

INTERNATIONAL

Vol. 10 No. 18

PRESS

10th April 1930

CORRESPONDENCE

Editorial Offices and Central Despatching Department: Berlin C 25, Bartelstrasse 1/5, III. Postal Address, to which all remittances should be sent by registered post: International Press Correspondence, Berlin C 25, Bartelstrasse 1/5, III. Telegraphic Address: Inprekorr, Berlin. Telephone: Berolina 1169 and 2886

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Reply to the Comrades on the Collective Farms.

By J. Stalin.

As is to be seen from the papers, my article "Many are being Rendered Giddy by the Successes", and the decision of the Central Committee "On the fight against Distortions of the Party Line in the Collective Economy Movement" have evoked numerous expressions of opinion in the ranks of the practical workers in the collective economy movement. In connection therewith I have lately received a number of letters from collective economists requesting me to reply to the questions contained therein. It was my duty to reply to these questions by personal letter. This, however, proved to be impossible as half of the letters did not give the addresses of the writers. The questions touched upon in the letters, however, are of tremendous political interest for all our comrades. Moreover, even those comrades who forgot to send their addresses, cannot be left without an answer. In view of this fact I found myself compelled to reply openly, i. e. in the press, to the letters from collective economists by dealing with those questions which are regarded of importance for the cause. I did this all the more readily as I had before me a direct decision of the C. C. in regard thereto.

First question: Wherein lie the roots of the mistakes in the peasant question?

Answer: In the incorrect methods of approaching the middle peasants. In permitting the employment of force in the sphere of economic relations with the middle peasants; in the failure to remember that the economic alliance (Smitchka) with the mass of the middle peasants must be built not on the basis of measures of compulsion, but on the basis of an agreement with the middle peasants, on the basis of alliance with the middle peasants; in the failure to remember that the foundation of the collective economy movement at the present moment is the alliance of the working class and of the village poor with the middle peasants against capitalism in general and against the kulaks in particular.

So long as the attack on the kulaks was conducted in a united front with the middle peasants, everything went well. When, however, as some our comrades, intoxicated by the

successes, began, unnoticeably, to deviate from the line of attack on the kulaks and to glide over to the line of fight against the middle peasants, when, in their eagerness to achieve a higher percentage of collectivisation, they began to employ force against the middle peasants, to deprive them of the right to vote, by "dekulakising" and expropriating them, the united front with the middle peasants began to be undermined and the kulak obtained the opportunity, as is quite clear, to make fresh attempts to recover his position.

They forgot that the employment of force, which is necessary and expedient in the fight against our class enemy, is impermissible and injurious when applied against the middle peasant, who is our ally.

They forgot that cavalry attacks, which are necessary and useful for solving tasks of a military character, are out of place and injurious when it is a question of solving the task of building up collective economy, which, moreover, is organised in alliance with the middle peasants.

Therein lie the roots of the mistakes in the peasant question.

With regard to economic relations with the middle peasants Lenin said:

"In the first place, we must insist on that truth, that here we cannot achieve any real and genuine success with methods of compulsion. Here the economic task is quite different. Here it is not a question of a pinnacle which can be removed while leaving the whole foundation, the whole structure intact. Here there exists no pinnacle such as the capitalists in the town were. To proceed with force here means to spoil the whole thing . . . There is nothing more stupid than the idea of applying force in the sphere of economic relations with the middle peasants". (Lenin, Russian edition, volume XVI, page 150 to 151).

Lenin states further:

"Employment of force against the middle peasantry means to cause tremendous damage. The middle peasant-

try is a numerous stratum numbering millions. Even in Europe, where the middle peasantry nowhere represented such a force, where there exists the gigantically developed technique and culture, city life, the railways, where it would have been easiest to think of such a thing — nobody, not one of the revolutionary socialists proposed that measures of compulsion should be employed against the middle peasantry." (Lenin Russian edition, Volume XVI, page 150.)

This seems clear.

Second question: What are the chief mistakes in the collective economy movement?

Answer: Of such mistakes there are at least three.

1. The Leninist principle of voluntariness in the establishment of collective farms is violated. The fundamental directive of the Party and the model statutes for agricultural producers' co-operatives with regard to the voluntary principle in building up collective economy are violated.

Leninism teaches that we must lead the peasant onto the path of collective economy by means of voluntary choice, by convincing him of the advantages of socialist collective economy as compared with individual economy. Leninism teaches that we can convince the peasants of the advantages of collective economy only by showing him, by proving by means of facts that collective economy is better than individual economy, that it is more advantageous than individual economy, that collective economy offers the peasants, the poor peasant and the middle peasant a way of escape from poverty and misery. Leninism teaches that every attempt to impose collective economy by force, every attempt to promote collective economy by means of compulsion can only yield negative results, can only turn the peasant against the collective economy movement.

And in actual fact, so long as this fundamental rule was regarded the collective economy movement showed success after success. But some of our comrades, intoxicated by the successes, began to neglect these rules, began to display inordinate haste and, in the desire to achieve high percentages, began to promote collective farms by means of compulsion. It is not surprising that we did not have to wait long to experience the negative results of such a "policy". The collective farms which had been set up in over haste began to dissolve as rapidly as they rose. And a portion of the peasantry, who only yesterday had enormous confidence in the collective farms, began to turn away from them.

Therein lies the first and chief mistake in the collective economy movement.

Speaking of the voluntary principle in building up collective economy Lenin said:

"Our task is now to go over to socialised cultivation of the soil, to go over to common big economy; but there must be no compulsion of any sort on the part of the Soviet Power. No law of any sort compels thereto. The agricultural communes are formed voluntarily; the transition to the socialised cultivation of the soil can only be voluntarily. There must not be and there will also not be permitted by the law the least compulsion on the part of the workers and peasants government, in this respect. If any of you have observed such acts of compulsion you must know that this is an abuse, that it constitutes a violation of the law, which we are endeavouring to put right and will put right with all our forces." (Lenin volume XX., 2nd part. Russian edition, page 320.)

And further:

"Only when we succeed in showing the peasant by means of facts the advantages of socialised collective, co-operative, common (artels) cultivation of the soil, only when we succeed in helping the peasants with the aid of co-operative, collective economy, only then will the working class, which holds the State power in its hands, really prove to the peasants that it was right, will it really in a tenable and correct way draw the masses of peasants, numbering millions, over to its side. Therefore, it is impossible to overestimate the importance of all kinds of undertakings for promoting co-operative, collective cultivation of the soil. We have millions of individual

farms, scattered about in the most remote villages Only when we prove practically, on the basis of experiences, which the peasant can understand, that the transition to co-operative, collective cultivation of the land is necessary and possible, will we have the right to say that in such a vast peasant country as Russia, a serious step has been made on the way to socialist agriculture".

(Lenin Volume XVI., Russian edition, page 392.)

Finally, yet another passage from the works of Lenin:

"In encouraging and spurring on the co-operatives of every kind, as well as the agricultural communes of the middle peasants, the representatives of the Soviet Power must not permit the least compulsion in the creation of such communes and co-operatives. Only such associations are of value which have been carried out by the peasants on their free initiative and whose advantages had been proved and tested by them in practice. Immoderate haste in this matter is harmful, as it can only increase the prejudice of the middle peasantry towards innovations. Such representatives of the Soviet Power who permit not only the direct but also the indirect employment of compulsion for the purpose of uniting the peasants in communes, must be sharply called to account and removed from their work in the villages." (Lenin Volume XVI. Russian edition page 519.)

That appears clear. It is hardly necessary to say that the Party will carry out with the greatest strictness these instructions of Lenin.

2. They destroyed the Leninist principle of taking into account the varied character of the conditions in the different districts of the Soviet Union in regard to the establishment of collective farms. They forgot that there exists in the Soviet Union the most varied districts with different economic structures and levels of culture. They forgot that among these districts there are advanced, middle and backward districts. They forgot that the tempo of the collective economy movement and the methods of establishing collective farms cannot be the same for all these districts, which are not by any means uniform.

"It would be a mistake" said Lenin, "were the comrades simply to write stereotyped decrees for all parts of Russia: if the Bolshevik-Communists, the Soviet functionaries in the Ukraine and in the Don, were to begin indiscriminately to extend them on a large scale to the other districts", for, "we are not connected by stereotyped formulae, we do not decide once and for all that our experiences, the experiences of Central Russia, can be transplanted fully and entirely to all the border districts". (Volume XVI., page 106.)

Lenin further said:

"To subject Central Russia, the Ukraine and Siberia to certain stereotyped formulae would be the greatest stupidity." (Volume XVIII, part I. Russian edition, page 143.)

Finally, Lenin renders it incumbent upon the Communists of the Caucasus

"to understand the peculiarity of their Republic in contrast to the situation and conditions of the R. S. F. S. R., and the necessity of not copying our tactics but altering them carefully in accordance with the development of the concrete conditions." (Volume XVIII. Russian edition, part I, page 200.)

That seems to be clear. Basing itself upon these instructions of Lenin, the Central Committee of our Party, in its decision "on the tempo of collectivisation" (See "Pravda" 6th of January 1930) divided the districts of the U. S. S. R., regarded from the standpoint of the tempo of collectivisation, into three groups, of which the North Caucasus, the centre and lower Volga district will be able to end their collectivisation by Spring 1931 whilst the other corn districts (the Ukraine, Central black earth districts, Siberia, Urals, Kasakstan etc.)

*) All emphasises are mine. J. Stalin.

will be able to end the collectivisation by the spring of 1932, and the remaining districts can extend the period of collectivisation up to the end of the Five-Year Plan i. e. until 1933.

That appears to be clear. And what has actually transpired? We found that some of our comrades, intoxicated by the first successes of the collective economy movement, absolutely forgot the instructions of Lenin and also the decisions of the C. C. The Moscow district, in its feverish desire for inflated figures, proceeded to collectivisation by orientating its functionaries to completing collectivisation by the Spring of 1930, although it had no less than three years (end of 1932) at its disposal. The Central black earth district, which did not wish "to lag behind the others", began to orientate its functionaries to completing collectivisation by the conclusion of the first half year of 1930 although it had not less than two years (the end of 1931) at its disposal. The Caucasians and Turkestanians, in their unbridled desire "to catch up with and pass" the advanced districts, began to orientate themselves to conclude collectivisation in the shortest possible period, although they had four years (end of 1923) at their disposal. Needless to say, that with such a feverish "tempo" of collectivising, the districts which are less prepared for the collective economy movement, in their unbridled desire "to outstrip" the better prepared districts, considered it necessary to exert an intensified administrative pressure, and attempted to replace the missing factors necessary for a rapid collective economy movement by their own administrative zeal. The results are known. All are aware of that confusion which arose in these districts and which had to be put right by the intervention of the C. C.

Therein lies the second mistake in the collective economy movement.

3. The Leninist principle of the impermissibility of springing over incompleting phases of the movement in regard to the establishment of the collective farms has been violated. The Leninist principle of not racing ahead of the development of the masses, of not subjecting the mass movement to decrees, of not getting separated from the masses but moving together with the masses and leading them forwards by attracting them to our slogans and enabling them to realise by their own experiences the correctness of our slogans, was violated.

"When the Petrograd proletariat and the soldiers of the Petrograd garrison seized power" — said Lenin — "they were perfectly aware that great difficulties would be encountered in the village in the work of construction; that here one must proceed more gradually, that it would be the very greatest stupidity to attempt here to introduce the common cultivation of the soil by means of decrees and legal declarations, that a very small number of enlightened peasants would agree to this whilst the enormous majority of the peasants would not set before themselves this task. Therefore, we confined ourselves to what was absolutely necessary in the interests of the revolution: in no circumstances to get ahead of the development of the masses, but to wait until the movement forwards grew out of the experience of the masses, out of their own struggles." (Volume XV. Russian edition, page 538/39).

Proceeding from these directives of Lenin, the C. C., in its decision "on the tempo of collectivisation (see "Pravda" 6th of January), recorded that a) the chief form of the collective economy movement at the present moment is the agricultural production co-operative (artel); that b) in view of this fact it is necessary to draw up a model statute for agricultural production co-operatives as the chief form of the collective economy movement; that c) "decreeing" the collective economy movement from above and playing with collectivisation must not be permitted in our practical work.

That means that we must now direct our course not to the communes but to the agricultural production co-operatives as the chief form of collective economic construction; that it must not be permitted to spring over the agricultural production co-operative immediately into the commune; that one must not substitute the mass movement of the peasants to the collective farms by "decreeing" collective farms, by "playing at collective economy".

That seems to be clear. And what actually transpired? It appeared that some of our comrades, intoxicated by the first successes of the collective economy movement, forgot both the directives of Lenin and the decisions of the C. C. Instead of organising a mass movement for the agricultural production co-operatives, these comrades commenced to lead over the individual peasant farms immediately to the commune. Instead of consolidating the forms of movement to the agricultural production co-operative, they began with compulsion to "socialise the small cattle and poultry, the milch cows which are not producing any commodity for the market, and the dwelling houses. The results of this haste, which is impermissible for a Leninist, are now known to all. As a rule there were of course no stable communes created, on the other hand, however a number of agricultural production co-operatives got out of hand. It is true, "beautiful" resolutions remained, but what was the use of them?

Therein lies the third mistake in the collective economy movement.

Third question: How did these mistakes arise and how must the Party correct them?

Answer: They arose on the basis of our rapid successes in the sphere of the collective farm movement. Successes often go to one's head. They not infrequently evoke excessive self-confidence and self-conceit. This can easily happen to representatives of a party which is in power, especially of such a Party as our Party, whose power and authority are almost immeasurable. In this respect cases of Communist presumptuousness, against which Lenin fiercely fought, are quite possible. In this respect belief in the omnipotence of decrees, of resolutions is altogether possible. In this respect the danger of the revolutionary measures of the Party being converted into empty bureaucratic decrees by individual representatives of the Party in this or that corner of our vast country is very real. In this respect I have in mind not only local functionaries, but also district functionaries as well as members of the C. C. "Communist presumptuousness"—said Lenin—"means that a man who is a member of the Communist Party and has not yet been purged from it, imagines he can solve all his tasks by Communist decrees." (Volume XVIII. Russian edition, 1st part, page 384 to 385.)

It was upon this basis that there arose the mistakes in the collective farm movement, the distortions of the Party line in the building up of collective economy.

Wherein lies the danger of the mistakes and distortions if they are continued in the future, if they are not rapidly and completely eradicated?

The danger lies in the fact that these mistakes lead us directly to a disintegration of the collective farm movement, to estrangement from the middle peasants, to the disorganisation of the village poor, to confusion in our ranks, to weakening of our whole socialist construction, to the restoration of the kulaks. In short, these mistakes have a tendency to divert us from the path of consolidating the alliance with the main mass of the peasantry, from the path of consolidating the proletarian dictatorship, to the path of breach with the masses, to the path of undermining the proletarian dictatorship.

This danger made its appearance in the second half of February, at the same moment when a portion of our comrades, blinded by the previous successes, rapidly departed from the Leninist path. The C. C. of the Party recognised this danger and did not hesitate to intervene in the matter by instructing Stalin to warn the comrades in a special article on the collective farm movement. Many believe that the article "Many are being Rendered Giddy by the Successes" was written on the personal initiative of Comrade Stalin. That of course is only empty talk. We do not have a Central Committee in order to leave such a matter to the personal initiative of anybody. A very thorough investigation was made by the C. C. And when the extent of the mistakes was ascertained, the C. C. did not hesitate to proceed with the whole force of its authority against the mistakes by publishing its famous decision of 15th March, 1930.

It is difficult to stop people when proceeding at a rapid pace and to bring them back to the right way and to reform the ranks while on the march. But our Party calls itself the Party

of Lenin precisely because it possesses sufficient elasticity to overcome such difficulties. And it has in the main already overcome these difficulties. The most important matter now is to display manliness, to recognise one's mistakes and to find sufficient strength to liquidate them in the shortest possible time. To be afraid to recognise mistakes after the intoxication of the recent successes, fear of self-criticism, unwillingness, rapidly and determinedly to correct the mistakes, therein lies the chief difficulty. We must overcome these difficulties, and discard the inflated statistics and the bureaucratic exaggerations; we must turn our attention to the tasks of the organisational-economic construction of collective farms in order that there shall not remain any trace of the mistakes. There is no reason whatever to doubt that the Party has, in the main, already overcome this dangerous difficulty.

"All revolutionary Parties"—said Lenin—"which have collapsed hitherto, collapsed because they became **presumptuous** and failed to see wherein lies their strength, because they feared to speak of their weaknesses. We, however, have not perished, because we are not afraid to speak of our weaknesses and we learn to overcome our weaknesses." (Volume XVIII, 2nd part, page 59.) We must not forget these words of Lenin.

Fourth question: Is not the struggle against the distortion of the Party line a step backward, a retreat?

Answer: Of course not. Only people who regard a continuation of mistakes and distortions as an advance, but consider the fight against the mistakes to be a retreat, can speak here of a retreat. To advance by piling up mistakes and distortions—this is really a splendid "advance".

We set up the agricultural production co-operatives as a fundamental form of the collective farming movement at the given moment, for which purpose we issued a model statute as instructions for the work of collective economic construction. Are we retreating in face of this matter? Of course not. We demanded the consolidation of the production-alliance (Smytchka) of the working class and the village poor with the middle peasant as the basis of the collective economy movement. Are we abandoning this matter? Of course not. We set up the slogan of liquidating the kulak as a class as the chief slogan of our practical work in the village at the given moment. Are we abandoning this matter? Of course not.

Already in January 1930, we adopted a definite pace for the collectivisation of the agriculture of the Soviet Union, by dividing the districts of the Soviet Union into definite groups and laying down a special tempo for each group. Are we abandoning this? Of course not.

Where is there a "retreat" of the Party in all this?

We desire that people who permit mistakes and distortions shall abandon their errors. We want the muddleheads to retreat from their confusion to the position of Leninism. We want this, as only under this condition can the **real** attack on our class enemies be continued. Does that mean that we thereby take a step backwards? Of course not. It only means that we wish to make a **proper** attack and not a muddleheaded play at attack.

Is it not clear that only fools and "Left" exaggerators can regard such an attitude of the Party as a retreat.

People who talk about retreat do not understand at least two things.

1. They do not know the laws of attack. They do not understand that an attack **without consolidation** of the captured positions is an attack which is doomed to failure. When can an attack, say in the military sphere, be successful? When people do not confine themselves to a big forward movement but at the same time endeavour to **consolidate** the captured positions, to **regroup** their forces in accordance with the changed state of affairs, to see about the reserves, to **develop** the connection with the rear. Why is all this necessary? In order to guard against being taken by surprise, to liquidate breaches in the front, against which no single attack is insured, and in this manner to prepare to settle the enemy completely. The mistake of the Polish armies in the year 1920, if one considers only the military side of the matter, consisted in the neglect of this rule. This is the reason, among others, why, after having advanced in a great mass as far as Kiev, they

were compelled to retreat in equally great masses to Warsaw. The mistake of the Soviet armies in the year 1920, if one again considers only the military side of the matter, was that they repeated the mistake of the Poles in their attack on Warsaw.

The same thing can be said regarding the laws of attack on the front of the class struggle. One cannot conduct a successful attack having as its object the liquidation of the class enemy, **without consolidating** the captured positions, without **regrouping** one's forces, without securing the front with **reserves**, without **protecting the rear** etc. The whole fact of the matter is that the muddleheads do not understand the laws of attack, while the Party understands and carries them out.

2. They do not understand the class nature of attack. They shout about attack. But against **which class**, in alliance with **which class** is the attack carried out? We are making the attack on the capitalist elements in the village in alliance with the middle peasants, as only such an attack can result in victory. But what is to be done when, carried away by their eagerness, some detachments of the Party begin the attack, deviate from the right path and turn their weapons against their allies, the middle peasants. Do we need any **attack** and not an attack on a definite class in alliance with a definite class? Don Quixote imagined he was attacking the enemy when he tilted at windmills. But as is known, he only got a bruised head as a result of this "attack".

• It appears that our Left exaggerators wish to emulate Don Quixote.

Fifth question: What is the chief danger, the Right or the "Left"?

Answer: With us, the chief danger is the Right. Does this contradict the well-known thesis in the decision of the C. C. of 15th March 1930, that the mistakes and distortions of the "Left" exaggerators are now the chief hindrance to the collective farm movement? No. The fact is that the mistakes of the "Left" exaggerators in this sphere of the collective farm movement are such that they create favourable conditions for strengthening and consolidating the Right deviation in the Party. Why? Because these mistakes present the line of the Party in a wrong light—they serve therefore to discredit the Party—and consequently render easier the fight of the Right elements against the leadership of the Party. The discrediting of the Party leadership is the same elementary basis on which alone the fight of the Right deviators against the Party can be conducted. The "Left" exaggerators with their mistakes and distortions furnish the Right deviators with this basis. Therefore, in order to fight successfully against Right opportunism we must overcome the mistakes of the Left opportunists. Objectively, the Left exaggerators are allies of the Right deviators.

That is the peculiar connection between "Left" opportunism and Right deviations. This connection explains the fact that some "Lefts" not infrequently speak of a block with the Rights. This explains the peculiar phenomenon that a portion of the "Lefts", who only yesterday "carried out" a noisy attack and attempted to collectivise the Soviet Union within two or three weeks, have to-day fallen into passivity; they sit with their arms folded and leave the field to the Right deviators, whereby they pursue the line of real retreat before the kulaks.

The peculiarity of the present period through which we are passing consists in the fact that the fight against the Left exaggerators constitutes for us the prerequisite for and the peculiar form of the successful fight against Right opportunism.

Sixth question: How shall we judge the withdrawal of a portion of the peasants from the collective farms?

Answer: The withdrawal of a portion of the peasants means that of late a certain number of unstable collective farms arose, which are now being purged of the non-persevering elements. That means that the inflated collective farms are disappearing, while the stable remain and are being consolidated. I think that that is a perfectly normal phenomenon. Some comrades, however, fall into despair in face of this phenomenon and cling frantically to the artificially exaggerated percentages. Others rejoice and prophesy the collapse of the collective farm movement. Both, however, are greatly mistaken.

They are far from having any Marxist understanding of the nature of collective economy. The collective farms are being abandoned in the first place by the so-called "dead souls". This does not mean a real abandonment but an exposure of emptiness. Have we any use for dead souls? Of course not. I believe that the North Caucasians and the Ukrainians are acting quite correctly when they dissolve the collective farms with dead souls and organise really living and stable collective farms. The collective farm movement only gains thereby.

Secondly, alien elements, directly hostile to our cause are leaving the collective farms. It is obvious that the more rapidly such elements are ejected, the better for the collective farm movement.

Finally, certain vacillating elements, which can be described neither as alien elements nor as dead souls, are leaving the collective farms. They are the same peasants whom today we are still unable to convince of the rightness of our cause, but whom we shall certainly convince to-morrow. The withdrawal of such peasants represents a serious, even if only a temporary, loss for the collective farm movement. Therefore, the struggle for the vacillating elements of the collective farms is now one of the most urgent tasks of the collective farm movement.

Thus it is to be seen that the withdrawal of a part of the peasants from the collective farms represents not only a negative phenomenon. Insofar as these withdrawals from the collective farms frees them from dead souls and immediately alien elements it represents a salutary process and consolidates the collective farms.

A month ago we reckoned to have more than 60 per cent. collectivisation in the corn districts. It is now clear that this figure, if one keeps in mind the real and stable collective farms, was obviously exaggerated. If the collective farm movement, after the withdrawal of a portion of the peasantry, is stabilised at the figure of 40 per cent. collectivisation in the corn districts, — and that is certainly to be attained — then that will be an enormous success for the collective farm movement at the given moment. I take the average figure for the corn districts which have been collectivised up to 80 and 90 per cent. 40 per cent collectivisation in the corn districts means that we shall be able to double the original Five-Year Plan of collectivisation by Spring 1930.

Who will deny the decisive character of this historical achievement of the socialist development of the Soviet Union.

Seventh question: Are the vacillating peasants acting rightly when they leave the collective Farms?

Answer: No. By leaving the collective farms they are acting contrary to their own interests, for it is only the collective farms that offer the peasants a way out of misery and ignorance. By leaving the collective farms they place themselves in a worse position, for they deprive themselves of those privileges and advantages which the Soviet Power grants to the collective farms. The fact that there are mistakes and distortions in the collective farms is no reason for withdrawing from them. The mistakes must be made good with united forces, by remaining in the collective farms. It is the easier to make good those mistakes as the Soviet power is fighting against them with all its forces. Lenin said:

"The system of small farms in the production of commodities is not capable of freeing humanity from the misery of the masses and from their suppression." Volume XV, part 1, page 49.)

"It is impossible to escape from misery by means of the small farm." (Volume XVI, page 378.)

"If we stick in the old manner to the small farm, even as free citizens on free soil, nevertheless we are threatened with inevitable ruin." (Volume XIV, part 1, page 169.)

"Only with the aid of common, comradely work can we emerge from the blind alley into which the imperialist war has driven us." (Volume XVI, page 375.)

"One must go over to common cultivation of the soil on the big model farms, otherwise we cannot emerge from that devastation, that desperate situation in which Russia is at present." (Volume XIV, part 1, page 169.)

What does all this mean? It means that the collective farms are the only means which offer the peasants a way out from poverty and ignorance.

It is clear that the peasants are not acting rightly when they leave the collective farms.

Lenin said:

"The Soviet government attaches tremendous importance to the Commune, the artels and to every organisation directed to the transformation, to the gradual promotion of this transformation of the small individual farm into a socialised co-operative farm or artel." (Volume XVI, page 391.)

"The Soviet power has given communes and the co-operatives an immediate preference by putting them in the first place." Volume XV, page 518.)

What does this mean? This means that the Soviet power will grant the collective farms advantages and privileges as against the individual farms. This means that the Soviet Power will render the collective farms help by granting land, by supplying machines, tractors, seed and the like, as well as by alleviating the burden of taxation and by granting credits.

Why does the Soviet Power grant the collective farms advantages and privileges?

Because the collective farm is the only means which can free the peasants from misery. Because the preferential aid rendered the collective farms is the most effective form of helping the poor and the middle peasants.

A few days ago the Soviet Government decided to exempt from taxation for two years all socialised working cattle on the collective farms, (horses, oxen etc.) all cows, pigs, sheep and poultry which are in the collective possession of the collective farm or in the individual possession of members of the collective farms.

Moreover, the Soviet government decided to postpone the collection of credit debts from members of the collective farms until the end of the year and to cancel all fines which have been imposed before the 1st of April on peasants who have joined the collective farms. It finally decided to carry out in any circumstances the granting of credits to the collective farms in the present year to the extent of 500 million roubles.

These privileges will serve to aid those peasants belonging to the collective farms who were capable of standing firm in face of the stream of withdrawals, who have been steeled in the fight against the enemies of the collective farms, who have defended the collective farms and firmly held in their hands the flag of the collective farm movement. These privileges will be granted to those poor and middle peasants belonging to the collective farms who now form the core of our collective farms, who will consolidate and give a firm form to our collective farms, and will win the millions and millions of peasants for socialism. These privileges will serve to aid those peasants belonging to the collective farms who now form the chief cadres of the collective farms and who fully deserve to be called the heroes of the collective farm movement. These privileges will not be granted to the peasants who have left the collective farms.

Is it not clear that the peasants make a mistake when they withdraw from the collective farms?

Is it not clear that only by returning to the collective farms can they be sure of receiving these privileges?

Eighth question: What should be done with the Communes, shall they be dissolved?

Answer. No. That is not necessary. I speak of the real communes, not the paper communes. In the corn districts of the Soviet Union there exist a number of splendid communes which deserve encouragement and support. I have in mind the old communes which have stood years of trial, which have been steeled in the struggle and thereby justified their right to existence. As regards the new communes which have only recently been formed, they will be capable of justifying their existence only when they have been voluntarily organised, with the active support of the peasants, without compulsory socialisation of the conditions of life.

The formation and the management of the communes is an intricate and difficult affair. Large and firm communes can

exist and develop only where there are experienced cadres and proved leaders. The over hasty transition from the statute of an Artel to the statute of a commune can only repel the peasants from the collective farm movement. Therefore, one must approach this matter with special seriousness and without an undue haste. The Artel is an easier matter and more accessible to the minds of the broad masses of peasants. Therefore, at the present moment the Artel is the most common form of the collective farm movement. Only to the extent that the agricultural Artels are strengthened and consolidated can the basis be created for a mass movement of the peasants to the communes. Therefore the Commune, which constitutes the highest form, becomes the most important link in the collective farm movement of the future.

Ninth question: What is to be the position with regard to the kulaks?

Answer: Up to the present the question of the middle peasant engaged our chief attention. The middle peasant is an ally of the working class, and we must conduct a friendly policy towards him. The case is otherwise with regard to the kulak. The kulak is an enemy of the Soviet Power. We have not and cannot have peace with him. Our policy towards the kulak is a policy of liquidating him as a class. This, of course, does not mean that we can liquidate him at one stroke. It means, however, that we shall proceed in order to encircle and liquidate him.

Lenin said the following with regard to the kulaks:

"The kulaks are the most bestial ruthless and savage exploiters, who in the history of other countries have more than once restored the power of the big landed proprietors, the Tsars, the priests and the capitalists. There are more kulaks than there are big landowners and capitalists. Nevertheless, the kulaks are a minority of the population. During the war these blood-suckers enriched themselves by taking advantage of the need of the people. They piled up thousands and hundreds, of thousands of roubles by forcing up the price of corn and other products. These spiders have become fat at the cost of the peasants ruined by the war, at the cost of the starving workers. These leeches have drunk of the blood the toilers and have become the richer the more the workers in the towns and in the factories have starved. These vampires have grabbed and are grabbing the land of the big landowners, they are making the poor peasants slaves again." (Vol. XX, part 2, 257.)

We have tolerated these blood-suckers, spiders and vampires, while carrying through a policy of limiting their exploiting tendencies. We have tolerated them, because there was nothing with which to replace the kulak production. Now we have the possibility of substituting their farms over and over again by our collective farms. We need no longer tolerate these spiders and blood-suckers, who commit arson on the collective farms, kill the functionaries of collective farms, and are endeavouring to destroy the seed: to tolerate them any longer would mean to act against the interests of the workers and peasants.

Therefore, the policy of liquidating the kulaks must be carried out with that energy and consistency of which only the Bolsheviks are capable.

Tenth question: What is the next practical task of the collective farms?

Answer: The next practical task of the collective farms consists in the struggle for the seed, for the greatest possible extension of the area of cultivation, for the correct organisation of the sowing campaign.

All the other tasks of the collective farms must be adapted to the tasks of the seed campaign. All the other work on the collective farms must be subjected to the work in the organisation of the sowing. This means that the tenacity of the

collective farms and its non-party active cadres, the capacity of the leaders of the collective farms and its Bolshevik nucleus will be tested not by brilliant resolutions and eloquent speeches of greeting, but by live work in the correct organisation of sowing.

In order honestly to fulfil this practical task, the attention of the functionaries of the collective farms must be directed to the economic question of building up collective farms, to the question of the inner development of the collective farms.

Up to quite recently the chase after high figures of collectivisation occupied the chief attention of the collective farm functionaries, while at the same time they would not see any distinction between a real and a paper collectivisation. There must now be a stop to this obsession with figures: the attention of the functionaries must now be concentrated upon consolidating the collective farms, upon the organisational extension of the collective farms, upon organising the practical work in the collective farms.

Up to quite recently the attention of the collective farm functionaries was concentrated on the big collective economic units on the organisation of the so-called "Gigants", while not infrequently the Gigants degenerated into clumsy bureaucratic institutions void of any economic roots in the villages. The work for the appearance consequently swallowed up the actual work.

The attention of the functionaries must now be directed to the organisational economic work of the collective farms in the villages. If this work shows the necessary results, then the "Gigants" will develop of themselves.

Until recently little attention was devoted to drawing the middle peasants into leading work on the collective farms. Meanwhile among the middle peasants there are excellent farmers who could become excellent managers. This shortcoming in our work must now be liquidated. The task now is to draw the best people from the circles of the middle peasants into leading work on the collective farms, and to render it possible for them to develop their capacities in this respect.

Up to recently too little attention was devoted to work among the peasant women. The past period has shown that work among the peasant women was the weakest part of our work. This shortcoming must now be decidedly liquidated, once and for all.

Until recently the Communists of a number of districts proceeded from the standpoint that they could solve by their own forces all the tasks of collective economic construction. They therefore did not give sufficient attention to drawing non-Party elements into responsible work on the collective farms, to promoting non-Party elements to leading work on the collective farms, to organising a broad cadre of non-Party elements on the collective farms. The history of our Party showed, and the past period of collective economic construction has once again confirmed, that such an attitude is fundamentally incorrect. If the Communists shut themselves up in their shells separate themselves from the non-Party elements, they will ruin the whole business. If the Communists have succeeded in achieving fame in the fight for socialism, this is due, among other things, to the fact that the Communists have understood how to attract the best people from the circle of non-Party elements; that they have understood how to draw new forces from the broadest strata of the non-Party elements; that they have understood how to surround their party with a broad stratum of active non-Party workers. This shortcoming in our work among the non-Party elements must now be decidedly liquidated once and for all.

To remedy these faults in our work, to liquidate them thoroughly, means to divert the collective farms onto the paths of economic work. Therefore, 1. correct organisation of the sowing, that is the task. 2. Concentration of attention on the economic questions of the collective farm movement, that is the means which is necessary for the solution of this task.

AGAINST COLONIAL OPPRESSION

MacDonald's Palestine Report.

By J. B. (Jerusalem).

Over seven months passed before the Shaw Commission, appointed by the MacDonald Government, completed its report on the „Disturbances in Palestine and the Means to Avoid their Repetition". By the very fact of its occupying so much time the Commission fulfilled an important part of its task: events developed very rapidly, ever fresh struggles, revolts are taking place in various parts of the globe — and thus the bloody August days in Palestine are forgotten by the general public.

The report of the Commission is full of superfluous and unimportant details, and in its investigations deals with things which have no bearing on the matter. On the other hand, however, it draws a picture which would never be "recognised" by those who actually experienced the August revolts in Palestine. Seven months have been employed in intensive elaboration of this work in order to furnish the necessary prerequisites for the conclusions which had been decided on beforehand.

What are these conclusions? Firstly, there was no revolt against the English in Palestine. Secondly, the savage Arabs attacked and slaughtered the peaceable Jews, as a result of which some of them were in turn killed by the Jews and by the British expedition troops. Thirdly, in this fight between races and religions, the British Government did everything possible to restore peace; it had however not enough troops. Fourthly, the policy of the British Government must be more definitely defined (particularly in regard to the immigration and colonial question) in order that the Arabs shall not feel that they are threatened by the Jews, for which purpose increased military forces are necessary.

In other words that means: the Arab population is blood-thirsty, Jews and Arabs slaughter each other, only the English Tommy Atkins, who can keep in check all savage instincts, is a blessing to the country.

The lying character of this representation of the matter is only surpassed in its baseness by the intention to conduct imperialist policy in Palestine in a more scheming manner in the future. Silence is preserved regarding the role of the British government in stirring up religious fanaticism. While the report speaks of provocation of the Jews, it does not mention that these provocations are only due to the fact that the British Government prepared the ground for them by the Balfour Declaration. There is no mention of the Arab freedom movement, of the many demonstrations under the slogan „Istiklal Tam" (complete independence), the revolts of the peasants against imperialism, the attacks on British government buildings etc. All this is hardly in keeping with the political conception of a religious fight, therefore the Commission simply takes no notice of it. But in order to supply the Arab clergy and the Arab bourgeoisie, who have gone over to national reformism, with arguments for „British objectivity and justice", the report speaks of the necessity of more carefully controlling Jewish immigration and colonisation.

The Shaw Commission has thereby supplied MacDonald with the scheme according to which the strategic bridge-head on the Eastern bank of the Suez Canal is to be controlled: in the first place, reinforcement of the military occupation, police, and fleet, in order that every revolt may be nipped in the bud. Secondly, maintenance of the Balfour Declaration as a means of stirring up the hatred of the Arabs against the Jewish minority, to rouse to the highest point the national-religious antagonism, and to keep in check the Jewish minority itself by fear of massacres by the Arabs on the one side and by holding out the hope of a "national home" on the other. Thirdly, to grant certain economic privileges to the Arab feudal lords and the bourgeoisie in order to obtain their assistance in suppressing the popular movement against imperialism: compensation of the Arab aristocracy at the cost of Zionism.

Such a carefully spun net, which places a sling round the neck of all sections of the population of Palestine, cannot be turned asunder by persuasion, by negotiations, or by well-

meaning advice which certain "pacifists" freely give now to the Jews now to the Arabs, now to the English. This net can only be broken through by force — by the union of the Arab and Jewish workers for joint active revolt against British imperialism in Palestine itself, by the active assistance of the proletariat in Great Britain, as well as in the other European and American countries.

It is very significant that in the Palestine question Baldwin and Lloyd George expressed their complete agreement with MacDonald and his Shaw Commission. It is therefore all the more necessary to expose to the proletarian masses the real content of the British Palestine policy and to destroy the web of lies of the imperialists and social imperialists.

ENLARGED PRESIDIUM OF THE E.C.C.I.

Resolution on Comrade Lozovsky's Report Concerning the V. Congress of the R.I.L.U.

In view of the growing acuteness of the economic and political struggles of the working class and the general upward swing of the labour movement, the work of the revolutionary trade unions, of the revolutionary opposition, and of the international centre of the revolutionary trade union movement, the R.I.L.U., becomes of extraordinary importance. Hence, the preparations for the V. Congress of the R.I.L.U. must go beyond the ordinary traditional methods used for preparing congresses and should bear a specific and urgent character. The V. Congress must serve as an important landmark in the history of the international labour movement.

The IV. Congress was of importance from the viewpoint of the ideological and organisational consolidation of the revolutionary trade union movement. That Congress met on the eve of the present upward swing of the labour movement; the V. Congress, however, is to meet at a time when the class struggles are becoming considerably more acute and it should therefore advance further on the basis of a tremendous development of revolutionary work among the masses in raising and solving the problems arising from the economic struggles occurring in the period of growing crisis and mass unemployment.

In connection with the V. Congress the Communist Parties of all countries are faced with the following tasks:

1. To verify the manner in which the decisions of the IV. Congress of the R.I.L.U. and the 6th session of its Central Council have been carried out in practice.

2. To investigate the condition of the Communist fractions in the trade unions and to establish the reasons of their continued weakness.

3. Carefully to examine and publicly discuss the weak sides in the work of the revolutionary unions and devise methods for its improvement.

4. To verify the work of the trade union opposition and of the Minority Movements, paying particular attention to the forms of their contact with the masses and the methods of their organisational mass work.

5. Thoroughly to discuss in the Party press the main problems of the international revolutionary trade union movement, allocating for this purpose a special V. R.I.L.U. Congress page.

6. To initiate a discussion among the masses on all questions connected with the V. Congress, not only at trade union conferences and congresses, but also right in the factories.

7. To ensure through the activities of the Communist fractions that the V. Congress shall have representatives of working men and women from the factories, especially from the basic industries (mining, engineering, transport, chemical, etc.).

8. To ensure that the preparations for the V. Congress be made with wide application of sincere self-criticism and determined struggle against trade union legalism and opportunism in practice and a considerable strengthening of mass trade union work.

The Presidium of the Comintern attaches exceptional importance to the preparations for the V. Congress of the R.I.L.U. and urges all Sections to do this work using the methods of international revolutionary competition.

CHINA

The Crisis and the Revolutionary Movement in China.

The Situation in the Soviet Districts.

By L. Magyar (Moscow).

There is hardly any other country in which the world economic crisis has had such disastrous results as in China. The country is labouring under a serious currency crisis. About 70 per cent of all the silk factories are closed. The tobacco industry, the oil refineries, the mills, and to a great extent also the textile industry of China are at a standstill. All this is connected with a severe agrarian crisis. Millions of Chinese peasants and workers are dying of starvation, but the imperialists are reaping higher profits and strengthening their positions in the country. The celebrated decree of the Nanking government regarding the abolition of extra-territoriality remains only on paper and has been finally exposed as a manoeuvre in order to deceive the masses. A new civil war is brewing. The whole of the North: the "model governor" Yen Si Shan, the "christian" General Feng Yu Hsiang, the remainder of the troops of Tang Shen Shi, Shi Yu Hsian etc. are marching against Nanking. In the South the remainder of the Kwangsi group and Chen Fa Kui's troops are preparing to deliver a blow against Nanking. But even in the camp of the Nanking Kuomintang there exists no unity. Various groups are quarrelling among themselves, and behind the backs of the hostile militarist groups, behind the backs of the various groups in the camp of the Nanking Kuomintang, it is not difficult to recognise the hands of the American, British, Japanese and even French and German imperialists.

The tremendous aggravation of the crisis is evoking an intensification of the class struggle in the towns. In Tsingtao and Canton the workers have already demonstrated with weapons in hand against the power of the Kuomintang. In Tsingtao the striking workers attempted to occupy the factories. When the tobacco factory belonging to Nanjan Brothers in Shanghai was closed, the workers attempted to take possession of it. The demonstration of the strikers in the French concession in Shanghai on March 5th ended with collisions between the police and the workers. On March 8th, International Women's Day, it came to shooting between workers and the police. In Hankow the workers dismissed from the Japanese textile factory stormed the works. In Taje the town and the works of the Hanjipin Trust were taken possession of by the worker and peasant troops led by the Communists. There is a growing ferment among the workers in all the industrial centres.

The wave of partisan wars and peasant revolts has risen even higher than that of the workers' strikes and demonstrations. In five provinces of Southern China, in Fukien, Kwangtung, Kiangsi, Hupeh and Hunan, a number of districts are already in the hands of the insurgent revolutionary peasants. The movement has already spread to South Kwangsi. The peasants revolts and partisan wars extend over a territory inhabited by 60 to 80 million people. Of course the Soviet Power is not yet established over the whole of this territory. But the movement already embraces masses numbering millions and the peasant troops, who are led by the Communists, and includes a number of towns. Numerous districts are under the rule of the Chinese Soviets. On this territory a Chinese Red Workers' and Peasants' Army, numbering thousand of fighters, has already been founded. The force of this army, however, does not lie in its numerical strength, but in the fact that it represents the kernel, the nerve of the peasant troops which support it. **The armed support of the broad mass of peasants lends great force to the Chinese Red Army.**

What is happening on the territories of the Soviet Republics in China? When the Red Army or the insurgent peasants have captured a certain district, the election of Soviets immediately takes place. **The Soviet power expropriates the land of the landowners and hands it over to the peasants'**

councils. The peasants' councils distribute the land. The question of the big landowners, of the gentry is decided in the villages by the method of "plebian" revolution. The eight-hour day is introduced; women are granted equal rights with the men; all enslaving agreements are annulled. The property of the usurers is confiscated. Revolutionary newspapers are published. The armed power of the Soviets is organised: in a word, an **agrarian revolution** takes place.

In South China, the agrarian revolution is proceeding under the leadership of the Communists over a large and ever extending area. That which is now happening in South China is a peculiar form of the realisation of proletarian leadership in the peasants revolution.

In South China the first harvest is now being brought in. The peasant must now pay the rent to the landowner, the interest to the usurer and the taxes to the gentry. As a result the movement has now reached enormous dimensions. The "Left" renegade **Trotzky** is indignant at the partisan war in China and "demands" an answer from the leaders of the Comintern why the Communists are at the head of **such** a movement. The Right renegade Roy sneers at the Soviets in the remote provinces of China. But the Communist Party of China is inspiring and guiding this movement, it is leading and organising it and achieving great victories. The power of the Soviets in China is growing.

The C. P. of China realises that the fate of the revolution will, in the last resort, be decided in Shanghai, Hankow, Tientsin, Canton etc. It is quite aware that, with the exception of Taje, Pinksjam and the mining districts of Honan, the proletariat is very weak in the districts embraced by the Soviet movement. Our Communist Party of China is aware that the counter-revolution cannot be vanquished by the elementary movement of the peasants without the co-operation of the workers. The Party knows that the peasantry, even when led by the Communists, cannot be victorious without the working class. But the Party also knows, that it is its duty to place itself at the head of the fight of the peasants for land, to lead the million masses into the movement and to connect the peasants' war — that is the next task — with the fight of the working class.

French aircraft have already bombarded the districts of South China where the Soviet power is established. The American Consuls are already collecting "evidence" against the Chinese Soviets. The English military courts, acting on the orders of the "Labour" government, are proceeding to defend the lives and "property" of foreigners. Nanking is mobilising whole armies against the Soviets. This, however, means that the international working class are all the more in duty bound to defend the Chinese Soviets. The Soviet Republics in China are a summons to fight against imperialism, for the agrarian revolution, against the bourgeoisie and the landowners, for a Soviet China of the workers and peasants.

IN THE INTERNATIONAL

Agenda of the 16th Party Congress of the C.P.S.U.

Moscow, 6th April 1930.

The 16th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has been fixed to commence on the 15th June 1930 with the following agenda:

1. Report of the Central Committee, the General Control Commission and the Central Revision Commission of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union;
2. Report of the delegation of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in the Executive Committee of the Communist International;
3. The Five-Year Plan of industrialisation; the collective agricultural movement; and the development of agriculture;
4. The tasks of the labour unions in the period of socialist construction; and
5. The election of the central party organs.