

COMMUNIST LEADERS DISCUSS BUCHARIN'S REPORT ON PROGRAM FOR COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

Yesterday, the DAILY WORKER published Comrade Bukharin's speech in presenting his report on the Communist Programme, the first part of which dealt with the general characteristics of the transition period. Today we give the discussion which followed, in the Enlarged Executive which in turn was to report to the Fifth Congress. Daily reports on the sessions of the World Congress will be published in the DAILY WORKER.

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Bela Kun: Who will guarantee the inflow of new proletarian elements into this organizing intelligentsia which is exposed to the danger of degeneration?

Lloyd George and Masters.

Bucharin: This question is very interesting. It leads us to discuss the so-called oligarchy. The bourgeoisie itself does not rule as a whole class, but thru its parties, and their leaders. For instance, the relationship of the Lloyd George Cabinet to the bourgeoisie is not a class relationship. It is said the political bureau of the Russian Communist Party governs Rus-

sia, but that the proletariat has no voice. But it never occurs to anyone to say that Lloyd George stands on top and the capitalist underneath. They do not regard that relationship as a class division.

In what does the socially necessary relation between leaders and classes consist? It consists in the inequality—culturally—of the members of the class itself. The vanguard of the class is the Party and in the Party the leadership—the so-called oligarchy. Under communism there will be no absolute equality, but the relation

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DISCUSS WORLD PROGRAM FOR COMMUNISTS

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between "leaders" and others will be different. Goethe is recognized on all sides as the greatest German poet without having been elected to this position. In this way all men of genius are socially recognized without being arranged in organizations.

This non-class relationship can, given certain pre-requisites, change into a class relationship. This is not possible among the bourgeoisie because the difference between the upper strata of the bourgeoisie and the average bourgeois is much slighter than between the ruling strata of the working class leaders and the average proletarian. The guarantees lie in the cultural uplifting of a growing number of men of our class. There will be no real danger if real progress is made in the cultural uplifting of the masses. The organizational pre-requisite consists in the monopoly of education. Never was this problem so clear as now. At the Second Congress Lenin said: The problem of selecting the people is the most important problem. But that represents a very long period of development. With us the most important conquest is the changing of mass psychology and the creation of new "cadres."

This ended comrade Bukharin's report.

Clara Zetkin: There is yet another factor: i.e. not only the destruction of the bourgeois monopoly of education but the will to use the possibilities of education to the utmost extent. Who, however, can guarantee the complete utilization of this will? For this it is necessary to change mass psychology, abolish the division of labor and the distinction between intellectuals on the part of manual workers. If this division becomes deeper, it will imply not only a degradation of the classes, but of humanity. The distinction must be reduced and finally removed. That is not simple, but it must be done.

The World Viewpoint.

Comrade Varga: Two ideas must be kept separated here. These are the question of the ripeness of the proletariat and the question of the characteristics of individual countries, but these two matters must be treated together. I have for a long time struggled to secure that in the program there should be included, besides the dynamic structure of the transition from capitalism to socialism, a concrete picture conveying from a world point of view the characteristics of the period. This is after the revolution, production fell.

We know that it must be so, but what is the way to higher production?

We may talk, for instance, of the development of types and the standardization necessary, on the practical grounds, for the prevailing mistake, in all our parties, is that to the extent of 99 percent they are occupied with their own countries.

How can we develop these types? There are three points to consider:

1. The ripeness of the country. Whether this group still has hopes of achieving higher economic development under capitalism.

2. Countries in which capitalism has already reached its zenith or has passed it, in which the struggle for power in the historical sense is already more acute.

3. Countries where the struggle for power is already at an end.

Within the first two groups there is a political division according to whether the country is imperialistic or is an object of imperialistic development.

Bound up with this question is the development of the working class movement, and in particular the revolutionary movement in the countries concerned.

Different Types.

In the first groups, i. e. in those groups of countries where progress is still possible, we find always that the working class movement is not yet strong. There is, however, the type of the labor party (British) which occurs because capitalism is still in the stage of upward development, and can therefore give its aristocracy of labor a higher standard of living.

In those countries which have already reached or passed the zenith, revolutionary parties develop because the bourgeoisie is no longer economically in the position to offer the working class a rising standard of living—and cannot even offer it to the aristocracy of labor. It should be a part of the program of individual countries to elaborate and to emphasize Bukharin's proposition with regard to the difference between American and French capitalism. In the program we should deal with the ripeness of the revolutionary struggle. Bukharin's chief idea with regard to the question, by what kind of objective paths are we assured that capitalism will collapse or can be overthrown, indicates that the dynamic of reproduction of contradictions rests upon an ever rising series of stages. This is correct. But we must oppose the idea that these contradictions can at any time produce a crisis. Before the world war there were seven or eight imperialistic States. It is inconceivable that there may finally (after sev-

eral more imperialistic wars) be one single Imperialistic State which will rule all the others. These contradictions will then simply disappear. We must not give any kind of fatalistic note to our program, neither in Rosa Luxemburg's sense, nor by the teaching that the contradictions will become more and more involved. We must emphasize the active part to be played by the proletariat as the most real, and the final guarantee for the workers' victory.

Less Work; More Production.

As far as the question of dictatorship is concerned at first, there must be a reduction in the standard of living. I think that we must emphasize the fact that the possibility of nationalization of production stands as an alternative to capitalism. We should say: you will work less, nevertheless, production will be greater.

The final question is the part of the intelligentsia in the dictatorship. We must consider the matter from two sides:

1. Bukharin has said that with the raising of the cultural level this difference will be reduced, but that on the other side, there is a great difference between the intelligentsia in the leading strata under capitalism, and in the communist state or the stage of transition. The leading strata in the capitalist state enjoy an enormously high material standard of living. In a socialist State, that must be prevented, and in Russia it is being prevented so that the intelligentsia, as far as their standard of living is concerned, are not far removed from the proletariat. In a higher stage of development the natural consequences will be as follows: the power of production will become so great that each worker will require to work from three to four hours. As a result of this, the difference will finally disappear because the worker will become just as intellectually developed as the man who lives by his intellect.

Dwoilatski: I should like to put forward a question with regard to the problem of production. We generally assert that immediately after the social revolution production will fall. That is clear, but in his report Comrade Bukharin does not put the other question: how can we guarantee the proletariat a higher standard of living? In my opinion this question must be dealt with in the program because all the reformists oppose us with the assertion that, in Russia, immediately after production. Under capitalist production, where monopolies are not so widely developed as in America, this cannot be developed on such a broad scale as under socialist production.

Development of Types.

In Germany the upper strata of the bourgeoisie, consisting of at least three millions, have a standard of living apparently five times that of the proletariat. If we can win over a part of this stratum we have already secured a fund. We must discuss the new distribution of productive power. Under capitalist production, a great part of productive power is used in making articles of luxury, but under socialist production, this motive would decline. This point must in some way be formulated. We need not speak of the development of types, but at least we must indicate some means by which we shall increase production. A general formula just as Varga gives, is certainly not enough.

Bukharin: Replying to the discussion.

I myself am in favor of the most careful formulation of all problems. In my report I have touched upon various questions, not because they ought all to be included in the program, but because we need clearness among ourselves.

We are speaking here only of an introduction to the program which can only consist of a general description of the period.

What has been said about the development of types and standardization, belongs to another part of the program. In the introductory part, we should formulate the objective tendencies of development; that is, tendencies and their control, without detail. If we formulate more in detail, we shall risk entering upon prophecy.

As far as types of countries are concerned, Thalheimer is right in his description of the various processes of the whole method of transition. What he said about tactics does not belong to this part. We can lay it down that the process will be peculiar to their circumstances, and perhaps give one or two sentences on that point, and deal with this point more extensively in the section on tactics.

I have dealt, theoretically, with the question of single trusts, to which Varga referred, in my book "World Economy and Imperialism." Practically this prediction of one single trust will be found to be absolutely academic. For the rest, it should not be placed in the introduction. There is another place for it. With regard to production, two sections of the program have been confused. Glowing pictures form part of a description of Communist society. If we deal with changes in production on a world scale in the general section, we shall again become prophetic. We shall run into the danger of rationalistic construction.

Will Eliminate Class War Costs.

The same remarks apply to the problem of non-productive consumption. In the early stage, non-productive consumption will increase. We cannot immediately construct a new apparatus. In communist society there will be various factors, such as the disappearance of the costs of the class war, etc. Neither can we speak in detail of the various questions regarding the possibility of the degradation of the intellectuals in connection with the various social structures. This introductory part must contain perfectly clear propositions, with which all comrades are in agreement, and these propositions must be quite briefly stated. I will try to put my report in writing, and to write the draft. Comrades will then be able to make additions in writing.

Thalheimer: 1. Regarding the different types of countries. Distinction must here be made in accordance with the possible forms of the change to socialism. These matters should be clearly separated.

2. How far can we go into detail in describing the various forms of transition? We should distinguish the various basic demands with the greatest clearness (e. g. the expropriation without compensation of great landowners), but on the other hand we should be very careful in giving these differences in detail because the main point will still be experience.

I think that we all assume that the German, English and French revolutions have given rise to definite transitional demands, and that also the German revolution will bring us new experiences, the specific forms of which we shall only slightly foresee. I say this only by way of explanation. We have tried to work out a program of first general principles, but in a few weeks the conditions have already changed.

Then the second question: the degradation of the proletarian intelligentsia in the period of transition. Here one must raise especially the question of change in the division of labor. Together with this question we should consider the division between manual and brain work, between town and country, divisions within industry, and within the professions. One other point with regard to the danger of degradation of the intelligentsia must be mentioned. The greatness of this danger is in a high degree dependent upon the type of transition, and the relative importance of the various types of conditions. For instance, a working class of twenty millions as against a peasant class of from ten to fifteen millions presents a different spectacle than three million workers against eighty million peasants.