

Comrade PEPPER:

Party Comrades, I believe it was no accident that the first words spoken by Comrade **Zinoviev** on this tribune were the words of **new factional struggle**. The resolution of the Russian delegation bureau declared that it considered Comrade Zinoviev's appearance here undesirable because it would create the danger of a new factional struggle. Comrade Zinoviev himself admitted this: **"the danger of further factional struggle is not altogether out of the question"**. Nevertheless, Comrade Zinoviev decided to appear here. The appearance of one of the most prominent leaders of the Opposition bloc on this international tribune, in my opinion, cannot be characterised otherwise than as an **International protraction of the Russian factional struggle** on the part of the Opposition. Comrade Zinoviev declared that he took the floor for an **"Explanation"** of the Opposition viewpoint. He delivered no **discussion speech**, but instead, nothing less than a co-report. This is the political content of the speech of Comrade Zinoviev!

The kernel question — said Comrade Zinoviev — which occupies him and of course which occupies also the C. I., is the **question of the construction of socialism in one country**. This is in fact the kernel question, it is a vital question not only for the C. P. of the Soviet Union, but also for the entire Communist International. Comrade Zinoviev and the other leading comrades of the Opposition have proven by their attitude that they still do not understand that by denying the possibility of the construction of Socialism in the Soviet

Union, they have brought themselves into Opposition against the entire C. I.

The Communist International has no programme, said Comrade Zinoviev, and also in the draft programme there is not a single word concerning the problem of building Socialism in a single country. This statement sounded like an indictment of the C. I. A few day ago, we received a memorandum from the German ultra-Leftists who were expelled from the Party, in which was contained the same reproach against the Comintern. It sounds somewhat peculiar when Comrade Zinoviev, until only recently Chairman of the Comintern, now throws up to us that the C. I. has as yet no programme. Surely, Comrade Zinoviev is at least equally responsible for this.

What has the speech of Comrade Zinoviev contributed to the solving of the problem of the possibility of building Socialism in one country. He did not even make the slightest attempt to give any sort of actual analysis of this problem. **Instead of analysis he gave us citations.** He tried to parade Marx and Engels against the building of Socialism in one country. He brings us Marx and Engels' citations written in the '40s and without further ado wants to apply them to our present period. But here there is surely an essential difference. In the '40s there were lacking the most important basic conditions, the economic and social premises for the building of Socialism and even for the victory of the proletariat itself. This circumstance explains the correctness of the statements of Marx and Engels that the revolution on the European Continent, leaving out England, would remain an insignificant affair. For the '40s this was absolutely correct. On the European Continent at that time there was only a very weak industry, and a still weaker proletariat. No real proletarian mass Parties were then in existence. But it is certainly utterly wrong to compare the period of the '40s with the period of present day imperialism, that is to simply liken Europe prior to the 1848 bourgeois revolution with Europe after the first world war and after the first socialist revolution in the Soviet Union. Present day Europe is a continent on which all the material pre-conditions of Socialism (concentration and centralisation of capital, monopolies), are at hand, where there exist large mass Parties of the working class, which already possess a revolutionary tradition. It is no application of Marxism, but contempt for the Marxist method if one only comes with citations and does not take into consideration the fundamental differences in the whole situation prevailing in Europe in these two periods.

Comrade Zinoviev then touched upon the question of N. E. P. He did not reply to the question which the whole Communist International is justified in putting to him: What is the New Economic Policy, is it really the "broadest retreat" — and only the "broadest retreat", as it was once characterised by Comrade Zinoviev — or are there contained in it also elements of a re-grouping of forces, a preparation for a new economic offensive in the direction of Socialism, as Comrade Lenin in his time characterised the N. E. P.? After all, it is a peculiar thing: Comrade Zinoviev tried in his speech today to give a much more confused and unclear reply than was given in the previous statements of the Russian Opposition. In the place of his former fiery accusations against the line of the C. P. of the Soviet Union, he now applies the method of **half-concealed insinuations**. This peculiar method is really the chief feature of Comrade Zinoviev's attitude today.

For example, Comrade Zinoviev tries to "prove" that the socialist revolution is an international revolution. He brings up heavy artillery, he cites Marx and Engels, he has a pile of citations from Lenin, all for the purpose of proving that the world revolution is actually an international revolution, that we are living in an age of world economy, that a world market has already been established by capitalism. All this looks very learned. But behind this erudition is hidden a political aim. Why all these citations? Does Comrade Zinoviev want to maintain that anybody in the C. P. S. U. or in the Comintern has said that the Socialist Revolution is not an international revolution? Has anyone of us ever maintained that we are living in the period of nationally-bounded revolution? Has anybody ever expressed any doubt that world economy has already been established? Or is he really trying to prove to the C. C. of the C. P. S. U., or to the Enlarged Executive, that capitalism has already established a world market, etc.? Why prove this? Who has disputed it? This whole so-called "proof of the case" — "supported" by so many citations —

does not serve for the clarification of the theoretical problems, it has a quite definite political purpose. And this purpose is to awaken distrust, to sow suspicion, to make it appear as though someone, that is to say the C. C. of the C. P. S. U., had taken the ground of the nationally-limited revolution, had denied the existence of world relationships.

Now a further question. Comrade Zinoviev mentioned here the question of the **law of the unevenness of capitalist development**, and maintained that this law was already formulated by Marx, that it is a general law of capitalist development and that it does not apply solely to the period of imperialism. All this is true. But who maintained the contrary? Comrade Zinoviev tried to put it as though Comrade Stalin had said that the law of the unevenness of capitalist development had been unknown to Marx. But what did Comrade Stalin actually say? He maintained that in Lenin's whole conception, in the method of his analysis, this law played a fundamental role. Did he want to say thereby that Marx had not seen this law? By no means. Did Stalin claim that this law applied only to the period of Imperialism? By no means. Lenin stated explicitly and more than once — I shall not give citations — that this law is a general law of capitalist development. Again, for what purpose this polemic of Comrade Zinoviev? It seeks to **cover over a real difference**. What is this difference? It is to be found in the statements of Comrades Trotsky and Zinoviev at the XV. Party Conference of the C. P. S. U., according to which the effectiveness of the law of uneven capitalist development is supposed to have become weaker during the period of imperialism. Comrade Stalin maintains the contrary, that this law of the unevenness of capitalist development has been intensified during the period of imperialism, and thereby he is in conformity with the views of Lenin.

Thus in the speech of Comrade Zinoviev insinuation follows upon insinuation. He makes the further claim that by raising the perspective of the possible building of Socialism in one country we restrict the proletarian struggle to a national perspective. What is the meaning of this charge if it is translated out of the language of semi-insinuation into the language of political clarity? Nothing less than that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has nationalistic tendencies, that it is nationally limited, that a danger of national narrowmindedness is prevalent in it.

The next insinuation! Comrade Zinoviev declared that **Marx and Marxism must be defended, that Marxism shall not be revised**. Splendid! But I ask who has assailed Marx and Marxism here, who is attempting to revise Marxism? What is the meaning of this charge? Again, the method of semi-insinuation, of under-cover attack.

A further insinuation: Comrade Zinoviev dished up here as a great discovery, that years are necessary until socialism can be built up and he expressed himself very disdainfully against any statement that a few weeks or Months would suffice. What is this? Does Comrade Zinoviev intend to polemise against anyone who ever really existed? Whoever said such a stupid thing?

The next insinuation, for a change, is an international one. Comrade Zinoviev related here that certain German and Czech comrades are of the opinion that it is important that in Russia socialism is really being constructed because forsooth the Communists in other countries cannot accomplish anything now.

I believe that it was the duty of Comrade Zinoviev to base such charges upon citations. Is it permissible to make such a terrific accusation, that in two of our most important mass Parties, a liquidatory and defeatist mood prevails, without offering concrete evidence? This charge is an unfounded insinuation against the German and Czech Parties, and in my opinion the C. I. must vigorously repudiate this insinuation.

The next insinuation is again directed against the C. P. S. U. Comrade Zinoviev cites here some Social Democratic paper or other in which it was written that the victory of "Stalinism" is really nothing else than a major rapprochement with the social democracy. What is the import of this charge? Nothing less than the C. P. S. U. is coming close to the Social Democracy. Comrade Zinoviev did not say this in so many words. But did he draw a line between himself and this citation from

that Social Democratic rascal? He merely presented it and left us to draw our own conclusions. But by this he wanted to say that in the C. P. S. U. real Bolshevism is advocated only by the poor, suppressed Opposition.

In his speech, Comrade Zinoviev also raised the **danger of degeneration in the C. P. S. U.** He spoke about tendencies, not about accomplished facts. Nobody has denied that there are dangers that signs of degeneration may occur. Of course, in a ruling Party like the C. P. S. U. in a country in which the Communist Party has a monopoly, such dangers can arise. The degeneration of the C. P. S. U., however, means nothing less than:

1. That it is no longer a truly proletarian Party,

2. That it is no longer fighting for Socialism, and

3. That it is no longer fit to play the leading role in the Communist International. That is entirely clear. **How can the C. P. S. U. remain the leading Party of the Comintern if it contains the greatest "deviation" of all of us?** The greatest mistakes that were ever made by any Section of the C. I. are after all infantile sicknesses compared with the "bourgeois degeneration", the "bourgeoisification" of the C. P. S. U.

Comrade Zinoviev charges that the Communist International no longer combats Right deviations, but that it persecutes only the ultra-Left. He maintains that he has remained as of old, that he has always combated these deviations and that he continues to do so also at present. I am afraid that Comrade Zinoviev is wrong when he says that he has remained as of old. He has unfortunately changed in many respects. Also in this connection a number of false ideas make their appearance in his statements. First he states that Lenin taught us that the Comintern must primarily fight opportunism, that **opportunism is our chief foe**. Very true. The foe, the greatest foe, is opportunism, but today it is to be found chiefly and for the most part not in the ranks of the C. I., but in the ranks of the II. International. Secondly, the question must be put in this way that within the Communist International the Right and ultra-Left deviation must be combated equally. Each situation, in each country, must be concretely studied as to where, concretely, the greatest danger lies, and this must be fought. Thirdly, can Comrade Zinoviev maintain that he has really fought these dangers? Yes, Comrade Zinoviev can maintain that for many years, and even very actively, he fought against these dangers. But for his most recent period one must observe the contrary. Did not Comrade Zinoviev long refuse to combat Medvediev and Shliapnikov, i. e. the Right danger in the Russian Party? Did he not long refuse to part company with the German ultra-Left? It cannot therefore be said that in the most recent period Comrade Zinoviev fought this danger in the Leninist sense of the word. The charge directed by Comrade Zinoviev against the leadership of the Comintern, that it is **not fighting the Right dangers** in my opinion throws a peculiar light upon the former leadership of the Comintern. But this charge has no foundation whatever. Comrade Zinoviev says that we do not condemn the Right mistakes of the Polish Party. But the thesis of Comrade Bukharin gives a sharp, an extremely sharp, condemnation of these mistakes. The thesis likewise condemns the article on the dictatorship of the proletariat, contained in the Czech press, and calls upon the C. C. of the C. P. Cz. to take measures to prevent a repetition of such mistakes. The thesis of Comrade Bukharin speaks about a series of mistakes and shortcomings in the British Party. But can one say that these mistakes of the British Party constitute a "stubborn" Right deviation? In my opinion they can not. Is it not true that the British Party for the most part has already itself recognised these mistakes and that it has openly admitted them here? Peculiarly enough, Comrade Zinoviev suddenly becomes very mild at the place where one can find really "stubborn" Rightists. In his speech here, he could not deny that he had conducted negotiations for the re-admission of Sourvarine into the Communist Party. These are contradictions that no one can afford.

With this I come to the end, and will close with the following:

When Comrade Zinoviev says that we will build up Socialism — he even said we will build Socialism with enthusiasm, then I am afraid that this conclusion at the end of his discussion speech must remain only an empty phrase. How can

anyone build Socialism with "enthusiasm" if one first theoretically proves that the construction of Socialism in the given Soviet Union is impossible, and if one, secondly, maintains that the C. P. S. U., which should direct this constructive work, is beginning to degenerate. If one, thirdly, makes the charge that the Comintern, which must lead the European and American workers without whose solidarity actions the building of Socialism is impossible, is so opportunist that it is hopeless to look to it to lead these proletarian masses on the road of the Revolution. The foundation of Comrade Zinoviev's explanations are not enthusiasm, but pessimism. With pessimism one can

neither build up Socialism in the Soviet Union, nor lead the European and American proletariat to victory over capitalism.

All of us, who for years fought under the leadership of Comrade Zinoviev, had to separate from him the very minute that he united with Trotzkyism. Anyone who unites with Trotzkyism cannot be the leader of the Communist International, he is no longer the representative of Leninism, but he has deserted the banner of Leninism.

(Applause.)

(Close of Session.)