

The Problems of the Enlarged Executive of the Comintern

By John Pepper

BRIEFLY and concisely, the stages through which the great international sessions of the Comintern have passed can be designated as follows: The analysis of the Fifth World Congress in 1924 established the existence of a short-lived democratic-pacifist period and replied through the general large-scale utilization of the united front tactic all along the line. The analysis of the Fifth Enlarged Executive established the fact of relative stabilization and replied with the slogan of bolshevization. A picture of tottering stabilization was given in the analysis of the Sixth Enlarged Executive which at the same time put forward as the chief task of the Communist Parties the struggle for the majority of the working class.

The session of the Seventh Enlarged Executive that is just beginning must go a step further. It must delimit more precisely the existence as well as the relativity of the stabilization—quantitatively as well as qualitatively—and must investigate these phenomena in all their concreteness in the various countries. A step forward must also be taken in the elaboration of the tactics of the Communist Parties. It is not sufficient to lay down the general necessity of the application of the united front tactic if we put forward as our central task the winning of the working class. We must analyze more concretely than we have hitherto done the concrete tendencies in each country and we must work out the specific forms of the united front.

The great international session of Communists must investigate the Social-democratic theory of "ultra-imperialism," which announces the "harmonious" equalization of the contradictions of capital and the peaceful further development of imperialism. The Communist International must settle accounts with the strange distortions in the analysis and perspectives of the Russian Opposition according to which the stabilization is at an end in the whole bourgeois world and exists only in the land of the proletariat, in the land of socialist development (supremacy of private capitalist elements, kulakisation of agrarian economy, bourgeois degeneration of the proletarian government and of the proletarian party, etc.).

An uninterrupted stream of capital exports issuing from the United States of America and going to Latin America, Europe, etc., a large-scale rationalization and trustification of American and European industry and growing pressure on the working class—these are the chief elements of the present stabilization. The process of stabilization produces its own contradictions. The extension of capitalist production and the narrowing of the market, the flow of super-profits from the whole world to the United States, the offensive of capital against the workers' standard of living called forth by the process of rationalization, all this sharpens the contradictions of the imperialist powers among themselves, gives rise to a permanent danger of war and brings with it a growing sharpening of class contradictions. Mighty gaps are visible in the edifice of capitalist stabilization: the gigantic struggle of the British proletariat, the victorious advance of the Chinese revolution, the rise of the people of Indonesia, the advancing class contradictions in Germany in spite of the "quiet coalition" of the Social-democracy with "its" bourgeoisie on the basis of the new German imperialism, and, above all, the highly successful advance of socialist construction in the Soviet Union.

A struggle against the danger of war, the removal of the pacifist infection from the minds of the working class, the development of the international solidarity for the Soviet Union, the concentrated support of the English miners' strike, the activization of the proletarian solidarity of the working class of Europe and America for the great Chinese revolution, the struggle against the consequences of capitalist rationalization thru the defense of the standard of living of the proletariat, thru the struggle against unemployment—these must be the central tasks of the Communist International.

Corresponding to the basic character of the present period as a period between two waves of the revolution, the working class also shows certain specific transition phenomena. Except in the U. S. A. where parallel with the monstrous development of imperialism there takes place a swing to the right in the labor movement, we notice in the most important countries a leftward movement of great masses of workers. This left movement manifests itself neither in the exodus of these leftward moving masses from the right-wing Social-democrats or Labor Parties nor in their acceptance of the Communist program. This leftward movement expresses itself many

times in great mass actions (the General Strike and the miners' strike in England, the Hamburg dock workers' strike in Germany, strike waves in France); often however, it is expressed in the various forms of the "minority movement," "left wing," "unity committees," "workers' delegations" which make their appearance in the most different forms and in the richest and most specific variations.

It is not enough to establish generally the tactics of the united front; it is necessary to find the transition forms of contact with the masses that correspond to the transition stage of the leftward movement of the masses. In their struggle to approach these masses and to win the confidence of the majority of the working class the Communists find three forms corresponding to the specific character of development and to the historical traditions of their countries. In most European countries the tactic of the united front is determined by the relations of the Communist Parties to the Social-democracy. In the countries of the "Anglo-Saxon" world (Great Britain, United States of America, Australia, Canada, etc.,) the concrete forms of the Communist united front are determined thru the adherence of the Communists to the Labor Parties. In the gigantic colonial countries of Asia and Africa the concrete forms of the united front tactics of the Communist Parties must be elaborated in relation to the national revolutionary movement.

In all countries, however, the trade unions must, of course, be the basic organizations in the struggle of the Communists for the soul of the working class, the basis of the all-inclusive united front struggle for the international and national unity of the trade union movement.

The objective analysis of capitalism establishes the present period as a transition period between two waves of revolution and corresponding to this shows the picture of transition tendencies in the labor movement. The tactics of the Communists must therefore consist in the crystallization of these various transition forms, politically as well as organizationally. The struggle of the Communists for the dictatorship of the proletariat can be carried on with success only when we succeed in drawing the workers into the struggle for their daily demands on the basis of a concrete program of action.

The inner life of the Communist Parties must be considered and judged primarily from the viewpoint of this great political task. All inadequacies and mistakes that can diminish the ability to carry out this task must be rooted out. The Enlarged Executive will correct in a friendly and comradely spirit the errors that our English brother party has made in carrying out its generally correct line. It will have to condemn the right errors that have manifested themselves in certain groups in the French party as well as in the Polish and Norwegian Parties. It will have to combat in the sharpest terms the great faults of the Russian opposition as well as the anti-bolshevist, many times even openly counter-revolutionary sins of the Ultra-Lefts in Germany. A united and collective leadership of the Communist International, a merciless struggle against factionalism in the C. P. S. U. as well as in the other sections of the Communist International will conclude the work of the Enlarged Executive.