

The Soviet Union and Its Bourgeois Critics

Marx - Lenin - Stalin

by Jay Lovestone

Marx on the Agriculture

Duranty gives the impression that the agrarian policies of the Soviet Union are "Stalinism", meaning that they not only have nothing in common with but actually are hostile to and a revision of the Marxian teachings on the agricultural question. This is sheer nonsense. Lenin's distinct contribution to the agrarian question will be discussed later. But the essential Marxian features of the agrarian policies of the Soviet Union can be clearly seen from the following analysis and estimate by Engels. The latter emphasized that:

"When we seize the powers of the state, we shall never dream of forcibly expropriating the poorer peasants, the small holders (with or without compensation), as we shall have to expropriate the great landowners. Our business as regards the small holders will be to see to it that their individual production and individual ownership are transformed into communal production and communal ownership, but the change must not be effected forcibly. We must act on them by way of example, and by offering social help with this and in view of..." (Engels: The Agrarian Problem in the West).

Duranty confuses the Kulak with the poor peasant. That we can understand. More than one Communist—even in high positions in the Party—forgetting the teachings of Lenin on this decisive question, has, now and then, tended to look upon the entire peasantry as one homogeneous reactionary mass and even confused the poor peasant with the Kulak. But how strikingly true is the prophetic analysis of Engels is shown by the application of its fundamentals in the Soviet Union today, in the mistakes and successes of collectivization under the Five Year Plan.

Said Engels:

"We are determinedly on the side of the small peasant. We will do all we can to make his life easier and to facilitate co-operation if he wants it. If he does not decide upon it, we will give him time to think the matter over on his bit of land. We will act in this way not only because we think that the small independent peasant can quite well range himself on our side but also because it is in the direct interest of the party. The greater the number of peasants we will let become proletarians and will draw to our side even while they are still peasants, the more rapid and easy will be the social transformation. For this transformation it is futile to wait till the moment when capitalist production will everywhere be developed to its maximum extent, when the last artisan and the last peasant will fall victim to big capitalist production." (Engels: The Peasant Question).

An examination of Soviet agricultural policy from the October Revolution thru the Five Year Plan reveals with great clarity the effective, realistic application of the above principles by the Russian Bolsheviks. "Criticism" of Marx on the agrarian question has long been the sport of the deserters from Marxism, Kautsky, Baur, Hillquit etc. Duranty has mechanically repeated such criticism, has merely vulgarized the pseudo-Marxist critics of victorious Bolshevism.

The Why and Wherefore of Leninism

It's an old trick of the enemies of Marxism to hide their attack of Leninism behind lip-service to Marxism, behind incessant repetition that Lenin was "against Marx". Duranty concludes that Marxism is European, Leninism semi-Asiatic, and the practices and policies of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republic today (for which he invents the name Stalinism) wholly Asiatic and therefore different from and opposed to Leninism and especially to Marxism. The aim of such propaganda is to undermine the growing confidence of the workers in the Soviet Union as a land of Socialist construction. Thru such propaganda the bourgeoisie hope to put over the following illusion and bluff among the workers: "Well, the Five Year Plan may be good for Russia. It is not good for Western Europe and America because Russia is Asiatic and they are not."

"Therefore", say the capitalist apologists, "there is no point in copying the Russians and their horrible Asiatic schemes. They won't work in Europe. They are based on the Asiatic doctrine of Stalinism and not on the European doctrine of Marxism or the semi-European theories of Lenin."

Again, we cannot emphasize too strongly that all attempts in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union or the Comintern apparatus to create a Stalin cult only play into the hands of the enemies of the Soviet Union and the Comintern. The present policies of the U.S.S.R. are founded solely upon Marxism and are deeply rooted in Leninism.

It is true Leninism is not merely a repetition of Marxism but is a development of Marxism. There are distinct contributions in the theories of Lenin. These contributions are much more than the concrete application of Marxism to the peculiar conditions of Russia. Stalin once said very well: "Lenin has indeed revived the revolutionary content of Marxism, suffocated by the opportunists of the Second International." That in itself would mean that Leninism is fully international and not semi-Asiatic or European or what not else.

Leninism is the Marxism of the period of imperialism—the period of the decay of capitalism—and the period of proletarian revolution. Leninism is the theory and strategy of the proletarian revolution, especially the theory and tactics of the dictatorship of the proletariat in realization. We must not forget that Lenin lived in a different epoch than did Marx and Engels, whose follower he was. Bukharin properly estimated this relationship as follows:

"Marx understood the epoch of merchant capitalism which was behind him. Marx likewise knew industrial capitalism. . . . But the entire new stage of

capitalist development with its great reorganization of productive relations in capitalism—what Lenin designated as monopolist capitalism—it is obvious that Marx could not know about all these phenomena since they were non-existent during his time, and it is just for that simple reason that he was unable to express and generalize them."

Lenin, the greatest follower of Marx and Engels, made distinct contributions in the development of Marxism by scientifically examining and generalizing first, the "phenomena arising from finance capital, from the imperialist policy of this finance capital"; second, the problems growing out of the World War and the resulting accentuated "decline of capitalist relations (state capitalism, disruption of production and exchange, etc.); third, "a series of factor directly connected with workers' risings during the time of the collapse of capitalist relations"; fourth, a whole series of altogether new questions growing out of the period of the "commencement of the epoch of working class rule."

Leninism and Russia

We have seen the new epoch which has given birth to Leninism. But how come that Russia was the home, the birthplace of Leninism? Because Russia represented the concentration and synthesis of all the acute contradictions of imperialism. "Czarism was the quintessence of the most negative sides of imperialism", said Stalin. Under Czarism Russia was that country sufficiently pregnant with revolution to be able to solve these contradictions by means of revolution. Bernard Shaw recently recognized the

international significance of this when he hailed Lenin as pointing a way out of the impasse into which capitalism ("western civilization") has been and is still traveling. Under these conditions the thoroughgoing destruction of Czarism could be achieved only thru an overthrow of imperialism—of the Czar as the watchdog of imperialism in Eastern Europe and the gendarme of Western imperialism in the Near and Far East.

The strategy of the entire proletarian victory in the Soviet Union and of the maintenance of the only workers' Soviet republic in the world are predicated upon Lenin's analysis and teaching on imperialism, on the national problem and the problem of the colonies, on the state, and on the peasantry (Lenin being "the most outstanding agrarian theoretician existing among Marxists"). Leninism, born in Russia, is international in content, in substance, in outlook. Leninism approaches the problem of the world revolution not merely from the angle of the economic condition in one or another separate country, but from the point of view of the condition of international capitalist world economy. Capitalism is now imperialism and its inherent basic contradictions have been enlarged to a world magnitude, to international dimensions.

Leninism is International

On this basis one can no longer speak of the problem of proletarian or national revolution in one or the other country as a distinct problem. To Leninism the various national fronts of capitalism are

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Stalin to the Industrial Executives

ON THE ROAD TO SOCIALISM

by Joseph Stalin

(Continued from the last issue)

5.—SIGNS OF A CHANGE AMONG THE OLD TECHNICAL INTELLIGENTSIA

The question of the attitude to the old bourgeois industrial and technical intelligentsia arises now in a new way.

A couple of years ago we had a situation when the more qualified section of the old technical intelligentsia was contaminated with the disease of "wrecking". Moreover, "wrecking" was something like a fashion then. Some did the wrecking, others shielded the wreckers, while there were those who washed their hands and maintained an attitude of neutrality, and there were those who oscillated between the Soviet government and the wreckers. Of course, the majority of the old technical intelligentsia continued to work more or less loyally, but we are alluding here not to the majority, but to the more qualified section of the technical intelligentsia.

What originated the wrecking movement, what stimulated it? The intensification of the class struggle within the U.S.S.R.; the aggressive policy of the Soviet power towards the capitalistic elements of town and country, the resistance of the latter to the policy of the Soviets, complications in the international situation, the difficulties of state farm and collective farm construction. While the activity of the militant section of the wreckers was reinforced by the interventionist designs of the imperialists in the capitalist countries, and by the grain difficulties within the country, the wavering attitude of another section of the old technical intelligentsia was strengthened by the fashionable talk that "nothing would come of the Kolkhozes and Sovkhozes, anyway," that "the Soviets would soon degenerate, collapse," that "the Bolsheviks by their policy were stimulating intervention," etc. etc.

Naturally, in such a situation there could be but one practical policy for the Soviet government in regard to the old technical intelligentsia—the policy of smashing the active wreckers, of beginning a process of differentiating among those who were neutral, and attracting those who were loyal.

It is quite a different situation today. To begin with, we have smashed and we are successfully overcoming the capitalistic elements of town and country. Of course, this cannot give any joy to the old intelligentsia. It is quite probable that they still feel sympathy for their defeated friends. But none of these sympathizers, especially those who were neutral and who wavered, care to share the fate of their active friends, now that the latter have suffered a humiliating defeat. Furthermore, we have overcome the bread difficulties, so much so that we are now exporting grain in quantities unprecedented during the whole existence of Soviet rule. Even the blind can now see that upon the front of kolkhoz and Sovkhoz construction we have been definitely victorious, having attained tremendous successes. Consequently, the chief "weapon" of the old intelligentsia has disappeared into oblivion. As to the interventionist hopes of the bourgeois intelligentsia, it ought to be admitted that they have proven—at least so far—to have been houses on sand. Indeed, for six years they were promised intervention, and not a single attempt was made to intervene. It is time to admit that our sagacious bourgeois intelligentsia was simply hoodwinked, not to speak of the fact that the very behavior of the active wreckers at the famous trial in Moscow resulted in the utter discrediting of the ideal of wrecking.

Naturally, these new circumstances were bound to tell upon our old technical intelligentsia. The new situation was bound to create, and it did create new moods among the old technical intelligentsia. This accounts for the fact that we now see definite signs of a change in the mood of a certain section of that intelligentsia, which formerly sympathized with the wreckers and now have turned to the side of the Soviets. The fact that not only this section of the old intelligentsia, but even also definite wreckers of yesterday, a considerable portion of them, are beginning to work in a number of factories and workshops side by side with the working class, clearly indicates the beginning of the change among the old technical intelligentsia. Of course, this does not mean that we have already no more wreckers. There are and there will be wreckers as long as we have classes, as long as we are surrounded by capitalism. But it does mean that since a considerable section of the old technical intelligentsia, which formerly sympathized with the wreckers in one way or another, has now turned to the side of the Soviets, there is but a small number of active wreckers left and they are isolated.

This means that there should be a corresponding change in our policy towards the old technical intelligentsia. Whereas the height of the "wrecking" period, our attitude to the old technical intelligentsia was chiefly expressed in the policy of smashing them now that the intelligentsia has turned to the side of the Soviets, our attitude should be to attract and assist the technical intelligentsia. It would be incorrect and non-dialectical to persist in the old policy under the new, changed conditions. It would be stupid and irrational to consider every specialist and engineer of the old school as nothing short of an uncaptured criminal and wreckers. The "anti-specialist" psychology has always been considered by us as a pernicious and shameful mania.

To sum up, our task is to change the attitude towards the engineering and technical forces of the old school, to accord them the utmost attention and solicitude, to more boldly draw them into work.

6.—COST ACCOUNTING AND ACCUMULATION

The picture would be incomplete if I failed to touch upon yet another new circumstance. I am alluding to the sources of accumulation for industry, for our national economy, and to accelerating the pace of this accumulation.

What is the new and outstanding feature in the development of our industry from this point of view of accumulation? It is that the old sources of accumulation are beginning to become already inadequate for the further development of industry. It becomes necessary to seek new sources of accumulation and to in-

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THE momentary lull in the international situation is but the calm before the storm. A particularly ominous sign is the fall of the pound sterling. The Prussian plebiscite results will play a decisive role in immediate European affairs. The American situation has taken a sharp turn for the worse. July steel production touched the lowest since December 1921—at about 33% capacity. Wheat, corn, cotton are constantly establishing new lows. Electric power output

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but links in the chain of world imperialism. Hence it is the duty of the revolutionary proletariat to break this chain of world imperialism at its weakest link at any particular moment. The international proletarian revolution starts precisely in that country where the proletariat can first break thru. This break will come, said Lenin, as it has come, not necessarily in that country with the highest developed capitalist industry but rather on the weakest national sector of the capitalist world front, at the break of the weakest link in the international imperialist chain. In 1917 it was Russia. Perhaps Germany will be the next—as the weakest link in the world chain. Perhaps India or China. The unquestionably international—not Asiatic, not European, not North American, but world perspective of Lenin is strikingly brought out in his analysis to the effect that:

"The capitalist countries of Western Europe will accomplish their evolution towards Socialism not by the methodical maturing of Socialism in these countries, but by means of the exploitation of certain states by others, thru the exploitation of the first State that is defeated in the imperialist war . . . The East, on the other hand, definitely entered into the revolutionary movement in consequence of this first imperialist war; it has been drawn into the whirlpool of the revolutionary world movement."

Lenin—Symbol of Revolutionary

It is especially because Leninism is international, is Marxism in the epoch of imperialism that it is so practical. Of course, the bourgeois intellectuals can never see this. They see individuals, personal ambitions, Tamerlanes, "Stalinism", as the incarnation of the practical. They cannot understand that the revolutionary theories of Marxism, of Leninism are the very quintessence of the practical. One of the most characteristic qualities of Lenin was "his realization of the practical sense of every theoretical construction and of any kind of theoretical conception."

Bukharin has pointed out that "Lenin always approached the question in such a way as to obtain alliance with the greatest possible number of people who could play the role of known quantities of energy to hurl against the old regime."

It would do well for those who so ardently call themselves Stalinites, who drink of the non-existent fountain of Stalinism and partake of the glory of

"practicalism", to ponder the above. Lenin was so practical that he was able to survey a whole epoch and observe even the minutest details in it.

Finally, it was none other than Stalin who understood and hailed Lenin as the symbol of revolutionary practise. Thus Stalin answers the question: What are the characteristics of the Leninist school of theory and practice?

"There are two—Russian revolutionary inspiration and the practical spirit of the American. Leninism is their harmonious union . . . The union of revolutionary inspiration with the American practical spirit—this is the essence of practical Leninism. Only this union will give us the perfect type of Leninist workers."

Precisely here is the key to the great success in Socialist construction in the Soviet Union today under the Five Year Plan. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union leading the Party, which is the inspiration and dynamo of the remarkable progress in Socialist construction in the Soviet Union, is developing policies for the country based on the full recognition of the following undying truths of Lenin

"The Communist who imagines he can succeed in every task by drawing up Communist decrees is guilty of Communist vanity."

"Fewer pompous phrases, and more everyday work . . . less political trepidation and more attention to the simpler but more tangible facts of Communist construction."

What timely and significant truths these are—not only for bourgeois critics of our movement but also for members in our Party, in our whole movement who have not yet learned to steer clear between the swamps of "revolutionary" phantasy and the morass of petty details.

Ford Called In For Baby Crisis

The Hoover Plan of 20 million babies in 20 years is already breaking down, due to the depression. The Census Bureau reports an 8.5% decrease in marriages during 1930. Unless maybe Hoover is getting revolutionary and will accept babies born out of lawful wedlock on a par with "married" babies. Or start a "capitalist competition" for twins or triplets. It is reliably rumored that Henry Ford will be called into a fishing conference on the Rapidan to outline a plan to produce babies on the belt system. They will hop off the belt one every 14 seconds with diaper, safety pin, milk bottle and muffler complete.