been a Chinese revolution in 1925-27. All of comrade Radek's considerations might have been successfully formulated at the beginning of 1924; the bourgeois-democratic revolution is not completed, it still has democratic stages before it, and then there will be a change by growth again. But the Right and Left Kuo Min Tang, the Canton period, the northern expedition, the Shanghai coup d'Etat, the Wuhan period — what are all those if not democratic stages? Or, since Martinov has made a mess of it, can we simply leave it out of consideration? The theses see in the future what has in reality already been left behind. Or, perhaps the theses hope to get "real" democracy? Let them give us her address. The essence of the matter is that all those conditions which with us united the agrarian revolution with the proletarian revolution are expressed still more clearly and imperiously in China. The theses demand that we "wait" until the democratic revolution has grown into a socialist revolution. Two questions are combined here. In a certain sense our democratic revolution grew into a socialist revolution only towards the middle of 1918. Yet power had been in the hands of the proletariat since November 1917. The argument sounds particularly bizarre coming from comrade Radek who so resolutely tried to prove that there is no feudalism in China, no class of landowners and that therefore the agrarian revolution would not be directed against the landlord but against the bourgeoisie. Survivals of feudalism are very strong in China, but they are indissolubly bound up with bourgeois property. How then can comrade Radek now pass over this difficulty by saying that the bourgeois-democratic revolution "is not completed," repeating here the mistake of Bucharin, who in turn repeats Kamenev's mistake in 1917? I cannot do better than to quote here again Lenin's word against Kamenev to which Beloborodov recently called my attention:

"He who is guided in his activity by the simple formula 'the bourgeois-democratic revolution is not finished' takes it on himself to guarantee in some way that the petty bourgeoisie is really capable of being independent of the bourgeoisie. He thereby capitulates weakly at the moment, hoping for the grace of the petty bourgeoisie." (Lenin. Vol. 14, Part 1, page 35).

That is all I can say on comrade Radek's theses. I think it is necessary to say it for the sake of clarity, without fearing the attempts of our "monolithic" opponents to exploit our differences of opinion.

LEO D. TROTSKY;

Alma-Ata, July 17, 1928.

## The Draft Program of the Comintern

### 8. THE BENEFITS OBTAINED FROM THE FARMERS' AND PEASANTS' INTERNATIONAL MUST BE PROBED.

One of the main, if not the main accusations hurled against the Opposition, was that of its "under-estimation" of the peasantry. Also on this point life has given the test proof both along the internal and the international lines. The official leaders proved guilty of UNDER-ESTIMATING the role and significance of the proletariat in relation to the peasantry all along the line. Here can be mentioned the greatest blunders and errors along the economic, political and international lines.

At the bottom of the internal errors, since 1923 there lies an under-estimation of the significance of State industry under the management of the proletariat for the whole of national economy and for the alliance with the peasantry. In China the revolution was lost by the failure to understand the leading and decisive role of the proletariat in relation to the agrarian revolution.

From the same viewpoint it is necessary to examine and estimate the role of the work of the Krestintern\* which from the beginning was not more than an experiment—an experiment which required the utmost vigilance, and integrity of principle, to boot. It is not difficult to understand the reason why.

The peasantry, by the history and conditions of its life, is the least international of all classes. What is called national traits has its chief source precisely in the peasantry. The peasantry and only its semi-proletarian sections at that can be interested in the international cause, only under the guidance of the proletariat. All roundabout ways are a mere play with classes, and such playing is always detrimental to the interests of the proletariat. Only to the extent that the national peasantry is severed by the national proletariat from the influence of the national bourgeoisie and is trained to see in the proletariat not only its ally, but also its leader, can it be attracted to the path of international politics. Attempts, however, to organize the peasants of the various countries into an independent international organization over the head of the proletariat and regardless of the national Communist Parties, are doomed beforehand to failure and, in the final analysis, can only hamper the struggle of the national proletariat for influence on the agricultural laborers and poor peasants.

In bourgeois revolutions as well as counter-revolutions, beginning with the peasant wars of the

sixteenth century, the various strata of the peasantry played an enormous and, at times, even decisive role. But this role was never an independent role. Directly or indirectly the peasantry always supported one political force against another. By itself it never constituted an independent force, having its own common national political tasks. In the epoch of finance capital the polarization of capitalist society has constantly progressed as compared with the phase of capitalist development. This means that the relative strength of the peasantry has diminished and not increased. At any rate, in the imperialist epoch, the peasants of the capitalist countries are less capable of INDEPENDENT political action on a national scale than in the epoch of industrial capitalism. The farmers of the United States today are incomparably less capable of playing an independent political role than forty or fifty years ago when, as the experience of the Populist movement shows, they could not organize an independent national party.

The temporary but sharp agrarianization of Europe as a result of the economic decline caused by the war has given rise to illusions concerning the possible role of "peasant", that is, bourgeois pseudo-peasant Parties. If in the period of grave peasant unrest after the war one could still risk the experiment of organizing a farmers' and peasants' international so as to test by experience the new relations between the proletariat and the peasantry, the peasantry and the bourgeoisie, the time has at last come when the five years experience of the Farmers' and Peasants' International must be theoretically and politically summarized, its great shortcomings revealed and an effort made to show what are its advantages. One conclusion at any rate cannot be denied. The experience of the "peasant" parties of Bulgaria, Poland, Roumania and Jugo-Slavia, that is, of the backward countries, the old experience of our Social Revolutionaries, and the fresh (the blood is not yet dried) experience with the Kuomintang, the sporadic experience in the advanced capitalist countries, particularly that of La Follette and Pepper in the United States, have invariably shown that in the epoch of capitalist decline there is even less reason to look for INDEPENDENT revolutionary anti-bourgeois peasant parties than in the epoch of rising capitalism.

"The town cannot be equalled to the village; the village cannot be equalled to the town in the historical conditions of that epoch. The town inevitably LEADS THE VILLAGE, the village inevitably follows the town."

still play a decisive role but this role, again, will be neither leading nor independent. The poor peasants of Hupeh, Kwantung, or Bengal can play a role not only on a national but also on an international scale. However, only on condition that they will support the workers of Shanghai, Hankow, Canton and Calcutta. This is the only way out for the revolutionary peasant ON AN INTERNATIONAL road. The effort immediately to unite the peasants of Hupeh with the peasants of Galicia or Dobrudja, the Egyptian fellah with the American farmer, is hopeless.

But the nature of politics is such that everything which does not directly serve its object inevitably becomes an instrument for other objects, frequently for the very opposite ones. Have we not seen examples when a bourgeois party, which relied on the peasantry or sought to rely on it, became interested in the Farmers' and Peasants' International for a longer or shorter period if it could not do so in the Comintern, only in order to find protection from the blows of its own Communist Party, as Purcell, in the trade union domain, protected himself through the Anglo-Russian Committee? If La Follette did not try to register in the Farmers' and Peasants' International that was due to the extreme weakness of the American Communist Party, the more so considering that at that time its leader Pepper, without an invitation, embraced La Follette, even without that. But Raditch, the bankers' leader of the Croatian rich peasants, found it necessary to leave his visiting card in the Farmers' and Peasants' International on his road to the Cabinet. The Kuomintang went much further than that and secured protection for itself, not only in the Farmers' International and the Anti-Imperialist League, but even knocked at the doors of the Politbureau of the C.P.S.U., against only one vote.

It is very significant for the leading political tendencies of recent years that whereas tendencies in favor of the liquidation of the PROFINTERN (the Red International of Labor Unions) were very strong (its very name was deleted from the statutes of Soviet trade unions), we find that, so far as we remember, the question has never been raised in the official press as to what exactly are the conquests of the FARMERS' AND PEASANTS' INTERNATIONAL.

The Sixth Congress must seriously probe the work of the Farmers' and Peasants' "International" from the viewpoint of p...