

Such was the general program of the Russian Social-Democracy up to the Revolution, although the left wing, with a Bolshevik tendency, and with Lenin at its head, promulgated in principle the complete nationalization of all privately-owned land, even that of small peasant owners, granting, however, the division of the land, if the peasantry should demand it.

Essentially, the general party program stood for three agrarian principles: nationalization, municipalization, and division of the land among the peasants. What is the value of each of these methods of regulating the land question in Russia?

Under nationalization or municipalization, the occupant of the land has merely the use of it, but no property rights. Land rent, if it is to be paid at all, is to go not to the private owners (for there will not be any such), but to the government or the local administrations; the people itself, through its chosen representatives, determining the sum to be paid in rent. The nationalization and municipalization of the land will thus terminate the exploitation of the peasants by the great landed proprietors. It is clear, therefore, that the Socialists of Russia have every reason for taking over, as far as possible, all the great landed properties, and thus removing them from the hands of private owners.

After a consideration of the advantages of each of these forms of public ownership of land, one section of the Russian Social Democracy, the Mensheviks, have given the preference to municipalization. In their opinion, unlimited nationalization of all the land will give too great a power to the central government and may serve as a dangerous support to a possibly successful counter-revolution. But if the land is the property of the organs of the local administrations, it may become, in their hands, a powerful weapon with which to resist a counter-revolutionary government which may have succeeded in gaining possession of the state powers.

These objections to nationalization are not without foundation. But as Russia, in a final regulation of the agricultural question, can hardly dispense with a nationalization of land on a large scale, there are necessary two elements, to avoid the evils of such a

procedure: in the first place, the taking over of the land by the state must be accomplished simultaneously, at the same time permanently strengthening the political power of revolutionary democracy, as only this condition can serve as a guarantee against the success of counter-revolution; in the second place, the Socialists should not use undue haste in finally confiscating the lands, particularly that of the nobles, but should first rather give them to the local revolutionary peasant organs. And this latter policy is the one that has been actually carried out.

A serious hindrance to the nationalization of all the land is the unusually varied *racial* character of Russia. Such pronounced nationalities as the Finns, Esthonians, Letts, Lithuanians, Poles, Ukrainians, Caucasians, and others, require broad autonomy, even political independence, particularly the Finns and the Ukrainians. In view of the nationalistic tendencies prevailing in Russia, its most probable political system will be that of a *federative republic*, consisting of many more or less independent republics, bound together by certain general national obligations. These autonomous regions will hardly consent to a passing of all the land into the hands of the central government of the whole united country. They will soon demand as their property such lands as are necessary to satisfy local needs, particularly those needed for agricultural purposes.

But as the greater part of the huge area of national, cabinet, and appanage lands is situated in the non-agricultural, poorly-settled districts, and may serve only as a reserve for future settlements, since they include the northern forests, necessary for the breaking of the cold climate, a general Russian nationalization of these lands is in any case desirable and will probably be carried out.

It must be pointed out that it would be an error on the part of the Russian socialists to *insist* on the nationalization of the present *apportioned* land, unless the peasantry themselves demand it. Whenever the Russian peasants, hitherto, have spoken of a transfer of the land into the possession of the entire people, they have referred to the great estates. They are not so completely "social-