

A National Revolution in the South?

Every important revolutionary question that Stalinism has attempted to solve and explain, to the party and to the class, has revolved in greater confusion and further revision of Marxism. Since the 1923 revolution in Germany, Stalinism has grown to a full size menace to the Bolshevik-Leninist position of the proletarian revolution. In every part of the world, where revolutionary situations have developed favorable to the extension of the October revolution, Stalinism has stayed the hand of the Communist vanguard, sowed confusion, by a combination of zig-zags, from opportunism to adventurism.

In the United States we have not yet had a revolutionary situation favorable for the proletarian seizure of power, notwithstanding the fact that the VII National Convention of the Communist Party of the United States adopted a thesis which said we were faced with a revolutionary upsurge in 1932—that is, in the first year of the present crisis. Because our "test" is still ahead Stalinism has not been able to repeat its criminal action in America.

The absence of a revolutionary situation in the United States up to the present has prevented the Stalinists from presenting us with their directives in action. However, there is sufficient material on hand to determine what road to power the Stalinists have charted out for the American workers.

The Stalinist "Chart for the U. S."
In the present chaotic stage of capitalism we are confronted with an era of proletarian revolutions which will be supported in the backward and underdeveloped capitalist countries by colonial uprisings and bourgeois-democratic revolutions, which have as their driving force, not the bourgeoisie, but the proletariat, with the support of the peasantry. In the developed capitalist countries, particularly in the United States, we are heading for a proletarian revolution.

The Centrals present their position in the "Resolution of the Communist International on the Negro Question in the United States," of October 1930. The C. I. resolution says, "The various forms of oppression of the Negro masses, who are concentrated mainly in the so-called 'Black Belt' provide the necessary conditions for a national revolutionary movement among the Negroes." We are thus informed by Stalinism that the road to power in parts of the United States leads through the "national revolution." Stalinism says the "national revolution" will come first or that an agrarian revolution in the South will lay the basis for self-determination for the Negro masses. Let us see what the C. I. resolution says. "Therefore, the overthrow of this class rule in the Black Belt is unconditionally necessary in the struggle for the Negroes' right to self-determination. This, however, means at the same time the overthrow of the yoke of American imperialism in the Black Belt on which the forces of the local white bourgeoisie depend. Only in this way, only if the Negro population of the Black Belt wins its freedom from American imperialism even to the point of deciding itself the relations between its country and other governments, especially the United States, will it win real and complete self-determination. One should demand from the

Discussion Article on the Negro Question

beginning that no armed forces of the American imperialists should remain on the territory of the Black Belt."

The Fate of the "Democratic Dictatorship" in the South

According to this quotation Stalinism does not only believe in a national revolution in PART of the United States but considers this national revolution to be the prelude to the proletarian revolution. Or, that first we will have a national revolution in the South—which will overthrow American imperialism—and then, sometime later, the proletariat will have its revolution. There are plenty of quotations in the history of the American Communist movement to prove that the party is aiming at a proletarian revolution—but the present Stalinist position on the Negro question, which speaks of an agrarian revolution, of a "national revolution," shows that they are badly confused. They are now aiming, not only at a proletarian revolution but are also aiming to establish a power in the South by a national revolution. Stalinism will not be able to wipe this out of the Communist movement until it corrects its position on the Negro question.

The resolution says, "Moreover, the party cannot make its stand for this slogan depend upon any condition, even the condition that the proletariat has the hegemony in the national revolutionary Negro movement or that the majority of the Negro population in the Black Belt adopted the Soviet form (as Pepper demanded) etc." This is not an abstract sentence speaking of revolutions against imperialism even though we do not have hegemony. It is a concrete statement for the southern part of the United States. In other words, they leave the door open for a revolution, a national revolution, in the southern part of the UNITED STATES which will not have a proletarian hegemony and will establish a power—other than a Soviet. What kind of a revolution have the Stalinists in store for us? What is their perspective? They can speak of a proletarian revolution all they want to but if they at the same time speak of a "national revolution" in the South, which will be the first or coming revolution—this in itself discounts what they say about the revolution to follow. To aim, first at a national revolution and then at a proletarian revolution in the United States is worse than the path of Stalinism in China, where they first aimed at the "democratic dictatorship" and then (?) later (?) at the dictatorship of the proletariat.

This false base in the United States is no accident—it flows from the false premise of the theory of socialism in one country. On this revisionist base no Marxian theory for revolution for developed or backward capitalist countries can be developed. The resolution is a bundle of confusion. A couple of examples can be presented. The resolution says the Black Belt can-

not be "called a special colony of the United States," but at the same time the resolution says, "In the interest of the utmost clarity of ideas on this question, the Negro question in the United States must be reviewed from the standpoint of its peculiar nature, namely, as a question of an oppressed nation, which in a peculiar and extraordinary distressing situation of national oppression not only in view of the prominent racial distinction (marked difference of color of skin, etc.), but above all, because of considerable social antagonism (remnants of slavery)."

After we are informed that remnants of slavery are a fact, the same resolution tells us that slavery is a fact. "It is only a Yankee bourgeois lie to say that the yoke of Negro slavery has been lifted in the United States. Formally it has been abolished but in practise the great majority of the Negro masses in the South are living in slavery in the literal sense of the word." Economic analysis has been replaced by "moral determinism." After we are told of remnants of slavery and then of slavery, the resolution continues, "More than three-fourths of all the Negro farmers have been bound in actual serfdom to farms and plantations of white exploiters by the feudal system of 'share cropping.'" The national question as well as the kind of labor: slaves, serfs or workers and farmers under capitalism depends, not upon moral conclusions of double exploitation, but upon economic relations.

One cannot come to a correct conclusion by approaching the problem of the coming revolution in the United States from the standpoint of the parts (south). Only by considering the part, the South, in relation to the whole, to the United States and world capitalism, can we find the Marxian road to power. The unsolved carry-over in the South, the economic needs and democratic demands that capitalism thrives on can not be fulfilled by a national revolution. They can only be eliminated in the United States by the overthrow of American imperialism.

The only force capable of this task is the proletarian revolution under the leadership of the Communist Party led by Marxists and not middle-headed Stalinists.

The C. I. resolution informs us that the agrarian problem is the basis of the national question. This is a return to an economic base. But this correct abstraction is used for false conclusions. The agrarian problem of the Russian, Chinese or Mexican peasants is not the same agrarian problem of the American Negroes. From the standpoint of exploitation or from the standpoint of moral consideration we can say the Negroes of the South are as bad off, but this does not solve the problem. The approach to the problem must be to ECONOMIC RELATIONS—SHIPS. Carryovers in developed America and feudal remnants of backward countries are two different problems. We do not conclude after we have analyzed the relation of the share-croppers to the landowners and local bankers. This must be extended to the WHOLE, which is within the framework of the capitalist mode of production of developed American imperialism. The question of the state and the ruling class cannot be ignored in the problem.

The condition of the Negro farmers is a remnant, a carryover which no one can deny, but the uneven development within countries as well as between countries which express the law of uneven development, not only skips stages but also bundles into knots different problems, which can only be untangled if the key is found. The keys for colonial countries and for the United States are different. For colonial countries, the solution of the agrarian problem, under the dictatorship of the proletariat expresses itself through giving land to the peasants, as a transition measure, essential, because a machine base for proper collectivization is lacking.

The solution of the agrarian problem in the United States, and this includes the Negro farmers, is not through TRANSITION STEPS (national revolution, agrarian revolution, etc.) but through the transformation of these antiquated methods of agricultural production into modern machine production. The collectivization of the farms, upon a machine base, and the transformation of oppressed farmers, black and white, not into free agrarian wage workers of the collectivized projects. This will be the product of the proletarian revolution.

We ask you readers to read the C. I. resolution yourself. It is printed by the party as, "The Communist Position on the Negro Question." The sections of the book by Browder and others present the case in an even more confused manner.

A Levee for a Retreat
In the same resolution, they quote the Colonial Theses of the Sixth World Congress. "But it is also clear that only a victorious proletarian revolution will finally decide the agrarian question and the national question in the South of the United States, in the interest of the predominating mass of Negro population of the country." The sentence says, "finally decide," meaning that the first revolution will be a "national revolution" and later we will have a proletarian revolution.

The socialists tell us they are aiming at a socialist mode of production. But what road do they follow to get it? The Stalinists tell us that they are aiming at the proletarian revolution too. But what road do they follow in the United States to get it? They tell us—first, a national revolution in the South, and then a proletarian revolution. The road to power cannot be separated from power itself, nor can the road to power be cut off, if we tack on for the distant future the goal of the proletarian revolution, or the socialist mode of production. So many good words and intentions, and that's all.

The rejection of the Marxian theory of the permanent revolution by the Stalinists and the adoption of the non-Marxian theory of socialism in one country in the base of these blunders, not only in America but wherever the Stalinists participated in a revolution or where they presented directives for the coming revolution. The coming revolution in America will be a proletarian revolution. It will not only complete the unfinished carryovers but it will primarily solve the problems of the working class.

—HUGO OEHLER.

VOTE COMMUNIST!

Highlights at Gillespie

Observations at the Convention of the Illinois Miners

GILLESPIE.—The National Miners Union had presented a credential for a fraternal delegation for Nelson, Meyerscough, Minerich and Borich. The Right wing showed itself, amid much demagoguery, much flaunting of the red herring, one delegate from Auburn, proclaiming loudly his Americanism, threatened to withdraw if the N. M. U. were permitted to remain in the hall. The Right wing was victorious and the N. M. U. was not seated while the West Virginia Miners Union was. The N. M. U. was not even allowed the floor when the motion was made and carried to proceed to the next order of business. The fight of the Left wing was unavailing against the double factor of the red phobic reactionaries and the disrepute of Stalinism because of the record of the Communist. The second factor prepared the miners to be easy prey for the reactionary demagogues.

The resolutions and constitutional committees were then elected by one representative of each sub-district. There was a Left Oppositionist on each of these committees, comrade Noel Bernard on the former and comrade Gerry Allard on the latter. The key constitutional committee had a good proportion of progressives, although it is significant to note that two members or supporters of the I. W. W., by the very force of their logic or illogic—often found themselves closer to the reaction than to the progressives centered around Allard. The resolutions committee seemed much more reactionary than the constitutional committee.

The sessions that heard the report of the scale committee and all ensuing sessions were closed to all non-delegates.

A survey of the situation had convinced the Left Oppositionists of the urgent necessity for united Left wing action. We proposed to Minerich a joint meeting of both groups to talk over possibilities of united work. Minerich stated that he would have to consult with his comrades and he would give us their answer later that evening.

We went to keep our appointment with Minerich. We found Meyerscough and Minerich waiting for us and we went into a side street and began our talk. This meeting, I think, is of great interest and importance. It is the first time, I believe, that the representatives of the party and the Left Opposition met, even informally, to discuss the possibility of common work for the common aim. After a long discussion in which we placed forward our ideas and they theirs, they left us stating that they would have to take counsel from a comrade still higher. Jack Stachel, who was in town, is the one they meant. The following is the program we proposed for joint labor:

1. Win the strike. Against the wage-cut to the bitter end. For a referendum in case the convention decided to retreat (this possibility had been hinted by Pearcey in his opening speech).
2. Strike Franklin County. Make the strike effective.
3. A union based on the class struggle.
4. A democratic union, with rank and file control and right of minority opinion.
5. National unity of all miners' groups that had risen against Lewis, including the N. M. U.
6. The N. M. U. to be seated as fraternal delegates with voice and the N. M. U. to be given a chance to speak.
7. Reinstatement of all expelled for their views from U. M. W. A. into the P. M. A.
8. For a united Left wing slate in the coming elections.
9. No horse-trading with reactionary elements and cliques—a straight-forward fight.
10. Cooperation with all relief and defense organizations.
11. A fight, if the point is raised, for Foster and Ford, and the C. P. in the elections.

This, I believe, was a key moment of the convention. Our proposal for a joint meeting of all Left wingers about this program would mean an aggressive fight that if not immediately victorious, would at least jolt the Right wing. In this positive platform would be found a rallying-unifying center for the scattered Left wingers who stood hopeless before the Right machine. Their later refusal places upon Stalinism a terrible onus.

Tues. Oct. 4, 1932
The next noon we met Borich and Minerich. They were evasive about the joint meeting. In order not to give them any excuse whatsoever we told them we were having a meeting at 6 that evening and we suggested that they turn this into a joint meeting. A hazy "We'll see," was their reply.

The Belleville-St. Clair Operators Association employing about 1000 men had proposed to the P. M. A. negotiations to settle the strike. The day set was Wednesday the 5th, so the convention spent that day in arriving at agreement on what to instruct their representative at the conference with the operators. By a

vote of 157 to 27 the convention recommended to its committee to secure the best terms above \$5—in other words to compromise. The 27 represented that group of Left wingers who stood for a fight to the finish.

As the delegates came to the relief headquarters for their supper the N. M. U. distributed a mimeographed copy of the speech Borich would have made had the floor been allowed him. I have sent you a copy of it. You will agree with me that it is a document much superior to anything issued on the miners in the last four years by Stalinism. The "third period" had died an unlamented death. The method of argument by epithet was abandoned here.

A much better appraisal of the united front replaces the old formula of "united front from below" versus "united front from above." The N. M. U. offers the united front to the organization as a whole. Our pride—for in great part this is the result of the consistent Leninist hammering of the Left Opposition—is only followed by the fear of the ultra-Left "zig" that will replace the Right-Left "zig." We can see a foreshadowing of this when the statement of the N. M. U. does not mention a word about political action in this presidential year. The miners are not, either as a group or individually, asked to vote Communist, in this statement.

While the statements were being distributed we asked if our invitation was going to be accepted. Our answer was a surly, "No." This "No" meant the granting of right of way to the reactionary steam roller!

We now come to another factor in the situation, the Socialist party. Four years ago, Socialists were conspicuous solely by their absence. Today the Socialist party has replaced the Communist party as dominant working class group throughout southern Illinois. Miners, young miners, are joining socialist meetings, are wearing "vote for Thomas and Maurer" buttons on their lapels. The C. P. has become a bitter memory. The fact that the Socialists can stage a comeback after 20 years of betrayal speaks eloquently for the results of Stalinist policy.

Five hundred miners filled the hall that night to hear Roy Burt expound the benefits of voting Socialist. This typical reformist address was followed by a clownish, shallow demagogue, by trade—a Socialist organizer—by name, John Taylor. Upon the completion of Taylor's speech the floor was thrown open for questions.

The Left Oppositionists present felt it incumbent upon themselves to ally themselves definitely with the party, but none of its moronic errors, to place itself sharply in opposition to the reformist Socialists and to give the Stalinists a needed lesson in how to carry on such activity. So comrade Clarke asked whether it was true that the S. P. by a vote of 6-5 had decided not to intervene in the battle between Lewis and the P. M. A. to remain "neutral", which meant essentially helping Lewis.

Taylor, answering, stated that the S. P. did not interfere in the internal quarrels of the miners. He boorishly jested about the danger of mixing into the quarrel of a man and wife.

Later Clarke arose and read from the "Class Struggle" the organization of a group of extreme left wingers in the Socialist Party, edited by Sol Larks of Chicago, where the stand of the National Executive Committee of that organization in refusing to support the Progressives is sharply condemned. Upon the demand of Taylor, Clarke handed him the paper. After the adjournment of the meeting when Taylor was asked for the return of the journal he belittled like an infuriated bull and snarlingly refused, stating that the editor of the "filthy rag" would be expelled from the S. P.

Our attack upon the S. P. was slashing and telling, while the arch-stupidity of the Centrals was exactly to the liking of those on the platform, and antagonized, not as Zip Kachinski, a Communist youth organizer, tried lamely to tell the workers present. Comrade Minerich told Kachinski not to "kid himself" and much more realistically recognized that opposed to us were the practically unanimous miners. Yet the Left Opposition questions were not shouted down, but listened to quietly and with interest and attention and even with some sympathy as we brought the lessons of socialist betrayal close to them. Yet, we must recognize that the Left Opposition often suffers because of Stalinism.

We discussed in comradely fashion with the miners after the meeting and showed the difference between Communism and Socialism—a privilege not granted the Stalinists.

CURTIS.

JAPAN

Its Rise from Feudalism to Capitalist Imperialism and the Development of the Proletariat

By Jack Weber

(Continued from last issue)
China at that period was completely self-sustaining. The Chinese were skilled handicraftsmen whose labor was so cheap that it was impossible to undersell her goods in her own market. China practiced both silk and cotton weaving so that not cotton goods could be sold in the Far East by Europeans. The English tried to sell their most important manufacture, woolen goods, but this was a drug on the market.

The Smuggling of Opium
There was only one commodity that the English found they could sell in China—opium! Opium was grown extensively in India where it was used as a drink, but was little known in China. The English mixed the opium with tobacco brought from America and planted in Formosa. The Chinese learned to smoke this mixture, and then opium alone. As soon as its effects became known in China, its importation was strictly prohibited under penalty of death. But the Europeans, particularly the British, started to smuggle it in using even the British Navy for this purpose. The traffic assumed such tremendous proportions that it literally drained the gold and silver out of China, gold and silver that the British traders used to pay for Indian cotton of which they imported one million lbs. a year by 1700 and 50 million by 1800.

So appallingly great became the illicit opium traffic—in time—that in sheer desperation the corrupt Chinese officials were driven to action. Around 1840 they seized a large number of chests of opium brought in by the English, and destroyed them. This was quickly seized upon by imperialist England as a good pretext for declaring war on China (the Opium Wars of the 1840's). China was forced to permit opium in and at the same time England was given a foothold in the Yangtze Valley at Hongkong.

Queerly enough, however, the British need for opium in China had ceased at the very time China was being coerced into its acceptance. The reason for this change must be sought in the industrial revolution. The cotton industry had given

a great impetus to factory development and this in turn stimulated English mechanical inventions. In 1785 for the first time steam engines were used in factories. The spinning-mule and the power loom had come into existence. England was transformed from a country that imported cotton goods in 1700 to one that exported to the extent of over one million pounds sterling by 1800. Her exports went mostly to her colonies,—but now she could even undersell cheap Chinese labor due to the superior productivity of the machines. Hence opium was no longer needed to finance the purchase of raw materials.

Under the driving-force of profits, however, the opium traffic could not be stopped. It had now invaded China in the form of poppy-growing, the mercenary Chinese officials encouraging this under the pretext that it would help keep Chinese money at home.

Japan and Opium
History has repeated itself after a fashion. Today Japan seeks to finance her purchases of raw cotton from abroad. One of the means used to accomplish this, is the sale of opium and of manufactured narcotics to China. Manchuria has always been a base for this traffic. The Japanese, in ousting Chang-Hsiang-liang, have taken over his control of opium. But it is no longer merely raw opium but the cheaper manufactured narcotics, morphine and heroin. These are supplied by the "advanced" capitalist countries, the U. S., England, Germany, Switzerland to China via Japan. The privileged consular pouches and parcels post system of Japan in Manchuria, are freely used for this purpose.

The League of Nations in typical fashion, has convened bodies of "experts" to help "solve" the opium problem. Soviet Russia, invited to these fake conferences, replied: "The government of the U. S. S. R. has come to the conclusion that in connection with the task of fighting the spread of opium and other drugs, the various states are striving to satisfy their own commercial interests and gain material benefits. Under such circum-

stances, Soviet Russia considers that its participation would be useless." Making a market for opium means "repeats" and how lucrative the business is, may be judged from the estimate that it amounts to some \$600,000,000 per year in China! What chance is there that so vast a business will be abolished under capitalism? In 1917 Japan's imports of morphine from England—intended for China—amounted to 600,000 ounces. The exact revenue derived from opium in India is unknown, a dark secret in the archives of a special revenue department. But it is known to supply 45% of the revenue in Straits Settlement, 21% in French Indo-China, 11% in the Dutch East Indies, 23% in Siam, 12 to 50% in Persia. The British government grants loans to farmers without interest to raise poppy, the government buying the entire crop. The price of poppy is regulated to spread the poppy acreage as against the competing crop-wheat! It is a foregone conclusion that capitalism will not solve this problem which will be liquidated only after the proletarian revolution and the elimination of the profit motive.

Cotton and the Swadeshi Movement
The industrial revolution not only permitted the English to undersell the Chinese but also the Hindus whose handicraft industry practically disappeared as a result. Gandhi, put forth by the Swadeshi movement to win over and mislead the Hindu masses, interprets the modern Swadeshi movement in terms of reestablishing this vanished art. Only the most glib individual could swallow this pretense. The Swadeshi movement is the bid of the Indian national bourgeoisie for an alliance with the British imperialists in the exploitation of the Hindu workers—particularly in the newly rising cotton mills. All that the In-

dian bourgeoisie desire is a protective tariff to keep out competition until their "infant" industry is strong enough to stand on its own lusty feet (on the backs of the Hindu workers, of course). Back in 1907 Dr. R. B. Gosh, president of the first National Indian Congress, stated: "What reasonable man can doubt that the real strength of the Swadeshi movement is to be found in our national desire to nurse our own industries, which the Government of India, with their free trade principles, are unable to protect by building up a tariff wall?" On the British side at this same time Sir R. Lethbridge ("India and Imperial Preference") advocated such a measure to fit into a scheme of Imperial Preference. Under the stress of Japanese and U. S. competition, England has been forced to adopt exactly this policy advocated for 25 years.

The Indian trade is the mainstay of the British cotton industry. To hold this trade and the shut door to all others has been the consistent policy of British capitalism. In their present desperation, Lancashire capitalists are trying to reduce costs by lowering the standards of living of English textile workers, so as to compete with Japan and America. Great Britain's monopoly of the piece goods trade in India is under threat. Both U. S. and English capitalism are suffering from Japanese competition. The latter's cotton textile industry has grown faster than any other country's during the past 15 years. Measured by the amount of raw cotton consumed the industry grew slowly in Great Britain till 1913, then declined. The industry has grown steadily in the U. S. since 1870. In Japan it began during the war and has risen rapidly since.

(To be continued)

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