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И. СТАЛИН
О ПЕРСПЕКТИВАХ
РЕВОЛЮЦИИ в КИТАЕ
*
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КИТАЙСКОЙ РЕВОЛЮЦИИ

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J. STALIN

THE PROSPECTS
OF THE REVOLUTION
IN CHINA

November 30, 1927

QUESTIONS
OF THE CHINESE
REVOLUTION

April 21, 1927
* May 9, 1927
May 13, 1927

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PUBLISHING HOUSE

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

J. STALIN

**THE PROSPECTS
OF THE REVOLUTION
IN CHINA**

*Speech Delivered in the Chinese Commission
of the E.C.C.I., November 30, 1926*

**QUESTIONS
OF THE CHINESE
REVOLUTION**

*Theses for Propagandists, Approved
by the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.)*



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Comrades, before passing to the subject under discussion, I think it necessary to say that I am not in possession of the exhaustive material on the Chinese question necessary for giving a full picture of the revolution in China. Hence I am compelled to confine myself to some general remarks of a fundamental character that have a direct bearing on the basic trend of the Chinese revolution.

I have the theses of Petrov, the theses of Mif; two reports by Tang Ping-shan and the observations of Rafez on the Chinese question. In my opinion, all these documents, in spite of their merits, suffer from the grave defect that they ignore a number of cardinal questions of the revolution in China. I think it is necessary above all to draw attention to these shortcomings. For this reason my remarks will at the same time be of a critical nature.

I
CHARACTER OF THE REVOLUTION
IN CHINA

Lenin said that the Chinese would soon be having their 1905. Some comrades understood this to mean that there would have to be a repetition among the Chinese of exactly the same thing that took place here in Russia in 1905. That is not true, comrades. Lenin by no means said that the Chinese revolution would be a replica of the 1905 Revolution in Russia. All he said was that the Chinese would have *their* 1905. This means that, besides the general features of the 1905 Revolution, the Chinese revolution would have its own specific features, which would be bound to lay its special impress on the revolution in China.

What are these specific features?

The first specific feature is that, while the Chinese revolution is a bourgeois-democratic revolution, it is at the same time a revolution of national liberation spearheaded against the domination of foreign imperialism in China. It is in this, above all, that it differs from the 1905 Revolution in Russia. The point is that the rule of imperialism in China is manifested not only in its military might, but primarily in the fact that the main threads of industry in China, the railways, mills and factories, mines, banks, etc., are owned or controlled by foreign imperialists.

But it follows from this that the questions of the fight against foreign imperialism and its Chinese agents cannot but play an important role in the Chinese revolution. This fact directly links the Chinese revolution with the revolutions of the proletarians of all countries against imperialism.

The second specific feature of the Chinese revolution is that the national big bourgeoisie in China is weak in the extreme, incomparably weaker than the Russian bourgeoisie was in the period of 1905. That is understandable. Since the main threads of industry are concentrated in the hands of foreign imperialists, the national big bourgeoisie in China cannot but be weak and backward. In this respect Mif is quite right in his remark about the weakness of the national bourgeoisie in China as one of the characteristic facts of the Chinese revolution. But it follows from this that the role of initiator and guide of the Chinese revolution, the role of leader of the Chinese peasantry, must inevitably fall to the Chinese proletariat and its party.

Nor should a third specific feature of the Chinese revolution be overlooked, namely, that side by side with China the Soviet Union exists and is developing, and its revolutionary experience and aid cannot but facilitate the struggle of the Chinese proletariat against imperialism and against medieval and feudal survivals in China.

Such are the principal specific features of the Chinese revolution, which determine its character and trend.

II

IMPERIALISM AND IMPERIALIST INTERVENTION IN CHINA

The first defect of the theses submitted is that they ignore or under-estimate the question of imperialist intervention in China. A study of the theses might lead one to think that at the present moment there is, properly speaking, no imperialist intervention in China, that there is only a struggle between Northerners and Southerners, or between one group of generals and another group of generals. Furthermore, there is a tendency to understand by intervention a state of affairs marked by the incursion of foreign troops into Chinese territory, and that if that is not the case, then there is no intervention.

That is a profound mistake, comrades. Intervention is by no means confined to the incursion of troops, and the incursion of troops by no means constitutes the principal feature of intervention. In the present-day conditions of the revolutionary movement in the capitalist countries, when the direct incursion of foreign troops may give rise to protests and conflicts, intervention assumes more flexible and more camouflaged forms. In the conditions prevailing today, impe-

rialism prefers to intervene in a dependent country by organizing civil war there, by financing counter-revolutionary forces against the revolution, by giving moral and financial support to its Chinese agents against the revolution. The imperialists were inclined to depict the struggle of Denikin and Kolchak, Yudenich and Wrangel against the revolution in Russia as an exclusively internal struggle. But we all knew—and not only we, but the whole world—that behind these counter-revolutionary Russian generals stood the imperialists of Britain and America, France and Japan, without whose support a serious civil war in Russia would have been quite impossible. The same must be said of China. The struggle of Wu Pei-fu, Sun Chuan-fang, Chang Tso-lin and Chang Tsung-chang against the revolution in China would be simply impossible if these counter-revolutionary generals were not instigated by the imperialists of all countries, if the latter did not supply them with money, arms, instructors, “advisers,” etc.

Wherein lies the strength of the Canton troops? In the fact that they are inspired by an ideal, by enthusiasm, in the struggle for liberation from imperialism; in the fact that they are bringing China liberation. Wherein lies the strength of the counter-revolutionary generals in China? In the fact that they are backed by the imperialists of all countries, by the owners of all the

railways, concessions, mills and factories, banks and commercial houses in China.

Hence, it is not only, or even not so much, a matter of the incursion of foreign troops, as of the support which the imperialists of all countries are rendering the counter-revolutionaries in China. Intervention through the hands of others—that is where the root of imperialist intervention now lies.

Therefore, imperialist intervention in China is an indubitable fact, and it is against this that the Chinese revolution is spearheaded.

Therefore, whoever ignores or under-estimates the fact of imperialist intervention in China, ignores or under-estimates the chief and most fundamental thing in China.

It is said that the Japanese imperialists are showing certain symptoms of "good will" towards the Cantonese and the Chinese revolution in general. It is said that the American imperialists are not lagging behind the Japanese in this respect. That is self-deception, comrades. One must know how to distinguish between the essence of the policy of the imperialists, including that of the Japanese and American imperialists, and its disguises. Lenin often said that it is hard to impose upon revolutionaries with the club or the fist, but that it is sometimes very easy to take them in with blandishments. That truth of Lenin's should never be forgotten, comrades. At all

events, it is clear that the Japanese and American imperialists have pretty well realized its value. It is therefore necessary to draw a strict distinction between blandishments and praise bestowed on the Cantonese and the fact that the imperialists who are most generous with blandishments are those who cling most tightly to "their" concessions and railways in China, and that they will not consent to relinquish them at any price.

III

THE REVOLUTIONARY ARMY IN CHINA

My second remark in connection with the theses submitted concerns the question of the revolutionary army in China. The fact of the matter is that the question of the army is ignored or under-estimated in the theses. (*A voice from the audience*: "Quite right!") That is their second defect. The northward advance of the Cantonese is usually regarded not as an expansion of the Chinese revolution, but as a struggle of the Canton generals against Wu Pei-fu and Sun Chuan-fang, as a struggle for supremacy of some generals against others. That is a profound mistake, comrades. The revolutionary armies in China are a most important factor in the struggle of the Chinese workers and peasants for their emancipation. Is it accidental that until May or June of this year the situation in China was regarded

as the rule of reaction, which set in after the defeat of Feng Yu-hsiang's armies, but that later on, in the summer of this year, the victorious Canton troops had only to advance northward and occupy Hupeh for the whole picture to change radically in favour of the revolution? No, it is not accidental. For the advance of the Cantonese means a blow at imperialism, a blow at its agents in China; it means freedom of assembly, freedom to strike, freedom of the press, and freedom to organize for all the revolutionary elements in China in general, and for the workers in particular. That is what constitutes the specific feature and supreme importance of the revolutionary army in China.

Formerly, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, revolutions usually began with an uprising of the people for the most part unarmed or poorly armed, who came into collision with the army of the old regime, which they tried to demoralize or at least to win in part to their own side. That was the typical form of the revolutionary outbreaks in the past. That is what happened here in Russia in 1905. In China things have taken a different course. In China, the troops of the old government are confronted not by an unarmed people, but by an armed people, in the shape of its revolutionary army. In China the armed revolution is fighting the armed counter-revolution. That is one of the specific features and one

of the advantages of the Chinese revolution. And therein lies the special significance of the revolutionary army in China.

That is why it is an impermissible shortcoming of the theses submitted that they underestimate the revolutionary army.

But it follows from this that the Communists in China must devote special attention to work in the army.

In the first place, the Communists in China must in every way intensify political work in the army, and ensure that the army becomes a real and exemplary vehicle of the ideas of the Chinese revolution. That is particularly necessary because all kinds of generals who have nothing in common with the Kuomintang¹ are now attaching themselves to the Cantonese, as a force which is routing the enemies of the Chinese people; and in attaching themselves to the Cantonese they are introducing demoralization into the army. The only way to neutralize such "allies" or to make them genuine Kuomintangists is to intensify political work and to establish revolutionary control over them. Unless this is done, the army may find itself in a very difficult situation.

In the second place, the Chinese revolutionaries, including the Communists, must undertake a thorough study of the art of war. They must not regard it as something secondary, because nowadays it is a cardinal factor in the Chinese

revolution. The Chinese revolutionaries, and hence the Communists also, must study the art of war, in order gradually to come to the fore and occupy various leading posts in the revolutionary army. That is the guarantee that the revolutionary army in China will advance along the right road, straight to its goal. Unless this is done, wavering and vacillation may become inevitable in the army.

IV

CHARACTER OF THE FUTURE GOVERNMENT IN CHINA

My third remark concerns the fact that the theses say nothing, or do not say enough, about the character of the future revolutionary government in China. Mif, in his theses, comes close to the subject, and that is to his credit. But having come close to it, he for some reason became frightened and did not venture to bring matters to a conclusion. Mif thinks that the future revolutionary government in China will be a government of the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie, under the leadership of the proletariat. What does that mean? At the time of the February revolution in 1917, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries were also petty-bourgeois parties and to a certain extent revolutionary. Does this mean that the future revolutionary government

in China will be a Socialist-Revolutionary-Menshevik government? No, it does not. Why? Because the Socialist-Revolutionary-Menshevik government was in actual fact an imperialist government, while the future revolutionary government in China cannot but be an anti-imperialist government. The difference here is fundamental.

The MacDonald government was even a "labour" government, but it was an imperialist government all the same, because it based itself on the preservation of British imperialist rule, in India and Egypt, for example. As compared with the MacDonald government, the future revolutionary government in China will have the advantage of being an anti-imperialist government.

The point lies not only in the bourgeois-democratic character of the Canton government, which is the embryo of the future all-China revolutionary government; the point is above all that this government is, and cannot but be, an anti-imperialist government, that every advance it makes is a blow at world imperialism—and, consequently, a blow which benefits the world revolutionary movement.

Lenin was right when he said that, whereas formerly, before the advent of the era of world revolution, the national-liberation movement was part of the general democratic movement, now, after the victory of the Soviet revolution in Russia

and the advent of the era of world revolution, the national-liberation movement is part of the world proletarian revolution.

This specific feature Mif did not take into account.

I think that the future revolutionary government in China will in general resemble in character the government we used to talk about in our country in 1905, that is, something in the nature of a democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, with the difference, however, that it will be first and foremost an anti-imperialist government.

It will be a government transitional to a non-capitalist, or, more exactly, a socialist development of China.

That is the direction that the revolution in China should take.

This course of development of the revolution is facilitated by three circumstances:

firstly, by the fact that the revolution in China, being a revolution of national liberation, will be spearheaded against imperialism and its agents in China;

secondly, by the fact that the national big bourgeoisie in China is weak, weaker than the national bourgeoisie was in Russia in the period of 1905, which facilitates the hegemony of the proletariat and the leadership of the Chinese peasantry by the proletarian party;

thirdly, by the fact that the revolution in China will develop in circumstances that will make it possible to draw upon the experience and assistance of the victorious revolution in the Soviet Union.

Whether this course will end in absolute and certain victory will depend upon many circumstances. But one thing at any rate is clear, and that is that the struggle for precisely this course of the Chinese revolution is the basic task of the Chinese Communists.

From this follows the task of the Chinese Communists as regards their attitude to the Kuomintang and to the future revolutionary government in China. It is said that the Chinese Communists should withdraw from the Kuomintang. That would be wrong, comrades. The withdrawal of the Chinese Communists from the Kuomintang at the present time would be a profound mistake. The whole course, character and prospects of the Chinese revolution undoubtedly testify in favour of the Chinese Communists remaining in the Kuomintang and intensifying their work in it.

But can the Chinese Communist Party participate in the future revolutionary government? It not only can, but must do so. The course, character and prospects of the revolution in China are eloquent testimony in favour of the Chinese Communist Party taking part in the future revolutionary government of China.

Therein lies one of the essential guarantees of the establishment in fact of the hegemony of the Chinese proletariat.

V

THE PEASANT QUESTION IN CHINA

My fourth remark concerns the question of the peasantry in China. Mif thinks that the slogan for forming Soviets—namely, peasant Soviets in the Chinese countryside—should be issued immediately. In my opinion, that would be a mistake. Mif is running too far ahead. One cannot build Soviets in the countryside and avoid the industrial centres of China. But the establishment of Soviets in the industrial centres of China is not at present on the order of the day. Moreover, it must be borne in mind that Soviets cannot be considered out of connection with the surrounding situation. Soviets—in this case peasant Soviets—could only be organized if China were at the peak period of a peasant movement which was smashing the old order of things and building a new power, on the calculation that the industrial centres of China had already burst the dam and had entered the phase of establishing the power of the Soviets. Can it be said that the Chinese peasantry and the Chinese revolution in general have already entered this phase? No, it cannot. Consequently, to speak of Soviets now

would be running too far ahead. Consequently, the question that should be raised now is not that of Soviets, but of the formation of peasant committees. I have in mind peasant committees elected by the peasants, committees capable of formulating the basic demands of the peasantry and which would take all measures to secure the realization of these demands in a revolutionary way. These peasant committees should serve as the axis around which the revolution in the countryside develops.

I know that there are Kuomintangists and even Chinese Communists who do not consider it possible to unleash revolution in the countryside, since they fear that if the peasantry were drawn into the revolution it would disrupt the united anti-imperialist front. That is a profound error, comrades. The more quickly and thoroughly the Chinese peasantry is drawn into the revolution, the stronger and more powerful the anti-imperialist front in China will be. The authors of the theses, especially Tang Ping-shan and Rafes, are quite right in maintaining that the immediate satisfaction of a number of the most urgent demands of the peasants is an essential condition for the victory of the Chinese revolution. I think it is high time to break down that inertness and that "neutrality" towards the peasantry which are to be observed in the actions of certain Kuomintang elements. I think that both the Chinese

Communist Party and the Kuomintang, and hence the Canton government, should pass from words to deeds without delay and raise the question of satisfying at once the most vital demands of the peasantry.

What the perspectives should be in this regard, and how far it is possible and necessary to go, depends on the course of the revolution. I think that in the long run matters should go as far as the nationalization of the land. At all events, we cannot repudiate such a slogan as that of nationalization of the land.

What are the ways and means that the Chinese revolutionaries must adopt to rouse the vast peasant masses of China to revolution?

I think that in the given conditions one can only speak of three ways.

The first way is by the formation of peasant committees and by the Chinese revolutionaries entering these committees in order to influence the peasantry. (*A voice from the audience*: "What about the peasant associations?") I think that the peasant associations will group themselves around the peasant committees, or will be converted into peasant committees, vested with the necessary measure of authority for the realization of the peasants' demands. I have already spoken about this way. But this way is not enough. It would be ridiculous to think that there are sufficient revolutionaries in China for this task. China

has roughly 400 million inhabitants. Of them, about 350 million are Chinese. And of them, more than nine-tenths are peasants. Anyone who thinks that some tens of thousands of Chinese revolutionaries can cover this ocean of peasants is making a mistake. Consequently, additional ways are needed.

The second way is by influencing the peasantry through the apparatus of the new people's revolutionary government. There is no doubt that in the newly liberated provinces a new government will be set up of the type of the Canton government. There is no doubt that this authority and its apparatus will have to set about satisfying the most urgent demands of the peasantry if it really wants to advance the revolution. Well then, the task of the Communists and of the Chinese revolutionaries in general is to penetrate the apparatus of the new government, to bring this apparatus closer to the peasant masses, and by means of it to help the peasant masses to secure the satisfaction of their urgent demands, either by expropriating the landlords' land, or by reducing taxation and rents—according to circumstances.

The third way is by influencing the peasantry through the revolutionary army. I have already spoken of the great importance of the revolutionary army in the Chinese revolution. The revolutionary army of China is the force which first

penetrates new provinces, which first passes through densely populated peasant areas, and by which above all the peasant forms his judgment of the new government, of its good or bad qualities. It depends primarily on the behaviour of the revolutionary army, on its attitude towards the peasantry and towards the landlords, on its readiness to aid the peasants, what the attitude of the peasantry will be towards the new government, the Kuomintang and the Chinese revolution generally. If it is borne in mind that quite a number of dubious elements have attached themselves to the revolutionary army of China, and that they may change the complexion of the army for the worse, it will be understood how great is the importance of the political complexion of the army and its, so to speak, peasant policy in the eyes of the peasantry. The Chinese Communists and the Chinese revolutionaries generally must therefore take every measure to neutralize the anti-peasant elements in the army, to preserve the army's revolutionary spirit, and to ensure that the army assists the peasants and rouses them to revolution.

We are told that the revolutionary army is welcomed in China with open arms, but that later, when it instals itself, a certain disillusionment sets in. The same thing happened here in the Soviet Union during the Civil War. The explanation

is that when the army liberates new provinces and instals itself in them, it has in some way or other to feed itself at the expense of the local population. We, Soviet revolutionaries, usually succeeded in counter-balancing these disadvantages by endeavouring through the army to assist the peasants against the landlord elements. The Chinese revolutionaries must also learn how to counter-balance these disadvantages by conducting a correct peasant policy through the army.

VI

THE PROLETARIAT AND THE HEGEMONY OF THE PROLETARIAT IN CHINA

My fifth remark concerns the question of the Chinese proletariat. In my opinion, the theses do not sufficiently stress the role and significance of the working class in China. Rafe asks, on whom should the Chinese Communists orientate themselves—on the Lefts or the Kuomintang centre? That is a strange question. I think that the Chinese Communists should orientate themselves first and foremost on the proletariat, and should orientate the leaders of the Chinese liberation movement on the revolution. That is the only correct way to put the question. I know that among the Chinese Communists there are comrades who do not approve of workers going on strike for an

improvement of their material conditions and legal status, and who try to dissuade the workers from striking. (*A voice*: "That happened in Canton and Shanghai.") That is a great mistake, comrades: It is a very serious under-estimation of the role and importance of the Chinese proletariat. This fact should be noted in the theses as something decidedly objectionable. It would be a great mistake if the Chinese Communists failed to take advantage of the present favourable situation to assist the workers to improve their material conditions and legal status, even through strikes. Otherwise, what purpose does the revolution in China serve? The proletariat cannot be a leading force if during strikes its sons are flogged and tortured by agents of imperialism. These medieval outrages must be stopped at all costs, in order to heighten the sense of power and dignity among the Chinese proletarians, and to make them capable of leading the revolutionary movement: Without this, the victory of the revolution in China is inconceivable. Therefore, a due place must be given in the theses to the economic and legal demands of the Chinese working class aimed at substantially improving its conditions. (*Mif*: "It is mentioned in the theses.") Yes, it is mentioned in the theses, but, unfortunately, these demands are not given sufficient prominence.

VII

THE QUESTION OF THE YOUTH
IN CHINA

My sixth remark concerns the question of the youth in China. It is strange that this question has not been taken into account in the theses. Yet it is now of the utmost importance in China. Tang Ping-shan's reports touch upon this question, but, unfortunately, do not give it sufficient prominence. The question of the youth is one of primary importance in China today. The student youth (the revolutionary students), the working-class youth, the peasant youth—all this constitutes a force that could advance the revolution with giant strides, if it was subordinated to the ideological and political influence of the Kuomintang.* It should be borne in mind that no one suffers from imperialist oppression so deeply and keenly, or is so acutely and painfully aware of

¹ *Note*. Such a policy was correct in the conditions prevailing at the time, since the Kuomintang then represented a bloc of the Communists and more or less Left-wing Kuomintangists, which conducted an anti-imperialist revolutionary policy. Later on this policy was abandoned as no longer in conformity with the interests of the Chinese revolution, since the Kuomintang had deserted the revolution and later became the centre of the struggle against it, while the Communists withdrew from the Kuomintang and broke off relations with it.

the necessity to fight against it, as the Chinese youth. The Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese revolutionaries should take this circumstance fully into account and intensify their work among the youth to the utmost. The youth must be given its place in the theses on the Chinese question.

VIII

SOME CONCLUSIONS

I should like to mention certain conclusions—with regard to the struggle against imperialism in China, and with regard to the peasant question.

There is no doubt that the Chinese Communist Party cannot now confine itself to demanding the abolition of the unequal treaties. That is a demand which is upheld now by even such a counter-revolutionary as Chang Hsueh-liang. Obviously, the Chinese Communist Party must go farther than that.

It is necessary, further, to consider—as a perspective—the nationalization of the railways. This is necessary, and should be worked for.

It is necessary, further, to have in mind the perspective of nationalizing the most important mills and factories. In this connection, the question arises first of all of nationalizing those enterprises the owners of which display particular hostility and particular aggressiveness towards the Chinese people. It is necessary also to give

prominence to the peasant question, linking it with the prospects of the revolution in China. I think that what has to be worked for in the long run is the confiscation of the landlords' land for the benefit of the peasants and the nationalization of the land.

The rest is self-evident.

Those, comrades, are all the remarks that I desired to make.

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I

PROSPECTS OF THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

Basic factors determining the character of the Chinese revolution:

a) the semi-colonial status of China and the financial and economic domination of imperialism;

b) the oppression of feudal survivals, aggravated by the oppression of militarism and bureaucracy;

c) the growing revolutionary struggle of the vast masses of the workers and peasants against feudal and bureaucratic oppression, against militarism, and against imperialism;

d) the political weakness of the national bourgeoisie, its dependence on imperialism, its fear of the sweep of the revolutionary movement;

e) the growing revolutionary activity of the proletariat, its mounting prestige among the vast masses of the working people;

f) the existence of a proletarian dictatorship in the neighbourhood of China.

Hence, two paths for the development of events in China:

either the national bourgeoisie smashes the proletariat, makes a deal with imperialism and together with it launches a campaign against the revolution in order to end the latter by establishing the rule of capitalism;

or the proletariat pushes aside the national bourgeoisie, consolidates its hegemony and assumes the lead of the vast masses of the working people in town and country, in order to overcome the resistance of the national bourgeoisie, secure the complete victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, and then gradually convert it into a socialist revolution, with all the consequences following from that.

One or the other.

The crisis of world capitalism and the existence in the U.S.S.R. of a proletarian dictatorship whose experience may be successfully utilized by the Chinese proletariat considerably enhance the possibility of the Chinese revolution taking the second path.

On the other hand, the fact that imperialism is attacking the Chinese revolution, in the main with a united front, that there is not at the present time that division and war among the imperialists which, for instance, existed in the imperialist camp prior to the October Revolution, and which tended to weaken imperialism—this

fact indicates that on its path to victory the Chinese revolution will encounter far greater difficulties than did the revolution in Russia, and that the desertions and betrayals in the course of this revolution will be incomparably more numerous than during the Civil War in the U.S.S.R.

Hence, the struggle between these two paths of the revolution constitutes the characteristic feature of the Chinese revolution.

Precisely for this reason, the basic task of the Communists is to fight for the victory of the second path of development of the Chinese revolution.

II

THE FIRST STAGE OF THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

In the first period of the Chinese revolution, at the time of the first march to the North—when the national army was approaching the Yangtse and scoring victory after victory, but a powerful movement of the workers and peasants had not yet unfolded—the national bourgeoisie (not the compradors)² sided with the revolution. It was the revolution of a united *all-national* front.

This does not mean that there were no contradictions between the revolution and the national bourgeoisie. All it means is that the national bourgeoisie, in supporting the revolution,

tried to utilize it for its own purposes and, by directing it chiefly along the lines of territorial conquest, to restrict its scope. The struggle between the Rights and the Lefts in the Kuomintang at that period was a reflection of these contradictions. Chiang Kai-shek's attempt in March 1926 to expel the Communists from the Kuomintang was the first serious attempt of the national bourgeoisie to curb the revolution. As is known, already at that time the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.) considered that "the line must be to keep the Communist Party within the Kuomintang," and that it was necessary "to work for the resignation or expulsion of the Rights from the Kuomintang" (April 1926).

This line was one directed towards further development of the revolution, close co-operation between the Lefts and the Communists within the Kuomintang and within the national government, strengthening the unity of the Kuomintang and, at the same time, exposing and isolating the Kuomintang Rights, compelling them to submit to Kuomintang discipline, utilizing the Rights, their connections and their experience, if they submitted to Kuomintang discipline, or expelling them from the Kuomintang if they violated that discipline and betrayed the interests of the revolution.

Subsequent events fully confirmed the correctness of this line. The powerful development of

the peasant movement and the organization of peasant associations and peasant committees in the countryside, the powerful wave of strikes in the towns and the formation of trade-union councils, the victorious advance of the national army on Shanghai, which was besieged by imperialist warships and troops—all these and similar facts indicate that the line adopted was the only correct one.

This circumstance alone can explain the fact that the attempt made by the Rights in February 1927 to split the Kuomintang and set up a new centre in Nanchang failed in face of the unanimous resistance of the revolutionary Kuomintang in Wuhan.

But this attempt was a sign that a regrouping of class forces was taking place in the country, that the Rights and the national bourgeoisie would not desist, that they would intensify their work against the revolution.

The C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.) was therefore right when it said in March 1927 that:

a) "at the present time, in connection with the regrouping of class forces and concentration of the imperialist armies, the Chinese revolution is passing through a critical period, and that it can achieve further victories only by resolutely adopting the course of developing the mass movement";

b) "it is necessary to adopt the course of arming the workers and peasants and converting

the peasant committees in the localities into actual organs of governmental authority equipped with armed self-defence”;

c) “the Communist Party should not cover up the treacherous and reactionary policy of the Kuomintang Rights, and should mobilize the masses around the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party with a view to exposing the Rights” (March 3, 1927).

It will therefore be easily understood that the subsequent powerful sweep of the revolution, on the one hand, and the imperialist onslaught in Shanghai, on the other hand, were bound to throw the Chinese national bourgeoisie into the camp of counter-revolution, just as the occupation of Shanghai by national troops and the strikes of the Shanghai workers were bound to unite the imperialists in order to strangle the revolution.

And that is what happened. The Nanking massacre³ served in this respect as a signal for a new demarcation of the contending forces in China. In bombarding Nanking and presenting an ultimatum, the imperialists desired to make it known that they were seeking the support of the national bourgeoisie for a joint struggle against the Chinese revolution.

Chiang Kai-shek, on the other hand, in firing upon workers' meetings and engineering a coup⁴, was, as it were, replying to the call of the

imperialists and saying that he was ready to make a deal with them together with the national bourgeoisie against the Chinese workers and peasants.

III

THE SECOND STAGE OF THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

Chiang Kai-shek's coup marks the desertion of the national bourgeoisie from the revolution, the emergence of a centre of national counter-revolution, and the conclusion of a deal between the Kuomintang Rights and the imperialists against the Chinese revolution.

Chiang Kai-shek's coup signifies that in South China there will now be two camps, two governments, two armies, two centres—the revolutionary centre in Wuhan and the counter-revolutionary centre in Nanking.

Chiang Kai-shek's coup signifies that the revolution has entered the second stage of its development, that a *swing* has begun away from the revolution of *all-national* united front and towards a revolution of the vast masses of the *workers* and *peasants*, towards an *agrarian* revolution, which will strengthen and broaden the struggle against imperialism, against the gentry and the feudal landlords, and against the militarists and Chiang Kai-shek's counter-revolutionary group.

This means that the struggle between the two paths of the revolution, between those who favour its further development and those who favour its liquidation, will grow more acute from day to day and fill the entire present period of the revolution.

It means that, by waging a resolute struggle against militarism and imperialism, the revolutionary Kuomintang in Wuhan will become in fact the organ of a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, while Chiang Kai-shek's counter-revolutionary group in Nanking, by severing itself from the workers and peasants and drawing closer to imperialism, will in the end share the fate of the militarists.

But it follows from this that the policy of preserving the unity of the Kuomintang, the policy of isolating the Rights within the Kuomintang and utilizing them for the purposes of the revolution, no longer accords with the new tasks of the revolution. It must be replaced by a policy of resolutely expelling the Rights from the Kuomintang, a policy of resolutely fighting the Rights until they are completely eliminated politically, a policy of concentrating all power in the country in the hands of a *revolutionary* Kuomintang, a Kuomintang without its Right elements, a Kuomintang that is a bloc between the Kuomintang Lefts and the Communists.

It follows, further, that the policy of close co-operation between the Lefts and the Communists within the Kuomintang acquires particular value and significance at this stage, that this co-operation reflects the alliance between the workers and peasants that is taking shape outside the Kuomintang, and that without such co-operation the victory of the revolution will be impossible.

It follows, further, that the principal source of strength of the revolutionary Kuomintang lies in the further development of the revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants and the strengthening of their mass organizations—revolutionary peasant committees, workers' trade unions and other mass revolutionary organizations—as the preparatory elements of the future Soviets, and that the principal pledge of the victory of the revolution is the growth of the revolutionary activity of the vast masses of the working people, and the principal antidote to counter-revolution is the arming of the workers and peasants.

It follows, lastly, that while fighting in the same ranks as the revolutionary Kuomintangists, the Communist Party must more than ever before preserve its independence, as an essential condition for ensuring the hegemony of the proletariat in the bourgeois-democratic revolution.

IV

ERRORS OF THE OPPOSITION

The basic error of the opposition (Radek and Co.) is that it does not understand the character of the revolution in China, the stage it is now passing through, and its present international setting.

The opposition demands that the Chinese revolution should develop at approximately the same pace as the October Revolution did. The opposition is dissatisfied because the Shanghai workers did not give decisive battle to the imperialists and their underlings.

But it does not realize that the revolution in China cannot develop at a fast pace, one reason being that the international situation today is less favourable than it was in 1917 (the imperialists are not at war with one another).

It does not realize that decisive battle must not be given in unfavourable conditions, when the reserves have not yet been brought up—just as the Bolsheviks, for example, did not give decisive battle either in April or in July 1917.

The opposition does not realize that not to avoid decisive battle in unfavourable conditions (when it can be avoided) means making things easier for the enemies of the revolution.

The opposition demands the immediate formation of Soviets of workers', peasants' and

soldiers' deputies in China. But what would forming Soviets *now* mean?

In the first place, they cannot be formed at any desired moment—they are formed only when the tide of revolution is running particularly high.

In the second place, Soviets are not formed for the sake of talk—they are formed primarily as organs of struggle against the existing power, as organs of struggle for power. That was the case in 1905. It was also the case in 1917.

But what would forming Soviets mean *at the present moment* in the area of action, say, of the Wuhan government? It would mean issuing the slogan of a struggle against the existing power in that area. It would mean issuing a slogan for the formation of new organs of power, a slogan of struggle against the power of the revolutionary Kuomintang, which includes Communists working in a bloc with the Kuomintang Lefts, for no other power exists now in that area except the power of the revolutionary Kuomintang.

It would mean, further, confusing the task of creating and strengthening mass organizations of the workers and peasants—in the shape of strike committees, peasant associations and committees, trade-union councils, factory committees, etc.—on which the revolutionary Kuomintang already relies, with the task of establishing a Soviet system, as a new type of state power, in

place of the power of the revolutionary Kuomintang.

It would mean, lastly, a failure to understand what stage the revolution in China is now passing through. It would mean placing in the hands of the enemies of the Chinese people a new weapon against the revolution, enabling them to spread new legends to the effect that what is taking place in China is not a national revolution, but artificially transplanted "Moscow Sovietization."

Hence, in advancing the slogan of the formation of Soviets *at the present moment*, the opposition is playing into the hands of the enemies of the Chinese revolution.

The opposition considers inexpedient the participation of the Communist Party in the Kuomintang. The opposition, consequently, considers expedient a withdrawal of the Communist Party from the Kuomintang. But what would withdrawal from the Kuomintang mean *now*, when the entire imperialist gang with all its underlings are demanding the expulsion of the Communists from the Kuomintang? It would mean deserting the battle-field and abandoning its allies in the Kuomintang, to the glee of the enemies of the revolution. It would mean weakening the Communist Party, undermining the revolutionary Kuomintang, facilitating the work of the Shanghai Cossacks and surrendering the banner of the

Kuomintang, the most popular of all the banners in China, to the Kuomintang Rights.

That is precisely what the imperialists, the militarists and the Kuomintang Rights are now demanding.

It follows, therefore, that by declaring for a withdrawal of the Communist Party from the Kuomintang *at the present moment*, the opposition is playing into the hands of the enemies of the Chinese revolution.

The recent plenum of the Central Committee of our Party⁵ therefore acted quite rightly in categorically rejecting the platform of the opposition.

Pravda, No. 90,
April 21, 1927

CONCERNING QUESTIONS OF THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

Reply to Comrade Marchulin

Your letter to the *Derevensky Kommunist*⁶ on the question of Soviets in China has been forwarded to me by the editorial board for reply. Presuming that you will have no objection, I am sending you a brief answer to your letter.

I think, Comrade Marchulin, that your letter is based upon a misunderstanding. And for the following reasons.

1) Stalin's theses for propagandists oppose the *immediate* formation of Soviets of *workers'*, *peasants'* and *soldiers'* deputies in *present-day* China. You, however, join issue with Stalin and refer to Lenin's theses and speech at the Second Congress of the Comintern, where he speaks only of *peasants'* Soviets, of *toilers'* Soviets, of Soviets of the *working people*, but does not say a single word about the formation of Soviets of *workers'* deputies.

Why does Lenin say nothing about the formation of Soviets of *workers'* deputies either in his theses or in his speech? Because, both in his speech and in his theses, Lenin has in mind countries where "there can be no question of a purely

proletarian movement," where "there is practically no industrial proletariat" (see Vol. XXV, p. 353⁷). Lenin definitely says in his speech that he has in mind such countries as Central Asia, Persia, where "there is practically no industrial proletariat" (*ibid.*)

Can one include among such countries China, with its industrial centres, such as Shanghai, Hankow, Nanking, Changsha, etc., where there are already some three million workers organized in trade unions? Obviously, not.

It is clear that in the case of present-day China, where there is a certain minimum of industrial proletariat, one must envisage the formation not simply of *peasants'* Soviets, or *toilers'* Soviets, but Soviets of *workers'* and *peasants'* deputies.

It would be another matter if we were considering Persia, Afghanistan, etc. But, as you know, Stalin's theses deal not with Persia, Afghanistan, etc., but with China.

Consequently your objection to Stalin's theses and your reference to Lenin's speech and theses at the Second Congress of the Comintern are mistaken and pointless.

2) You quote in your letter a passage from the "Supplementary Theses" of the Second Congress of the Comintern on the national and colonial question, where it is said that in the East "the proletarian parties must carry on intensive propaganda of communist ideas and at the first

opportunity establish *workers'* and peasants' Soviets." In so doing, you make it appear as if these "Supplementary Theses" and the passage you quote from them are Lenin's. That is not so, Comrade Märchulin. You have simply made a mistake. The "Supplementary Theses" are Roy's. It was indeed as Roy's theses that they were submitted at the Second Congress and adopted as a "supplement" to Lenin's theses (see verbatim report of the Second Congress of the Comintern, pp. 122-26).

Why were the "Supplementary Theses" needed? In order to single out from the backward colonial countries which have no industrial proletariat such countries as China and India, of which it cannot be said that they have "practically no industrial proletariat." Read the "Supplementary Theses," and you will realize that they refer chiefly to China and India (see verbatim report of the Second Congress of the Comintern, p. 122).

How could it happen that Roy's special theses were needed to "supplement" Lenin's theses? The fact is that Lenin's theses had been written and published long before the Second Congress opened, long before the representatives from the colonial countries had arrived, and prior to the discussion in the special commission of the Second Congress. And since the discussion in the congress commission revealed the necessity for singling out from the backward colonies of the

East such countries as China and India, the necessity for the "Supplementary Theses" arose.

Consequently, Lenin's speech and theses must not be confused with Roy's "Supplementary Theses," nor must it be forgotten that, in the case of countries like China and India, one must envisage the formation of *workers'* and peasants' Soviets, and not simply of peasants' Soviets.

3) Will it be necessary to form *workers'* and peasants' Soviets in China? Yes, it certainly will. That is plainly stated in Stalin's theses for propagandists, which say:

"The principal source of strength of the revolutionary Kuomintang lies in the further development of the revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants and the strengthening of their mass organizations—revolutionary peasant committees, workers' trade unions and other mass revolutionary organizations—as the *preparatory elements of the future Soviets*..."*

The whole question is *when* to form them, in *what* circumstances, in *what* situation.

Soviets of workers' deputies are an all-embracing, and therefore the best, revolutionary organization of the working class. But that does not necessarily mean that they can be formed at any time and in any circumstances. When Khrustalyov, the first chairman of the St. Petersburg Soviet of Workers' Deputies, suggested the

* See this book, p. 43.—Ed.

formation of Soviets of workers' deputies in the summer of 1906, after the tide of revolution had receded, Lenin objected and said that at that moment, when the rearguard (the peasantry) had not yet caught up with the vanguard (the proletariat), the formation of Soviets of workers' deputies was inexpedient. And Lenin was quite right. Why? Because Soviets of workers' deputies are not a simple workers' organization. Soviets of workers' deputies are organs of the struggle of the working class against the existing power, organs of an uprising, organs of a new revolutionary power, and only as such can they develop and gain strength. And if the conditions do not exist for a direct mass struggle against the existing power, for a mass uprising against that power, for the organization of a new revolutionary power, then the formation of workers' Soviets is inexpedient, since, in the absence of these conditions, they run the risk of decaying and becoming mere talkshops.

Here is what Lenin said about Soviets of workers' deputies:

"Soviets of workers' deputies are *organs of direct struggle of the masses.*" ... "It was not some kind of theory, not appeals on somebody's part, not tactics of somebody's invention, not a party doctrine, but the logic of facts that faced these non-party, mass organs with the necessity of an uprising, and made them organs of an uprising. And to establish such organs at the present time

would mean creating organs of an *uprising*,* and to call for their establishment would mean *calling for an uprising*** To forget this, or to veil it from the eyes of the broad mass of the people would be the most unpardonable short-sightedness and the worst of policies" (see Vol. X, p. 15).

Or again:

"The whole experience of both revolutions, that of 1905 and that of 1917, and all the decisions of the Bolshevik Party, all its political statements for many years past, boil down to this—that a Soviet of workers' and Soldiers' Deputies is practicable only as the *organ of an uprising*,* only as an *organ of revolutionary power*.* If this is not their purpose, Soviets become empty playthings that are bound to lead to apathy, indifference and disillusionment among the masses, who quite naturally become fed up with the endless repetition of resolutions and protests" (see Vol. XXI, p. 288).

That being the case, what would it mean to call for the *immediate* formation of Soviets of *workers'*, peasants', and soldiers' deputies in present-day South China, in the area, say, of the Wuhan government, where the revolutionary Kuomintang is now in power, and the movement is developing under the slogan, "All power to the revolutionary Kuomintang"? To call now for the formation of Soviets of *workers'* and peasants' deputies in this area would mean calling for an

* My italics.—J. St.

** My italics.—J. St.

uprising against the power of the revolutionary Kuomintang. Would that be expedient? Obviously, not. Obviously, whoever at the present time calls for the immediate formation of Soviets of *workers'* deputies in this area is trying to skip over the Kuomintang phase of the Chinese revolution, is running the risk of putting the revolution in China in a most difficult position.

That, Comrade Marchulin, is how matters stand with the question of the immediate formation of Soviets of *workers'*, peasants' and soldiers' deputies in China.

At the Second Congress of the Comintern a special resolution was adopted entitled: "When and in What Circumstances Soviets of Workers' Deputies May Be Formed." Lenin was present when that resolution was adopted. I would advise you to read it: It is not without interest (see verbatim report of the Second Congress of the Comintern, pp. 580-83).

4) When will it be necessary to form Soviets of *workers'* and peasants' deputies in China? Soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies will necessarily have to be formed in China at the moment when the victorious agrarian revolution has developed to the full, when the Kuomintang, as a bloc of the revolutionary Narodniks of China (the Kuomintang Left) and the Communist Party, begins to outlive its day, when the bourgeois-democratic revolution, which has not yet triumphed

and will not triumph so soon, begins to manifest its negative features, when it becomes necessary to pass step by step from the present, Kuomintang type of state organization to a new, proletarian type of organization of the state.

It is in this way that the passage on *workers'* and peasants' Soviets in Roy's "Supplementary Theses" adopted at the Second Congress of the Comintern should be understood.

Has that moment already arrived?

There is no need to prove that it has not yet arrived.

What, then, is to be done at this moment? The agrarian revolution in China must be broadened and deepened. Mass workers' and peasants' organizations of every kind must be created and strengthened—from trade-union councils and strike committees to peasant associations and peasant revolutionary committees—with a view to converting them, as the revolutionary movement grows and achieves success, into organizational and political bases for the future Soviets of workers', peasants' and soldiers' deputies.

That is the task now.

May 9, 1927

The magazine *Derevensky*

Kommunist, No. 10,

May 15, 1927

Signed: *J. Stalin*

TALK WITH STUDENTS OF THE SUN YAT-SEN UNIVERSITY

May 13, 1927

Comrades, unfortunately, I can devote only two or three hours to today's talk. Next time, perhaps, we shall arrange a longer conversation. Today, I think, we might confine ourselves to an examination of the questions which you have formulated in writing. I have received ten questions in all. I shall reply to them in today's talk. If there are additional questions—and I am told there are—I shall try to answer them in our next talk. Well then, let us get down to business.

FIRST QUESTION

"Why is Radek wrong in asserting that the struggle of the peasantry in the Chinese countryside is directed not so much against feudal survivals as against the bourgeoisie?"

"Can it be affirmed that merchant capitalism predominates in China, or feudal survivals?"

"Why are the Chinese militarists, who are owners of big industrial enterprises, at the same time representatives of feudalism?"

Radek does, indeed, assert something similar to what is stated in this question. As far as I recall, in his speech to the active of the Moscow organization, he either completely denied the existence of feudal survivals in the Chinese countryside, or attached no great importance to them.

That, of course, is a grave error on Radek's part.

If there were no feudal survivals in China, or if they were not of very great importance for the Chinese countryside, there would be no soil for an agrarian revolution, and there would then be no point in speaking of the agrarian revolution as one of the chief tasks of the Communist Party at the present stage of the Chinese revolution.

Does merchant capital exist in the Chinese countryside? Yes, it does. And it not only exists, but is sucking the blood of the peasantry no less effectively than any feudal lord. But this merchant capital of the type of primitive accumulation is peculiarly *combined* in the Chinese countryside with the domination of the feudal lord, of the landlord, and adopts the latter's medieval methods of exploiting and oppressing the peasants. That is the point, comrades.

Radek's mistake is that he has not grasped this peculiarity, this *combination* of the domination of feudal survivals with the existence of merchant capital in the Chinese countryside,

along with the preservation of medieval feudal methods of exploiting and oppressing the peasantry.

Militarism, tuchuns, all kinds of governors and the entire present flint-hearted and rapacious bureaucracy, military and non-military, constitute a superstructure on this peculiar feature in China.

Imperialism supports and strengthens the whole of this feudal-bureaucratic machine.

The fact that some of the militarists who own landed estates are at the same time owners of industrial enterprises does not alter anything at bottom. Many of the Russian landlords, too, in their time owned factories and other industrial enterprises, which, however, did not prevent them from being representatives of feudal survivals.

If in a number of regions 70 per cent of the peasants' earnings go to the gentry, the landlords, if the landlord actually wields power both in the economic sphere and in the administrative and judicial sphere, if the purchase and sale of women and children is still practised in a number of provinces—then it must be admitted that the predominating power in this medieval situation is the power of feudal survivals, the power of the landlords and of the land-owning bureaucracy, military and non-military, in a peculiar combination with the power of merchant capital.

It is these peculiar conditions that create the soil for the peasant agrarian movement which is growing, and will continue to grow, in China.

In the absence of these conditions, in the absence of feudal survivals and feudal oppression, there would be no question in China of an agrarian revolution, of the confiscation of the landlords' land, and so forth.

In the absence of these conditions, an agrarian revolution in China would be incomprehensible.

SECOND QUESTION

"Why is Radek wrong in asserting that, since Marxists do not admit the possibility of a party of several classes, the Kuomintang is a petty-bourgeois party?"

This question calls for a few observations.

Firstly. The question is put incorrectly. We do not say, and never have said, that the Kuomintang is a party of several classes. That is not true. We have always said that the Kuomintang is the party of a *bloc* of several oppressed classes. That is not one and the same thing, comrades. If the Kuomintang were a party of several classes, that would mean that not one of the classes linked with the Kuomintang would have its own party outside the Kuomintang, and the Kuomintang itself would constitute one *single* and common party for all these classes. But is that the

state of affairs in reality? Has not the Chinese proletariat, which is linked with the Kuomintang, also its own separate party, the Communist Party, which is distinct from the Kuomintang and which has its own special programme and its own special organization? It is clear that the Kuomintang is not a party of several oppressed classes, but is the party of a *bloc* of several oppressed classes that have their own party organizations. Consequently, the question is put incorrectly. In point of fact, in present-day China the Kuomintang can be regarded only as the party of a *bloc* of oppressed classes.

Secondly. It is not true that Marxism does not in principle admit the possibility of a party of a bloc of oppressed, revolutionary classes, and that it is impermissible in principle for Marxists to belong to such a party. That, comrades, is absolutely untrue. In point of fact Marxism has not only recognized (and continues to recognize) the permissibility in principle of Marxists joining such a party, but in definite historical conditions has put this principle into practice. I might refer to the example of Marx himself in 1848, at the time of the German revolution, when he and his supporters joined the bourgeois-democratic league in Germany⁸ and collaborated in it with representatives of the revolutionary bourgeoisie. It is known that, in addition to Marxists, this bourgeois-democratic league, this bourgeois-revolu-

tionary party, included representatives of the revolutionary bourgeoisie. The *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*,⁹ of which Marx was then the editor, was the organ of that bourgeois-democratic league. Only in the spring of 1849, when the tide of revolution in Germany had begun to recede, did Marx and his supporters resign from that bourgeois-democratic league, having decided to set up an absolutely independent organization of the working class, with an independent class policy.

As you see, Marx went even further than the Chinese Communists of our day, who form part of the Kuomintang precisely as an independent proletarian party with its own special organization.

One may dispute or not whether it was *expedient* for Marx and his supporters to join the bourgeois-democratic league in Germany in 1848, when it was a matter of waging, in conjunction with the revolutionary bourgeoisie, a revolutionary struggle against absolutism. That is a question of *tactics*. But that Marx recognized the permissibility *in principle* of such joining is something of which there can be no doubt whatever.

Thirdly. It would be fundamentally incorrect to say that the Kuomintang in Wuhan is a petty-bourgeois party, and to leave it at that. The Kuomintang can be characterized in that way only by people who have no understanding either of imperialism in China, or of the character of the Chinese revolution. The Kuomintang is not an

“ordinary” petty-bourgeois party. There are different kinds of petty-bourgeois parties. The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries in Russia were also petty-bourgeois parties; but at the same time they were *imperialist* parties, because they were in a militant alliance with the French and British imperialists, and together with them engaged in the *conquest* and *oppression* of other countries—Turkey, Persia, Mesopotamia, Galicia.

Can it be said that the Kuomintang is an *imperialist* party? Obviously not. The Kuomintang party is *anti-imperialist*, just as the revolution in China is anti-imperialist. The difference is fundamental. To fail to see this difference and to confuse the *anti-imperialist* Kuomintang with the *imperialist* Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties means to have no understanding of the national revolutionary movement in China.

Of course, if the Kuomintang were an *imperialist* petty-bourgeois party, the Chinese Communists would not have formed a bloc with it, but would have sent it to all the archangels. The fact of the matter, however, is that the Kuomintang is an *anti-imperialist* party which is waging a revolutionary struggle against the imperialists and their agents in China. In this respect, the Kuomintang stands head and shoulders above all the various *imperialist* “Socialists” of the Kerensky and Tsereteli type.

Even Chiang Kai-shek, who is a Right

Kuomintangist, Chiang Kai-shek who *before* he carried out his coup engaged in all sorts of machinations against the Left Kuomintangists and the Communists—even he was then superior to the Kerenskys and Tseretelis; for, whereas the Kerenskys and Tseretelis were warring *for* the enslavement of Turkey, Persia, Mesopotamia, Galicia, thus helping to *strengthen* imperialism, Chiang Kai-shek was warring—whether well or badly—*against* the enslavement of China, and was thus helping to *weaken* imperialism.

Radek’s error, and that of the opposition generally, is that he disregards the semi-colonial status of China, fails to observe the anti-imperialist character of the Chinese revolution, and does not observe that the Kuomintang in Wuhan, the Kuomintang without the Right Kuomintangists, is the centre of the struggle of the Chinese labouring masses *against* imperialism.

THIRD QUESTION

“*Is there not a contradiction between your appraisal of the Kuomintang* (speech at the meeting of students of the Communist University of the Toilers of the East, May 18, 1925) *as a bloc of two forces—the Communist Party and the petty bourgeoisie—and the appraisal given in the Comintern’s resolution on the Kuomintang as a bloc of four classes, including the big bourgeoisie?*”

“Would it be possible for the Chinese Communist Party to belong to the Kuomintang if there were a dictatorship of the proletariat in China?”

In the first place, it should be noted that the definition of the actual situation in the Kuomintang given by the Comintern in December 1926 (Seventh Enlarged Plenum) is reproduced in your “question” incorrectly, not quite accurately. The “question” says: “including the *big bourgeoisie*.” But the compradors are also a big bourgeoisie. Does this mean that in December 1926 the Comintern considered the comprador bourgeoisie a member of the bloc within the Kuomintang? It obviously does not, because the comprador bourgeoisie was, and remains, a sworn enemy of the Kuomintang. The Comintern resolution speaks not of the big bourgeoisie in general, but of “*part of the capitalist bourgeoisie*.” Consequently, what is referred to here is not every kind of big bourgeoisie, but the national bourgeoisie of the *non-comprador* type.

In the second place, I must say that I do not see any contradiction between these two definitions of the Kuomintang. I do not see any, because what we have here is a definition of the Kuomintang from two different standpoints, neither of which can be termed incorrect, for they are both correct.

When, in 1925, I spoke of the Kuomintang as the party of a bloc of the workers and peasants, I by no means intended to describe the *actual* state of affairs in the Kuomintang, to describe what classes were *in fact* linked with the Kuomintang in 1925. When I spoke of the Kuomintang then, I was thinking of it only as the *type* of structure of a distinctive people’s revolutionary party in the oppressed countries of the East, especially in such countries as China and India; as the *type* of structure of such a people’s revolutionary party as *must* be based on a revolutionary bloc of the workers and the petty bourgeoisie of town and country. I plainly stated at that time that “in such countries the Communists *must pass* from the policy of a *united national front* to the policy of a *revolutionary bloc* of the workers and the petty bourgeoisie” (see *Stalin*, “The Political Tasks of the University of the Peoples of the East,” *Problems of Leninism*, p. 264¹⁰).

What I had in mind, therefore, was not the present, but the *future* of people’s revolutionary parties in general, and of the Kuomintang in particular. And I was absolutely right in this. For organizations like the Kuomintang can have a future only if they strive to base themselves upon a bloc of the workers and the petty bourgeoisie, and in speaking of the petty bourgeoisie one should have in mind principally the *peasantry*, which constitutes the *basic* force of the petty

bourgeoisie in the capitalistically backward countries.

The Comintern, however, was interested in a different aspect of the matter. At its Seventh Enlarged Plenum it regarded the Kuomintang not from the standpoint of its future, of what it should become, but from the standpoint of the *present*, of the *actual* situation within the Kuomintang, and of just what classes were *in fact* linked with it in 1926. And the Comintern was absolutely right when it said that at that moment, *when there was not yet a split in the Kuomintang*, the latter did *in fact* comprise a bloc of the workers, the petty bourgeoisie (urban and rural) and the national bourgeoisie. One might add here that not only in 1926, but in 1925 as well the Kuomintang was based upon a bloc of precisely those classes. The Comintern resolution, in the drafting of which I took a very active part, plainly states that "the proletariat forms a bloc with the peasantry, which is actively entering the struggle on its own behalf, with the urban petty bourgeoisie, and with part of the capitalist bourgeoisie," and that "this combination of forces has found its political expression in a corresponding grouping within the Kuomintang party and the Canton government" (see the resolution¹¹).

But inasmuch as the Comintern did not confine itself to the *actual* state of affairs in 1926,

but also touched upon the *future* of the Kuomintang, it could not but state that this bloc was only a temporary one, that it was bound in the near future to be superseded by a bloc of the proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie. It is precisely for this reason that the Comintern resolution goes on to say that "at the present time the movement is on the threshold of a third stage, on the eve of a new regrouping of classes," and that "at that stage of development the basic force of the movement will be a bloc of a still more revolutionary character—a bloc of the proletariat, the peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie, *with the ousting** of the greater part of the big capitalist bourgeoisie" (*ibid.*).

That is precisely the bloc of the workers and the petty bourgeoisie (peasantry) upon which the Kuomintang should have relied for support, which is already beginning to take shape in Wuhan after the splitting of the Kuomintang and the desertion of the national bourgeoisie, and about which I spoke in my address to the Communist University of the Toilers of the East in 1925 (see above).

Thus we have a description of the Kuomintang from two different aspects:

a) from the aspect of its *present*, of the actual state of affairs in the Kuomintang in 1926, and

* My italics.—J. St.

b) from the aspect of its *future*, of what the Kuomintang must be, as the *type* of structure of a people's revolutionary party in the countries of the East.

Both these descriptions are legitimate and correct, because, embracing the Kuomintang from two different aspects, in the final analysis they give an exhaustive picture.

Where then, one asks, is the contradiction?

Let us, for the sake of greater clarity, take the "Workers' Party" in Britain (the "Labour Party"). We know that there is in Britain a special party of the workers that is based on the trade unions of the factory and office workers. No one hesitates to call it a workers' party. It is called that not only in British, but in all other Marxist literature.

But can it be said that this party is a real workers' party, a class party of the workers, standing in opposition to the bourgeoisie? Can it be said that it is *actually* the party of one class, the working class, and not a party, say, of two classes? No, it cannot. *Actually*, the Labour Party in Britain is the party of a bloc of the workers and the urban petty bourgeoisie. *Actually*, it is the party of a bloc of two classes. And if it is asked whose influence is stronger in this party, that of the workers, who stand in opposition to the bourgeoisie, or that of the petty bourgeoisie, it must be said that the influence of the petty bourgeoisie predominates in this party.

That indeed explains why the British Labour Party is *actually* an appendage of the bourgeois liberal party. Yet it is called in Marxist literature a *workers'* party. How is this "contradiction" to be explained? The explanation is that when this party is defined as a *workers'* party, what is usually meant is not the actual state of affairs within the party at *present*, but the *type* of structure of a workers' party by virtue of which it should in the *future*, given certain conditions, become a real class party of the workers, standing in opposition to the bourgeois world. That does not preclude, but on the contrary, presumes the fact that *actually* this party is, for the time being, the party of a bloc of the workers and the urban petty bourgeoisie.

There is no more contradiction in this than there is in all I have just said about the Kuomintang.

Would it be possible for the Chinese Communist Party to belong to the Kuomintang if there were a dictatorship of the proletariat in China?

I think it would be inexpedient and, therefore, impossible. It would be inexpedient not only if there were a dictatorship of the proletariat, but also if Soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies were formed. For what does the formation of Soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies in China mean? It means the creation of a dual

power. It means a struggle for power between the Kuomintang and the Soviets. The formation of workers' and peasants' Soviets is a preparation for the transition from the bourgeois-democratic revolution to the proletarian revolution, to the socialist revolution. Can such preparation be carried out under the leadership of *two* parties belonging to one common revolutionary-democratic party? No, it cannot. The history of revolution tells us that preparation for the dictatorship of the proletariat and transition to the socialist revolution can be effected only under the leadership of *one* party, the Communist Party, if, of course, it is a genuine proletarian revolution that is in question. The history of revolution tells us that the dictatorship of the proletariat can be achieved and developed only under the leadership of *one* party, the Communist Party. Failing that, there can be no genuine and complete dictatorship of the proletariat under the conditions of imperialism.

Consequently, not only when there is a dictatorship of the proletariat, but even prior to such a dictatorship, when Soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies are being formed, the Communist Party will have to withdraw from the Kuomintang, in order to conduct the preparations for a Chinese October under its own exclusive leadership.

I consider that in the period of the formation of Soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies in

China, and of preparation for the Chinese October, the Chinese Communist Party will have to replace the present bloc *within* the Kuomintang by a bloc *outside* the Kuomintang, on the pattern, say, of the bloc which we had with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries in the period of transition to October.

FOURTH QUESTION

"Is the Wuhan government a democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, and if not, what further ways of struggle are there for the establishment of a democratic dictatorship?"

"Is Martynov right in asserting that the transition to the dictatorship of the proletariat is possible without a 'second' revolution, and if so, where is the border-line between democratic dictatorship and proletarian dictatorship in China?"

The Wuhan government is not yet a democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. It may become one. It certainly will become a democratic dictatorship if the agrarian revolution develops to the full; but it is not yet the organ of such a dictatorship.

What is required for the Wuhan government to be converted into the organ of a democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry? Two things, at least, are required for that:

Firstly, the Wuhan government must become

the government of an agrarian-peasant revolution in China, a government that gives the utmost support to that revolution.

Secondly, the Kuomintang must replenish its top leadership with new leaders of the agrarian movement from the ranks of the peasants and workers and enlarge its lower organizations by including in them the peasant associations, the workers' trade-union councils and other revolutionary organizations of town and country.

At present, the Kuomintang has some 500,000 members. That is a small, a terribly small, number for China. The Kuomintang must include millions of revolutionary peasants and workers, and thus become a revolutionary-democratic organization many millions strong.

Only under those conditions will the Kuomintang be in a position to set up a revolutionary government which will become the organ of a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry.

Whether Comrade Martynov did actually speak of a peaceful transition to the dictatorship of the proletariat, I do not know. I have not read Comrade Martynov's article; I have not read it because it is not possible for me to keep an eye on all our day-to-day literature. But if he really did say that a peaceful transition from the bourgeois-democratic revolution to the proletarian revolution was possible in China—it is a mistake.

Chugunov once asked me: "What do you think, Comrade Stalin, wouldn't it be possible to arrange things so as, through the Kuomintang, without going roundabout, to pass at once to the dictatorship of the proletariat by peaceful means?" I, in my turn, asked him: "And what is it like, Comrade Chugunov, in China? Have you Right Kuomintangists, a capitalist bourgeoisie, imperialists?" He replied in the affirmative. "Well then," I said, "a fight is unavoidable."

That was before Chiang Kai-shek's coup. Theoretically, of course, the possibility of a peaceful development of the revolution in China is conceivable. Lenin, for example, at one time thought that a peaceful development of the revolution in Russia was possible through the Soviets. That was in the period from April to July 1917. But after the July defeat Lenin recognized that a peaceful transition to the proletarian revolution had to be considered out of the question. I think that still more must a peaceful transition to the proletarian revolution be considered out of the question in China.

Why?

Firstly, because the enemies of the Chinese revolution—both internal (Chang Tso-lin, Chiang Kai-shek, the big bourgeoisie, the gentry, the landlords, etc.) and external (the imperialists)—are too numerous and too strong to allow of

thinking that the further development of the revolution can proceed without big class battles and without serious splits and desertions.

Secondly, because there is no reason to regard the Kuomintang form of state organization as an expedient form for the transition from the bourgeois-democratic revolution to the proletarian revolution.

Lastly, because if, for example, in Russia a peaceful transition to the proletarian revolution did not succeed through the Soviets, which are the classic form of the proletarian revolution, what grounds are there for assuming that such a transition can succeed through the Kuomintang?

I therefore think that a peaceful transition to the proletarian revolution must be considered out of the question in China.

FIFTH QUESTION

“Why is the Wuhan government not conducting an offensive against Chiang Kai-shek, but is attacking Chang Tso-lin?”

“Does not the simultaneous offensive of the Wuhan government and Chiang Kai-shek against the North blur the front of the struggle against the Chinese bourgeoisie?”

Well, comrades, you are asking too much of the Wuhan government. It would be very fine, of course, to beat simultaneously Chang Tso-lin

and Chiang Kai-shek and Li Ti-sin and Yang Sen. But the position of the Wuhan government just now is such as not to permit it to launch an offensive simultaneously on all four fronts. The Wuhan government undertook the offensive against the Mukdenites for at least two reasons.

Firstly, because the Mukdenites are pushing towards Wuhan and want to annihilate it, so that the offensive against the Mukdenites is an absolutely urgent measure of defence.

Secondly, because the Wuhaners want to join forces with Feng Yu-hsiang's troops and to advance further in order to broaden the base of the revolution, which, again, is a matter of the greatest military and political importance for Wuhan at the present moment.

A simultaneous offensive on two such important fronts as against Chiang Kai-shek and Chang Tso-lin is at the present time beyond the strength of the Wuhan government. That is apart from an offensive westwards, against Yang Sen, and southwards, against Li Ti-sin.

We, the Bolsheviks, were stronger at the time of the Civil War, yet we were unable to develop successful offensive operations on all the fronts. What grounds are there for expecting more from the Wuhan government at the present moment?

Furthermore, what would an offensive against Shanghai mean just now, when the Mukdenites and Wu Pei-fu's supporters are moving on

Wuhan from the north? It would mean making things easier for the Mukdenites and putting off union with Feng's troops for an indefinite period, without gaining anything in the east. For the time being, let Chiang Kai-shek rather continue to flounder in the Shanghai area and hobnob there with the imperialists.

There will be battles yet for Shanghai, and not of the kind that are now being waged for Changchow, etc. No, the battles there will be far more serious. Imperialism will not so lightly relinquish Shanghai, which is a world centre where the cardinal interests of the imperialist groups intersect.

Would it not be more expedient first to join forces with Feng, acquire sufficient military strength, develop the agrarian revolution to the full, and carry on intense work to demoralize Chiang Kai-shek's rear and front, and then, after that, to tackle the problem of Shanghai in all its magnitude? I think that would be more expedient.

Consequently, it is not at all a matter here of "blurring" the front of the struggle against the Chinese bourgeoisie, because in any case it cannot be blurred if the agrarian revolution develops—and that the latter is developing and will continue to develop is now scarcely open to doubt. I repeat, it is not a matter of "blurring," but of developing appropriate fighting tactics.

Some comrades think that an offensive on all fronts is now the principal sign of revolutionary spirit. No, comrades, that is not true. An offensive on all fronts at this moment would be stupidity, not a sign of revolutionary spirit. Stupidity should not be confused with revolutionary spirit.

SIXTH QUESTION

"Is a Kemalist revolution possible in China?"

I consider it improbable in China, and therefore impossible.

A Kemalist revolution is possible only in countries like Turkey, Persia or Afghanistan, where there is no industrial proletariat, or practically none, and where there is no powerful agrarian-peasant revolution. A Kemalist revolution is a revolution of the top stratum, a revolution of the national merchant bourgeoisie, arising in a struggle against the foreign imperialists, and whose subsequent development is essentially directed against the peasants and workers, against the very possibility of an agrarian revolution.

A Kemalist revolution is impossible in China because:

- a) there is in China a certain minimum of militant and active industrial proletariat, which enjoys enormous prestige among the peasants;
- b) there is in the country a developed

agrarian revolution which in its advance is sweeping away the survivals of feudalism.

The vast mass of the peasantry, which in a number of provinces has already been seizing the land, and which is led in its struggle by the revolutionary proletariat of China—that is the antidote against the possibility of what is called a Kemalist revolution.

The Kemalist Party cannot be put on a par with the Left Kuomintang party in Wuhan, just as Turkey cannot be put on a par with China. Turkey has no such centres as Shanghai, Wuhan, Nanking, Tientsin, etc. Ankara falls far short of Wuhan, just as the Kemalist Party falls far short of the Left Kuomintang.

One should also bear in mind the difference between China and Turkey as regards their international position. In relation to Turkey, imperialism has already secured a number of its principal demands, having wrested from it Syria, Palestine, Mesopotamia and other points of importance to the imperialists. Turkey has now been reduced to the dimensions of a small country with a population of some ten to twelve million. It does not represent for imperialism a market of any importance or a decisive field of investment. One of the reasons why this has happened is that the old Turkey was an agglomeration of nationalities, with a compact Turkish population only in Anatolia.

Not so with China. China is a nationally compact country with a population of several hundred million, and constitutes one of the most important markets and fields for capital export in the world. Whereas in Turkey imperialism could content itself with severing from it a number of very important regions in the East, exploiting the national antagonisms between the Turks and the Arabs within the old Turkey, in China imperialism has to strike at the living body of national China, cutting it to pieces and severing whole provinces from it, in order to preserve its old positions, or at least to retain some of them.

Consequently, whereas in Turkey the struggle against imperialism could end with a curtailed anti-imperialist revolution on the part of the Kemalists, in China the struggle against imperialism is bound to assume a profoundly popular and distinctly national character and is bound to deepen step by step, developing into desperate clashes with imperialism and shaking the very foundations of imperialism throughout the world.

One of the gravest errors of the opposition (Zinoviev, Radek, Trotsky) is that it fails to perceive this profound difference between Turkey and China, confuses the Kemalist revolution with an agrarian revolution, and lumps everything indiscriminately into one heap.

I know that among the Chinese nationalists there are people who cherish Kemalist ideas.

There are pretenders in plenty to the role of a Kemal in China today. The chief among them is Chiang Kai-shek. I know that some Japanese journalists are inclined to regard Chiang Kai-shek as a Chinese Kemal. But that is all a dream, the illusion of frightened bourgeois. In China victory must go *either* to Chinese Mussolinis like Chang Tso-lin and Chang Tsung-chang, only for them to be overthrown later by the sweep of the agrarian revolution, *or* to Wuhan.

Chiang Kai-shek and his followers, who are trying to hold a middle position between these two camps, are inevitably bound to fall and share the fate of Chang Tso-lin and Chang Tsung-chang.

SEVENTH QUESTION

"Should the slogan of immediate seizure of the land by the peasantry be issued in China at this moment, and how should the seizure of land in Hunan be assessed?"

I think that it should. Actually, the slogan of the confiscation of the land is already being carried out in certain areas. In a number of areas, such as Hunan, Hupeh, etc., the peasants are already seizing the land from below, and are setting up their own courts, their own penal organs and their own self-defence bodies. I believe that in the very near future the entire peasantry of China will go over to the slogan of the

confiscation of the land. Therein lies the strength of the Chinese revolution.

If Wuhan wants to win, if it wants to create a real force both against Chang Tso-lin and against Chiang Kai-shek, as well as against the imperialists, it must give the utmost support to the agrarian-peasant revolution for the seizure of the landlords' land.

It would be foolish to think that feudalism and imperialism can be overthrown in China by armed strength alone. Without an agrarian revolution and without active support of the Wuhan troops by the vast masses of the peasants and workers, such forces cannot be overthrown.

Chiang Kai-shek's coup is often appraised by the opposition as the decline of the Chinese revolution. That is a mistake. People who appraise Chiang Kai-shek's coup as the decline of the Chinese revolution are in fact siding with Chiang Kai-shek, are in fact in favour of Chiang Kai-shek's being received back into the Wuhan Kuomintang. They apparently think that if Chiang Kai-shek had not split away, the cause of the revolution would be going better. That is foolish and unrevolutionary. Chiang Kai-shek's coup has in fact led to the Kuomintang being cleansed of dross and to the core of the Kuomintang moving to the Left. Of course, Chiang Kai-shek's coup was bound to result in a partial defeat for the workers in a number of areas. But that is merely a partial

and temporary defeat. In point of fact, with Chiang Kai-shek's coup, the revolution *as a whole* has entered a higher phase of development, the phase of an *agrarian* movement.

Therein lies the strength and might of the Chinese revolution.

The progress of a revolution must not be regarded as progress along an unbroken ascending line. That is a bookish, not realistic notion of revolution. A revolution always moves in zigzags, advancing and smashing the old order in some areas, and sustaining partial defeats and retreating in others. Chiang Kai-shek's coup is one of those zigzags in the course of the Chinese revolution, one that was needed in order to cleanse the revolution of dross and to impel it forward towards a powerful agrarian movement.

But for this agrarian movement to be able to take shape, it must have its general slogan. That slogan is the confiscation of the landlords' land.

EIGHTH QUESTION

"Why is it incorrect to issue the slogan of the formation of Soviets at the present moment?"

"Does not the Chinese Communist Party run the danger of lagging behind the movement in view of the formation of workers' Soviets in Honan?"

What kind of Soviets does the question refer to—*proletarian* Soviets, or *non-proletarian* Soviets, "peasants'" Soviets, "toilers'" Soviets, "people's" Soviets? In his theses at the Second Congress of the Comintern, Lenin spoke of the formation of "peasants' Soviets," "toilers' Soviets," in the backward countries of the East. He had in mind such countries as Central Asia, where "there is no industrial proletariat, or practically none." He had in mind countries such as Persia, Afghanistan, etc. That, indeed, explains why there is not a single word in Lenin's theses about the organization of *workers'* Soviets in such countries.

But it is evident from this that what Lenin's theses were concerned with was not China, of which it cannot be said that it has "no industrial proletariat, or practically none," but other, more backward, countries of the East.

Consequently, what is in question is the immediate formation of Soviets of *workers'* and peasants' deputies in China. Consequently, in deciding this question, it is not Lenin's theses that must be borne in mind, but Roy's, which were adopted by the same Second Congress of the Comintern, and which speak of the formation of *workers'* and peasants' Soviets in countries such as China and India. But it is said there that *workers'* and peasants' Soviets should be formed in those countries when passing from the

bourgeois-democratic revolution to the proletarian revolution.

What are Soviets of *workers'* and peasants' deputies? Soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies are, chiefly, organs of an uprising against the existing power, organs of struggle for a new revolutionary power, organs of the new revolutionary power. At the same time, Soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies are centres of organization of the revolution.

But Soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies can be centres of organization of the revolution only if they are organs for the overthrow of the existing power, if they are organs of a new revolutionary power. If they are not organs of a new revolutionary power, they cannot be centres of organization of the revolutionary movement. This the opposition refuses to understand, combating the Leninist conception of Soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies.

What would the formation at the present time of Soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies in the area of action, say, of the Wuhan government mean? It would mean the creation of a dual power, the creation of organs of revolt against the Wuhan government. Should the Chinese Communists overthrow the Wuhan government at the present time? It is clear that they should not. On the contrary, they should support it and convert it into an organ of struggle against Chang Tso-

lin, against Chiang Kai-shek, against the landlords and gentry, against imperialism.

But if the Communist Party at the present time ought not to overthrow the Wuhan government, what would be the sense of forming Soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies *now*?

One or the other:

either Soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies are formed immediately in order to overthrow the Wuhan government, which would be incorrect and inadmissible at the present moment;

or in setting up Soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies immediately, the Communists do not work for the overthrow of the Wuhan government, the Soviets do not become organs of a new revolutionary power—and in that case the Soviets will wither and become a travesty of Soviets.

That is what Lenin always warned against when he spoke of the formation of Soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies:

Your "question" says that workers' Soviets are being formed in Honan, and that the Communist Party risks lagging behind the movement if it does not go to the masses with the slogan of the formation of Soviets. That is nonsense, comrades. There are no Soviets of workers' deputies in Honan at this moment. That is a canard spread by the British press. What we have there

are "Red Spears"¹²; peasant associations are there, but of Soviets of workers' deputies there is so far not even a hint.

Workers' Soviets could, of course, be formed. That is not a very difficult matter. But the point is not the formation of workers' Soviets; the point is to convert them into organs of a new revolutionary power. Failing that, Soviets become an empty shell, a travesty of Soviets. To form workers' Soviets prematurely only in order to cause them to collapse and to turn them into an empty shell would indeed mean helping to convert the Chinese Communist Party from the leader of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into an appendage of all kinds of "ultra-Left" experiments with Soviets.

Khrustalyov, the first chairman of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies in St. Petersburg in 1905, likewise urged the restoration, and therefore also the formation, of Soviets of workers' deputies in the summer of 1906, believing that Soviets by themselves were capable of reversing the relationship of class forces, irrespective of the situation. Lenin at the time opposed Khrustalyov and said that Soviets of workers' deputies ought not to be formed then, in the summer of 1906, since the rearguard (the peasantry) had not yet caught up with the vanguard (the proletariat), and to form Soviets under such circumstances, and

thereby to issue the slogan of an uprising, would be risky and inexpedient.

But it follows from this, firstly, that the role of Soviets in themselves should not be exaggerated, and, secondly, that when forming Soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies the surrounding circumstances must not be ignored.

Is it necessary at all to form Soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies in China?

Yes, it is necessary. They will have to be formed when the Wuhan revolutionary government has become consolidated and the agrarian revolution has developed, at the time of the transition from the agrarian revolution, from the bourgeois-democratic revolution, to the proletarian revolution.

The formation of Soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies will mean laying the foundations of Soviet power in China. But laying the foundations of Soviet power will mean laying the foundations of dual power and steering a course towards the replacement of the present Wuhan Kuomintang power by Soviet power.

I think that the time for that has not yet come.

Your "question" speaks of the hegemony of the proletariat and the Communist Party in China.

But what is required in order to facilitate the Chinese proletariat's role of leader, of hegemon, in the present bourgeois-democratic revolution?

This requires, in the first place, that the Chinese Communist Party should be a solidly united organization of the working class, with its own programme, its own platform, its own organization, its own line.

This requires, secondly, that the Chinese Communists should be in the front ranks of the agrarian-peasant movement, that they should teach the peasants, especially the poor peasants, to organize in revolutionary associations and committees and work for the confiscation of the landlords' land.

This requires, thirdly, that the Chinese Communists should strengthen their position in the army, revolutionize it, transform it and convert it from an instrument of individual adventurers into an instrument of revolution.

This requires, lastly, that the Chinese Communists should participate in the local and central organs of the Wuhan government, in the local and central organs of the Wuhan Kuomintang, and there pursue a resolute policy for the further extension of the revolution both against the landlords and against imperialism.

The opposition thinks that the Communist Party should preserve its independence by breaking with the revolutionary-democratic forces and withdrawing from the Kuomintang and the Wuhan government. But that would be the sort of rather dubious "independence" which the Men-

sheviks in our country spoke about in 1905. We know that at that time the Mensheviks opposed Lenin and said: "What we need is *not* the hegemony, *but* the independence of the workers' party." Lenin rightly retorted that that was a negation of independence, for to counterpose independence to hegemony meant converting the proletariat into an appendage of the liberal bourgeoisie.

I think that the opposition, in talking today of the independence of the Chinese Communist Party and at the same time urging or hinting that the Chinese Communist Party should withdraw from the Kuomintang and the Wuhan government, slips into the line of advocating the Menshevik "independence" of the 1905 period. The Communist Party can preserve real independence and real hegemony only if it becomes the leading force both inside the Kuomintang and outside it, among the broad masses of the working people.

Not withdrawal from the Kuomintang, but ensuring the leadership of the Communist Party both inside and outside the Kuomintang—that is what is now required of the Chinese Communist Party, if it wants to be really independent.

NINTH QUESTION

"Is it possible at the present moment to raise the question of the formation of a regular Red Army in China?"

I think that as a perspective this question should certainly be kept in mind. But, considered practically, it is impossible just now, at this moment, to replace the present army by a new army, a Red Army, simply because there is so far nothing to replace it by.

The chief thing *now* is, while improving and revolutionizing the existing army by all available means, to lay at once the foundations for new, revolutionary regiments and divisions, composed of revolutionary peasants who have passed through the school of the agrarian revolution and of revolutionary workers, to create a number of new and really reliable corps with reliable commanders, and to make them the bulwark of the revolutionary government in Wuhan.

These corps will be the nucleus of the new army which will subsequently develop into a Red Army.

That is necessary both for the fight on the battle-fronts and especially for the fight in the rear against all kinds of counter-revolutionary upstarts.

Without this, there can be no guarantee against reverses in the rear and at the front, against desertions and betrayals.

I think that this course is the only possible and expedient course for the time being.

TENTH QUESTION

"Is the slogan of seizing the Chinese enterprises possible now, at a time of struggle against the bourgeoisie?"

"Under what conditions will the seizure of the foreign factories in China be possible, and will it involve the simultaneous seizure of the Chinese enterprises?"

I think that, generally speaking, the time is not yet ripe for passing to the seizure of the Chinese enterprises. But the possibility is not excluded that the stubborn sabotage of the Chinese employers, the closing down of a number of such enterprises and the artificial creation of unemployment may compel the Wuhan government to begin to nationalize some of these enterprises even at the present time and to set them going by its own efforts.

It is possible that the Wuhan government may be compelled even at the present time to take such a step *in individual cases*, as a warning to particularly malevolent and counter-revolutionary Chinese employers.

As to the foreign enterprises, their nationalization is a matter for the future. To nationalize them means to declare direct war on the imperialists. But to declare such a war requires somewhat different, more favourable circumstances than exist at present.

I think that at the present stage of the revolution, when it has not yet acquired sufficient strength, such a measure is premature and therefore inexpedient.

The task just now consists not in that, but in fanning the flames of the agrarian revolution to the utmost, in ensuring the hegemony of the proletariat in this revolution, in strengthening Wuhan and converting it into a centre of struggle against all the enemies of the Chinese revolution.

One must not shoulder all the tasks at once and risk collapsing under the strain. Particularly so, since the Kuomintang and its government are not adapted to the accomplishment of such cardinal tasks as the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, Chinese and foreign.

For the accomplishment of such tasks a different situation, a different phase of the revolution and different organs of revolutionary power are required.

J. Stalin, *The Revolution in China and the Errors of the Opposition*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1927

NOTES

1 The Kuomintang—the political party in China formed by Sun Yat-sen in 1912 to fight for the establishment of a republic and the national independence of the country. The entry of the Chinese Communist Party into the Kuomintang (1924) helped to convert the latter into a people's revolutionary mass party. In the first stage of development of the Chinese revolution, 1925-27, when it was an anti-imperialist revolution of a united all-national front, the Kuomintang was the party of a bloc of the proletariat, the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie and part of the big national bourgeoisie. In the second stage, in the period of the agrarian bourgeois-democratic revolution, after the national bourgeoisie had deserted to the camp of counter-revolution, the Kuomintang represented a bloc of the proletariat, the peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie, and pursued an anti-imperialist revolutionary policy. The development of the agrarian revolution and the pressure of the feudal lords on the Kuomintang, on the one hand, and the pressure of the imperialists, who demanded that the Kuomintang break with the Communists, on the other hand, frightened the petty-bourgeois intellectuals (the Lefts in the Kuomintang), who swung over to the counter-revolution. When the Kuomintang Lefts began to desert the revolution (summer of 1927), the Communists withdrew from the Kuomintang, and the latter became a centre of struggle against the revolution. p. 17

² Compradors—part of the big native merchant bourgeoisie in the colonies and dependent countries who act as intermediaries between foreign capital and the local market. In China, the comprador bourgeoisie showed itself to be an agency of foreign imperialism and a bitter enemy of the Chinese revolution of 1925-27.

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³ In the course of successful battles against the militarists in the North for the unification of China, the units of the national-revolutionary army captured Nanking on March 23, 1927. Aiming at strangling the revolution the imperialist powers have passed from the assistance to the Chinese militarists to an open intervention into China. On March 24 British and American warships bombarded Nanking.

p. 40

⁴ This refers to the counter-revolutionary coup made on April 12, 1927 by the Kuomintang Rights with Chiang Kai-shek at the head. As a result of this coup a counter-revolutionary government was formed in Nanking.

p. 40

⁵ This refers to the plenum of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.) held April 13 to 16, 1927 with the participation of members of the Central Control Commission and the Central Auditing Commission.

It discussed a number of questions connected with the congresses of Soviets of the R.S.F.S.R. and the U.S.S.R.

After discussing a communication of the Political Bureau of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.) on the decisions adopted by it in connection with international developments (events in China, etc.), the plenum approved the Political Bureau's policy on international affairs.

The plenum decided to convene the Fifteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) in the latter half of November, 1927, and instructed the Political Bureau to prepare the agenda of the Congress for the next plenum.

The plenum heard also a communication of the Bureau of the Communist group in the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions about the last session of the Anglo-Soviet Committee of Unity in Berlin. p. 47

⁶ *Derevensky Kommunist (Rural Communist)*—a fortnightly magazine for Party active in the countryside, organ of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.). It was published from December 1924 to August 1930. Until February 1927, its editor-in-chief was V. M. Molotov. p. 48

⁷ References in Roman numerals to Lenin's works here and elsewhere are to the 3rd edition of the *Works*. p. 49

⁸ This refers to the Cologne Democratic League, which was formed in the period of the German bourgeois revolution of 1848. The league included workers as well as bourgeois-democratic elements. Karl Marx was elected a member of the district committee of the democratic leagues of the Rhine region and Westphalia and was one of its leaders. p. 60

⁹ The *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, published in Cologne from June 1, 1848 to May 19, 1849. It was directed by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. The editor-in-chief was Karl Marx. On the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, see K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Moscow 1951, pp. 297-305. p. 61

¹⁰ See J. Stalin, *Works*, Vol. 7, Moscow 1954, p. 149. p. 65

¹¹ This refers to the resolution of the Seventh Enlarged Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Comintern

on the situation in China, adopted on December 16, 1926. For the resolution of the plenum see the book *Theses and Resolutions of the Seventh Enlarged Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Comintern*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1927. p. 66

- ¹² "Red Spears"—armed detachments formed by Chinese peasants in self-defence against the oppression of the landlords and militarists. During the Chinese revolution of 1925-27 the "Red Spears" and similar peasant organizations ("Yellow Spears," "Black Spears," "Big Knives," "Tightened Belts," etc.) rendered substantial assistance to the national-revolutionary army in the fight for China's independence. p. 86

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