

**Ruining a Movement**

# Decline of the Chinese Communist Party

SHANGHAI—

The Chinese revolution of 1925-27 was drowned in blood by the joint forces of the imperialists and the national bourgeoisie with the help of Stalin. The Communist Party suffered a series of defeats in the struggle and became completely impotent both by physical extermination of the white terror and the demoralization caused by Stalin's theories. The Sixth (last) Congress of the Party held in June 1928 did not sum up the lessons of the greatest revolution in the East and straighten our political line in order to prepare the third Chinese revolution; instead it deepened the past mistakes and disarmed the Party ideologically and politically before the bourgeoisie.

The Congress defined the character of the next Chinese revolution as still a bourgeois democratic one and refused to see that the course and experiences of the 1925-27 revolution have shown that the solution of the tasks of a bourgeois democratic revolution can only lie in the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Congress gave ambiguous expressions concerning the present stage of developments, saying that although there is no broad mass revolutionary upheaval, it is nevertheless inevitable; we can already see weak symptoms of this upheaval but we must not overestimate them.

**An Open Road to Adventurism**

Thus the Congress did not give correct and definite estimations of the present period as the one between two revolutions, and did not put up transitional, revolutionary democratic slogans for the conquest of the masses. Instead it opened all doors to every adventurist explanation of the resolution. Every manifestation of discontent among the masses, no matter what character it assumes no matter how sporadic and spontaneous it is, a defensive strike or a mutiny of the soldiers, or the riots of the rickshaw coolies in the breaking up of tramways—all this is put into the scheme of the approach of the great mass revolutionary upheaval is seized upon to prepare the uprising or general strike. Those who do not believe this way are, of course, Trotskyists and therefore liquidators.

By defining the character of the next Chinese revolution (or the present unfinished one, according to the Stalinists) as bourgeois democratic, the Party raised in its "Program of the Chinese Revolution at the Present Stage" ten demands, as for example: Expropriation of the enterprises and banks of foreign capital; establishment of the workers-peasants-soldiers Soviet government; confiscation of the lands of all landlords and transference of all of it to the peasants. This means that the enterprises and banks of Chinese capital shall not be touched and violated in the revolution. It also gave elastic formulae concerning the peasants' movement, such as, "It is not correct deliberately to force (or to intensify) the anti-rich peasants struggle...but this is not to mean that we should give up the class struggle against the rich peasants...."

Such formulations naturally become repulsive and excite indignation among the rank and file of the Party members under the conditions of sharp class struggle antagonisms in China after the revolution. Already in the enlightenment campaign on the Sixth Congress, the workers in unit meetings demanded why the enterprises of Chinese capital should not be confiscated by the revolutionary power. The workers were not silenced by the scholasticism of the Party functionaries and said in indignant protest: "You are the second Chiang Kai-Sheks, only without arms," and then quit the meetings.

The tactics towards the rich peasants, when put into practice, can only mean the union with them but not the struggle against them. The rich peasant in China is most hated by the poor peasants, and by the village laborers, because he is a user, robs the poor peasant by making loans at heavy rates of interest. Now the Party

calls upon the poor peasants not to force the struggle against the rich ones when they should be the direct object of attack.

What did the poor peasant answer? In the province of Hupeh, for example, they said in one meeting: "We shall make no more revolutions. What good does it do us?" They slept in the meeting instead of taking an interest in it, that is, they passively resisted the official policy. In some other provinces, the rich peasants made their way into the Party, filled its ranks and even occupied leading posts there. When the Central Committee issues its directives to such Party locals, with slogan against taxes of every kind, against rent and payment of loans, then these locals only carried out the directives against taxes but not against rent and loans.

**Zig-Zagging Policies**

Because of the Stalinist leadership in the Comintern, the Party is left without any policy and definite line. It is helpless before events. Right on the eve of the war between Chiang Kai-Shek and the Kwang-Si clique in the Spring of last year, the Central Committee of the Party categorically stated that no war is possible between these two militarists' groups, and this in face of the feverish military preparations and transport of arms which convinced even the local Party organs of the inevitability of war. Only yesterday it spoke of not forcing the struggle against the rich peasants and denounced the Trotskyists for such a standpoint. Today, it opens a campaign in the Party press against those members of the Party who show hesitation in the struggle and announces itself ready for fighting the rich peasants to the bitter end. Yesterday it said that Chiang Kai-Shek represents the bourgeoisie against the "feudal power" of the Kwang-Si clique. Today, it says that "the Kiang-Su (the province where the Chiang government is located) ruling class is dominated by feudal elements". All these theories are changed like the weather or one's linen. What serious revolutionist can have confidence in such a leadership?

In the sphere of action, the Party leadership shows no less lightmindedness. Since the first of May, the Party has again entered the era of adventurism. Demonstrations were held in the streets according to the calendar of revolutionary festivals, if not with the masses then with the Party members alone. Instead of "taking possession of the streets", some hundred people together with the bystanders, stand on the sidewalks of an appointed street at an appointed time, then someone gives the signal with firecrackers, some slogans are shouted, leaflets are thrown into the street, and then there are some arrests, most of the participants and observers going quietly home.

Of course such farcical demonstrations can only lower the standard of Communism, make the Communist workers leave the Party's ranks, and arouse the antipathy of the workers. The attendants at the demonstrations become less as the former become more frequent and desperate. When the attendants diminish, then workers are hired to show up in the streets! No serious agitational work is developed in the factories or works, in the important big factories only two or three Communist workers remain and even then no regular meetings take place—sometimes for two months. The local organizers get in touch with them only when it is necessary to enlist them in demonstrations.

**Decline in Membership**

The membership under such conditions is miserable. According to an official admission in a circular of the Shanghai Eastern district (the biggest industrial district in Shanghai), the membership decreased since last August from 85 to 82. The membership in all Shanghai, according to the most optimistic figure, is about 800. There are many other industrial cities where the Communist workers do not count more than ten. We owe all this to Stalin's blind policy of adventurism, to the destructive work of the Stalinist which

the Party from the workers. Indeed, things have even gone so far that in some Shanghai factories, the Communist workers try to organize their own unions behind the backs of the official leadership and oppose their meddling in their affairs.

The characteristic feature of this period of adventurism is that it is combined with opportunism of the worst kind. The C. C. last year sent Communists into the army of the Left Kuo Min Tang generals to cooperate with them in the military campaign against Chiang Kai-Shek. The Party has sent representatives to attend the anti-Chiang Kai-Shek conference in Hong Kong in which the reactionary militarists and the Left Kuo Min Tang participated. Many lower Party workers were taken in by the Left Kuo Min Tang's military adventure against Chiang Kai-Shek. Others followed the tail of the Left Kuo Min Tang in the economic struggle and trade union tactics. At the top of the Party, a wild campaign is developed against the Left K.M.T. full of invective and abusive words, but behind the scenes, the official leadership coquettes with these same Lefts, organizes the armed uprising together with them. The Central task and slogan of today's official leadership is the general political strike, partisan's warfare, armed uprising, organizing the local uprisings, preparing to establish the revolutionary power, etc., that is, to run further away from the workers in order to combine with the Left Kuo Min Tang and become in fact the instrument of the petty bourgeoisie.

**The Guerilla Warfare**

As to the guerilla warfare, in many places it becomes "aimless burning, killing and pillaging under the leadership of the declassed elements" (from the Party circular), since it lacks a mass basis. It sometimes violates the poor peasant's property because the armed forces of the landlords and rich peasants are too strong to permit of plundering. In other villages, the guerilla warfare which has some mass basis, divides the land among the peasants and annuls loans, doing something in the interest of the peasants by exterminating the landlords and bureaucrats. But these acts are too far from the important cities to exercise any influence upon them, and besides when it assumes a more menacing character, it is overpowered and driven away by the government's troops.

Since last year, the Party has concentrated all its propaganda work in the struggle against "Trotskyism", because the Communist Opposition has begun to work in China. Since then, it has taken a series of organizational measures against us. It fights most fiercely against one slogan, the Constituent Assembly, denouncing it as the slogan of the Left Kuo Min Tang. Thus, the constituent assembly, together with the 8-hour day, the confiscation of land, and the fight for the complete independence of China and self-determination of nationalities within China, which form our transitional revolutionary democratic demands to mobilize the masses, are "liquidators' demands" in the eyes of the Stalinists. But that does not in the least prevent the official leadership of the Party from organizing the "League for the Struggle for Freedom", together with the discontented petty bourgeois elements, intellectuals and professors, which is necessarily a decorative and helpless institution like the Anti-Imperialist League all over the world: a veritable tail of the petty bourgeoisie.

NIEL-SH

April 13, 1930.

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**TROWS HUNDREDS OUT OF JOBS**

MILLTOWN, N. J.—With the closing of the Michelin Tire Co. works at Milltown, near New Brunswick, hundreds of French workers imported from Brittany are jobless here in a strange country. They staged a short walkout two years ago, in revolt against a wage which sounded good in Brittany when they left their fisher nets to look for gold in America. Arrived in Milltown, they found the \$12 a week wage paid adult men didn't mean what the equivalent in francs would buy back in the old country.

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CLEVELAND—Over 109 men have been dropped from the Cleveland Railway Co. payroll since January 1. The company saved \$74,663 in maintenance in April, and \$14,000 was cut off operating expenses.