

Comrade Pepper (America):

I agree with comrade Roy that the European and American Parties have not the correct idea of the colonial question. Comrade Brown is also right when he says that the West European parties pay very little attention to the national and colonial question. But I think that this accusation is justified only as far as some sections are concerned, but does not apply to the Comintern as a whole. The Comintern is better than its sections. For it has been the ideological leader of all its sections, including the comrades who came here with complaints. It is the Comintern which provided these comrades with a platform for the airing of their complaints. As to the Irish question, Comrade Lenin mentioned Ireland even during the imperialist war as a country where a revolutionary national war is possible. Comrade Roy went too far in his criticism of the tactics which the Comintern has hitherto applied. He goes too far by applying the standard of his Indian experiences to all other questions. Moreover, I do not think that even the Indian bourgeoisie, in its objective role, is counter revolutionary to the extent of identifying its interests with those of British imperialism. Even if the Indian bourgeoisie persecutes the proletariat of its country, its attitude towards British imperialism will always be objectively revolutionary.

Comrade Manuilsky was right in emphasising the revolutionary significance of the self-determination slogan. But I think that he paid too little attention to the other side of the question. The other slogan which we need is the slogan of complete equality between nations and even races. In many countries we are not in a position to separate the various nationalities or races in a way which would not rob the slogan of self-determination of its concrete meaning. This applies to the Negro question in America, or rather to the whole national question of the U.S.A. where the proletarians of 56 nationalities intermingle and cannot properly develop mainly because many of them are deprived of the press in their mother tongue, and are therefore deprived of proper leadership. Engels called a nation which is deprived of its leading sections a "nation without a history". In this sense, we are justified in calling the American proletariat a proletariat without a history. In this case the slogan of absolute equality is a truly revolutionary slogan.

In Australia the racial question is not connected with national self-determination, but rather with immigration facilities for "the coloured races". The same is the case in the Japanese-American conflict. I am therefore of the opinion, that we should issue as a third and auxiliary slogan, the slogan of the right of free emigration and immigration.