

WHO WILL PREVAIL?

The provisional character of the Congress is displayed more crudely than the most imaginative Oppositionist might have conceived it. What is the single episode of Uglanov worth? This bully, audacious when he is the apparatus, but a rag when he is outside of it, repented for the second time by unreservedly recognizing all the "rhythms" and all the "periods". Does that look as it were enough? They laughed at him. Is that what he was asked? Are you a little child? Then acknowledge that Stalin is a born leader and countersign it.

Evidently, Uglanov acknowledged it and, of course, he countersigned it. Everything is now reduced to that. The five year plans may vary; yesterday the growth was still 9 percent; today it is 30 percent. The five year plans may become four or three year plans and, for collectivization, even two year plans. But that is not the question. Acknowledge Stalin. The assembling does not take place on a program, nor on ideas, nor on methods, but on a person. Stalin surrounds himself with a Central Committee, the Central Committee with District Committees, and the District Committees select a Party. The Congress assembles only for the purpose of demonstrating for things settled in advance. Taken as a whole, it is a preparation for Bonapartism within the framework of the Party. It takes a pitiful blind man or a tired official not to see it and not to understand it. But to see and understand it, and to keep still, is possible only for scoundrels. There are not a few of them among the capitulators.

The ten hours report of Stalin—what emptiness of bureaucratic thought!

Stalin's Figures

The figures of success are not presented to instruct, but to dazzle and deceive the Party. The successes are incontestable—it is not we who deny it; we foresaw them and we fought for them at a time when the motto of the Party was to be satisfied with the "slow growth", at a time when all the Kaganovitches shrieked at us while defending the five year plan at 9 percent: "Where will you get the means, demagogues?" At a time when all the Yaroslavskys, in reply to criticism of the shameful minimalism of the original five year plan, threw volumes of control figures at the heads of the speakers; at a time when the Molotovs jeered at the very idea of the possibility of a 20 percent increase after the end of the reconstruction period. The successes are undeniable. We foresaw and fought for them a long time.

Already in the first control figures of the state plan of 1925, very imperfect and very timid, we discerned "the music of socialism in construction". What sarcasm this expression aroused among the philistines, the ignoramuses, the dunces, the talentless geniuses of the all-powerful apparatus. Now that all the immense possibilities contained in the October revolution have blazed a way through the most stubborn difficulty—the narrow conservative spirit of the bureaucracy—the latter parades in its Congress:

"The October revolution: that is us! Socialism: that is us! And everything else: that is us also! For the State, is us!" After which Stalin appears and explains: "The workers' State, that is I; and all of them, they are still I." And since they have destroyed and trampled down the control of the masses, they need an arbitrary power, a chief, the coronation of the hierarchy, the first among all: Stalin.

That is why they rise and proclaim in chorus: "Yes. We are he." That is the music of the Sixteenth Congress.

The economic successes are considerable. But the difficulties and the contradictions are still greater. On that point Stalin said nothing. Or rather, he merely said just what was needed to conceal the difficulties and attenuate the contradictions.

Nothing but figures to characterize the rhythm of growth! Not a figure to characterize the quality of production! It is as though to describe the constitution of a man, one gave his height without giving his breadth. This also applies to the question of net costs. The whole economic system, and above all, its management, is

tested by the output of labor and the tributary economic forms of the market, the output of labor is measured by the production costs or the net costs. To avoid this question is to declare a man healthy by looking at his face without either listening to him or taking his pulse.

The inter-dependence of the city and the country is regulated among us by the exchange: money is not yet a thing of the past. Stalin said nothing about the dangers of inflation.

The problem of the relation of taxed prices of agricultural products and retail prices of manufactured commodities is one of the central problems not only of economy but of the whole social and political system based on the October revolution. Are the "scissors" of the price of manufactured objects and agricultural products closing or widening, the "scissors" of which one blade represents the worker and the other the peasant. Not a word about that in the report.

On the contrary, one finds there the affirmation that the dilemma: "Who will prevail?", is now settled and conclusively. This conclusion is drawn from the incontestable weakening of capitalist forces in the internal market. But this weakening does not decide the question. The village has not yet said its final word. The contradictions of the country are being brought into the frame-work of the collective farms, but they have not yet disappeared. They will reveal themselves. A good harvest will revive their acuteness. The drivers and numskulls will surely say that we are against a good harvest. All the Rudzutaks have Mikoyaned, all the Mikoyans have Rudzutaked on this theme for many years until, in their ardor, they ran their heads against the Kulaks' barns. That is when they proclaimed in Pravda that, as a result of two good harvests, the Kulak had attracted the middle peasant and taught him to conduct the grain strike against the Workers' State. The less the leadership is capable of foresight, the more the process of differentiation pursues its fatal course. It will pass through all the collective farms and develop the differentiation between the various farms and within them. And that is when the leadership, which is strong for forecast after the event, will convince itself that the framework of the collective farms, lacking solid material and cultural foundations are exposed to all the contradictions of merchant economy. The majority of the bureaucratically created collective farms will become the arena of the class struggle. That means the dilemma: "Who will prevail?" will arise anew in all its amplitude, raised to a higher degree.

The World Market

But the struggle will not stop there. The internal forces of capitalism in the U.S.S.R. draw their importance and significance from the forces of world capitalism. But Mikoyan—this infant prodigy—will probably have to convince himself that there really is "this world market to which we are subordinate, to which we are bound, from which we cannot escape." (Lenin at the 11th Congress.) The dilemma: "Who will prevail?" is in the last analysis the question of the mutual relations between the U.S.S.R. and world capitalism. This problem is not solved but only posed by history. The internal successes are of great importance because they give the possibility of consolidation, of progress, and when it is necessary to wait, of holding on. But no more. The internal economic struggles are vanguard battles with an enemy the bulk of whose forces is beyond the border. The dilemma: "Who will prevail?", not only on the military field, not only on the political field, but primarily on the economic field, is posed before us on a world scale—or more precisely, it circumscribes us.

Military intervention is dangerous. Economic intervention by low-priced products is incomparably more dangerous. The question of economic power and of political stability leads in the last analysis to

the question of labor productivity. In merchant economy, labor productivity is expressed by the net cost and sales price. The "scissors" between home prices and the prices of the world market constitute the most important measure of the relation of forces between growing socialism and its capitalist encirclement. What has become of these "scissors" in the course of the last two and a half years? On this essential question, no reply. Stalin gives no seriously studied comparative coefficient, no Marxist formula to define the dynamic interdependence of home and world economy. The engineer who runs an electric station must have before him a chart of the control apparatus by means of which he ceaselessly follows all the fundamental processes of production and the distribution of energy. In the same way, the economic direction of the Soviet State must have on its "chart" the constant system of coefficients which characterize—not only the absolute growth of industry—but also the curve of net costs, the purchasing power of the tchervonetz, the home and foreign "scissors". If not, the leadership is compelled to react blindly to economic disorder, until the safety apparatus explode one after the other, fire breaks out, and the consumers lose themselves in the night.

The emptiness of ten hours of bureaucratic thought will teach the Party nothing and prepare it for nothing. Quite the contrary it can only lull it with the disgraceful melody of "national socialism".

The Party Regime

At all events, the most threatening danger is not constituted today by the "scissors" between home and foreign prices. The most threatening danger is the "scissors" between the Party bureaucracy and the working class, with the complete impotence and the decomposition of the Party. The monstrous parade of "monolithism" is crowned by a small, a very small circumstance; but a very menacing one: this "monolithism" of two millions cannot tolerate the slightest criticism of the leadership. In the thirteenth anniversary of the dictatorship, after all the economic and cultural successes, after the question "Who will prevail?" is pronounced finally settled and when, consequently, the Party regime should become incomparably freer than at the time of the civil war—the Party, that is, the bureaucracy, does not tolerate a single critical remark by a worker, a single timid question by the student: "Is not the Central Committee responsible for the deviations?" The whole press, unleashing its standardized rage, denounces the remark of the worker or the question of the student as the most direct and most threatening danger to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The bureaucracy of the G.P.U. does not let itself be surpassed by the Party bureaucracy, with its Yagodas and under-Yagodas grown ripe under the Stalinist sun. The Agabekovs watch vigilantly over the monolithism up to the moment when they pass over to the class enemy.

One of the deported Oppositionists is hunted down by virtue of the statute on espionage for having corresponded with Trotsky. This idea undoubtedly comes from the Master himself. For his whole mastery consists only of such ideas. In his speech to the Congress, Stalin said that the Left Opposition serves information to the press of the world bourgeoisie. What information? The verbose speaker said nothing about that. However, from the information that the bourgeoisie gets from our publications it can draw but one conclusion: that in spite of the Thermidor lies of Stalin's agents, we, Bolshevik-Leninists, constitute an inseparable part of the Soviet Republic, its devoted soldiers, ready to defend it to the very end and at the same time, the Left wing of the international proletarian vanguard. The world bourgeoisie and the social democracy understand this very well. That is why they enclose us in a hostile blockade, for which the Dovgalevskys, the Bessedovskys, and the

Cachins join with Tardieu, the Krestinskys come to understandings with the ministers of Hindenburg, and the Sokolnikovs conspire with the Hendersons. There is the real distribution of men on the great chess-board.

As for ourselves, we ask what information is needed by the world bourgeoisie, after what is furnished it by the official Stalinist press agency, and primarily by Stalin himself. The president of the Soviet of Commissars is spoken of as a saboteur. Yesterday's leaders of the Comintern are branded as the "agents of the bourgeoisie". For the amusement of children, they exhibit yesterday's guides of the trade unions and of the Moscow organization who purged it of "Trotskyism" for many years. On top of this, the official press publishes information on the passage of "Trotskyists" from the ranks of the Red Army into the ranks of Chiang Kai-Shék. Is all this a joke? The world bourgeoisie knows the history of the Red Army well enough to ask itself: "If this is true, then what does it mean?" At the same time, irreproachable Bolsheviks, unshakable revolutionists are persecuted for having corresponded with Trotsky. Do not these facts, furnished every day and every hour by the Stalinist apparatus—which tramples under foot and drags into the mud the whole past of the Party and the revolution solely for the purpose of forging a false biography for the provision of a chief—do not these facts suffice for the world bourgeoisie?

And if that is not enough, the Stalinist informers appear in their second edition: Bessedovsky, Krukov, Agabekov who have ceaselessly combated Trotskyism for seven years, who yesterday—literally yesterday—directed the purging of the nuclei, and who pass directly into the camp of the class enemy furnishing the Secret Services of imperialism with all the secrets of the Soviet government which were confided to them or which they were aware of. What information does the bourgeoisie still need after what they are constantly furnished with by the Stalinists of today and the Stalinists of yesterday, who supplement one another?

Stalin's Repressions

After the shooting of Blumkin, Stalin replaced him with Agabekov. There is a fact which sums up the policy that Stalin carries out in the Party. At the same time, the Agabekovs persecute the revolutionists who correspond with Trotsky by virtue of the statute which is supposed to permit Stalin to perpetrate new assassinations. He who does not understand the symptomatic and threatening import of this fact is a miserable idiot. He who understands and keeps quiet is a scoundrel.

Neither the repression nor the threats will silence us. The stake of this struggle is too grave: it is the fate of the Party of Lenin and the October revolution. Not only of the C.P. of the S.U. but of the international Party of Lenin, which has today fallen under the direction of the adjutant Flick under the pseudonym of Molotov. It is a question of the preservation of world Communism. The struggle between Leninism and Stalinism is still open. And here the question "Who will prevail?" assumes its full amplitude.

Repression will not cause us to deviate from our path. The bloodiest and most envenomed violence of Stalin will not separate us from the Party that Stalin holds at the throat. But we will redouble, and treble and multiply tenfold the energy of our struggle. Today we continue to serve the aims that we served in the 1905 revolution, during the imperialist slaughter, in the 1917 revolution, the civil war, the first period of economic construction, the foundation of the Comintern, the struggles against the cowardice of the philistine epigones, for a bold rhythm of socialist construction, against national socialism, for the international revolution!

—THE BULLETIN OF THE OPPOSITION (BOLSHEVIK-LENINISTS)