

# SOCIALISM AND ADVENTURISM

THE DANGERS OF

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(Continued from the Last Issue)  
Pravda itself (October 27) is compelled to observe:

"We are experiencing difficulties in the supply of food and industrial commodities for current use.

"We are still experiencing a great shortage of metal, of coal, of electrical energy and of building materials for the full assurance of the rhythms undertaken in the socialist construction.

"The transportation of industrial and agricultural products is far from being assured by our transport service.

"National economy is experiencing a pressing shortage of factory hands and of cadres of skilled workers".

Does it not flow from all this that the passage from the five to the four year plan was a flatly adventurist step? For everybody, except Pravda. "The delay in fundamental construction in 1929-1930," writes Pravda, "in spite of the absence of objective causes, was a pretext for the agents of the Kulaks in the party—the Right wing opportunists—to raise new howls on the subject of the intolerable rhythms adopted by the party." (November 3, 1930.) In this way the Stalinists are, better than anyone could, clearing the ground for the Right wing by reducing their divergences with it to this dilemma: four or five years? However, this question can be decided not in a "principled" manner but only empirically. In this dispute, which is measured by a difference of twelve months, it is still difficult to define two distinct lines. Yet this bureaucratic manner of posing the question gives us the exact measure of the divergences between the Right and the Centrists in the evaluation of the Centrists themselves. The relations between them is as four to five, which makes a twenty percent difference. And what will happen in case experience should show that the plan will not come to be realized in four years? Would that mean that the Right wing is correct?

Between the second and the third years the so-called supplementary trimester (October, November, December 1930) was inserted. The third year of the five year plan now begins officially on January 1, 1931, without taking into account this supplementary trimester. The divergence with the Right wing is thus reduced from twenty to fifteen percent. What purpose do these worthless methods of procedure serve? They serve the purpose of "prestige", but not of socialism.

The gaps that they are compelled to stuff up with the supplementary trimester came into being, according to Pravda "in spite of the absence of objective causes." This is a very consoling explanation but it replaces neither the uncompleted factories nor the unmanufactured commodities. The misfortune is that the subjective factors like "incompetence", "the absence of initiative", etc., are governed by the subjective element, that is, by the bureaucratic apparatus, only to a certain extent, and beyond these limits the subjective factors become objective fetters since they are determined in the last analysis by the level of technique and of culture. Finally, even the "gasp" which are actually engendered by subjective causes, for example, by the myopia of the "general" leadership, also become objective fetters since they are possibilities of further development. If opportunism is characterized by a passive adaptation to objective conditions ("chvostism"), adventurism, which is the antipode of opportunism, is characterized by its wanton and disdainful attitude towards the objective factors. The leitmotiv of the Soviet press today is: "Nothing is impossible for a Russian".

The articles of Pravda (Stalin himself remains prudently silent) prove that foresight, collective experience, flexibility in economic direction, will, in the future as in the past, be replaced by the "general" knout. Pravda recognizes, in a series of cases, that "faltering was liquidated less by production than by the revolutionary pressure of the masses" (November 1). The meaning of this avowal is quite clear.

It is obvious that if it were really a question of outstripping in the course of the coming two or three years the advanced capitalist countries and in this way to assure the invulnerability of socialist economy, then a temporary pressure, no matter how heavy it might be for the muscles and nerves of the workers, would be comprehensible and even justified. We have seen above with how much ambiguity, deceit and demagoguery this question is presented before the workers. The uninterrupted play on the nerves threatens to provoke a reaction in the masses incomparably graver than that of the end of the civil war.

This danger is all the more acute and menacing since not only will the problem of "catching up with and outstripping" not be solved, even admitting that the five year plan is completely realized, but the plan itself will never be realized in four years, in spite of the extreme extension of forces. What is still more serious is that the adventurism of the leadership renders the realization of the plan in five years less and less likely. The stupid and blind obstinacy of maintaining the plan intact and to the letter in the name of the "general" prestige, makes inevitable a whole series of crises, which can retard the economic development and unleash an open political crisis.

## THE U. S. S. R. AND THE WORLD MARKET

Thus the summary results of the production increase, unusual in its sweep, do not trace the real picture of the situation, for they do not characterize the economically and politically unfavorable conditions in which the third year of the five year plan began (October 1, 1930). A more concrete economic analysis shows that the arbitrary statistics of the successes hide a series of profound contradictions: (a) between the city and country (the price scissors; the lack of food products and raw materials; the lack of industrial commodities in the country); (b) between heavy and light industry (enterprises not supplied with raw materials and the shortage of commodities); (c) between the real and the nominal purchasing capacity of the teheronetz (inflation); (d) between the party and the working class; (e) between the apparatus and the party; (f) within the apparatus.

But aside from these so-called internal contradictions, there is a contradiction which, by the logic of things, acquire an ever greater significance: the contradiction between Soviet economy and the foreign market.

The reactionary utopia of an enclosed socialist economy developing harmoniously on the internal foundations with the safeguarding of the monopoly of foreign trade, constituted the point of departure of the whole plan. The specialists of the State Planning Commission, willingly running counter to the "bosses" and connecting their aims at sabotage with the prejudices of the masters, constructed the first draft of the five year plan not only with a declining curve of the industrial rhythms but also with a declining curve of foreign trade: they provided that at the end of the next ten, twelve years, the U. S. S. R. would have completely ceased all importation. And since, on the other hand, the same plan provided for an increasingly abundant harvest, and consequently increasing possibilities for export, a question remained unanswered: what will be done with the surplus grain as well as with the other surpluses that the country will have produced? Surely they were not to be dumped into the ocean? However, before the first draft of the five year plan was submitted, under the pressure of the Opposition, to a revision in principle, the very development of things produced fissures in the theory and practice of an isolated economy. The world market presents to the economy of every country, socialist as well as capitalist, immense and prodigiously inexhaustible reserves. The growth of Soviet industry creates technical and cultural needs on the one hand and new contradictions on the other, thus obliging it to resort in ever greater measure to the reserves of foreign trade. At the same time, the development of industry which is unequal because of natural conditions, engenders in various branches a pressing need for exporting (for example, oil, wood), long before industry as a whole has begun to satisfy the elementary requirements of the country. The revival of the economic life of the U. S. S. R. thus leads from all sides not to the economic isolation of the country but quite the contrary to the growth of its relations with world economy, and consequently of its dependence upon world economy. The character of this dependence is defined on the one hand by the specific gravity of Soviet economy within world economy, but in a more direct manner—by the relationship between the net cost of the Soviet products and the net costs of the advanced capitalist countries.

The entry of Soviet economy upon the world market has thus taken place not in accordance with the provisions of the plan, with a broad perspective, but on the contrary despite all the provisions, under the pressure of pitiless necessity, when it was shown that the import of machinery, of

different matter of life and death for all the branches of industry. Imports cannot be extended except by the extension of exports.

The Soviet state exports because it cannot help but export and it sells at prices which are determined today by world economy. By that, Soviet economy not only falls to an increasing degree under the control of the world market, but more than that, it is drawn—in a refracted and altered way, it is understood—into the sphere of influence of the oscillations of the world capitalist conjuncture. The export plan for the year 1929-1930, far from being realized according to the provisions, has been considerably injured as regards financial results because of the world crisis. This is how one of the multiple discussions between the Left Opposition and the Centrists finds its solution. Already in the struggle for the necessity of elaborating the five year plan, we advanced the idea that the five year plan is only the first stage, after which we would have to pass over in the briefest possible time to a plan with a perspective of eight or ten years, in order to embrace an average period for renewing the stock of tools, and, at the same time to adopt ourselves to the world conjuncture. A stabilization of post-war capitalism, no matter how frail—said the representatives of the Opposition—will lead inevitably to the reappearance of the commercial-industrial cycles disturbed by the war, and we will be obliged to build our plans not upon the alleged independence from the world conjuncture, but upon the intelligent adaptation to this conjuncture, that is, in such a manner as to be able to gain as much as possible from the economic rise and to lose as little as possible from the crisis. It is futile to recall now the national-socialist commonplace which the official leaders, and Stalin and Bukharin in the first place, set up against these provisions which are being realized today. The less the leaders of economy foresaw the simple logic of things the more does export today assume a chaotic character.

From the brief history of Soviet foreign trade and the difficulties encountered last year by exports, always very inadequate in volume, in spite of its forced character some conclusions, simple but very important for the future, must be drawn. The greater the success of the development of Soviet economy in the future, the more extended will have to be the foreign economic relations. The contrary theorem is still more important: it is only by an ever greater extension of exports and imports that economy will be able to overcome in time the partial crises, to diminish the partial disproportions, to level the dynamic equilibrium of the various branches and in this way assure accelerated rhythms of development.

However, it is precisely here that, in the final analysis, we run into the decisive problems and difficulties. The possibility of making use of the reserves of the world market for the development of socialist economy is directly determined, as we have said, by the relations between the domestic and the world net costs of a unit of merchandise of a fixed, standard quality. However, the bureaucratic course of the rhythms up to now has not only not permitted us to obtain any successes in this field, but even of posing this question in its genuine aspect.

In his report to the 16th Congress, Stalin said that the quality of our production is "sometimes scandalous" (it is with such explanations that the bureaucracy stuffs up every hole). This looks very much like the expression concerning our "frightful" backwardness. Instead of exact data, we are served up expressions which have the air of being very strong, but which only conceal the reality with cowardice: the backwardness—"frightful"; the quality—"scandalous". Yet, two figures, two average comparative coefficients would have given the party and the working class an incomparably more valuable orientation than all the mountains of cheap journalistic statistics, which fill the ten hour speeches of the sages of our times and which seek, in this field also, to replace quality by quantity.

The sale of Soviet products even at prices lower than the net costs is—in the interests of imports—inevitable in a certain measure and is fully justified from the point of view of general economy. But only in a certain measure. The increase of exports will encounter in the future ever greater obstacles, as a result of the difference in domestic and world net costs. Here the problem of comparative coefficients of the quality and quantity of domestic and world products is posed with a special acuteness and an obvious necessity. The fate

of Soviet economy is decided economically in the knot of foreign trade, just as it is decided politically—in the knot which binds the C. P. S. U. with the Comintern

The world capitalist press has represented the growth of Soviet exports as dumping, and the mercenary bourgeoisie of the Russian emigration and its domesticated "democracy" have seized upon this catchword—and there is nothing astonishing in this, just as there is nothing astonishing in the fact that the mercenary emigrant press publishes the revelations of the national defense secrets of the U. S. S. R. in the interests of Rumania, of Poland and sharks of more substantial size. It is not their dastardliness which is astonishing, it is their stupidity which, for that matter is not surprising either: do not ask for too much intelligence from the mercenary bourgeoisie. By representing the Soviet "dumping" as a threat to world economy, the liberals and the democrats recognized by that alone that Soviet industry has attained such a degree of power that it is in a position to shake the world market. Unfortunately, that is not the case.

It is enough to say that Soviet exports, considerably augmented in its present volume, represents only one and a half percent of world exports. With this, it is impossible to overturn capitalism, rotten though it is. It is only avowed boobies who, without ceasing to be knaves for that, can attribute to the Soviet government the intention of provoking the world revolution by one and one half percent of exports.

What are called the inroads of Soviet economy into world economy is rather, in much greater measure, the inroads of the world market into Soviet economy. This process will be extended until it becomes more and more an economic duel between two systems. In the light of this perspective, we see how infantile is the narrow philosophy according to which the construction of socialism is assured by the victory of the bourgeoisie of one's own country, after which the relationships with the world abroad is limited to the struggle against military interventions.

Already at the beginning of the world crisis, the Opposition proposed the launching of an international proletarian campaign for the strengthening of economic collaboration with the U. S. S. R. In spite of the fact that the crisis and unemployment made this campaign urgent, it was rejected under all sorts of inept pretexts, but in reality because the initiative for it emanated from the Opposition. At the present time, in view of the world attack against Soviet "dumping", the sections of the Comintern are nevertheless compelled to conduct the campaign we proposed before in favor of economic collaboration with the U. S. S. R. But how pitiful and eclectic is this campaign, without either clear ideas or perspectives; a campaign of disordered defense instead of a well prepared offensive. Thus, we once more see in the light of this example that behind the bureaucratic clamouring is concealed the same "chvostism", the same incapacity to take the political initiative in a single important question.

## CONCLUSION

1. To acknowledge publicly that the realization of the five year plan in four years was a false step.
2. The experiences of the first two years and the inserted trimester must be the object of studies and free and cogent discussion by the party.
3. The criteria of this discussion: (a) the optimum rhythms (those which are most reasonable), that is, the rhythms which not only assure the application of the present orders, but still more, the dynamic equilibrium of the rapid growth for a series of years to come; (b) the systematic raising of real wages; (c) the closing of the scissors of industrial and agricultural prices, that is, the strengthening of the alliance with the peasantry.
4. In no case to identify the collective farms with socialism. To follow attentively the inevitable process of differentiation within the collectives, as well as between different collectives.
5. To pose openly and within the framework of the plan the problem of stabilizing the monetary system, otherwise the dangers of panic which bureaucratic deflation may engender will be just as threatening as inflation.
6. The problem of foreign trade must be posed as a cardinal problem in the perspective of the extension of relations with world economy.
7. To work out a system of comparative coefficients between Soviet production