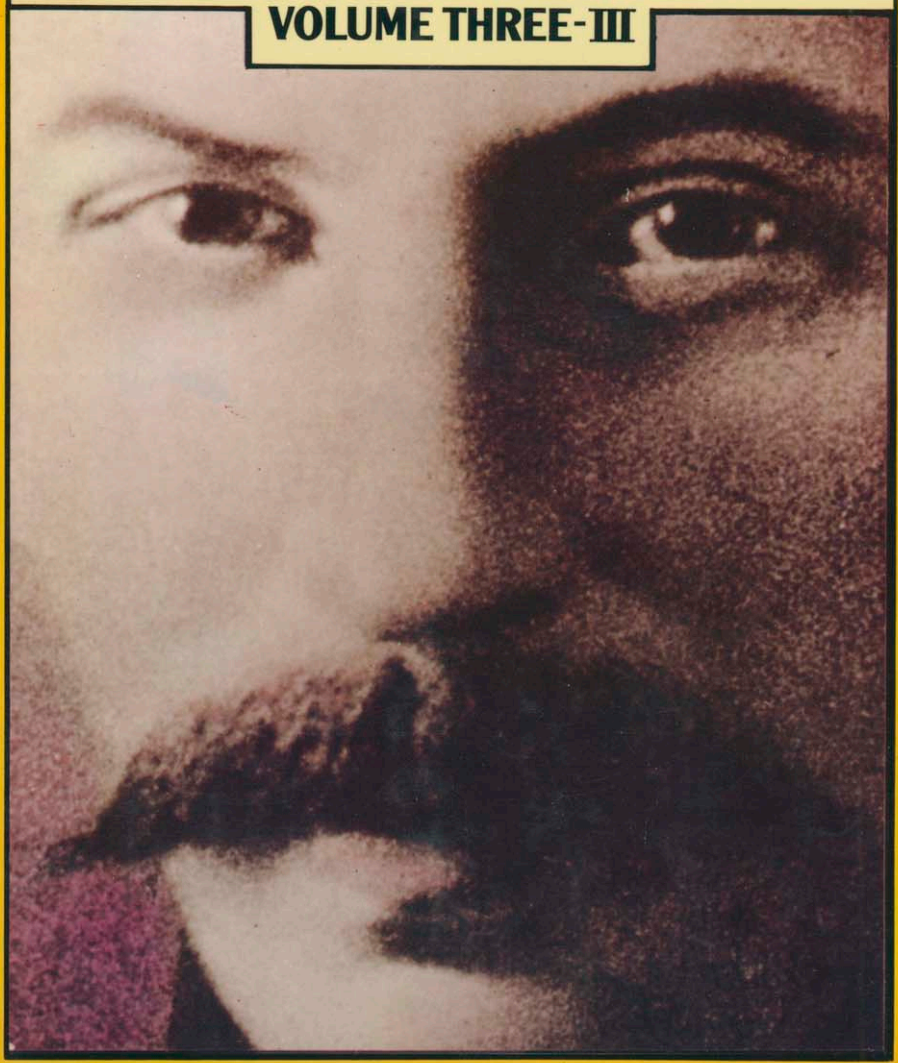
A HISTORY OF SOVIET RUSSIA 14

E. H. CARR

FOUNDATIONS OF A PLANNED ECONOMY 1926-1929

VOLUME THREE-III



A HISTORY OF SOVIET RUSSIA

A HISTORY OF SOVIET RUSSIA

by E. H. Carr

in fourteen volumes

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FOUNDATIONS OF A PLANNED ECONOMY 1926–1929

BY
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VOLUME THREE—PART III



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PREFACE

My first impression, on sitting down to write the preface to this final volume of my *History of Soviet Russia*, is one of thankful relief that I have been able to finish the project on which I embarked more than thirty years ago. Had I realized at that time the formidable dimensions of the task I might not have been rash enough to undertake it. My purpose, as I wrote in the preface to my initial volume, was "to write the history, not of the events of the revolution ... but of the political, social and economic order which emerged from it"; and I never intended to go beyond the final establishment of Stalin's dictatorship, which drew a impenetrable curtain of silence over discussions and differences of policy within the party. But even with these limitations the work grew constantly on my hands, partly through my own increased consciousness of the complexities and ramifications of the subject, and partly through the publication of materials hitherto unknown or unavailable; access to rare documents was also rendered progressively easier by the development of microfilm and xerox facilities. I am not sure exactly what I envisaged when I began to research and write. But it was something far smaller and more restricted in scope than what has emerged.

A minor casualty of this process of growth is the cumbrous numbering of the volumes. I started with the idea of dividing the whole into several major sections or instalments with separate titles: these have taken shape as *The Bolshevik Revolution 1917–1923*, *The Interregnum 1923–1924*, *Socialism in One Country 1924–1926* and *Foundations of a Planned Economy 1926–1929*. In the middle nineteen-fifties I contemplated that each of these sections (except *The Interregnum*, which was a single bridge-volume), would comprise three volumes, devoted to economic, political and international affairs. This would have made ten volumes in all. In the final result, two of these volumes split into two, and one into three, so that the ten "notional" volumes are represented by fourteen "physical" volumes. The concluding part now published is the third part of the third volume of *Foundations*

of a Planned Economy. References in the footnotes to the two previous parts are by page numbers, the volume being continuously paginated. References to Vol. 1 or Vol. 2 are to the previous volumes of *Foundations*. I know that this numbering has sometimes caused confusion, for which I can only apologize.

The lapse of thirty years has brought more substantial changes. History does not stand still; nor does the historian. Writing today, I should shape my first volume very differently, giving less prominence to the formal constitutional arrangements of the new régime, and more to the geographical, social and economic environment in which it operated. Initial attempts at constitution-making, designed to convert the revolutionary Soviets of workers and peasants into permanent organs of government, were strongly influenced by western models. The result was incongruous. An air of unreality clung to the earliest, as well as to more recent, Soviet constitutions. They made little impact on the society for which they were devised, and were moulded by it in ways far removed from the intentions and professions of those who drafted them. It is in the structure of the society as a whole that the key to these developments must be sought. On the other hand, the emphasis on continuity in Chapter 2 of *Socialism in One Country*, though not wrong, now seems to me somewhat overstated.

My enterprise may have been rash in another respect. No serious history of the French revolution was attempted till half a century after the event. What, looking back over the past sixty years, strike me most are the extraordinary variations in the climate of western reactions to the revolution — variations more directly determined by changing attitudes and policies in the west than by what was happening in the Soviet Union. The middle nineteen-twenties were marked by a wave of intense anti-Soviet feeling in Great Britain and France, and by a continuing boycott in the United States of America; yet in the Soviet Union the period was a relatively tranquil interlude of recovery and relaxation, after the miseries and the violence of the revolution and the civil war, and before the intense pressures of the five-year plan and the provocations of Stalin's dictatorship. The nineteen-thirties in the Soviet Union were the period of the collectivization of the peasant, of sharply depressed standards of living and of the great purges; yet this was the period when uncritical enthusiasm for the Soviet Union in the west reached its highest point.

So volatile a climate of opinion is inimical to the writing of history, and could hardly fail to weigh on any western scholar engaged in the study of the Russian revolution. When I first planned my work immediately after the war, it seemed natural (though no doubt foolish) to hope that the co-operation uneasily established during the war would be continued and further developed after the victory. When my first volume was published in 1950 disputes between east and west had reached a high pitch of exasperation; the "people's democracies" had belied their name, and the seeds of McCarthyism were beginning to sprout. After the Khrushchev "revelations" of 1956 a milder climate set in, which encouraged the historian in the task of holding a balance between the achievements of the revolution and the iniquities of the Stalinist régime. This lasted for a decade. Then the Paris events of May 1968, and still more the Soviet occupation of Prague three months later, brought about another sharp exacerbation of anti-Soviet feelings in the west. Today, a decade later, the atmosphere of mutual incomprehension and recrimination matches that of the cold war of the nineteen-fifties or the open animosities of 1927. These transient fluctuations of opinion have not only affected the conduct of contemporary relations between the Soviet Union and the western world, but have cast back their shadow over currently fashionable assessments, both east and west, of the past events with which I have been concerned. I have tried my best to insulate myself from them, and to arrive at conclusions which would stand the test of a longer perspective. Others must judge how far I have succeeded. But I have never wanted to see the Russian revolution — any more than, say, the French revolution — either as pure white or as pure black; and I do not think that my verdict on it at any time would have differed materially from what I have written in the last chapter of the present volume.

In the preface which I wrote in May 1976 to the first part of this volume, I recorded my continuing debt to many of the helpers whose names appear in prefaces to previous instalments of the *History*. It is perhaps scarcely necessary for me on this occasion to follow the normal practice of exonerating them from responsibility for any errors or any opinions which may have appeared in these pages. Nearly half the present third part of the concluding volume is rightly devoted to Soviet relations with China. Professor Nikiforov, of the Far Eastern Institute of the Soviet Academy of

Sciences, guided me to important Russian material; and Professor Stuart Schram, one of the very few scholars in this country qualified to master both the Russian and the Chinese sources, has aided and stimulated my imperfect attempts to surmount the language barrier. I am most grateful to them for this help, as well as to Miss Ruth McVey for expert advice on the Indonesian question. Mr Douglas Matthews has again undertaken the onerous task of making the index.

In writing these last lines, I must single out for special appreciation, among the many institutions which have furthered and supported my work, the generous contribution of my own college and the labours of its library staff on my behalf. I also recall the invaluable collaboration of Professor R. W. Davies in one of the key volumes of the whole series. But my final tribute of thanks must once more be reserved for Tamara Deutscher. I am deeply conscious that without her unstinting help over the past five years in every aspect of the work I should not have been able to complete it.

E. H. CARR

30 November 1977

D: *The Soviet Union and the Non-Capitalist World*

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CHAPTER 82

THE USSR AND THE EAST

THE eastern world first presented itself to the Bolsheviks as the source of a vast revolutionary potential. Revolutionary movements in Turkey, in Persia and in China had drawn inspiration from the Russian revolution of 1905. It would be the destiny of the victorious Russian revolution to come to provide encouragement and leadership for revolutions in the east. In an article of 1912 with the wilfully paradoxical title "Backward Europe and Advanced Asia" Lenin wrote that "the hundreds of millions of toilers of Asia have a reliable ally in the proletariat of all civilized countries", and that the victory of this proletariat "will free the peoples of Europe and the peoples of Asia".[1] When, especially after the outbreak of war in 1914, he became involved in the problems of national self-determination and liberation, it went without saying — and was therefore not often said — that the liberation of eastern nations was as much part of the programme as that of the western nations; the "colonial" question was a facet of the national question. It is true that, when Lenin embarked during the war on the intensive study of imperialism, he was concerned — like Rosa Luxemburg before him — with its implications for the western imperialist Powers rather than with its effects on its victims. But a fresh twist and a fresh impetus had been given to the cause of the eastern colonial peoples, whose liberation from the imperialist yoke would deal a death-blow to western capitalism.

While, however, revolution in the west and revolution in the east could be conceived as naturally complementary elements in a single process, a marked difference between them remained. It was not that a sharp distinction could be drawn between "social" revolution in the west and "national" revolution in the east. National liberation was still on the agenda of revolution in the west; and revolution in the east was never emptied of its social con-

[1] Lenin, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, xxiii, 167.

tent. The difference between them was revealed in the differing outlooks from the vantage-point of Moscow. For the Bolsheviks of 1917 the prospect of revolution in the advanced capitalist countries of the west was the beacon which would offer guidance and example, and promised the aid without which they could not hope even to survive. Revolutions in the east would naturally need the inspiration, the guidance and perhaps the tutelage of those who had made the glorious Russian revolution. The difference turned on the issue of class, which itself reflected the difference between advanced and backward countries. Revolutions in the west would be proletarian revolutions — even in a fuller sense than the Russian prototype. The eastern revolutions to which the Bolsheviks now looked forward would occur in countries where the proletariat, if it existed at all, was weak, unorganized and hitherto devoid of class consciousness, and where communist parties — and even socialist parties — had not yet been thought of. In such conditions the problem of the class character of these revolutions could not be avoided. Were they, following the example of the 1905 revolution in Russia, to be regarded as bourgeois revolutions which would pave the way for eventual proletarian revolution, but which in their present stage pursued essentially bourgeois national and democratic aims? Or were they, like the Bolshevik revolution of 1917, to be regarded as proletarian revolutions, dedicated to social ends, but consummating the unfulfilled aims of bourgeois democracy and nationalism in their triumphant progress? This problem continued for many years to perplex relations between the Communist International and eastern communist parties.[2]

The victory of the revolution, and the assumption of state power in the form of a Soviet republic, added practical urgency to the problem. Lenin early came to recognize the need to resort to "diplomacy" in order to discriminate between different bourgeois enemies and to exploit conflicts between them;[3] and the embarrassment of reconciling such diplomacy with the encouragement of revolutionary communist parties was dramatically illustrated in Turkey, where the conclusion of the Soviet–Turkish treaty of

[2] For the first tactical discussion of the problem at the second congress of Comintern in 1920 see *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917–1923*, Vol. 3, pp. 251–259.

[3] See pp. 119–120 above; Lenin repeated this injunction in November 1920 (see *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917–1923*, Vol. 3, p. 276).

March 1921 followed at a short interval on the execution by Kemal of Turkish communist leaders. But the tension between diplomacy and international revolution was further sharpened when the Soviet Government, in the interests of security and of economic reconstruction, embarked on the course of accommodation with the western capitalist Powers. One of the key-stones of the Anglo-Soviet treaty, also concluded in March 1921, was an undertaking by the Soviet Government to refrain from any "form of action or propaganda to encourage any of the peoples of Asia in any form of hostile action against British interests or the British Empire".[4] It mattered little that the formal separation between the Soviet Government and Comintern was no longer an effective fig-leaf. What mattered was the recognition that the promotion of communism among the peoples of Asia was an act of militancy against the hostile imperialist Powers. Henceforth it fitted into the larger framework of Soviet foreign policy. It was a weapon of diplomacy, to be actively and vigorously used against any Power whom it was desired to harass or oppose, but muffled or relegated to subterranean channels when good relations were sought. The negotiations between Joffe and Sun Yat-sen in January 1923, leading to an agreement to recognize the indefinite postponement of the introduction into China of communism or of "the Soviet system", were conducted on a diplomatic basis without reference, so far as the record goes, to any organ of Comintern or to the infant Chinese Communist Party.[5] Such measures were thought of as primarily defensive. The touchstone was the security of the Soviet Union — the stronghold of the victorious revolution. Nothing else mattered so much as this. When Stalin in 1924 enunciated the doctrine of socialism in one country, he offered a rationalization, and a veneer of respectability, of an established attitude of mind.

The other crucial change which occurred at this time was in the balance of the revolutionary perspective. When the theme of revolution in Asia was broached before 1917, or in the years immediately after, the prospect was evidently remote, and subsidiary to the confident faith in revolution in the west. But the October revolution and its sequel imperceptibly changed the balance. Stalin in an article on the first anniversary of the revolution wrote

[4] See *ibid.* Vol. 3, pp. 288, 467–468.

[5] For this agreement see *ibid. 1917–1923*, Vol. 3, pp. 540–541.

of "a link between the peoples of the backward eastern and the advanced western countries", drawn into "a common camp for the struggle against imperialism", and of "a new revolutionary front, from the proletarians of the west through the Russian revolution to the oppressed peoples of the east, *against* world imperialism".[6] As the European revolution tarried, and turbulence in Asia increased, the prospect of a reinforcement of the revolutionary process from the east gained plausibility. The theses of the second congress of Comintern in 1920 on the national and colonial question declared that the RSFSR "must inevitably group around itself, on the one hand, Soviet movements of the advanced workers of all countries, on the other, all the national liberation movements of colonies and oppressed nationalities", and that this would create "a close union of all national and colonial movements of liberation with Soviet Russia". But they also contemplated "the subordination of the interests of the proletarian struggle in one country to the interests of this struggle on a world scale".[7] At the third congress of Comintern in July 1921 Lenin predicted that, "in the coming battles of world revolution, the movement of a majority of the population of the whole world, originally aimed at national liberation, will turn against capitalism and imperialism, and will perhaps play a far greater revolutionary rôle than we expect".[8] In March 1922 IKKI, referring to "the great importance of the national revolutionary movements rapidly developing in the colonial countries of the Near East and in neutral Asia, and especially in Egypt and India", instructed the British, French and Italian parties to establish special colonial commissions to initiate measures for their support.[9] Lenin, now seriously perturbed by the delayed revolution in the west, noted in one of his last articles that Asia, which constituted "a gigantic majority of the population of the world", had "entered finally into the revolutionary movement".[10]

The last flicker of revolutionary insurgency in the west — in Bulgaria and Germany in 1923, in Estonia in 1924 — were soon to be extinguished. In Asia the prospect seemed less bleak. In the

[6] Stalin, *Sochineniya*, iv, 165–166.
[7] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), pp. 127–128.
[8] Lenin, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, xliv, 38.
[9] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, Sonderbeilage No. 2, April 1, 1922, p. 9.
[10] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 612.

spring of 1924 Stalin, in his famous lectures *On the Foundations of Leninism*, demanded "the formation and consolidation of a common revolutionary front" to bring about "the victory of the working class in the advanced countries, and the liberation of the oppressed peoples from the yoke of imperialism".[11] Even Trotsky, deeply committed to the cause of revolution in Europe, remarked in a speech celebrating the third anniversary of the Communist University of Toilers of the East on March 21, 1924, that, thanks to the demoralization by European reformist leaders of "the upper strata of the working class", it might follow that "the centre of gravity of the revolutionary movement will be transferred to the east", and that "a revolution in the east will be needed ... in order to give an impetus to the revolution of the European proletariat".[12] A year later, at the fifth IKKI in March 1925, Zinoviev claimed that Lenin in his last years "saw clearly that the great reserve army of the revolution is approaching from the east, and that the revolution would perhaps alter its line of march, perhaps enter by another gate".[13] Voices were raised on all sides to reproach the organs of Comintern and Profintern for their failure to pay serious attention to eastern countries. Since the war, as Kuusinen later put it, "the immense world of colonies and semi-colonies has been converted into the inextinguishable source of a revolutionary mass movement".[14] Unexpectedly and paradoxically — for the parallel between revolutions in the advanced western countries, which might have come to the rescue of the Russian revolution, and revolutions in the backward eastern countries, which would depend on the Russian revolution for help and guidance, was largely illusory — the east forced itself into the place on the agenda left vacant by the indefinite postponement of revolution in the west.

[11] Stalin, *Sochineniya*, vi, 145; for these lectures see *The Interregnum, 1923–1924*, pp. 357–359. At the fifth congress of Comintern in June 1924 Nguyen Ai-quoc claimed, apparently on the strength of this passage, that Stalin "describes ... as counter-revolutionary the view according to which the victory of the proletariat in Europe is possible without a direct link with the liberation movement in the colonies" (*Protokoll: Fünfter Kongress der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), ii, 686).

[12] L. Trotsky, *Zapad i Vostok* (1924), p. 38; some allowance should be made for the occasion and for the popular tone of the speech.

[13] *Rasshirennyi Plenum Ispolkoma Kommunisticheskogo Internatsionala* (1925), pp. 45, 432; for Zinoviev's preoccupation at the fifth IKKI with the prospective "route" of the revolution see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 288.

[14] *Novyi Vostok*, xxiii–xxiv (1928), p. xv.

The promotion of the east to a foremost place in the revolutionary prospect threw into relief the underlying problem of the class character of the eastern revolutionary movements. In Asia the one country which had a high standard of industrial development and a numerous proletariat, and which might therefore have fitted into the Marxist pattern of proletarian revolution, was Japan. When a "congress of toilers of the Far East" was convened in Moscow in January 1922, Zinoviev maintained that Japan's 3,000,000 industrial workers and 5,000,000 landless peasants provided "the key to the solution of the Far Eastern question", and that the victorious Japanese proletariat would lead the revolution elsewhere in Asia, though these views do not seem to have commended themselves to other delegates.[15] Next to Japan, India, thanks to the industrial development fostered by the investment of British capital, excited the highest hopes, and ranked far ahead of China in the scale of revolutionary expectations.[16] Stalin, addressing students of the Sun Yat-sen university a few days before the Shanghai shootings of May 30, 1925, still treated India as the typical colonial country, "with more or less capitalist development and a more or less numerous national proletariat", and bracketed China and Egypt as countries "little developed in respect of industry, and with a relatively small proletariat".[17] The early Bolsheviks, unfamiliar with Chinese conditions, may have underestimated the growth of a Chinese industrial proletariat, under the influence of foreign capital, on the railways and in the treaty ports. Lozovsky told the seventh Soviet trade union congress in November 1926 that the investment of western capital in China, India and Indonesia explained "the growing activity of the workers' movement in these countries", as well as "why the bourgeoisie clings so tightly to these countries".[18] But it remained broadly true that China, like Indonesia, Korea and the countries of the Middle East, and indeed like India, was a predominantly peasant country,

[15] See *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917–1923*, Vol. 3, pp. 527–528.

[16] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 658. Lenin, in his article of 1908 (see p. 698 below), believed that in India "the proletariat has already risen to the level of political mass struggle"; in China he saw only a "revolutionary movement against mediaevalism", and thought that "the transition of the old Chinese revolts into a conscious democratic movement is inevitable".

[17] Stalin, *Sochineniya*, vii, 146.

[18] *Sed'moi S"ezd Professional'nykh Soyuzov SSSR* (1927), p. 256.

that any revolutionary movement in these countries was likely at first to assume national rather than social forms, and that such social impetus as it might muster would come from the oppressed and rebellious masses of peasants rather than of urban workers. The Comintern leaders, in dealing with the eastern question, faced two dilemmas: how far to support national governments or movements in revolt against imperialism, even where these governments and movements were actively engaged in persecuting and repressing workers and workers' organizations, and how to reconcile the hegemony of the proletariat with a social revolution made predominantly by and for the masses of the peasantry.

The first dilemma was evaded by insistence on the practical need to see allies anywhere and everywhere in the life-and-death struggle against the imperialist Powers. The identification of the cause of world revolution with the survival of the Soviet republic sprang almost unperceived, and unwanted by many, out of the acute strategic needs of the republic. But the danger did not pass as the republic gradually consolidated its power. When the *rapprochement* between Germany and the western Powers following the Locarno treaty excited fresh fears in the Soviet Union, the apprehension quickly spread to those areas of Asia which would be involved, or might serve as a starting-point, in any future conflict. "War against any eastern country is war against the USSR, just as war against the USSR is war against the east", proclaimed a Soviet commentator, adding that "the colonies are ... reservoirs from which world imperialism draws 'cannon fodder'" — a reference to the employment of native Asian and African troops in the armies of the imperialist Powers.[19] In the war scare of 1927 the vision was conjured up in Moscow of "a chain of states dependent on Great Britain reaching from the Mediterranean Sea to the Indian Ocean, a chain which Great Britain began to forge after the war, beginning in Egypt and stretching over the Arab mandated territories through Persia to Baluchistan".[20] To refuse support to any government or movement struggling to break that chain would have seemed quixotic folly. The only limitation was one of power;

[19] *Novyi Vostok*, XV (1926), pp. iii, viii; for the employment of coloured troops see p. 211, note 77 above, and 995 below.

[20] *International Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 98, October 7, 1927, p. 2107.

as Stalin had put it at the fourteenth Russian party congress in December 1925:

> Unfortunately we are not yet strong enough to give direct help to all colonial peoples in the cause of their liberation.[21]

Nevertheless, from the moment when Comintern promoted and fostered the growth of communist parties, however small and ineffective, in eastern countries, the practice of leaving these parties at the mercy of Soviet-supported national régimes in their respective countries aroused uneasy feelings in Moscow. Lenin at the second congress had qualified his recommendation of support for "bourgeois liberation movements in colonial countries" with the proviso "so long as their representatives do not prevent us from fostering and organizing the peasantry and the broad masses of the exploited in a revolutionary spirit".[22] Chicherin, admitting that it was Soviet policy "to help the bourgeoisie of eastern countries", recognized, but curtly dismissed, the problem:

> To those of us who are incapable of dialectical reasoning the bourgeois-oriented attitude taken up by the workers' and peasants' government might seem a betrayal of communist principles.[23]

At the fifth congress of Comintern a year later Roy once more protested that national liberation movements could not be supported without regard to the question what class was leading them.[24] But Manuilsky, in his most intransigent mood, having defended "class collaboration" with parties like Sarekat Rayat in Indonesia and Kuomintang in China, also raised "not only the question of revolutionary collaboration with this kind of existing party, but also the question whether we, as communists, should not, in countries of backward economic structure, ourselves take the *initiative* of creating such parties".[25] The congress in its resolution, if it showed an increasingly acute awareness of the dilemma, contributed nothing to its solution:

[21] Stalin, *Sochineniya*, vii, 270.

[22] Lenin, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, xli, 243–244.

[23] *Kommunisticheskaya Revolyutsiya*, No. 13–14 (52–53), July 15–August 1, 1923, pp. 25–26; for this article see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 615.

[24] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 618.

[25] *Protokoll: Fünfter Kongress der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), i, 624.

> In India, Japan, China and Turkey during the past year the first cells of a communist movement have been formed. In all these countries a broad economic struggle of the workers is beginning. The Communist International must pay the closest attention to this movement, and at the same time the Communist International must support in every way, in the spirit of the resolution of the second world congress, the movement of oppressed nationalities directed against imperialism, remembering that these movements are one of the chief component parts of the great movement of liberation which alone can carry revolutions to victory, not only on a European, but on a world scale.[26]

Unable to furnish a coherent answer to the question, the commission set up by the congress to consider revolutionary national movements in the east seems never to have reported.[27] Attempts were made to resolve the contradiction by insisting on the independence of the communist parties concerned. In the autumn of 1926 a Turkish communist attached to Comintern firmly enunciated the principle:

> In so far as the movements are anti-imperialist factors, we must support them and do all in our power to ensure their success. But we must never forget their *bourgeois* character or their predominantly *capitalist* tendencies, and ... carefully preserve the independence of the communist organizations.[28]

But this formula was unlikely to bring consolation to the much-tried Turkish party. Down to 1927 the practice of support for national régimes in eastern countries on the sole condition of their active opposition to the imperialist Powers was never seriously challenged, though the theory by which it was justified admitted many ambiguities.

[26] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), pp. 410–411.

[27] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 90, 619. Stalin, in an unpublished letter to Manuilsky of July 31, 1924, some weeks after the end of the congress, criticized the congress resolution for its handling of the social question, and argued that "in such colonies as India, the proletariat must be prepared for the rôle of leader of the liberation movement" (*Komintern i Vostok* (1969), p. 139); this unresolved difference no doubt explained the failure of the commission of IKKI to produce the intended resolution.

[28] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 127, October 22, 1926, p. 2184; the writer was the Turkish delegate at the seventh IKKI in November 1926 (see p. 669 below).

The other dilemma confronting the leaders of Comintern was how to make sense of the doctrine of the hegemony of the proletariat in revolutions in countries where a proletariat was minimal or non-existent. It was true that Russia in 1917 was a predominantly peasant country. But the proletariat had at least been numerous enough to provide the spear-head of the revolution; and a formula which treated the peasants as allies and auxiliaries of the proletariat did not lack plausibility. It was true that the Russian revolution had provided an impetus and an inspiration for movements of revolt in eastern countries. But to speak of the victorious revolutionary proletariat of Russia as leading such movements, or coming to their aid in any meaningful sense, was at this time quite unrealistic. Such aid as the Soviet Government, with its meagre resources and in its own precarious situation, could supply to eastern countries locked in the struggle against imperialist Powers was reserved for national régimes and movements of a bourgeois — or even feudal — complexion. When it was desired to fit this policy into a revolutionary framework, it was not the peasantry, but the working class, which was invoked as "the promoter and chief champion of the [national] movement".[29] Yet it was clear from the outset that any mass movement of revolt in these countries could come only from the oppressed and downtrodden peasants.

Thanks to these conditions an unpremeditated association between the colonial and agrarian questions began to take shape in Comintern. The theses of the second congress of Comintern on the national question, drafted by Lenin, proclaimed it "indispensable specially to support the peasant movement in backward countries against all manifestations and survivals of feudalism, ... to strive to give to the peasant movement the most revolutionary character, where possible, by uniting peasants and all the exploited into Soviets, and thus realizing the closest possible alliance of the western European communist proletariat with the revolutionary movement of the peasants in the east, in the colonies, and in backward countries generally". While, however, Comintern should "enter into temporary agreements, even alliances, with bourgeois democracy in colonies and backward countries", it should not effect a fusion with bourgeois democracy, but "unconditionally

[29] See resolution of the sixth IKKI of February 1926, in *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), p. 619.

maintain the independence of the proletarian movement".[30] The Chinese Communist Party at its congress in July 1922 announced its intention to "lead the workers to support the democratic revolution, and forge a democratic united front of workers, poor peasants and petty bourgeois"; the strange alliance between the CCP and Kuomintang dated from that year.[31]

The "Sketch of an Agrarian Programme" adopted by the fourth congress of Comintern in November 1922 contained a paragraph devoted to "colonial countries with an enslaved native peasant population", whose liberation was conditional on the achievement of national liberation. But it was expressly stipulated for the first time that, in some countries, "the struggle of the enslaved peasantry against the landowners" would begin only after victory in the national struggle.[32] At the fifth congress of Comintern in June 1924 Nguyen Ai-quoc intervened in an otherwise unremarkable debate on the agrarian question to depict the wretched condition of the peasants in French colonial possessions, driven from the land and reduced to beggary and slavery by the inroads of capitalist imperialism.[33] But he made little impact. Cognizance was taken of the peasants of the eastern world only in a routine manifesto to the "fraternal peoples of the east", which assured "the million-headed masses" of "the boundless sympathies of the advanced proletarians of all countries", and brought special greetings to the peoples of Turkey and Afghanistan, and to the Chinese Kuomintang and the Mongolian People's Party.[34] That endemic discontent and revolutionary potential in the east were identified with the peasantry which formed the mass of the population was indisputable. But, so long as communist parties in eastern countries were exceedingly weak, and peasant revolts sporadic and unorganized, nothing occurred to call in question the theoretical assumption that communist parties were essentially proletarian in character, and that peasant uprisings could mature into genuine revolution-

[30] *Ibid.* p. 129.

[31] See *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917–1923*, Vol. 3, pp. 532–534.

[32] See *ibid.* Vol. 3, p. 483.

[33] *Protokoll: Fünfter Kongress der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), ii, 788–793; for this debate see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 87.

[34] *Protokoll: Fünfter Kongress der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), pp. 1048-1050; for this manifesto see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 619–620.

ary movements only under communist, i.e. proletarian, leadership and guidance.

Events in China in the autumn and winter of 1926–1927 disturbed this balance. The revolution which burst out with unexpected power from Canton, and seemed about to sweep everything in central China before it, split into its two component parts — the national revolution and the social revolution. Moreover, it was impossible to imagine a social revolution in China which did not embrace the mass of the peasantry, and voice their protest against the age-long conditions of oppression and indigence, rarely far above subsistence level, in which they lived. Meanwhile the ferment of proletarian revolt was also at work. The harsh repression of the strike on the Peking–Hankow railway in February 1923, and the more important labour disorders in Shanghai in the summer of 1925,[35] encouraged the rise of a revolutionary mood throughout China; and the victorious advance of the Canton armies into central China fanned a flame of proletarian discontent in the factories of Wuhan. But the masses which swelled the armies as they advanced, and made their victory possible, were masses of peasants in revolt against landlords, and owed nothing to proletarian promptings or proletarian leaders. The seventh IKKI, which met in Moscow in November 1926, responded by placing an unusually strong emphasis on agrarian revolution as a necessary ingredient of the revolutionary process, and by sending a large mission to China to follow and direct the course of events.[36] The dawn of victory was not the occasion for an unravelling of its theoretical perplexities.

The blow which shattered these high hopes fell when Chiang Kai-shek revealed his tacit collusion with the imperialist Powers, and turned his guns on the communists and workers in Shanghai. The hastily patched up revision of Comintern theory, which now denounced the treachery of the big nationalist bourgeoisie, but pinned its hopes on the petty bourgeoisie represented in the Left wing of a divided Kuomintang — the line propounded by Bukharin at the eighth IKKI in May 1927 — lasted only for a few months. The disasters which followed the collapse of the Left

[35] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 690, 719–720.
[36] See p. 737 below.

Kuomintang, and brought about the virtual suppression of the Chinese Communist Party, inspired a further revision of theory in Comintern. The petty bourgeoisie had shown itself an unreliable ally; and the rôle of the proletariat as leader of the peasantry in an immediate revolutionary upsurge was once more exalted, the local sequel of the new line being the disastrous adventure of the Canton commune.[37] Events in China were one of the strands — and one of the earliest in time — leading up to the Left turn in Comintern which declared itself in the winter of 1927–1928.

Throughout 1927 China overshadowed all other eastern countries in the preoccupations of Comintern; and no important changes occurred in these countries to call for fresh decisions. But discouragement seemed to require a radical reassessment of policies. Symptoms of the turn to the Left could already be detected at the fifteenth congress of the Russian party in December 1927. The section devoted to colonial countries in Bukharin's report on the work of IKKI[38] was overshadowed by the shipwreck of Comintern policies in China. "Blocs of a lasting character in the form of the creation of such organizations as Kuomintang" were "excluded". Yet the principle of the united front was intact. "Joint actions by proletarians and peasants with the national bourgeoisie" and "temporary parallel actions and agreements" were still in order.[39] The ninth IKKI in February 1928, with its reiterated attacks on the social-democrats and its insistence on the "radicalization" of the masses, intensified the Left-ward movement in Comintern.[40] The resolution on China, while it carried a warning against "*playing* with insurrection", encouraged the party "to prepare itself for the broad upsurge of a new revolutionary wave."[41] Lozovsky's visit to the Far East in 1927 had stimulated fresh interest in Profintern, which in the autumn of that year began to issue a monthly English-language *Eastern and Colonial Bulletin*; and the fourth congress of Profintern in March 1928 was distinguished by the presence of an unprecedentedly large number of delegates from colonial and semi-colonial countries, including Latin America.

[37] For these events see pp. 835–844 below.

[38] For this report and the debate on it see pp. 153–155 above.

[39] *Pyatnadtsatyi S"ezd VKP (B), i* (1961), 672.

[40] See pp. 163–165 above.

[41] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (133), pp. 764–765; for this resolution see pp. 851–852 below.

The ground had thus been prepared when the sixth congress of Comintern in July 1928 embarked on the first massive discussion, since the second congress eight years earlier, of policy in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. Pronouncements were made about particular countries, notably China and India. But the discursiveness of the debate, the number of orators from all parts of the world who participated in it, and the uncertainties of the situation in the Russian party, militated against the emergence of any general theoretical conclusions.[42] The resolution correctly recorded that cracks in the capitalist system, and divisions and conflicts between the imperialist Powers, and the confrontation between the forces of world revolution centred on the Soviet Union and the forces of imperialism, had stimulated revolutionary movements throughout the colonial world. But the defeat in China had not been redeemed by conspicuous progress elsewhere. It was still firmly asserted that the colonial revolution was in its bourgeois-democratic phase. But some of the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution could be realized only by a socialist revolution; and the transformation of the one revolution into the other would depend on "the degree of development of the revolutionary proletarian leadership of the movement" and on "the degree of organization and revolutionary experience of the working class, and also to a certain extent of the peasantry". Bourgeois nationalism was a discredited force; and, while the revolutionary potential of the petty bourgeoisie and the importance of agrarian revolution were cautiously recognized, the weight of emphasis was transferred to the revolutionary proletariat — an impression enhanced by the fierce denunciation of social-democracy, characteristic of the congress as a whole, with which the colonial resolution concluded.[43] An article on the Middle East published while the congress was in session made the point that, "by way of distinction from the European workers' movement, it was not treacherous social-democracy, but the revolutionary communist party, which in the Arab countries stood at the cradle of the working class".[44] While this generalization was not wholly applicable to India, China or Indonesia, communism had by the middle nineteen-twenties supplanted social-democracy everywhere in Asia

[42] For the debate see pp. 213–219 above.
[43] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), pp. 832–870.
[44] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 83, August 10, 1928, p. 1517.

as the supporter and instigator of workers' and peasants' movements.

The programme of Comintern adopted by the congress, which was in the main Bukharin's work, was more general and more eclectic. "The international revolution of the proletariat" set in motion by the "world-wide imperialist war" had culminated in "the great Chinese revolution which shook the whole Asiatic continent". The passages relating specifically to the colonial and semi-colonial world distinguished between countries where industrial development had created a bourgeoisie committed to a "struggle with feudalism, with pre-capitalist forms of exploitation", and more backward countries where hired labour and a national bourgeoisie scarcely yet existed. But the appeal to western communists was the same for all:

> *A fraternal fighting alliance with the colonial toiling masses is one of the chief tasks of the world industrial proletariat as the leader and director of the struggle against imperialism.*

The immediate demands to be put forward in colonial countries were "complete independence and expulsion of the imperialists, a government of workers and peasants, the land for the whole people, the eight-hour working day etc."[45] The vexed issue of the peasantry was met by defining the dictatorship of the proletariat as "a special form of class alliance between the proletariat as the avant-garde of the toilers and the numerous new proletarian strata of toilers, or a majority of them".[46] The hegemony of the proletariat was denied by nobody, and least of all by Trotsky, who formulated it with his customary clarity in his critique of the programme:

> In the revolutions of the east the peasantry will still play a decisive rôle, but once again this rôle will be neither leading nor independent. The poor peasants of Hupei, Kwangtung or Bengal can play a rôle, not only on a national but on an international scale, but only if they support the workers of Shanghai, Canton, Hankow and Calcutta.[47]

[45] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), pp. 9–10, 30–31.
[46] *Ibid.* p. 25.
[47] L. Trotsky, *The Third International after Lenin* (N.Y., 1936), p. 226; according to Trotsky, the Chinese peasantry was "even less capable of playing a *leading* role than the Russian" (*ibid.* p. 184).

The programme was an unsensational document which remained strictly within the bounds of current Comintern orthodoxy. Trotsky called it a "hopeless attempt to reconcile the theory of socialism in one country with Marxist internationalism".[48] Its references to colonial countries did little either to analyse defeats of the past or to pave the way for victories of the future.

A by-product of the controversy about the class character of the revolution in eastern countries was the question whether these countries could reach the stage of socialist revolution without passing through the intermediate stage of capitalism. Marx and Engels, confronted with this question in relation to Russia in the eighteen seventies by their Russian supporters, had returned somewhat equivocal answers, but concluded that any such possibility depended on the victory of a proletarian revolution in the advanced capitalist countries of western Europe.[49] The drive for industrialization in Russia at the turn of the century, and the revolution of 1905, had in any event closed this option. Before 1917 Russia had progressed too far on the capitalist road for any question to arise of an avoidance of the capitalist stage of development. But Lenin at the second congress of Comintern more pertinently asked and answered the same question in relation to the eastern world:

> Can we recognize as correct the assertion that the capitalist stage of economic development is unavoidable for those backward peoples now being liberated, in whose midst, now since the war, a movement on the path of progress is visible? We answered this question in the negative. If the victorious revolutionary proletariat carries out systematic propaganda among them and the Soviet governments come to their aid with all the means at their disposal, then it is incorrect to suppose that the capitalist stage of development is unavoidable for the backward nationalities. In all the colonies and backward countries we must not only form independent cadres of fighters, party organizations, not only carry on propaganda for the organization of peasant Soviets, and strive to adapt them to pre-capitalist conditions, but the Communist International must establish, and justify theoretically, the proposition that with

[48] L. Trotsky, *Permanentnaya Revolyutsiya* (Berlin, 1930), p. 169.
[49] See *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917–1923*, Vol. 2, pp. 388–392.

> the aid of the proletariat of the most advanced countries the backward countries can make the transition to the Soviet order, and, through definite stages of development, to communism, while avoiding the capitalist stage of development.[50]

But no reference to this option was made in the theses which he presented to the congress, and it did not figure in subsequent debates.

The idea remained dormant for several years.[51] It was not till November 1926 that Bukharin, in both his spoken and written reports to the seventh IKKI, again raised the question of non-capitalist development. He noted that "the historical possibility", recognized by Marx, of non-capitalist development for Russia had not been realized. But he quoted Lenin in support of the hypothesis that, in colonial and predominantly peasant countries like China, the capitalist line of development might be "avoided" through an alliance with the Soviet Union and the western proletariat,[52] and concluded that "*Comintern considers non-capitalist development possible in China*". The issue provoked no discussion. The resolution adopted at the end of the session merely observed that "the result of the Chinese revolution need not necessarily be to create such social and political conditions as will lead to the capitalist development of the country".[53] When Bukharin reverted to the theme in an address to the students of the Communist University of Toilers of the East and of the Sun Yat-sen university in January 1927, he foresaw the possibility for

[50] Lenin, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, xli, 245–246.

[51] Bukharin in his heated polemic against Preobrazhensky in December 1924 claimed that "*under the dictatorship of the proletariat*" non-capitalist development was becoming a reality *in Russia* — a hypothesis never contemplated by Lenin (for this article see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 1, p. 207, note 1); and in January 1926, in obvious reference to the parallel drawn by Preobrazhensky between the colonial countries and the Russian peasantry, he ingeniously suggested that Lenin's words about colonial countries in 1920 might be applied to "our peasantry in relation to our state industry" (N. Bukharin, *K Itogam XIV S"ezda VKP(B)* (1926), p. 45). These controversial sallies were in marked contrast to his normal insistence on the capitalist implications of NEP for the peasantry; he silently retreated from them a year later in his remarks about China and Russia (see p. 662 below).

[52] *Puti Mirovoi Revolyutsii* (1927), i, 26, 88–89; for Bukharin's two reports see pp. 132–134 above.

[53] *Kommunistcheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), p. 672; about the same time the function of Soviet trade with the east was said to be "to assist the eastern countries to by-pass the capitalist stage of economic development" (see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 637–638).

China "to go over to the rails of non-capitalist development, i.e. to the rails of socialism". But he added that, even if this prospect were realized, "we shall have in a certain measure to permit the development of capitalist relations, and to permit them, probably, in a proportionally far *greater degree* than we permitted this in the Soviet Union".[54] Bukharin thus, by identifying non-capitalist development with socialism, and by postulating that this could be attained only through the development of capitalist relations, reverted to the classic Marxist sequence capitalism–socialism, and silently abandoned — for China as well as for Russia — the notion of non-capitalist development as a way of avoiding capitalism. But no practical conclusion was drawn from these baffling pronouncements.

Neither Lenin nor Bukharin had made the point that, once it was recognized that a country had embarked on the non-capitalist path to socialism, a policy of support for the national bourgeoisie, which was the representative and embodiment of capitalism, would become meaningless, and the transition would be made from the abortive bourgeois-democratic to the effective socialist revolution. But it was probably these radical implications of the doctrine of the non-capitalist path which accounted for its revival at the sixth congress of Comintern in July 1928. The programme of Comintern drafted by Bukharin on the eve of the congress held out the cautious hope that, thanks to the growing power of "centres of socialism in the form of Soviet republics", the colonial countries might "be drawn into the channel of socialist construction, avoiding the phase of the further development of capitalism as a dominating system".[55] Kuusinen briefly broached the theme at the end of his report on colonial and semi-colonial countries, observing that the idea was also to be found in the works of Marx:

> One further idea of Lenin should also be emphasized: the possibility for backward countries to develop towards socialism, while avoiding the domination of the capitalist system, if the advanced countries lend their support in this matter to the backward countries.[56]

[54] *Revolyutsionnyi Vostok*, i (1927), 10–12.

[55] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), p. 31; the passage was taken over unchanged from Bukharin's draft (see pp. 224–225 above).

[56] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 29.

But the question attracted little notice in the long debate. Gusev argued with some ingenuity that non-capitalist development was possible in countries which had no native bourgeoisie, but was excluded in countries like China and India, where the revolution was already in the bourgeois-democratic stage.[57] Neumann, anxious to provide a theoretical justification for the Canton commune, of which he had been the organizer, rhetorically called the prospect of non-capitalist development "one of Lenin's boldest thoughts", and wanted to make it "the starting-point of our whole strategy for all colonial countries".[58] Nobody else pursued the subject. The passage relating to it in Kuusinen's draft theses was strengthened in the commission. In the final version it followed a prediction of the inevitable collapse of capitalism and rise of the proletarian dictatorship in the USSR, and ran as follows:

> This means the presence of an objective possibility of a non-capitalist path of development for backward colonies, a possibility of the growing of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in advanced colonies into a proletarian-socialist revolution with the support of the victorious proletarian dictatorship of other countries.... Therefore the theoretical and practical defence of this path and the most selfless struggle for it is the duty of all communists.

A later passage declared that "the transition of the revolution into its socialist phase" presupposed "a definite level in the industrial development of the country, organization of the proletariat in trade unions, and a strong communist party".[59] In what was evidently an authoritative article written shortly after the congress Kuusinen was more guarded:

> In all colonial and semi-colonial countries the development of productive forces and the socialization of labour stands at too low a level for the revolution to make the transition to socialist revolution without passing through several transitional stages.

It remained, therefore, for the present a bourgeois-democratic revolution. Nevertheless, at the very end of the article, the writer

[57] *Ibid.* iv, 235–236; the greater part of Gusev's speech was devoted to Latin America, where he was anxious to show that no native bourgeoisie existed (see pp. 975–976 below).

[58] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kominterna* (1929), iv, 380–381.

[59] For the original draft see *ibid.* iv, 505; for the final text see *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), pp. 836–837, 845.

conceded the possibility of "a greater curtailment of the historic path of development", and "the inestimable possibility of avoiding the boundless sufferings, both material and of human victims, which toiling humanity has had to bear on the capitalist path of development throughout many generations".[60] The application by Lenin to colonial countries of the theory of non-capitalist development as a path to socialism was not free from the ambiguities and embarrassments attendant on the original invocation of the theory by Marx and Engels in relation to Russia; and it would be difficult to find any instance in which it served as a guide to policy or action. Its momentary revival in 1928 fitted in with the prevailing mood of "radicalization" and reaction against collaboration with bourgeois-democratic movements.

An embarrassing theme, recurrent throughout this period and ventilated by some eastern delegates at the sixth congress, was the attitude of western communists to revolutionary movements in colonial countries. The principle had been expounded in the theses of the second congress in 1920:

> First and foremost, the duty to render the most active help rests on the workers of the country on which the backward nation is dependent in colonial or financial relations.

But the demand for "a closer alliance of the western European communist proletariat with the revolutionary movement of peasants in the east"[61] remained a pious aspiration. Stalin, in his first detailed excursion into international affairs in March 1925, reiterated that it was the duty of communist parties "to lay down forms and methods of bringing together the working class of leading countries with the national-revolutionary movement of colonies and dependent countries".[62] But it was normally left to representatives of the dependent countries to call attention to the prevalent neglect of this duty; and they did not always find it tactful to do so. Nguyen Ai-quoc reproached the PCF at the fifth congress of Comintern in June 1924 with its indifference to the colonial peoples, and secured the insertion of a suitable exhorta-

[60] *Novyi Vostok*, xxiii–xxiv (1928), p. xxx.
[61] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), pp. 128–129.
[62] Stalin, *Sochineniya*, vii, 57.

tion in the congress resolution.[63] A Palestinian delegate at the seventh IKKI tartly recalled that the British workers had done nothing to aid the movement for national independence in Egypt, and added that the British workers in the general strike had not sought sympathy or support from the colonial peoples;[64] and the Netherlands party incurred censure on the same occasion for its lukewarm response to the Indonesian rising.[65] At the sixth congress of Comintern in July 1928, when pressure was applied to the parties on every front to adopt more radical policies, Katayama on behalf of the secretariat offered criticism of the attitude of the British, Netherlands and American parties to movements in the colonial possessions of their respective countries.[66] An unusually vocal Persian delegate complained not only that "Comintern in its daily work pays very little attention to the countries of the Near East", but that the CPGB in particular had done nothing to help the Persian and Indian parties; and a Palestinian delegate, speaking of the Arab countries, roundly asserted that "the European proletariat betrayed them".[67] A delegate from Indo-China spoke eloquently of the exploitation of his country by French imperialism and of a growth of a parasitic national bourgeoisie, and rested all his hopes "on the world proletariat, and in particular on the proletariat of France and China and on the Third International".[68] But no encouragement was given to discuss these themes; and the indifference of the congress towards the eastern countries, other than India and China, was unshaken.

By the time the next important Comintern gathering, the tenth IKKI, assembled in July 1929, the colonial question had once more faded into the background. None of the leading spokesmen of Comintern were eager to discuss China;[69] and only Mif, the head of the eastern secretariat, attempted a detailed review of the colonial countries. But he risked few generalizations, except to claim in conclusion "powerful successes in the field of the strike

[63] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 617–618.
[64] *Puti Mirovoi Revolyutsii* (1927), i, 567.
[65] See p. 951 below.
[66] See p. 219 above.
[67] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), i, 259, iv, 147.
[68] *Ibid.* iv, 242–249.
[69] See pp. 893–894 below.

movement", and an "increase of the mass movement and of the influence of Comintern in all the countries of the east".[70] With the Chinese revolution in eclipse, and with no conspicuous achievements to record elsewhere, the prospects of revolution in the east once more faded out of the world picture as seen from Moscow.

[70] *Protokoll: 10. Plenum des Exekutivkomitees der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), pp. 478–492; for discussions of particular countries at the tenth IKKI see pp. 673–674 (Turkey), 894–895 (China), 942–943 (India), 956–957 (Indonesia), 989–990 (Latin America) below.

CHAPTER 83

THE MIDDLE EAST

(*a*) *Turkey*

By 1926 the Turkish Communist Party had been driven underground, crushed under Kemal's iron heel.[1] A handful of exiled Turkish communists lived under Comintern patronage in Moscow, and presumably functioned as delegates to a party conference in May 1926, which recorded that the illegal party central committee in Turkey had fallen a victim to "some Menshevik–liquidationist deviations", implying "passivity" or toleration of the Kemal régime. The conference endeavoured to rectify this attitude and draw up a programme of action. But the intervention of Comintern was required to overcome the opposition of the old central committee.[2] An article in the Comintern news-sheet in September 1926 predicted a growth of discontent in the population and increasingly harsh repressions, and called on communists to "prepare and spur on" the movement of the working masses;[3] and a further article claimed, without much conviction, that some trade unions, "especially in the provinces", had been founded by communists or were under communist control.[4] Although, however, Turkey had a larger proportion of industrial workers in the population than any other middle eastern country, results were meagre. An "external bureau" of the party central committee was set up in Vienna and maintained contacts with

[1] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 643.

[2] For a confused account of these events see *Die Komintern vor dem 6. Weltkongress* (1928), pp. 432–433; the former secretary of the central committee was said to have given evidence for the police in proceedings against party activists. According to *Tätigkeitsbericht der Exekutive der Kommunistischen Internationale, Februar bis November 1926* (1926), p. 168, the greatest danger to the party lay in "an outspoken tendency to autonomy" in the branches.

[3] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 114, September 14, 1926, pp. 1929–1930.

[4] *Ibid.* No. 119, September 28, 1926, pp. 2037–2038; for an earlier similar claim see *Bericht über die Tätigkeit der Exekutive der Kommunistischen Internationale vom. IV. bis V. Weltkongress (1924)* (1924), p. 57.

illegal groups in Turkey.[5] But the party was in a state of total disarray. Those who escaped the charge of passivity, and pursued the new radical line, "fell into an exaggeration of individual heroism, began to reject work within the Kemalist trade unions", and were guilty of "anarchist errors and tendencies" and "sectarianism", demanding the immediate proclamation of the dictatorship of the proletariat.[6]

These faint stirrings of underground activity did not interfere with the determination of the Soviet authorities to woo the friendships of a régime whose interests and recent experiences seemed to guarantee its hostility to British imperialism. But neither side was willing to assume more positive or specific obligations than those involved in the treaty of December 17, 1925;[7] and repeated official assurances of mutual good will were empty of content. During the summer of 1926 Kemal's escape from an attempt to assassinate him, and the first aeroplane flight from Moscow to Ankara, provided occasions for fulsome exchanges.[8] But the signature by Turkey on June 6, 1926, of an agreement with Great Britain about Mosul was greeted with disappointment in Moscow,[9] where apprehension was felt at the prospect of Turkey being attracted into the orbit of the western Powers. Articles in the press anxiously reported a campaign in the western European press and at Geneva to lure Turkey into the League of Nations.[10] Anxieties aroused by a Turkish–Persian treaty of April 22, 1926, were ostensibly allayed by a Turkish–Soviet exchange of notes on June 29, 1926, in which the Turkish Government offered an assurance that it had not undertaken, and would not undertake, any obligations conflicting with its treaty with the Soviet Union.[11]

On November 13, 1926, a meeting between Chicherin and Tewfik, the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, took place at Odessa, Tewfik having declined to travel as far as Moscow. The

[5] G. Harris, *The Origins of Communism in Turkey* (Stanford, 1967), pp. 143–144, and sources there quoted; this author quotes (*ibid.* pp. 141–145) several instances of members who left, or were expelled from, the party, and later entered Kemal's service.

[6] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 356–357.

[7] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 641–642.

[8] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, ix (1964), 318–319, 370, 731, note 73.

[9] *Izvestiya*, June 8, 1926.

[10] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 114, September 14, 1926, p. 1931; *Izvestiya*, October 1, 1926.

[11] *Mirovoe Khozyaistvo i Mirovaya Politika*, No. 9, 1926, pp. 140–144.

conversation between minister and commissar turned largely on Chicherin's efforts to avert the danger that Turkey might yield to pressure to join the League of Nations. Tewfik emphatically stated that Turkey had no present intention of applying for membership, and would not accept membership without a permanent seat on the council. But he was unwilling to make a public declaration of refusal to join, or to enter into any formal commitment about the future. The two parties agreed on the importance of a common policy in regard to Rumania and Greece (this meant in practice that Turkey would support Soviet policy in Rumania in return for Soviet support of Turkish policy in Greece); and Soviet fears of a *rapprochement* between Turkey and Poland were calmed by Tewfik's pronouncement that "the road between Warsaw and Ankara goes through Moscow". An agreed record of the conversation was drawn up, but not published. The brief official *communiqué* was confined to the customary compliments and assurances of friendship.[12] Chicherin, in an interview after his return to Moscow, underlined the common interest of the two countries in resisting "world imperialism", whose expansionist policies threatened both the Soviet Union and Turkey.[13] A few days later the Turkish delegate at the seventh IKKI optimistically assigned to Turkey a leading place in "a re-grouping of the peoples of the east" on the side of the Soviet Union, and thought that the Kemalists, in spite of some waverings, would move towards "the oppressed peoples and the Soviet Union";[14] and Tewfik, in conversation with the Soviet *polpred* in Ankara, described "Odessa" as the answer to western "pressure" to join the League of Nations and to break with the Soviet Union.[15]

A more substantial achievement was the signature at Ankara on March 11, 1927, of a Soviet–Turkish trade treaty. The balance of Soviet trade with Turkey, unlike that with most eastern countries, was strongly active, oil, sugar and textiles being the largest items of Soviet export to Turkey. Business was transacted through a Soviet mixed trading company, Russo-Tyurk; this functioned as a subsidiary of the London company Arcos, which since 1922 had had a branch in Constantinople.[16] The Soviet Union was prepared

[12] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, ix (1964), 499, 540–544.

[13] *Izvestiya*, November 24, 1926. [14] *Puti Mirovoi Revolyutsii* (1927), i, 273.

[15] Quoted from Soviet archives in S. Nikonova, *Antisovetskaya Vneshnyaya Politika Angliiskikh Konservatorov* (1936), p. 152.

[16] *Entsiklopediya Sovetskogo Eksporta* (Berlin, 1924), iii, 530.

to accord to trade with Turkey the favourable conditions reserved for Soviet trade with the east, and to encourage an increase in Soviet imports from Turkey. The two principal difficulties were the incompatibility of Soviet insistence on the monopoly of foreign trade with the desire of Turkish merchants to profit by a free market, and the Soviet claim of extra-territorial status for Soviet trading organs in Turkey. The main treaty contained the usual stipulations for mutual most-favoured-nation treatment. Transit of goods across the territory of either party could be limited by the legislation of that party; an exception was made in favour of free transit of goods from Turkey through Batum to the eastern provinces of Turkey and to Asiatic countries. State juridical persons in respect of their commercial transactions were to have the same rights and obligations under the laws of the country in which they operated as private juridical persons. Further Turkish anxieties about the status and activities of the Soviet trade delegation were allayed in a separate protocol. Most important of all, a note from the Soviet representative, specifically declared to have the same force as the treaty itself, laid down the procedure for Soviet imports from Turkey. Quotas in terms of value were fixed for all imports. Those on List A could be imported, within the ration, without licence; those on List B required a licence from the trade delegation for each consignment. Both lists were further sub-divided into two categories: industrial raw materials, and consumer goods. Of the former 70 per cent, of the latter 20 per cent, could be sold only to Soviet trading organizations; the balance could be disposed of freely on the market.[17] The treaty was hailed in Moscow as a political victory, and as a shining example of the Soviet attitude to eastern countries: "We do not see in them competitors with our industry, and we are not afraid to grant certain exemptions in regard to the trading régime". Turkey, "in spite of the bitter campaign recently conducted against the Soviet Union", had recognized where "her own economic and political interests" lay; and, while the Great Powers strove to "conduct an intrigue against the USSR and exacerbate relations of other states with the Soviet Union", the Soviet Government pursued its peaceful policy.[18]

Soviet–Turkish friendship continued to have its ups and downs.

[17] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, x (1965), 81–100.
[18] *Izvestiya*, March 15, 1927.

An article in the Comintern news-sheet in the autumn of 1927 connected an intensification of reprisals against the workers' movement in Turkey with "a deterioration of Turkey's relations with the Soviet Union".[19] But in the long run Soviet-Turkish relations gradually improved. Minor problems arising on the long and wild land frontier between the two countries were settled by agreements in 1928.[20] Manifest Turkish reluctance to antagonize the western Powers sometimes caused anxiety in Moscow. But Turkey's reserved attitude to the break between Great Britain and the Soviet Union in May 1927 had gone far to allay Soviet fears that Turkey would be drawn into a western bloc. Litvinov's disarmament proposals at Geneva were received with sympathy by the Turkish Government; and at the fifth session of the preparatory commission in March 1928 Turkey, as the result of a Soviet initiative, was invited to become a member of the commission.[21] The Turkish Government was flattered by the invitation, but somewhat embarrassed by the sponsorship. When the Turkish delegation arrived in Geneva, its support proved rather less wholehearted than Litvinov had hoped for. The ever tactless Voroshilov, in a public speech, complained of the "indeterminate" attitude of the Turkish delegation, and provoked the indignant retort that, while the Turkish Government had never adhered to the principle of total disarmament, it had fully supported Litvinov's proposals for partial disarmament, even though he had failed to give it notice of them in advance.[22] The arrival in Ankara in March 1928 of a delegation from Chiang Kai-shek aroused fears in Moscow that the two dictators, linked by a common hostility to communism, might find common ground in international policy. But the Turkish Government gave the comforting reassurance that the reception of the delegation would be cool and would not include a meeting with Kemal.[23]

The attempts of Italy, now regarded as committed to the

[19] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 117, November 29, 1927, p. 2636.

[20] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, xi (1966), 82, 698, note 24.

[21] *Ibid.* xi, 126–127, 135–136, 152. For the invitation see p. 109, note 27 above; to the annoyance of the Soviet Government, Poland sponsored the invitation when it came before the League council (*Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, xi (1966), 152).

[22] *Ibid*, xi, 260–261, 268–269; Voroshilov's speech was published in *Izvestiya*, April 6, 1928. For Litvinov's proposals at Geneva see pp. 107–109 above.

[23] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, xi (1966), 242–243.

western bloc, to penetrate the Balkans were watched with a jealous eye from Moscow, and coloured Soviet relations with Turkey. Chicherin referred to "the very dangerous character of Italo-Balkan negotiations", which had "an anti-Soviet edge", and pressed Turkey not to enter into any pact with Italy or Greece, unless those countries were also prepared to conclude pacts with the Soviet Union.[24] Turkish negotiations with these countries provoked the sour comment in *Izvestiya* that they must inevitably lead to "a cooling off of Soviet–Turkish relations", and that the conclusion of pacts with these countries would be "objectively a step against the USSR".[25] The Turkish Government hedged by concluding the pact with Italy, but refusing to conclude a pact with Greece.[26] In October 1928 the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, reviewing the changes that had come over the scene since his meeting with Chicherin in Odessa two years earlier, noted that "conflicts between states in the west have in the recent period been extraordinarily intensified, chaos is apparent, and attempts to create a single front are shattered by the demands of Powers seeking to free themselves from the Anglo-French hegemony". In these conditions he described cooperation with the Soviet Union as "the basis of my foreign policy".[27] The description contained an element of polite hyperbole. But the adhesion of Turkey to the Soviet-sponsored agreement bringing the Kellogg pact into force between the Soviet Union and her neighbours[28] pointed to a growing sense of a common interest, which denoted, if not an identity of aims, at any rate an absence of any important divergence.

The process of Soviet–Turkish *rapprochement* was regarded without enthusiasm by the few Turkish communists and by those Comintern circles which reflected on the increasingly ruthless measures of repression applied by the Kemal régime to Turkish workers. In the debate on colonial and semi-colonial countries at

[24] *Ibid.* xi, 274, 289.

[25] *Izvestiya*, May 10, 1928.

[26] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, xi (1966), 312, 315; for Chicherin's comparatively calm acceptance of the Italo-Turkish pact see *ibid.* xi, 348–349. The Turkish delegate at the sixth congress of Comintern in July 1928 alleged that the aim of "treaties with Italian capital" was "war against the Soviet Union, war against the revolutionary front of the international proletariat" (*Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 356).

[27] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, xi (1966), 535–536.

[28] See p. 115 above.

the sixth congress of Comintern in July 1928, Shakhri, the Turkish delegate, protested vigorously against the assumption, in the draft theses submitted by Kuusinen, that Turkey was a primitive country where "pre-feudal" conditions prevailed, and where Kemal's struggle against foreign imperialism could be regarded as a progressive factor. Shakhri argued that Turkey had been launched on the path of industrialization for 70 or 80 years, and now had 600,000 industrial workers. It was the rising commercial and industrial bourgeoisie, with the army on its side, which supported Kemal; it was "the Kemalist bourgeoisie" which persecuted the working class, and had "gone over completely to the camp of counter-revolution". Shakhri concluded by calling for the better organization of the communist party and for "denunciation of the Kemalists before the Turkish toiling masses as betrayers of the independence of the country, as betrayers of the revolution, as a counter-revolutionary class".[29] But nobody attempted to answer this inconvenient tirade; and any mention of the embarrassing Turkish problem was eliminated from the final text of the theses.

It was perhaps in response to this appeal that, in the following year, the central committee of the Turkish Communist Party, presumably located in Moscow, drew up a revised "programme of action" and "special theses" for carrying it into effect. The programme denounced the Kemalist party for having begun "*to misuse its revolutionary victories as a foundation for the supremacy and enrichment of a new Turkish, predominantly commercial, bourgeoisie*", and called for "the *unmasking* of the anti-national character of this party, of its evolution towards compromise with foreign imperialism, of its reactionary attempts to crush the class struggle of the masses of workers and peasants in the interests of a bourgeois dictatorship". The goal in view was the seizure of power by a "worker–peasant bloc ... under the hegemony of the proletariat led by its *avant-garde*, the Turkish Communist Party".[30] In July 1929, at the tenth IKKI, the representative of the eastern section of the secretariat noted the deterioration of the Kemalist régime, its increasing economic de-

[29] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 353–359.

[30] For the programme see *Programmnye Dokumenty Kommunisticheskikh Partii Vostoka* (1934), pp. 148–158; the "special theses" (unless they are incorporated in the programme) do not seem to have been published.

pendence on the imperialist Powers, and the radicalization of the working class. He concluded that increasingly brutal oppression of the workers called for "a revision of our previous attitude to Kemalism".[31] Where local communist parties were non-existent or unimportant, speakers at Comintern gatherings and writers in the Comintern press enjoyed a licence to use brave language which was in practice irrelevant to local conditions, and was ignored by the makers of Soviet policy.

(*b*) *Persia*

Soviet attitudes towards Riza's high-handed régime in Persia remained ambivalent throughout the nineteen-twenties.[32] Marked divergencies persisted between official pronouncements of Narkomindel and opinions expressed in circles close to Comintern. In the summer and autumn of 1926 what were described as risings of "conservative khans, and also peasants and soldiers" in northern Persia, led by Ibrahim Khan, were confidently attributed by spokesmen of Narkomindel to "English agents", who had encouraged the insurgents to "wave the red flag" and "mouth Soviet slogans"[33] — a hypothesis even more far-fetched than the corresponding British suspicion that the affair was due to Soviet intrigues. Early in 1927 a different and detailed analysis of the affair appeared, over a fictitious signature, in the journal of the Communist University of Toilers of the East. The revolt was here described as one of disgruntled soldiers and deserters whose pay was in arrears (Ibrahim himself was a non-commissioned officer), and of landless peasants (constituting 75 per cent of the population of the region), supported by small groups of artisans and unemployed in the towns of Resht and Enzeli. The 1920 rising of Kuchik Khan (in regard to whom ambivalent attitudes had also been taken up in Moscow) was recalled; and the population of the northern region was said to contain "a more conscious element" than in other parts of the country. The revolt was suppressed by the army. But ringleaders condemned to public execution sang revolutionary songs and shouted, "Down with the Shah! Long live

[31] *Protokoll: 10. Plenum des Exekutivkomitees der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), p. 490.

[32] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 646–649.

[33] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, ix (1964), 338; in an interview in *Izvestiya*, July 29, 1926, Yurenev, the *polpred* in Teheran, made light of the insurrection.

revolution!" The account ended with the verdict that this result coincided "with the new directive of Riza's policy in the interests of the feudal–monarchical elements in the country, actively supported throughout by Anglo-imperialism".[34] This verdict, which was widely endorsed in Moscow not only in orthodox party circles but also by supporters of the opposition, seemed to derive confirmation from what happened in China. Zinoviev, in theses submitted to the party central committee on April 14, 1927, but not published, treated Riza as the Persian counterpart of Chiang Kai-shek, and denounced "the military and Fascist monarchy of Riza Shah, which to a great extent is really an instrument of England";[35] and a delegate at the eighth IKKI a month later retorted that Riza represented nothing so modern as Fascism, but oriental despotism.[36]

The attitude of Soviet diplomacy, far less clear-cut, was dictated by different considerations of everyday prudence. Riza's undoubted ambition to modernize Persian life and society was one of the elements which entitled his rule to be labelled "progressive". As Soviet spokesmen put it, "the USSR is interested in the development of the productive forces of Persia and in freeing her from subjection to imperialist pressure"; the Soviet Government looked sympathetically on reforms in the judicial system, in education and in finance, on Persian industrial development and, more doubtfully, on plans for a more equitable solution of the agrarian question.[37] Soviet encouragement and aid were readily forthcoming for such projects as the construction of a government radio station in Teheran, the establishment of an air line between Teheran and Moscow, the development of education and learning and the campaign against locusts.[38] But these meagre measures of assistance could not match the large and increasing investment of British and American capital in Persia, reinforced by the presence in Teheran of an American financial adviser. Nor were other causes of friction lacking in relations with a country in close territorial proximity to the Soviet Union. The murder of Voikov

[34] *Revolyutsionnyi Vostok*, No. 2, 1927, pp. 193–199; for Kuchik see *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917–1923*, Vol. 3, 242–244.

[35] L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., 1932), p. 317.

[36] *Die Chinesische Frage auf dem 8. Plenum* (1928), pp. 45–46.

[37] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, x (1965), 309, 377.

[38] *Ibid.* ix (1964), 256, 338; x (1965), 378–379; xi (1966), 15–16; xii (1967), 89–91.

in Warsaw in May 1927 provoked fears of similar dangers from the numerous and active "white" Russian *émigrés* in Persia. In June 1927 a protest was made against a "white guard committee" in Teheran, which was said to have been responsible for incitements to violence against Soviet officials and property; and the assurance was received that the Persian Government had knowledge only of a "charitable society" of aged Russians who had founded a library.[39]

The main efforts of Soviet diplomacy in Persia at this time were directed to the conclusion of a non-aggression pact, a trade treaty, and other agreements with the Persian Government. In the winter of 1925–1926 the Soviet representative in Teheran had already broached with Riza the prospect of a Soviet–Persian agreement on the lines of the recently concluded Soviet–Turkish pact.[40] The reception of the offer was lukewarm. But in the summer of 1926 a special Persian envoy, Teymurtash, visited Moscow and conducted extensive negotiations with Chicherin, as a result of which a draft pact was drawn up at the beginning of October. Its terms did not differ significantly from those of the Soviet–Turkish pact; the Persian Government was to declare in a supplementary protocol that the obligations undertaken by it were not inconsistent with its obligations under the Covenant of the League of Nations, which retained their validity.[41] While, however, Teymurtash was in Moscow, other counsels prevailed in Teheran. In December 1926 the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ansari, assured the British chargé d'affaires, presumably in response to a British intervention, that the pact drafted in Moscow would not be signed, informed the Soviet *polpred* in the same sense, and proposed to transfer the negotiations to Teheran.[42] On January 4, 1927, the Soviet Government, expressing resentment at the intrusion of "obligations to a third party", refused to transfer the negotiations to Teheran, though it declared its willingness to sign in Teheran the pact negotiated with Teymurtash in Moscow.[43] These tough tactics appear to have paid off. A month later, Ansari indicated that, subject to a little face-saving, he was prepared to make the

[39] *Ibid.* x, 329–330.
[40] *Ibid.* ix, 7; for the Soviet–Turkish pact see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 641–642.
[41] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, ix (1964), 475–477.
[42] *Ibid.* ix, 712, note 1.
[43] *Ibid.* x, 9–10.

journey to Moscow; and in April 1927 Rykov was able to inform the fourth Union Congress of Soviets of his arrival to take up the negotiations where Teymurtash had left off.[44] A Soviet commentator hailed this change as an indication that Persia had outgrown the "English malady" with which her policy had been infected.[45]

In the negotiations conducted by Ansari in Moscow as much importance was attached to the trade treaty as to the non-aggression pact. Persia's overwhelmingly favourable trade balance with the Soviet Union, and the dependence of Persian exporters on the Soviet market, made the Persian Government highly vulnerable to Soviet pressure.[46] A large part of Soviet–Persian trade was carried on by Persian merchants visiting the great fairs of the USSR; in 1926, in the words of an official report, fairs were still "the basic form of Soviet–Persian trade".[47] But the days when eastern products crossed the Asian frontiers of the Soviet Union without let or hindrance were now over. A licensing system was set up for imports from eastern countries of all but a few favoured items; customs duties were imposed; and a balance of trade between imports and exports was now a major aim of Soviet policy. This made it urgent, since Soviet exports to Persia would be channelled through the monopoly of foreign trade, to set up a quota system for Soviet imports from Persia on the analogy of the arrangements just concluded with Turkey.[48] The fixing of these quotas, and the perennial problem of the status of the Soviet trade delegation, seem to have been the main topics of discussion. Progress was delayed by the resignation early in June 1927 of the Persian Government, which was attributed by the Soviet press to British intrigues.[49] But by the middle of August 1927 the texts of a non-aggression pact, of a trade treaty and of several minor agreements had been agreed and initialled, subject to a few out-

[44] *Ibid.* x, 45; *SSSR: 4 S"ezd Sovetov* (1927), p. 28.

[45] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 58, June 7, 1927, p. 1255.

[46] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 637.

[47] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, ix (1964), 678. For the share of the Baku and Nizhny-Novgorod fairs in Soviet–Persian trade see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 635; for a decree permitting free import between June 15 and September 15, 1926, of cotton, wool and feathers from eastern countries destined for the Nizhny-Novgorod fair see *Sobranie Zakonov*, 1926, No. 32, art. 593, 594.

[48] See pp. 669–670 above.

[49] *Izvestiya*, June 10, 1927.

standing points;[50] and on October 1, 1927, the solemn signature of all the agreements took place in Moscow.

The non-aggression treaty, signed by Chicherin and Ansari, did not differ substantially from the draft agreed a year earlier with Teymurtash, though the reservation in the accompanying exchange of notes of Persian obligations under the Covenant of the League of Nations was slightly more explicit. The trade agreement, which took the form of an exchange of notes between Karakhan and Ansari, provided for the fixing of a quota each year for Soviet imports from Persia; if Soviet exports to Persia in the given year exceeded or fell short of the total, the quota of imports for the following year would be adjusted accordingly. The quota for the first year of the agreement was fixed at 50 million rubles, 30 millions for industrial raw material (mainly cotton and wool), 20 millions for consumer products. The jealously guarded right of transit of goods across Soviet territory from western countries to Persia was limited in principle to transit from countries with which the Soviet Union had trade agreements, and to certain named categories of goods. The Soviet trade delegation in Teheran would enjoy extra-territorial rights as part of the Soviet diplomatic mission, but in its commercial transactions it would be recognized as a juridical person subject to Persian law. The Soviet Government agreed to return to Persia the port of Pakhlevi on the Caspian Sea, occupied since 1920, in return for a Persian undertaking to maintain the port and its installations in good order, and to lease to the Soviet Caspian shipping line for 25 years the land and other facilities necessary for its services; the Persian Government also undertook not to employ foreign nationals in the port. A customs convention, a fishery convention and several other agreements were signed at the same time.[51] Karakhan in a press interview on the following day stressed the "profoundly pacific character" of the agreements, which distinguished them from agreements concluded with Persia by imperialist states; and the Shah, in a formal speech of welcome to the newly accredited Soviet representative Davtyan, spoke of a "new era" in Soviet–Persian relations.[52]

The conclusion of the agreements was a symptom of growing

[50] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, x (1965), 365–366.

[51] *Ibid.* x, 396–428; for a list of other agreements see *ibid.* x, 646, note 87. An agreement on the regulation of frontier incidents had been signed some weeks earlier in Teheran (*ibid.* x, 357–361).

[52] *Ibid.* x, 437, 439.

Soviet prestige in Asian countries; and Soviet–Persian relations entered on a smoother phase. Persia at this time was still bound by "capitulations" — in the current phrase, by "unequal treaties" — to accord favourable treatment to the trade of the western countries. This was one of the shackles on Persian freedom of economic action which Riza, with Soviet encouragement, was determined to throw off. On May 9, 1927, the Persian Government had given a year's notice to terminate the régime of capitulations; and the Soviet–Persian customs convention of October 1, 1927, contained a clause providing that the convention would lose its effect if and when Persia adopted an "autonomous" customs tariff. On May 3, 1928, a law embodying such a tariff was adopted by the Persian assembly. The decision was officially notified to the Soviet *polpred* on May 10, 1928, and duly welcomed by him.[53] But the atmosphere of mutual suspicion was not easily dissipated. Great Britain showed unexpected haste in accepting the abolition of the capitulations, and in signing a new customs convention with Persia. The counterpart of this — the concession to Great Britain of a right of transit by air across Persian territory and the use of two aerodromes in southern Persia — was regarded by the Soviet Government as a sinister prelude to the establishment of British air bases in Persia in the event of war.[54] Persian diplomacy was equally prone to mistrust Soviet intentions. When Turkey and Afghanistan, not without Soviet encouragement, signed a non-aggression treaty on May 20, 1928, Teymurtash expressed the fear that this was directed against Persia, and that the Soviet Union, in view of its treaties with Turkey and Afghanistan, would be unable to come to her aid in the event of an attack on her. Karakhan found this hypothesis so far-fetched that he regarded it as "blackmail" designed to "justify [Persian] agreements with Great Britain".[55] The British

[53] *Ibid.* xi (1966), 310–311; a revised Soviet–Persian customs convention was concluded in March 1929 (*ibid.* xii, 120–124). The Persian delegate at the World Economic Conference in Geneva in May 1927 had made a declaration insisting on Persia's right to tariff autonomy (*Report and Proceedings of the World Economic Conference* (Geneva, 1927), i, 245).

[54] *Ibid.* xi, 312, 314–315.

[55] *Ibid.* xi, 347, 362, 367. Tension between Persia and Afghanistan was, however, real; when, a year later, the Soviet Government protested to the Persian Government against Persian threats of intervention in Afghanistan provoked by banditry on the frontier (*ibid.* xiii, 167–168), it was suspected in Moscow that Riza's "annexationist ambitions" were "dictated primarily by British capital" (*Protokoll: 10. Plenum der Exekutivkomittees der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), pp. 490–491).

Government's signature of the Kellogg pact was qualified by a declaration reserving its freedom of action "in certain regions of the world the welfare and integrity of which constitute a special and vital interest for our peace and security". This reservation was not unreasonably supposed in Teheran to relate, among other places, to the Persian Gulf,[56] and may have prompted Persia's ready adhesion to the Soviet-sponsored protocol bringing the pact independently into force between the Soviet Union and its neighbours.[57]

These developments were hardly enough to breed confidence in the sincerity or stability of Soviet–Persian relations; and Persian diplomacy was still seen as a balancing act between Soviet friendship and British imperialism. The dichotomy between Narkomindel and Comintern was allowed to persist. Official good-will and optimism was tempered by a flow of propaganda highly critical of the Persian Government. The report of IKKI submitted to the sixth congress of Comintern in July 1928 stressed Riza's subordination to British capital, and concluded that the social basis of the régime remained the same as under the previous dynasty — "the great feudal landlords, the old officials, the heads of the national bourgeoisie".[58] At the congress, a Persian delegate explained that Riza's régime, "representing the interests of the largest landowners, has still further damaged the already grievous position of the peasant population". In the debate on the colonial question, he protested against the way in which "it had been drummed into the heads of the workers for a number of years that Riza's revolt is a progressive revolt", led by "Persian revolutionaries". He criticized a passage in the draft theses which implied this view, and once more denounced Riza as "the representative of Persian reaction, not the representative of Persian nationalism and progress".[59] The result of these strictures was the total disappearance of the embarrassing Persian question from the final text of the theses. Nothing occurred in the next twelve months to modify the view of Riza's régime prevalent in Comintern circles. The question was not discussed at the tenth IKKI in July 1929. But Mif, the

[56] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, xi (1966), 499, 507.

[57] See p. 115 above.

[58] *Die Komintern vor dem 6. Weltkongress* (1928), pp. 437–438.

[59] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), i, 257, iv, 479–480; Rothstein also criticized the same passage, and the failure to analyse the character of Riza's régime (*ibid.* iv, 194).

head of the eastern section of the secretariat, reported that "Riza and his clique pursue with ever less concealment the policy dictated to them by international imperialism and, first and foremost, by British capital."[60] It was none the less apparent that such pronouncements would not deter the Soviet Government from pursuing Soviet interests with the usual weapons of diplomacy, and were not regarded as incompatible with the aim of improving Soviet–Persian relations.

The Persian Communist Party continued to exist on paper after its suppression by Riza at the end of 1925,[61] but played no significant rôle throughout this period. In 1926 it apparently received advice from Moscow to try "the Mongolian experiment", i.e. to transform itself into a people's revolutionary party without specific communist commitment. The Persian communists rejected this proposal, but attempted to create such an organization without dissolving their own party.[62] A delegate of a Persian Revolutionary Republican Party addressed the Brussels congress of the League against Imperialism in February 1927, denouncing Riza as "a Mussolini of the worst kind"; but any communist affiliations he may have had were studiously ignored. The records of the congress included a resolution protesting against British domination over Persia for the past 200 years.[63] Later in 1927 the Chinese disaster inspired Comintern with second thoughts, and a fresh instruction was issued to dissolve the national party and strengthen the Persian Communist Party.[64] This was doubtless the occasion for the convocation of the second party congress,[65] said to have met at Urumia in northern Persia, not far from the Turkish and Soviet frontiers, but probably held on Soviet soil. The agenda of the congress was comprehensive and unrealistic, comprising not only the international and internal situation of Persia, but the national, agrarian and trade union questions, the

[60] *Protokoll: 10. Plenum des Exekutivkomitees der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), p. 490.

[61] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 647

[62] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), i, 258–259.

[63] *Das Flammenzeichen vom Palais Egmont* (1927), pp. 61–62, 256; for this congress see pp. 297–301 above.

[64] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), i, 258–259.

[65] The first-congress had been held at Enzeli in July 1920 (see *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917–1923*, Vol. 3, p. 244).

preparation of a party programme, as well as work in the cooperatives, in the youth league and among women. Its main function was to refute those "light-minded comrades" and professed "experts", who believed that Riza had been "called to strengthen the position of an independent national Persia", and was engaged in something like a bourgeois revolution. The main resolution of the congress declared emphatically that "the struggle proclaimed by Riza never went beyond the limits of a struggle for power within the landlord-feudal order". Riza had admittedly not carried out a mere "palace revolution"; it had been "accompanied by a great struggle within the feudal class, then by a struggle of the ruling landlord class against attempts of the national bourgeoisie somehow or other to attain power, and finally by a struggle of the feudalists and the upper stratum of the bourgeoisie against revolutionary movements and revolutionary organizations". On the controversial issue of a national-revolutionary party the congress hedged. The "objective prerequisites" for the foundation of such a party were present in Persia. But the Persian Communist Party was still weak; and the Chinese precedent showed the dangers of close relations with a national party. If such a party were formed, however, the communist party should use every effort to take over the leadership of it.[66]

Two Persian delegates spoke at the sixth congress of Comintern in July 1928. Sultan-Zade, long resident in Moscow, complained that Kuusinen's theses on colonial and semi-colonial countries answered none of the questions which interested Persia. He refused to believe that the bourgeoisie would ever support an agrarian revolution, and maintained that "the petty bourgeoisie, like the bourgeoisie, will betray the cause of agrarian revolution at the decisive moment".[67] The second delegate, Shargi by name, in the same debate drew a confused and unpromising picture. The Persian party, like other communist parties in colonial countries, was "swollen with opportunist and petty bourgeois elements";

[66] The fullest available account of the congress is by Sultan-Zade in *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 50 (124), 1927, pp. 21–26; a brief account in *Die Komintern vor dem 6. Weltkongress* (1928), p. 439, also mentions "the opportunist standpoint of some comrades". If these were Persians, they have not been identified; the "experts" referred to were no doubt Gurko-Kryazhin and his disciples (see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 647–648).

[67] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), 249–252; for this debate see pp. 213–219 above.

quality of membership was more important than quantity. On the other hand, the party in the struggle against imperialism "must collaborate, must utilize the small and middle peasantry, the intelligentsia, the small and medium traders". Shargi denounced those who for several years had acclaimed Riza's *coup* as "progressive" and "revolutionary". Riza was "the representative of Persian reaction, not the representative of Persian nationalism and progress".[68] But Persian affairs excited no interest in other delegations; and Persia was one of the few "colonial and semi-colonial countries" to escape mention in Kuusinen's comprehensive theses on the subject.

(*c*) *The Arab World*

Among the Arabic-speaking countries, Egypt stood somewhat apart at a relatively higher stage of development than the rest. Its emancipation from Turkish rule had been achieved in the distant past, and was now replaced by a looser British suzerainty. The other Arab lands of the Middle East — the French mandated territories of Syria and the Lebanon, the British mandated territories of Palestine, reserved for the creation of a Jewish National Home, and of Iraq, and the remaining Arab countries subject to British suzerainty — had been exposed during the war of 1914–1918 to the heady propaganda of national liberation and self-determination; and bitter feelings were generated when their promised liberation from the Turkish yoke was succeeded by new forms of domination imposed by their liberators. Nascent Arab nationalism received a powerful stimulus from the success of the Turkish nationalist movement in asserting its independence in a stubborn struggle against the western imperialist Powers.[69] The external support which Kemal had enjoyed was, however, not available to the Arabs, whose lands remained for some time firmly closed to Soviet influence or penetration.

[68] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 477–478; Shargi also spoke in the main debate on Bukharin's theses, complaining of the neglect by Comintern of the Near Eastern countries (*ibid.* i, 257–259). In the list of congress delegates the second Persian delegate is named as Rizaev (*ibid.* v, 155).

[69] This point was made by a Turkish communist in *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 127, October 22, 1926, p. 2182.

From 1924 onwards Egypt was ruled by a succession of puppet governments, subject in the last resort to British control; recalcitrance on any major issue was effectively met by a display of naval force. After elections in May 1926 the Wafd had a clear majority in parliament. But Zaglul's return to office would have been unacceptable to the British Government; and he bowed to its veto. The Wafd was committed in principle to demands for the withdrawal of British armed forces from Egyptian soil, and for the reunification of the Sudan with Egypt. These issues remained taboo, and negotiations for a treaty to regularize relations between Great Britain and Egypt were pursued without results throughout 1927 and 1928. But, however uneasy the course of Anglo-Egyptian relations, Egypt remained, as in the previous period,[70] impenetrable both to the blandishments of Comintern and to Soviet diplomacy.

The one channel of communication open between Moscow and Cairo was the growing trade between the two countries, stimulated by extensive Soviet imports of Egyptian cotton. Since the Egyptian economy was largely dependent on cotton exports, which were increasingly threatened by American competition, the maintenance of the Soviet market was a major Egyptian interest. In 1926 a branch of the Soviet–Turkish mixed trading company Russo-Tyurk, itself a subsidiary of Arcos in London,[71] was set up in Alexandria to foster Soviet–Egyptian trade; and in the autumn of that year the Russian-Eastern Chamber of Commerce organized the shipment of consignments of sugar, timber, matches, flour and soap for sale on the Egyptian market.[72] Since Soviet purchases of Egyptian cotton continued to be negotiated on the British market, fears arose in Cairo that they might be affected by the rupture of Anglo-Soviet relations in May 1927; and voices began to be raised in favour of more direct trading relations with the Soviet Union.[73] In June 1927 the Egyptian minister in Ankara, himself a cotton merchant, made an anxious enquiry of his Soviet colleague about the future level of Soviet purchases, and the forms in which direct Soviet–Egyptian trade might be organized.[74] One minor concession

[70] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 651–652.

[71] See p. 669 above.

[72] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, ix (1964), 319; Soviet trade with other Arab countries was also conducted through Russo–Tyurk (*ibid.* ix, 549–550).

[73] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, x (1965), 640, note 62.

[74] *Ibid.* x, 315, 316.

secured from the Egyptian Government was the admission to Egypt of a representative of Tekstilimport as purchasing agent for Egyptian cotton.[75] But the Soviet Government was now seriously preoccupied by the passive balance of Soviet trade with eastern countries.[76] In February 1928, the Russian-Eastern Chamber of Commerce sent to the Egyptian Chamber of Commerce an account of the trade between the two countries in the year 1926–1927, which put Soviet exports to Egypt at 5·8 million rubles (including oil to the value of 4·2 millions), and Soviet imports from Egypt at 20·8 millions (consisting exclusively of Egyptian cotton); the moral was drawn that the further development of trade required "an improvement in the balance of trade ... and a covering of Egyptian exports with imports from the USSR".[77] The Egyptian minister at Ankara continued to busy himself with the establishment of "normal economic relations" between the two countries, but thought that the Egyptian Government was restrained by "fear of complicating its relations with Great Britain".[78] Soviet complaints of the high Egyptian customs tariff on tobacco, which was a bar to imports of Soviet tobacco, had no effect.[79]

In 1928, with more radical policies gaining ground in Moscow, the time seemed to have come to arouse the Egyptian workers from their enforced quiescence. The fourth congress of Profintern in March 1928 received the greetings of "revolutionary Egyptian trade unions", which recorded their protest against "foreign conquerors and native exploiters".[80] An article in the journal of Comintern denounced both the Wafd and the whole Egyptian national movement as subservient to Great Britain; the Wafd was said to control the trade union movement, but to have no mass following. The writer exhorted Egyptian communists to unmask the Wafd in the same way as Turkish communists unmasked Kemal.[81] Egypt was not represented at the sixth congress of Comintern in July 1928; so far as is known, no effective communist

[75] *Ibid.* xi (1966), 403.

[76] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 636–637.

[77] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, xi (1966), 114–115.

[78] *Ibid.* xi, 341.

[79] *Ibid.* xi, 498.

[80] *Protokoll über den Vierten Kongress der Roten Gewerkschaftsinternationale* (n.d.), p. 113.

[81] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 23–24 (149–150), 1928, pp. 107–108.

party existed in Egypt at that time. But a Comintern spokesman, Vasiliev, with the Chinese and Indian precedents well in mind, made a brave attempt in the debate on colonial countries to fit Egypt into the current Left pattern. Premising that a "weak" Egyptian party needed help from Comintern to arrive at a correct policy, he asserted that "the whole ruling *élite* of the Wafd" had "coalesced personally with the existing régime ... of political and economic exploitation by British imperialism". He rejected the idea that the "worker–peasant masses" could effect "a radical democratization of the Wafd" or even "found a new Left Wafd" (an echo of controversies about Kuomintang). Egyptian communists should "concentrate a decisive blow" on the Wafd, as "an organ of betrayal of the national movement and of compromise with British imperialism".[82] Egypt rated a brief paragraph in the theses adopted at the end of the debate, which observed that "the greatest danger for the trade union movement" was its "domination by bourgeois nationalists" (the Wafd was not named); the Egyptian Communist Party, still described as "very weak", was urged to strengthen its work not only among urban workers, but among agricultural workers and peasants.[83] So long as British power in Egypt was unshaken, the door was effectively barred against communism or Soviet intrusion.

In Syria and Lebanon French rule was strong enough to preclude any effective form of communist or Soviet activity, though revolts in Syria against the French administration were endemic throughout the period. In August 1926 a protest against French atrocities in Syria was issued in the name of "the central committee of the communist party of Syria and Palestine";[84] this sug-

[82] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kommunisticheskogo Internatsionala* (1929), iv, 256, 260.

[83] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), p. 864; a note in *Programmnye Dokumenty Kommunisticheskikh Partii Vostoka* (1934), p. 159, referred to "worthless elements" in the leadership of the party, who were expelled in 1931.

[84] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 109, August 27, 1926, p. 1826; two years later the same joint organ addressed letters of protest to the Egyptian Government and to the Wafd against violent measures of repression applied under "the dictatorship of British bayonets" (*ibid.* No. 83, August 10, 1928, pp. 1517–1518), and in the following year called for an anti-British boycott throughout the Arab world in response to high-handed British measures in Iraq (*ibid.* No. 15, February 15, 1929, p. 294).

gested that the Syrian Communist Party, alleged to have existed since 1925,[85] functioned as a section of the slightly less nebulous Palestinian party. A Comintern report of 1928 spoke of a Syrian party and youth organization, and of a party newspaper, promptly suppressed, but lacked any convincing detail.[86] Two Syrian delegates received voting mandates at the sixth congress of Comintern in July 1928[87] but neither spoke in the debates; and the only perfunctory mention of Syria at the congress occurred in general reviews by Haider, a Palestinian delegate, of the situation in the Arab world, in which he protested against the neglect by Comintern and by the League against Imperialism of Middle Eastern problems.[88]

The establishment of a Jewish National Home under British mandate in Palestine made the territory an anomalous *enclave* in the Arab world, which was being transformed by the constant pressure of Jewish immigration. The Palestinian Communist Party[89] suffered less from the legal ban on its activities, which was not very strictly enforced, than from its inability to formulate a coherent policy. It could denounce the British mandate as a glaring example of British imperialism. But it was deprived of any positive appeal to the driving-force of communism throughout the rest of the colonial world — the rising tide of native nationalism. It was committed to unite Jewish and Arab workers in the same party. But common Jewish and Arab objections to the British mandate differed fundamentally; the national aspirations of Jews and Arabs could not be reconciled in a single programme. The resolution of an enlarged central committee of the Palestinian party in September 1926 exhibited the ambiguities and evasions which

[85] See *Socialism in One Coutry, 1924–1926*. Vol. 3, p. 654; later, the Palestinian section of the party, persecuted by the "British–Zionist authorities", was said to have transferred its activity to Syria, where it "collaborated in the organization of the Syrian communist group" (*Ein Jahr Arbeit und Kampf* (1926), p. 359).

[86] *Die Komintern vor dem 6. Weltkongress* (1928), p. 443.

[87] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929) v, 155; according to *Programmnye Dokumenty Kommunisticheskikh Partii Vostoka* (1934), p. 159, the Syrian party was admitted to Comintern in 1928, but did not appear "openly . . . in the political arena" till 1930.

[88] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), i, 282–285, iv, 144–148.

[89] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 653.

beset the party line. Denunciation of the rôle of the imperialist Powers, and especially of British imperialism, in the Arab world, and praise of Arab nationalism, were followed by two sections addressed respectively to the Arabs and to "the European population" of Palestine. The Arabs were exhorted to demand the annulment of the mandate and the establishment of a "democratic régime", and assured that the prime need was "the creation of a healthy revolutionary group" in the national movement. The final section attributed to the weakness of the communist party the fact "that disillusioned petty bourgeois elements do not join the revolutionary democratic movement, and that workers who have freed themselves from Zionist illusions have no link with the revolutionary workers' movement". Finally, "Jewish intellectuals" (the only use of the word "Jew" in the resolution) were urged to support "the growing tendency towards *rapprochement* with the Arab population".[90] A representative of the Jewish Workers' Party (Poale Zion) delivered a speech at the Brussels congress of the League against Imperialism, and presented a long resolution, which declared that the struggle against imperialism demanded an increase in the worker population of Palestine, to be achieved "by a close fusion of the masses of Jewish and Arab workers, and intensive immigration of Jewish workers".[91] This ingenious attempt to fit Zionist objectives into a proletarian framework can have made little appeal to the Arabs.

The trade unions seemed the least unpromising field for communist work; and attempts continued to penetrate the Histadruth, the Zionist trade union federation affiliated to IFTU.[92] Some members of the British National Minority Movement travelled to Palestine, and helped to organize a similar movement in the Histadruth. One difference between majority and minority was said to be that, whereas the unions affiliated to IFTU wanted separate Jewish and Arab unions "in order to drive a wedge between the Jewish and Arab proletariat", the minority called for "international unions".[93] This was the period of the campaign waged by Profintern for trade union unity; and the resolution of the Palestinian Communist Party of September 1926 contained a proviso

[90] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 118, September 24, 1926, pp. 2017–2018.

[91] *Das Flammenzeichen vom Palais Egmont* (1927), pp. 85–87, 257–260.

[92] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 653.

[93] *Ein Jahr Arbeit und Kampf* (1926), pp. 359–360.

that the campaign against unemployment was to be "turned into a struggle against the government, not against the workers' organization (Histadruth)".[94] But the call for unity, like similar gestures in Europe, was no more than a propaganda device. The minority unions affiliated to Profintern and excluded from the Histadruth, following tactics employed in Europe, summoned a "unity congress", which purported to seek the reunification of the trade union movement. The congress, which mustered 80 delegates, including 25 Arabs, met on December 17–19, 1926, and received messages of greeting from the general council of the British Trade Union Congress, from the Anglo-Russian committee and from the executive bureau of Profintern; an approach to IFTU had predictably provoked a hostile answer. The congress passed resolutions on the conventional topics, including a protest against the policy of boycott and exclusion pursued by the Histadruth.[95] The Histadruth congress which sat at Tel-Aviv from July 5 to 22, 1927, was, according to a communist reporter, more concerned with the Zionist cause than with the interests of the workers, and attacked communists and their supporters as "traitors" and "enemies of the people". It did, however, for the first time admit some Arab delegates as "guests", and passed resolutions favouring the organization of Arab workers in trade unions. It also welcomed the Russian revolution, and Soviet plans for the settlement of Jews on the land.[96] But later in the year the Histadruth press was said to have taken up the cause of "persecuted counter-revolutionaries" in the Soviet Union.[97] Communist infiltration into "reformist" trade unions was no more likely to succeed in Palestine than in Europe.

Meanwhile, the illusion that British policy was changing in a sense favourable to the Arabs[98] was short-lived. Early in 1927 a local communist commentator observed that British imperialism was beginning to interest itself in "the Zionist undertaking", and

[94] For this resolution see p. 688, note 90 above; for the Profintern campaign see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 566–581.

[95] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 5, January 11, 1927, p. 108.

[96] *Ibid.* No. 80, August 9, 1927, pp. 1740–1741.

[97] *Ibid.* No. 127, December 30, 1927, p. 2966.

[98] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 653–654; by 1928 it was assumed in Moscow that "the agents of British imperialism are working by all means to disrupt the Arab national movement" (*Die Komintern vor dem 6. Weltkongress* (1928), p. 445).

that the Zionist organization was turning to "American philanthropists".[99] The pressures of unemployment and immigration, and the rising tide of Zionist aspirations, were responsible for a mounting tension in Palestine in 1928. In Moscow it was hopefully believed that "the Jewish workers, who have turned in disillusionment away from Zionism, are becoming more and more radical".[100] Increased intransigence on the part of the Palestinian communists may have been stimulated by the turn to the Left in Comintern policy. In February 1928 police action in Jerusalem was reported against members of the communist party and of MOPR.[101] In the May 1 demonstrations the party distributed leaflets in Arabic, Jewish (i.e. Yiddish) and Old Jewish (i.e. Hebrew); and three communists were arrested.[102] Haider, the single Palestine delegate to the sixth congress of Comintern in July 1928, rather oddly called the régime in Palestine "a strong reformist organization of European imperialism which has created a powerful base by utilizing the Zionist movement". But he avoided the specific problems of Zionism altogether.[103] An article published during the congress boasted of the existence in Palestine of "a social revolutionary workers' movement", including "a solid party", supported by "a healthy youth organization and other auxiliary organizations such as sections of Profintern, MOPR etc."[104] But, though Palestine, unlike the surrounding Arab countries, did possess an embryonic communist organization, mainly of European origin, these claims were vastly exaggerated.

A third congress of the Palestinian Communist Party met secretly on December 1–2, 1928, with 24 delegates. It denounced the "police terror" against communist trade unions and MOPR, attacked "the Fascist trade union organization Histadruth", approved the resolutions of the sixth congress of Comintern (whose vocabulary it lavishly borrowed), and appointed a "party council"

[99] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 33, March 25, 1927, p. 713; these correct observations were combined with some fanciful speculations.

[100] *Die Komintern vor dem 6. Weltkongress* (1928), p. 446.

[101] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 21, February 28, 1928, pp. 427–428; MOPR had more than a thousand members in Palestine in 1928 (*Die Komintern vor dem 6. Weltkongress* (1928), p. 448).

[102] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 46, May 15, 1928, pp. 823–824, No. 71, July 24, 1928, pp. 1285–1286.

[103] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 148; for Haider's speeches see p. 687 above.

[104] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 83, August 10, 1928, p. 1517.

to reinforce the central committee and "to strengthen the ranks of the communist party".[105] But this tiny party with its European traditions did not escape the consequences of the rift in Comintern. In the spring of 1929 a session of the party central committee had to deal with a Right deviation in its own ranks. The dissentients objected to the slogan of "a workers' and peasants' government" put forward in a directive of IKKI at the time of the party congress in December 1928, and wished to substitute "a democratic republic" as more likely to rally the support of the petty bourgeoisie. This attitude was said to conceal "an under-estimate of the power of the proletariat", "defeatist moods" and opposition to "the sharpening of the class struggle"; much of the language was borrowed from the campaign against Bukharin and the Right deviation in Moscow. The resolution of the committee ruled out "a peace with the Right deviation", and called on the party to undertake "a rapid liquidation of the Rightists".[106]

The opportunity of establishing a link between deviations in this obscure and remote communist party and deviations in Moscow doubtless prompted a unique gesture of concern in Comintern for the Palestinian party. In August 1929 Šmeral arrived in Jerusalem as the emissary of Comintern, conferred in conditions of secrecy with the party leaders, and was introduced to some Arab nationalists. His enquiries were, however, interrupted by serious Arab riots against the Jewish population, duly supressed by the British authorities. This outbreak of racial violence typified the dilemma which constantly confronted the policies of Comintern and of the Palestine Communist Party. The Arab struggle for national liberation from British imperialism and Jewish exploitation drew a full measure of inspiration and support from communist doctrine and from the pronouncements of Comintern. But endorsement of anti-Jewish violence by a party whose leaders were all Jews could scarcely be expected. Šmeral is said to have given his approval to a resolution of the party central committee urging participation in the defence of Jewish areas, and himself to have added an amendment emphasizing "the harmful and devastating influence of the clergy on the Arab nationalist movement", and declaring that "no agreement and no common front could be adopted by the Palestinian Communist Party with the Mufti of

[105] *Ibid.* No. 1, January 4, 1929, pp. 23–24.
[106] *Ibid.* No. 48, June 4, 1929, pp. 1159–1160.

Jerusalem and his followers". Šmeral then thankfully abandoned an intractable problem and returned to Moscow.[107]

The more remote territories of the Hejaz and the Yemen were exempt from any form of communist propaganda or influence. But in both a faint trickle of Soviet activity was discernible. In the Hejaz one cause of Hussein's downfall was thought to have been his subservience to Great Britain. Mutual mistrust between Great Britain and his conqueror and successor, Ibn Saud, paved the way for Soviet overtures; and an agreement for mutual recognition between the Soviet Government and Ibn Saud's sultanate had been achieved in February 1926.[108] Efforts continued intermittently to strengthen the tenuous thread of Soviet relations with the Hejaz. British intelligence sources in India reported the presence of a Soviet representative in Jiddah in December 1926 with an offer of "aeroplanes and guns ... to make trouble with the British";[109] and at the same moment a Turkish delegate to the seventh IKKI described the Hejaz as "the centre round which, in the immediate future, the national liberation movement of the Muslim peoples will be concentrated".[110] In the spring of 1927, Ibn Saud substituted the royal title for his previous designation as sultan of Nejd, and was hailed as "King of the Hejaz, Nejd and Associated Territories"; this won him fulsome congratulations from the Soviet Government.[111] The encouragement of trade was one of his major preoccupations.[112] Soviet exports to the Hejaz were organized through the Soviet–Turkish company Russo-Tyurk; and an exhibition of Soviet products was arranged in the Soviet consulate in Jiddah in June 1927.[113] But British policy in the area was also

[107] Y. Berger-Barzilai, *The Tragedy of the Soviet Revolution* (in Hebrew) (Tel Aviv, 1968), pp. 93–98. The author was in Moscow as representative of the Palestinian party earlier in 1929; but the statement in M. Rodinson, *Marxisme et le Monde Musulman* (1972), p. 429, that he had a personal interview with Stalin is unconfirmed.

[108] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 655.

[109] Government of India, *Communism in India, 1924–1927* (1927), p. 200.

[110] *Puti Mirovoi Revolyutsii* (1927), i, 277.

[111] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, x (1965), 135–136, 163, 195–196.

[112] According to an article in *Novyi Vostok*, xxiii–xxiv (1928), pp. 278–279, bourgeois traders were "the most important factor in the social-economic evolution of the Hejaz and support of Ibn Saud".

[113] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, x (1965), 316.

flexible. A treaty of friendship between Great Britain and the new kingdom had been signed on May 20, 1927; and Ibn Saud, alternately harassed and cajoled by Great Britain, was not disposed to offer further provocation by empty demonstrations of friendship for the Soviet Union,[114] though flattering gestures accompanied the arrival of a new Soviet representative in Jiddah on October 3, 1928.[115]

Meanwhile the large desert territory of the Imam of the Yemen in south-western Arabia owed some vestige of independence to two factors: a protracted frontier dispute with the British Protectorate of Aden on its southern border, and some support from Italy, whose colony of Eritrea faced the Yemen across the Red Sea, and which concluded a treaty of friendship and trade with the Imam on September 2, 1926. The first Soviet attempt to establish contact with the Yemen dated from the spring of 1928. Early in that year an enquiry was received in Moscow from the Imam through the Turkish Government about ways and means of entering into trade relations with the Soviet Union.[116] In May 1928 Astakhov, an official of Narkomindel, was despatched to the Yemen with a shipload of merchandise and a letter from Chicherin to the Imam, containing greetings and a request that he should explain to Astakhov his "wishes in regard to trade and other questions".[117] So successful was Astakhov's mission that, when the Imam on July 12, 1928, wrote a fulsome reply to Chicherin's letter, he had already signed the draft of a treaty of friendship and trade with the Soviet Union.[118] After a further exchange of correspondence, the treaty, which was little more than a declaration by the parties of an intention to maintain relations and trade with each other, was signed in Sana on November 1, 1928.[119] Early in 1929 the Yemeni Government asked for Soviet aid in establishing relations with Germany, which had already supplied two aeroplanes flown by German pilots to the Yemen. Krestinsky was instructed to pass on this request in Berlin, and to hint that the Soviet Government would also be interested in the recognition by

[114] *Ibid.* xi (1966), 322.
[115] *Ibid.* xi, 723, note 101.
[116] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, xi (1966), 131.
[117] *Ibid.* xi, 307–308; *Izvestiya*, January 27, 1929. The ship also carried a consignment of goods for the Hejaz.
[118] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, xi (1966), 308.
[119] *Ibid.* xi, 518–523, 560–562.

Germany of the Hejaz.[120] These mild diplomatic excursions amounted at this time to no more than faint attempts to drive a wedge into the closed circle of British influence in the area.

(*d*) *Afghanistan*

Soviet–Afghan relations were from the outset smooth and uncomplicated, being based on an absence of points of friction, and a common mistrust of British designs.[121] Immediately after the conclusion of the Soviet–Turkish treaty of December 17, 1925, Chicherin thought of Afghanistan and Persia as two countries with which similar pacts of neutrality and non-aggression might be negotiated.[122] A draft conforming closely to the lines of the Soviet–Turkish treaty was presented to the Afghan Government on July 26, 1926; and, after a few modifications apparently designed to make the text more explicit, the treaty was signed in Kabul on August 31, 1926.[123] A few days later a draft trade treaty was submitted to the Afghan Government.[124] The uneventful course of relations between the two countries was marked by conventional pronouncements of friendship, and was doubtless assisted by the absence of any communist party or communist movement in Afghanistan.[125] In the summer of 1927 the Afghan Minister for Foreign Affairs declared that the USSR could "in a certain respect" be numbered with those eastern countries whose cooperation was essential for their common welfare and for the cause of peace in Asia; and the Soviet representative in Kabul, in a press interview referring to the Soviet breach with Great Britain, observed that "the intensified activity of British imperialism inevitably serves as a stimulus to the further strengthening of friendly relations between Afghanistan and the USSR".[126] In November 1927 a detailed agreement was concluded for the establishment by

[120] *Ibid.* xii (1967), 61–62, 82–83.

[121] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 655–657.

[122] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, ix (1964), 7–8.

[123] *Ibid.* ix, 334–336, 406–410.

[124] *Ibid.* ix, 414.

[125] Indian intelligence sources, though constantly apprehensive of Soviet propaganda and pressure in Afghanistan, recorded an alleged resolution of the eastern section of IKKI in August 1926 that "revolutionary and party work in the ordinary sense" were "out of place" in that country (Government of India, *Communism in India, 1927–1935* (1935), p. 33).

[126] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, x (1965), 374.

the two governments from January 1, 1928, of an air line with regular fortnightly flights between Kabul and Tashkent.[127]

Encouraged perhaps by Soviet support, King Amanullah now conceived an ambition to extricate his country from its traditional backwardness and isolation. A symptom of this design was a project, first mooted in the autumn of 1927, to visit the principal capitals of Europe. Apprised of the plan, the Soviet Government issued a warm invitation to visit the Soviet Union, which was promptly accepted.[128] The journey began early in 1928 and, after an extended tour of western Europe, brought Amanullah to Moscow on May 3, 1928. His impending arrival had been well advertised in the press.[129] *Izvestiya* published his photograph and a short biography; *Pravda* explained that the Soviet Union and Afghanistan, in spite of their different stages of development, "stand shoulder to shoulder against European imperialism". Amanullah's stay in the Soviet Union attracted much favourable publicity; a descriptive article in *Izvestiya* of May 9, 1928, depicted Afghanistan as "a national-progressive state". Amanullah witnessed military parades in Moscow and Leningrad and a naval exercise in the Black Sea, and visited a tea plantation in Transcaucasia and a rubber factory; time prevented the inclusion of the electricity generating stations Volkhovstroi and Dneprostroi in the programme.[130] Diplomatic conversations revolved round three main desiderata of the Afghan Government. The first was the conclusion of a trade treaty, negotiations for which had made no progress, mainly owing to the unwillingness of the Soviet Government to accord a right of free transit of goods across Soviet territory between European and Asian countries. The second was the construction of a road directly linking Kabul with Soviet territory. The Soviet Government enthusiastically favoured all such projects; but the scarcity of resources, in machinery and in technical skills, made them difficult to execute. The third was the conclusion of a four-Power pact between the USSR, Afghanistan, Turkey and Persia on the lines of the bilateral pacts already con-

[127] *Ibid.* x, 501–504; the project does not appear to have been realized (see p. 696 below).

[128] *Dokumenty Vneshei Politiki SSSR*, x (1965), 466, 471.

[129] *Izvestiya*, April 21, 1928; *Pravda* April 29, 1928; see also *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917–1923*, Vol. 3, p. 237, note 1. For the greetings exchanged on his arrival see *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, xi (1966), 293–294.

[130] *Ibid.* x, 387.

cluded between the USSR and Turkey, the USSR and Afghanistan, and Turkey and Afghanistan. The Soviet Government would have preferred to stick to bilateral pacts, but saw no objection in principle to a four-Power pact provided no attempt was made to turn it into a guarantee pact: here everything obviously depended on the attitude of the other states concerned.[131] When on May 18, 1928, Amanullah and his suite departed on their homeward journey through Turkey and Persia,[132] much good-will had been expressed, but no decisions recorded. Nothing changed in the next few months. In October 1928 discussions in Kabul on the trade treaty were still in suspense; a promise was given to initiate 15 Afghan trainees into the processes of oil extraction at Baku; and the agreement to establish an air line between Kabul and Tashkent was renewed for a further year.[133]

Unfortunately Amanullah's ambitions to make contact with the modern world, or perhaps his long absence in Europe, had antagonized some of the tribal chiefs who were still a powerful element in the Afghan community. A tribal rising in November 1928 was attributed at first to the opening of new schools, and later to British instigation; rumour even conjured up a vision of Colonel Lawrence present in person to direct this "blow against progressive Afghanistan".[134] When Chamberlain declared that "His Majesty's Government have carefully refrained from any interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan", *Pravda* described this assurance as "a curiosity".[135] Official claims of the Afghan Government that the situation was well in hand were premature. On January 15, 1929, the insurgents took Kabul, drove out Amanullah (who fled to India), and installed their leader Habibullah as ruler with the title of emir. Most of the foreign diplomatic missions left Kabul, fearing civil war and disorder. The

[131] *Ibid.* xi, 302–307, 336–337; for the pact between Turkey and Afghanistan see p. 679 above.

[132] For Amanullah's departure see *Dokumenty Vneshei Politiki SSSR*, xi (1966), 320–321.

[133] *Ibid.* xi, 543, 558, 590, 747, note 201.

[134] *Ibid.* xi, 591–592, 611; *Izvestiya*, December 20, 1928; *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 142, December 21, 1928, pp. 2833–2834. Raskolnikov, a former Soviet *polpred* in Kabul, attributed Amanullah's downfall to his failure to adopt a programme of agrarian reform (*ibid.* No. 11, February 5, 1929, pp. 198–200).

[135] *House of Commons: Fifth Series*, ccxxiv, 571–572; *Pravda*, January 30, 1929.

Soviet mission rather uncomfortably remained, an object of suspicion to the new régime, with which it maintained *de facto* relations, while withholding formal recognition.[136] At first sight it seemed as if the whole edifice of Soviet diplomacy which had worked steadily for ten years to expand Soviet influence in Afghanistan through support of the modernizing policies of Amanullah, had crumbled in ruins. In the event, the material and moral support accorded to Afghanistan in these years was not entirely lost, even under subsequent régimes. Afghanistan remained somewhat uncertainly within the Soviet orbit, though this may have been due rather to the decline of the formerly predominant British power than to any positive Soviet intervention.

[136] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, xii, (1967) 43–44, 93–94.

CHAPTER 84

REVOLUTIONARY CHINA: I THE FLOWING TIDE

(*a*) *The Northern Expedition*

THE "northern expedition" launched by Chiang Kai-shek from his base in Canton early in July 1926 was a dramatic turning-point in Sino-Soviet relations, and a prelude to a far-ranging controversy about the significance of the Chinese revolution, and the attitudes towards it to be adopted in Moscow. Lenin in 1908 had discerned in China "a movement against mediaevalism" and "a 'new spirit' and 'European trends'". In July 1912 he described China as a "semi-feudal country", where feudalism was still the main source of oppression and exploitation; but he hailed Sun Yat-sen as "a Russian *narodnik*", and praised the amalgam of "his progressive, fighting, revolutionary programme of agrarian transformations, and his would-be socialist theory".[1] The peoples of the east, he declared in 1919, were "not workers who have passed through the school of capitalist factories and workshops, but typical representatives of the toiling, exploited mass of peasants suffering from mediaeval oppression".[2] In the following year Lenin told the second congress of Comintern that communist parties in the backward countries could not pursue a communist line "without maintaining definite relations with the peasant movement, without supporting it in action"; and, in the debate with Roy, he agreed to speak of support for "national-revolutionary" rather than "bourgeois-democratic" movements, explaining that bourgeois movements for national liberation would be supported only if they were genuinely revolutionary.[3] Finally, towards the end of his life, Lenin proclaimed that in India and China "the year 1905 draws inexorably and ever more rapidly nearer, with this substantial and huge difference that in 1905 the revolution in Russia could pass by in isolation ..., but the revolu-

[1] Lenin, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, xvii, 179, xxi, 400–406; for Lenin's views on feudalism in China see Note E, p. 1023 below.

[2] Lenin, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, xxxix, 329.

[3] *Ibid.* xli, 243; for this debate see *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917–1923*, Vol. 3, pp. 252–255.

tions which are growing in India and China are being drawn, and have been drawn, into the revolutionary struggle, the revolutionary movement, the international revolution".[4]

These pronouncements, made at different times, in different contexts and for different purposes, left a confused picture. Every Bolshevik accepted as valid the analogy drawn by Lenin between the Russian and Chinese revolutions, though with reservations of differing strength about the pecularities of the Chinese situation. But which Russian revolution was to serve as the exemplar? Here opinions were sharply divided. Those who spoke in terms of 1905 postulated a revolutionary national bourgeoisie confronted by surviving elements of an old feudal society in league with foreign imperialists, and neglected, or postponed to a remoter future, the rift between the national bourgeoisie and the workers and peasants. This analysis implied a long-term and gradualist view; the revolution was to advance by stages. Those who spoke in terms of 1917 assumed that the national bourgeoisie had already absorbed what was left of the feudal order, and was already in open or tacit collusion with the imperialists; the one remaining revolutionary force consisted of the workers and peasants. In Soviet writings it had become stereotyped procedure to distinguish between three views of the Russian revolution: the Menshevik view, which set a sharp dividing line, and predicated an interval of time between the two stages, so that the bourgeois-democratic revolution must be completed before the proletarian or socialist revolution could be initiated; the Bolshevik view of a bourgeois-democratic revolution evolving, through a democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants, into a socialist revolution under the leadership of the proletariat; and Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution, which foresaw an immediate transition, through the proclamation of Soviets, from the bourgeois-democratic to the proletarian revolution, and ignored the intermediate stage of the dictatorship of workers and peasants.[5] The relation between the stages proved as fruitful a source of controversy in the Chinese as in the Russian revolution. This divergence also involved a difference of attitude towards the rôle of the peasantry. The agrarian question was, Lenin noted in 1907, basic to the Russian revolution of 1905; it

[4] Lenin, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, xlv, 174.

[5] For these controversies see *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917–1923*, Vol. 1, pp. 38–43, 52–62.

constituted "the national peculiarity of that revolution".[6] In the 1917 revolution, the peasantry was the auxiliary of the proletariat.

Controversies about the Chinese revolution, like other Soviet controversies, were often conducted in scholastic terms which thinly veiled current issues of policy. The view which sharply differentiated the two stages, equated the present stage of the Chinese revolution with the Russian revolution of 1905, and gave unconditional priority to the bourgeois-democratic revolution, was represented in the policy consistently pursued by all the Soviet advisers in China — notably by Borodin, Voitinsky and Bubnov — with full support from Comintern, of subordinating the nascent CCP to Kuomintang, and of enforcing this subordination on sometimes recalcitrant CCP leaders. Until the bourgeois-national revolution had achieved its goal, to support Kuomintang was the primary duty of the party. Total subordination of the CCP to Kuomintang, however, though never directly attacked, caused some uneasiness in Comintern. The official line, as it emerged in the middle nineteen-twenties, was in effect an attempt to balance between unconditional insistence on either extreme. It recognized the two stages, continued to assert that the Chinese revolution was still in its bourgeois-democratic stage, and proclaimed unreserved support for the national revolution, while going as far as it dared to encourage and endorse workers' and peasants' demands which could be realized only in the second stage. The resolution of IKKI of January 12, 1923, adopted on the eve of Joffe's decisive negotiations with Sun Yat-sen, declared that "the central task for China is the national revolution against the imperialists and against their feudal agents within the country"; and the IKKI directive to the CCP of May 24, 1923, in repeating this phrase, added that the formation of an anti-imperialist front must be "accompanied by an agrarian revolution of the peasantry against the survivals of feudalism", and called for "unconditional support of the workers' movement".[7] A working policy for the present which weighed harshly on the small band of Chinese communists was mitigated by the proclamation of a policy for the future which would, however, become practical only if and when the first policy was carried to a successful conclusion.

[6] Lenin, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, xvi, 403,

[7] *Strategiya i Taktika Kominterna*, ed. G. Kara-Murza and P. Mif (1934), pp. 112, 114–116.

The year 1924 saw the peak of Borodin's success in forging close links between the Chinese national revolution represented by Kuomintang and the Soviet authorities, with the CCP as an often reluctant partner — and instrument — of the alliance. The impatience of the CCP leaders was manifested at the fourth party congress held at Canton in the absence of Borodin in January 1925.[8] The congress denounced "the big commercial comprador bourgeoisie and the industrial bourgeoisie" as unwilling to "collaborate with the lower classes" in the national-revolutionary movement, and concluded that "the real drive of the national-democratic movement in China depends on the simultaneous participation in it of workers, peasants and urban petty and medium bourgeoisie".[9] This appears to have been the first frank diagnosis of a fundamental rift in the Chinese bourgeoisie, and by implication in the ranks of Kuomintang. Two months later the death of Sun Yat-sen was followed by an open split between Right and Left factions, hitherto held together by the leader's personality and prestige; and the shootings in Shanghai in May 1925 provoked waves of unrest among both workers and peasants which lasted throughout the summer.[10]

These events were not allowed to affect the policy pursued by Borodin in Canton of close cooperation with Kuomintang, in which Chiang Kai-shek soon acquired a dominant position. But in Comintern they inspired, not indeed a change of policy — it was assumed that the Right in Kuomintang was no more than a minority faction — but an attempt to readjust theory to meet a changing situation. Voitinsky, back in Moscow from China, wrote an article in the Comintern journal in which he foresaw the development of "a purely bourgeois wing solidly linked with anti-national elements", and advocated concessions to the Left in order to encourage "a turn to the Left in the government towards a closer *rapprochement* with the popular masses" and a broader recognition of their interests.[11] A fortnight later, on the death of Sun Yat-sen, he looked forward to a break-away from Kuomintang of "elements socially hostile to the working population of China, ... elements of the Chinese bourgeoisie already conscious

[8] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 715–716.

[9] Quoted in *Komintern i Vostok* (1969), pp. 277–278, from a collection of the resolutions which has not been available.

[10] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 719–724.

[11] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 3 (40), 1925, pp. 154–158.

of their class interests", and the transformation of Kuomintang into "a mass people's party", representing the interests "of the working strata and of the peasantry" as well as "of the petty bourgeoisie and the urban poor".[12] Finally Voitinsky in an article on the fifth IKKI, specifically referring to India and China, declared that "the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat in the general struggle for liberation ... begins to be placed on the agenda by the whole recent course of events in these countries". But that the invocation of the proletariat was an act of obeisance to Marxist theory, and not a call for a change in policy, was shown by a carefully phrased reservation:

> The Communist Party of China, which is the party of the industrial proletariat, will nevertheless realize the hegemony of the proletariat not directly, as in purely capitalist countries, and not even as in revolutionary Russia, but through the medium of a national-revolutionary party, resting on the masses of the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie and the radical intelligentsia.[13]

The policy of total support for Kuomintang was not modified. But criticism was met by re-classifying Kuomintang, no longer as a bourgeois, but as a predominantly petty bourgeois party.

These pronouncements were made at a time when Stalin was cautiously beginning to assert his authority in international affairs. In his unpublished letter to Manuilsky of July 31, 1924, referring to "colonies such as India", he had spoken of "the hegemony of the proletariat in the struggle for liberation" and of the need to "break up the conciliationist national bourgeoisie",[14] thus anticipating some of Voitinsky's terminology. In a report to the Moscow party organization on May 9, 1925, after the fourteenth party conference, he noted that in some colonial and dependent countries ("India, Egypt etc.", China not being named), "there are growing, and will grow, certain strata of the national bourgeoisie, the richest and most powerful, which, fearing a revolution in their country more than imperialism, will prefer a deal with imperialism to the cause of the liberation of their country from imperialism". Stalin's first venture into the Chinese maze occurred in a some-

[12] *Bol'shevik*, No. 5–6, March 31, 1925, pp. 46–52.
[13] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 4 (41), 1925, pp. 64–65.
[14] For this letter see p. 653, note 27 above.
[15] Stalin, *Sochineniya*, vii, 107.

what confused passage of his address on May 18, 1925, to the Communist University of Toilers of the East:

> Where the national movement has already split into revolutionary and conciliationist parties, but where the conciliationist section of the bourgeoisie cannot yet come to terms with imperialism, communists can no longer take as their goal the formation of a united national front against imperialism.

But this did not mean, as it might at first sight have appeared to mean, that the united front with Kuomintang was obsolete. For in the following sentences Stalin looked forward to a dual rôle of Kuomintang as "a single party, a worker-peasant party", forming a bloc ("a two-sided party") consisting of a communist party (the CCP) and "a revolutionary petty bourgeois party" (evidently Kuomintang itself). And he concluded trenchantly that "exposure of the ambiguity and inconsistency of the national bourgeoisie and a decisive struggle against imperialism are the tasks of this bloc".[16] The united front was preserved by tacitly excluding the "conciliationist" big bourgeoisie from Kuomintang, and by defining Kuomintang in a new way. But, while workers' and peasants' risings in the summer of 1925 intensified the hostility of the Kuomintang Right to the communist alliance, and prepared the way for an open rift in the ranks of Kuomintang, nobody in Moscow was in a hurry to pursue Stalin's theoretical musings. It was not till March 1926 that the sixth IKKI, in a resolution on the Chinese question, described Kuomintang as "a revolutionary bloc of workers, peasants, intelligentsia and urban democracy", adding that "some strata of the Chinese big bourgeoisie, which had been temporarily grouped round the Kuomintang party, have now moved away from it".[17] But none of these reservations affected the policy of support for Kuomintang as a whole, which survived Chiang's *coup* of March 20, 1926, and the expulsion of leading Russian military advisers.[18]

[16] Stalin, *Sochineniya*, vii, 146–147; for this speech see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 718. That the passage afterwards caused some embarrassment is shown by the omission from the text in the collected edition of the name Kuomintang which identified the hypothetical "worker-peasant party" in the original text in *Pravda*, and by Stalin's own explanation two years later that his reference to Kuomintang was intended to indicate a *type* of "oppressed countries of the east", not an actual description of Kuomintang at the time (Stalin, *Sochineniya*, ix, 246).

[17] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 765–766.

[18] For this see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 778–780.

In the summer of 1926, the two most powerful warlords in China, both inveterate enemies of the Soviet Union, were Chang Tso-lin in Manchuria and Wu Pei-fu, weakened by local defeats but not yet eliminated, in central China. It was their predominance, and with it the whole system of local warlords which had divided China for so many years, which Chiang Kai-shek set out to challenge in the name of a Chinese national revolution. Throughout July and August 1926 Chiang's armies marched northwards, gathering strength as they advanced, partly through individual recruitment, partly through the accession of hitherto independent military units of minor local warlords. As the event proved, Soviet observers both on the spot and in Moscow under-estimated Chiang's military strength and the support which he would draw from the population; and, fearing that the venture would end in failure, and merely provoke reprisals and further aggression by the imperialist Powers and their Chinese agents, they had vainly sought to dissuade him from it.[19] What, however, eventually proved fatal to communist hopes and Soviet ambitions was not Chiang's failure, but Chiang's success. Already through the *coup* of March 20, 1926, Chiang had unequivocally asserted the subordination of the Soviet military advisers to his will. But, much as he disliked foreign tutelage, he still needed Soviet support; and, so long as the Soviet Government, however hesitantly, allowed Borodin and the military advisers to cooperate in the grand design, he continued to make friendly gestures and to proclaim himself a champion of the Left. Blyukher, the senior Soviet military adviser, now back in China after a year's absence, accompanied Chiang on the campaign; and relations between the two men seem to have been cordial.[20] In addition to Soviet advisers attached to Chiang's

[19] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 772–778, 796; Voitinsky afterwards pretended that he had opposed the northern expedition because he thought that Chiang might use it "in order to crush the revolutionary movement in China" (*Problemy Kitaya*, iii (1930), 224) – a remarkable instance of foresight after the event.

[20] See references to Chiang's diary in *Documents on Communism, Nationalism and Soviet Advisers in China*, ed. Wilbur and How (1956), p. 375; he was the only Russian for whom Chiang expressed friendly feelings thirty years later (Chiang Kai-shek, *A Summing-Up at Seventy* (1957), pp. 51–52). For Blyukher's role in the planning of the expedition see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 772; later, the plan was said to have been "worked out and successfully realized under his leadership" (*Voprosy Istorii KPSS*, No. 11, 1964, p. 89).

staff, Soviet officers accompanied all the main fighting units.[21] It was not till the spring of 1927, when victory was secure, that Chiang could afford to dispense with Soviet aid, and to re-shape his policy on a different course.

The problems which the northern expedition were later to present to Comintern and to its leaders in Moscow were more immediately apparent to the CCP. A session of the enlarged central committee of the party, held in Shanghai from July 12 to 18, 1926, attempted, at the moment of the start of the expedition, to grapple with deep divisions within the party. The political report presented to the session in the name of the central committee, presumably by Ch'en Tu-hsiu, revealed some of the embarrassments; Chiang Kai-shek's military operations were disingenuously excused as a defensive move against the aggressions of Wu Pei-fu:

> The despatch of forces of the national government signifies nothing more than a defensive war against the anti-Red army's penetration into Hunan and Kwangtung. It does not signify a real revolutionary northern expedition.

The main emphasis in party policy was still on the struggle against foreign imperialism: "We emphasize opposition to Britain first, followed by opposition to Japan and then to the United States". In terms of class, the aim must be to "utilize the bourgeoisie" and prevent it from being drawn into the imperialist camp. In terms of the party line in Kuomintang, "we unite with the Left and force the centre to attack the reactionary Right"; this was the correct application of "our tactics of the united front". Serious shortcomings were diagnosed not only in party organization, but in the labour and peasant movements. "The labour movement has become bureaucratic and lacks mass substance", except for the Shanghai General Labour Union which was really "turning to the masses". The peasants were convicted of "the disease of a Left deviation".[22]

[21] The memoir-writers who describe the work of the Soviet advisers rarely give statistics. Estimates of 30–40 advisers attached to Feng Yü-hsiang (*Documents on Communism, Nationalism and Soviet Advisers in China*, ed. Wilbur and How (1956), p. 321; Feng's autobiography cited in J. Sheridan, *Chinese Warlord* (1966), p. 167) may be too low; the number attached to all the nationalist armies must have amounted to some hundreds.

[22] *Documents on Communism, Nationalism, and Soviet Advisers in China*, ed. Wilbur and How (1956), pp. 271–277; for the Shanghai General Labour Union see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3 (Penguin ed. 1972), pp. 741–742.

The final texts of the resolutions which emerged from this session appear never to have been published; some of them were evidently a subject of acute controversy at the session.[23] The most contentious issue was the old crux of the relations of the CCP to Kuomintang. The Russian party central committee, in session at the same moment, passed an unpublished resolution about China in which it condemned *inter alia* an "opportunist" and "capitulationist" proposal of Zinoviev and Trotsky to leave Kuomintang.[24] Voitinsky, just back from Moscow to resume his post as head of the Far Eastern bureau of Comintern in Shanghai, had come with instructions, as Ch'en long afterwards put it, "to correct our tendency to withdraw from Kuomintang". Ch'en, according to this account, pointed out that the Chinese revolution had two alternative roads to follow, that of the proletariat and that of the bourgeoisie, and that the second would "betray the revolution in the course of its development". He was content to co-operate with the bourgeoisie on condition that "it is we who should have the leading rôle". But all the Comintern representatives in Shanghai opposed this proposition so strongly that Ch'en withdrew it.[25]

Neither the negative attitude of Comintern, however, nor

[23] The texts available in translation (*Documents on Communism, Nationalism, and Soviet Advisers in China*, ed. Wilbur and How (1956), pp, 278–315) are stated to have been drafts provisionally "adopted" at the session, but remitted to the secretariat "for revision and printing"; since, however, this took longer than had been expected, the unrevised drafts were sent in the meanwhile to local party organizations. Judging from quotations in other sources (see pp. 708–709 below), some of the final texts diverged quite widely from the drafts.

[24] For this session, which was mainly concerned to condemn the opposition and to remove Zinoviev from the Politburo, see Vol. 2, pp. 6–9. The resolution on China is known only from an article in *Komintern i Vostok* (1969), p. 294, by an author who had access to archives, and quotes its third paragraph as rejecting proposals by "the opposition (Zinoviev, Trotsky)" to recall Karakhan, renounce rights in the CER, and leave Kuomintang. For the questions of the CER and the recall of Karakhan see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 770–771; on the former, at any rate, Trotsky was clearly misrepresented. It is highly unlikely that Trotsky or Zinoviev proposed on this occasion to leave Kuomintang; Trotsky was still hesitating on this issue when he wrote to Radek on August 30, 1926 (see p. 754 below), and Zinoviev was still against the proposal in May 1927 (see p. 758, note 214 below). The resolution of the seventh IKKI (see pp. 731–734 below) did not mention the opposition in this context.

[25] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 798; for Ch'en's letter of December 10, 1929, see p. 906, note 434 below.

Ch'en's self-imposed restraint, prevented a majority of the central committee of the CCP from pressing insistently for withdrawal. The draft resolution, presumably submitted by Ch'en and Voitinsky, proposed to work "within Kuomintang" and to "unite with the Kuomintang Left in a strong alliance". In silent protest against the Kuomintang resolution of May 17, 1926, which was not otherwise referred to, it declared that "Kuomintang should not have excessively rigid regulations and discipline", and suggested that Kuomintang organs "at any rate at lower levels" might "assume the characteristics of political clubs in order to be close to the masses".[26] Nobody perhaps remembered that this had been the condition of Kuomintang before Sun Yat-sen, on the urgent advice of Borodin, transformed it in January 1924 into an organized and disciplined political party. The resolution also contained a decision to substitute for the existing relation between the CCP and Kuomintang "an alliance between separate bodies", to adopt an independent political line and to treat Kuomintang as "a party of petty bourgeois democracy".[27] In the loosely organized CCP, however, decisions not endorsed by the representative of IKKI had little binding force. This resolution was apparently received with so much disapproval in Moscow that it had to be annulled.[28] Trotsky in an unpublished memorandum two months later quoted a passage from it, presumably revised to meet the requirements of Comintern, to the effect that "the predominant rôle of the petty bourgeoisie in Kuomintang makes possible for the maximum length of time our participation inside this party on the basis of our own policy".[29] All the evidence points to the confused and contradictory character of the debates.

[26] *Documents on Communism, Nationalism and Soviet Advisers in China*, ed. Wilbur and How (1956), pp. 279–281; for the resolution of May 17, 1926, see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 794.

[27] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 11 (85), March 18, 1927, p. 6; this summary is the only source for this decision. By an oversight or a misprint, the resolution is dated "June"; and this error is followed in other Soviet sources.

[28] *Die Chinesische Frage auf dem 8. Plenum* (1928), p. 18.

[29] Memorandum of September 27, 1926, in Trotsky archives, T 3008; both Trotsky and Radek (K. Radek, *Izmena Kitaiskoi Krupnoi Burzhuazii Natsional'nomu Dvizheniyu* (see p. 813, note 148 below), p. 25) quoted a declaration of the committee of July 12, 1926, defending collaboration with the bourgeoisie as "Bolshevism in the name of national well-being, but not Bolshevism in the name of communism" — a formula which Trotsky criticized as having "nothing in common with Marxism".

The other main embarrassment at the session was the social policy of the CCP, i.e. its attitude to the demands of peasants and workers. Borodin on his first encounter with Sun Yat-sen at the end of 1923 had met opposition to attempts to inscribe peasant demands in the Kuomintang programme.[30] Before the launching of the northern expedition in 1926 he recognized that "to undertake to change agrarian relations, to change the tax system, is an immeasurably harder task than to beat the generals", and would be resisted by "whole classes, those social strata of the population which live on a 65 per cent exploitation of the labour of peasants". At the same time, he concluded that "a new anti-imperialist government could not be formed without solving the agrarian problem".[31] These considerations dominated the proceedings of the central committee. The resolution on the peasantry was highly equivocal. The elaboration of a peasant programme was postponed till the next party congress, and immediate demands were modest. Confiscation of land did not figure among them. The slogan "Down with the landlords" was rejected: "attacks should be concentrated on reactionary big landlords". Peasants should be armed only for self-defence; the word "army" should be avoided. "Banditry" was firmly condemned. A special resolution on the Red Spears gave a general blessing to the movement, but, in the provinces where the nationalist armies were operating, carefully distinguished between "genuine" Red Spears and "those with bandit characteristics".[32] But it cannot be said that, before the launching of the northern expedition, the party had any defined peasant policy. Its limited resources were concentrated in the towns; and, where communists worked in the countryside, they were likely to do so in their capacity as members of Kuomintang rather than of the CCP.[33] A decision was taken to set up a peasant department of the central committee; Mao Tse-tung was named as its director.[34]

[30] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 695–696.

[31] A. Cherepanov, *Severnyi Pokhod* (1968), p. 28; some degree of hindsight may be suspected in this account.

[32] *Documents on Communism, Nationalism and Soviet Advisers in China*, ed. Wilbur and How (1956), pp. 296–305; Voitinsky later called this resolution "opportunistic", and by implication blamed himself as partially responsible (*Problemy Kitaya*, iv–v (1930), 99). For the Red Spears see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 723, and pp. 713, 715 below.

[33] *Agrarnye Problemy*, No. 2, 1927, pp. 37–38; see also p. 710 below for Zinoviev's comment.

[34] E. Snow, *Red Star over China* (1938), p. 158.

The resolution of the session on the workers' movement showed the same desire to postpone the class struggle to a more propitious moment:

> The present important task of Chinese workers is to lead the national struggle for liberation. The united front against imperialism and militarism set up by the unions and by the mass organizations of other classes is the only strategy for discharging this duty. Hence labour unions should issue statements of policy from time to time on the common interests of the people of all classes, and lead the masses of workers to actual participation in the national revolutionary movement.[35]

A passage not in the original draft, but quoted by Zinoviev in April 1927 in his theses for the eighth IKKI, bluntly admitted the failure of the CCP to understand that its welfare "depends on the success of the war carried on together with the proletariat against the imperialists and militarists, and not on the class struggle of the proletariat".[36] What many Chinese communists found it difficult to believe was that this course was conducive to the welfare of workers and peasants. A party report to Comintern at the time of the session expressed well-founded anxiety about developments in Kuomintang:

> Beginning with May 30 of last year, the objective situation in China is such that class differentiation is becoming all the time clearer. A similarly sharp division has begun in the Kuomintang organization. Kuomintang is every day drawing nearer to the capitalists.[37]

Everything goes to show that, on this issue also, Ch'en and the majority of the CCP central committee bowed reluctantly to the dictates of Moscow.

The session of the central committee in July 1926 passed resolutions of the kind familiar elsewhere on party organization and on propaganda and publicity. The resolution on organization did not mention Kuomintang, and was particularly concerned with the failure to create adequate party organs, which "in the past ... have been organized only in form" owing to lack of trained per-

[35] *Documents on Communism, Nationalism, and Soviet Advisers in China*, ed. Wilbur and How (1956), p. 289.

[36] L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., 1932), p. 348.

[37] Quoted in K. Radek, *Izmena Kitaiskoi Krupnoi Burzhuazii Natsional'nomu Dvizheniyu* (see p. 813, note 148 below), pp. 24–25.

sonnel: of an estimate of 355 officials required to man responsible party posts barely 120 were available.[38] The resolution on propaganda concluded with the remark that "not even one or two per cent of the resolutions on propaganda" adopted by the previous session in October 1925 had been carried into effect, and that these were still valid.[39] Zinoviev in theses prepared in April 1927 for the eighth IKKI admitted that "the [Chinese] communist organizations are really pretty amorphous", and that "in their agitation among the masses of the people the communists never, or almost never, appear in the name of their own party, but in the name of Kuomintang".[40]

The seven army corps which had set out from Canton two months earlier had swollen to forty, and the number of men engaged from 70,000 to 250,000,[41] by the time Hankow was reached at the beginning of September 1926. This accretion of numbers could not fail to affect the quality of the force. It now incorporated many units which had come over from the armies of Wu Pei-fu or of minor warlords. In the words of a Soviet commentator, it "included a large number of troops who had not passed through ... the political school in which the original Canton soldiers were educated, and therefore differed little from the ordinary armies of the Chinese militarists", being marked by "lack of political consciousness, lack of discipline, and a readiness to desert in moments of difficulty".[42] In the hour of victory such deficiencies excited little notice. The fall of Hankow on September 7, 1926,

[38] *Documents on Communism, Nationalism, and Soviet Advisers in China*, ed. Wilbur and How (1956), pp. 110–116.

[39] *Ibid.* pp. 125–129; the political report to the session (see p. 705 above) contained a passage on the decline in the quality of party membership (the counterpart of rapidly rising numbers) and the inadequacy of leadership and training.

[40] L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., 1932), p. 347.

[41] K. Radek, *Izmena Kitaiskoi Krupnoi Burzhuazii Natsional'nomu Dvizheniyu* (see p. 813, note 148 below), p. 28; Chu Teh later put the comparative figures at 60,000 and 200,000, which were more than doubled by the end of the year (A. Smedley, *The Great Road* (1956) pp. 182–183).

[42] *Novyi Vostok*, xv (1926), pp. xxxi–xxxii; Stalin in the Chinese commission of the seventh IKKI in November 1926 expressed anxiety "that the Chinese revolutionary army has been joined by many dubious elements, that these elements may change its image for the bad", and thought it necessary "to neutralize anti-peasant elements in the army, to preserve its revolutionary spirit" (Stalin, *Sochineniya*, viii, 370–371).

marked the virtual end of Wu Pei-fu's military power. The collapse of the warlord who had always been regarded as the most implacable enemy of communism, and the chief agent of British imperialism, was greeted with particular satisfaction in Moscow, where each successive nationalist victory was enthusiastically chronicled.[43] Anxiety, however, still persisted about the intentions and capacities of Chang Tso-lin in northern China. *Pravda* reported an advance of Mukden troops towards Kalgan, which meant "a strengthening of the imperialist Powers, first and foremost, of Japan".[44] A statement of IKKI of September 13, 1926, while rejoicing that Chiang's advance had "dealt a severe blow to the militarists and their backers, the imperialist Powers", still expressed fears that the danger of "imperialist intervention" had been intensified.[45] Hopes were entertained that the Kuominchün armies in the north-west would rally to the nationalist cause. When Feng Yü-hsiang, fresh from his visit to Moscow[46] and full of enthusiasm for the Soviet Union and for Kuomintang, reappeared in Kalgan early in October 1926 to resume command of his forces, he at once sent a telegram to Chiang Kai-shek offering his cooperation and declaring that his "people's army" would be renamed the "Revolutionary North China Army".[47] Feng's customary circumspection soon deflated his ardour. The main threat to his forces came from Chang Tso-lin; and, until Chiang revealed an intention to bear the brunt of a campaign against Chang, he preferred not to commit himself to action. But Chiang's sweeping victories had created a new situation:

[43] See, for example, *Izvestiya*, September 3, 10, 11, 1926; a Japanese correspondent, who met Wu in Peking in July 1926, found him uncompromisingly hostile to the "Red doctrine" (K. Fuse, *Soviet Policy in the Orient* (Peking, 1927), pp. 317–318). The resolution of the seventh IKKI in November 1926 hailed "the defeat sustained by Great Britain in China as a result of the overthrow of the British agents, Wu Pei-fu and Sun Ch'uan-fang, by the Canton army" (*Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), p. 655).

[44] *Pravda*, August 31, 1926; for similar articles see *Izvestiya*, September 8, 1926, *Pravda*, September 10, 1926.

[45] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 116, September 17, 1926, pp. 1967–1968.

[46] For Feng see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 789–790. For Feng's own account, from his autobiography and diary, of his stay in Moscow see J. Sheridan, *Chinese Warlord* (1966), pp. 200–202; he was received by Chicherin, Kalinin, Voroshilov, Lunacharsky, Krupskaya and Trotsky, and spoke at Radek's invitation to the students of the Sun Yat-sen university.

[47] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 125, October 15, 1926, p. 2149.

> The two new forces in China [wrote a Soviet commentator] are gradually moving on to the stage — the forces of reaction and revolution, of Mukden and Canton.[48]

After a short pause, a further advance of the nationalist army led to the occupation on November 7, 1926, of Nanchang, the capital of the province of Kiangsi. This in turn opened the way to the vital province of Chekiang, and put Chiang's forces on the road to Shanghai. Earlier Soviet fears now melted away. A report submitted to the seventh IKKI in Moscow in November 1926 noted that the expedition had at first aroused hesitation and anxiety, but that its rapid success had "exceeded all expectations".[49] Opposition in Moscow to the northern expedition had been inspired by a pessimistic assessment of its prospects. Its victories could not but seem an important advance for the revolutionary cause.

Success, however, also brought into the open the rifts between Kuomintang and CCP which had hitherto been assiduously plastered over. The triumphant advance of the nationalist armies fanned the revolutionary mood of the peasantry, whose miserable plight impressed all observers of the Chinese scene. Mao Tse-tung calculated at this time that, out of 320 million Chinese peasants (80 per cent of the population of China), from 100 to 120 millions owned land (large landlords being an insignificant fraction), but that of these only 10 per cent were well-to-do peasants; the remainder of the rural population — small landowners, sharecroppers, poor peasants and landless agricultural workers — lived in extreme indigence and were potential supporters of revolution.[50] According to another calculation made in the spring of 1927, landless peasants made up 55 per cent of the rural population, poor peasants (1 to 10 million) 20 per cent, middle peasants (10 to 20 million) 12 per cent, and owners of more than 30 mu (large and small landlords, *kulaks* etc.) 13 per cent.[51] In the terr-

[48] *Novyi Vostok*, XV (1926), p. xxxi.

[49] *Tätigkeitsbericht der Exekutive der Kommunistischen Internationale, Februar bis November 1926* (1926), p. 158.

[50] Mao Tse-tung published an article in the January 1926 issue of the Kuomintang monthly journal entitled "An Analysis of All Classes in the Chinese Peasantry", followed in the February issue by "An Analysis of All Classes in Chinese Society" (extracts in S. Schram, *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung* (1963), pp. 172–178); a contemporary review by Iolk of the second article with extensive extracts was reprinted in *Voprosy Filosofii*, No. 6, 1969, pp. 130–136.

[51] L. Delyusin, *Agrarno-Krest'yanskii Vopros v Politikie KPK* (1972), p. 225.

itories liberated by the advance of the nationalist armies, 50 per cent of the population was said to consist of landless peasants paying rent.[52] The rule of Wu Pei-fu in central China had been noted for its oppressive character, and had been marked by the formation of armed peasant bands under various designations, of which the Red Spears were the best known.[53] In Hunan the end of Wu's power had been followed by massive peasant risings, in which, in the first months of 1926, "millions of peasants" had been involved.[54] In Hupei, where the proportion of landless peasants was lower, and of small proprietors higher, than in Hunan, peasant risings began before the arrival of the nationalist armies, but an organized peasant movement came only at the end of 1926.[55] In Fukien "a peasant, insurrectionist, partisan army" was said to have liberated the province before the arrival of the nationalist forces.[56]

The rising tide of peasant insurgency which accompanied the nationalist advance impelled the central committee of the CCP in Shanghai, at a session in October 1926, to abandon its cautious and evasive attitude of three months earlier to the peasant problem.[57] Prompted or seconded by Voitinsky as representative of Comintern, it drew up an agrarian programme for the party, opening with the bold assertion that, "without agrarian reforms which satisfy the masses of the rural population, the Kuomintang government cannot maintain itself, and the whole liberation struggle will suffer defeat". While, however, "the completion of the national-democratic revolution which has begun" would be impossible without nationalization of the land, such a demand would be "premature in the present stage of development of the revolution". For the present, it was enough to "oppose the small, middle and well-to-do peasantry and the landless peasants to the big landlords and the gentry". These "class contradictions" in a front directed against "the militarists, the landlords and the gentry" could not be eradicated by any reforms in the nationalist

[52] S. Dalin, *Ocherki Revolyutsii v Kitae* (n.d. [1927]), p. 19.

[53] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 723, 734.

[54] See *ibid.* Vol. 3, p. 762, note 6.

[55] *Agrarnye Problemy*, No. 2, 1927, pp. 43–44. In general, the further north, the higher the proportion of small peasant proprietors; in Honan this reached 60 per cent (*ibid.* p. 48).

[56] S. Dalin, *Ocherki Revolyutsii v Kitae* (n.d. [1927]), p. 37.

[57] For the resolution of July 1926 on the peasantry see p. 708 above.

government, but would "inevitably develop as the power of the militarists is overthrown". The task of the CCP was to unfold peasant slogans which would advance the national-democratic revolution to its succeeding stage, while at the same time conforming to the general political tasks of the revolution at its present stage. The programme drawn up to meet these multifarious requirements included such radical items as the arming of the peasants, the setting up of a revolutionary peasant government in the countryside, and the confiscation of the estates of large landlords and militarists and of communal land.[58]

Organization within the CCP was loose, distances great, and communications between its organs at different levels intermittent and precarious. The revolutionary explosion in the areas liberated by the nationalist campaign was in all probability a more potent influence on party workers in the localities than any injunctions drawn up by the party central committee in Shanghai. What is certain is that communists, and some Kuomintang radicals, were active in the armies and among the peasants, and were credited with an important rôle in encouraging and promoting peasant disturbances. Members of the Communist Youth League, which saw itself transformed in the winter of 1926–1927 from a small illegal organization into "a mass league with tens of thousands of members", were a source of trouble. "Very often against the will of the generals, very often illegally", they went to work with the armies, though "without instructions and without leadership", since the CCP did not approve of these activities.[59] It was the students, noted one enthusiastic American observer, who first organized the peasants.[60] Killings of landlords and gentry by peasants, sometimes indiscriminate, sometimes apparently organized by peasant unions, took place in the provinces liberated

[58] *Agrarnye Problemy*, No. 2, 1927, pp. 49–50.

[59] R. Chitarow, *Geschichte der Kommunistischen Jugendinternationale*, iii (1930), 107–108; this source recalls an unspecified occasion on which the representative of the youth league on the central committee of the CCP voted in the committee in a minority of one in favour of "carrying out the agrarian revolution" (*ibid.* iii, 110). The CCP conference of August 7, 1927 (see pp. 824–827 below), reproached the party leaders with their failure to appeal to the rank and file of the nationalist armies (*Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, viii (1927), 30); but it is not clear that the bulk of the nationalist forces differed substantially from the mercenary armies of the warlords, or were likely to be susceptible to political propaganda.

[60] A. L. Strong, *China's Millions* (1936), p. 155.

by the nationalist armies, and especially in Hunan. Insurgent peasants were perhaps not easily distinguishable from bandits, long a familiar feature of the Chinese countryside. The Red Spears were described by one Soviet commentator as an organization "of a mediaeval type"; they represented the small peasant proprietor, not the landless peasant, opposed the redistribution of land, and were politically unstable and unreliable.[61] Peasant risings, in the words of a Chinese writer, had "an antiquated background of superstition, feudalism and secret societies"; they were often exploited by ambitious people trying "to realize their individual campaigns to become ruler, if successful, or brigand, if defeated".[62] As a Comintern report alleged, "it often happens that these peasant troops are utilized by reactionary elements against the national revolution";[63] this was at any rate an excuse for increasingly frequent reprisals by the nationalist forces. In Kwangtung one of the Soviet advisers reported clashes not only between peasants and gentry, but between peasants and nationalist troops; this had become "the most thorny question in the province".[64] Such incidents alarmed and antagonized both the solid bourgeois majority of Kuomintang and the military leaders; many of Chiang's generals came from "bourgeois circles, landlords, and bourgeois intelligentsia", and were said in the past to have "given much trouble to Sun Yat-sen".[65] When Chiang entered Changsha, the capital of Hunan, in August 1926, he delivered a speech explaining that the purpose of the Russian alliance was not to introduce communism but to overthrow imperialism;[66] and he issued a manifesto in which, after vowing destruction to foreign imperialists and Chinese militarists, he offered the chilling prediction that "the development of industry will produce an improvement in the economic conditions of agriculture, and thus improve

[61] *Agrarnye Problemy*, No. 2, 1927, pp. 32, 49.

[62] Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party* (1971), p. 598; IKKI in its letter to the CCP of October 26, 1929 (see p. 895 below), described the Red Spears as "objectively revolutionary" in spite of a reactionary leadership.

[63] *Tätigkeitsbericht der Exekutive der Kommunistischen Internationale, Februar bis November 1926* (1926), p. 150.

[64] *Documents on Communism, Nationalism and Soviet Advisers in China*, ed. Wilbur and How (1956), p. 377.

[65] K. Radek, *Izmena Kitaiskoi Krupnoi Burzhuazii Natsional'nomu Dvizheniyu* (see p. 813, note 148 below), p. 7.

[66] S. Schram, *Mao Tse-tung* (1966), pp. 92–93.

the lot of the peasants", and said nothing of land tenure or rent.[67]

What made the situation more alarming was that peasant revolt was now passing from a purely spontaneous to a planned and organized phase. The formation of peasant unions in Kwangtung went back to 1924, and had allegedly been fostered by workers involved in the Hong Kong strike. A first congress of peasant unions in Canton in May 1925 was said to represent 200,000 organized peasants; at a second congress a year later the number had risen to 620,000. In central China the formation of peasant unions seems to have awaited the advance of the nationalist armies in the summer and autumn of 1926, but then proceeded apace. In Hunan there were by November 1926 1,200,000 organized peasants, in December 1926 1,500,000, in April–May 1927 5,200,000. In Hupei the numbers were 70,000 in December 1926, 800,000 in March 1927, 1,250,000 in May 1927. In Hunan, where the movement was most active, it was noted that 14 per cent of the members of the so-called peasant unions were artisans, and 8 per cent traders and teachers; but 30 per cent were landless peasants.[68] The degree of active participation of members of the CCP and the Left Kuomintang or of workers in the formation of the peasant unions is difficult to assess. But contacts undoubtedly existed, and fanned the growing mistrust of the CCP and of the Kuomintang Left felt by Chiang Kai-shek and his immediate circle. The danger signals were read in Moscow. So eager were the authorities not to antagonize Kuomintang or to embarrass the advancing nationalist armies that, on October 29, 1926, presumably at the time of the session of the central committee of the CCP, the Politburo sent a telegram to Voitinsky in Shanghai urging the CCP to keep the rebellious peasant movement in check.[69] The message was relayed to local party leaders. The Hunan provincial party committee issued a slogan, "Down

[67] S. Dalin, *Ocherki Revolyutsii v Kitae* (n.d. [1927]), p. 34.

[68] *Agrarnye Problemy*, No. 2, 1927, pp. 34–36, 42, 46; all figures are obviously in part conjectural.

[69] L. Trotsky, *Stalinskaya Shkola Falsifikatsii* (Berlin, 1932), pp. 169, 176. Stalin, in reply to Trotsky's indictment nine months later, did not defend the telegram, but claimed that it had been subsequently cancelled by Comintern, pointing out that it had not been criticized by the opposition at the time (Stalin, *Sochineniya*, x, 18); the only recorded cancellation consisted of a routine phrase in Stalin's speech to the seventh IKKI (see p. 730 below), which may well have made less impression than the original instruction.

with local bandits", which gave aid and comfort to landlords and nationalist army commanders.[70] But official discouragement did not stem the wave of unrest. Peasant risings, and the formation of peasant unions and armed peasant detachments on the pattern of the Red Spears, continued in many areas occupied by the nationalist armies, notably in Hunan and Honan.[71]

If the spread of organized peasant unrest in the areas through which the northern expedition advanced was its most immediately embarrassing concomitant, it no less effectively stimulated the discontent of industrial workers and artisans. The workers' movement in China was still in its infancy.[72] Voitinsky in an article of March 1926 noted that China had no more than two million industrial workers, but "an immense number of non-industrial workers — tens of millions of artisans". Genuine trade unions scarcely existed. Organization started from the strike committee. Shanghai, since the events of May 1925, had 120,000 organized workers. In Canton, workers had enjoyed the support of Kuomintang, and were in league with the petty bourgeoisie, Chinese traders and capitalists, and even with the government, during the Hong Kong strike. Moreover, the enthusiasm of the workers had "drawn into the struggle hundreds of thousands of peasants". Elsewhere in China, and in some branches of industry, little had been done; only 30,000 railway workers were organized in a railway workers' union with a central committee. In north China some "yellow" or "traitor" unions had been founded, having links with

[70] *Problemy Kitaya*, i (1929), 12–13; a CCP report of 1926 (not more precisely dated) was said to have deprecated the slogan "Down with the landlords" on the ground that some landlords belong to Kuomintang and supported the national revolution (K. Radek, *Izmena Kitaiskoi Krupnoi Burzhuazii Natsional'nomu Dvizheniyu* (see p. 813, note 148 below), p. 28).

[71] For some particulars from Kuomintang sources see T. C. Woo, *The Kuomintang and the Future of the Chinese Revolution* (1928), pp. 208–210; for an appeal of the Hunan peasant union in December 1926 for the confiscation of estates of large landlords see J. Ch'en, *Mao and the Chinese Revolution* (1963), p. 113. A plea that the peasants were at this time concerned only with such modest demands as relief from exorbitant rents and taxes (*Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 26 (100), 1927, p. 3) was singularly remote from reality.

[72] An article in *Novyi Vostok*, xiii–xiv (1926), 17–31, put the total working class in China at 5 millions, of whom 1·5 million were factory workers; 120,000 worked on the railways, 80,000 in water transport, 300,000 in the textile industry, 120,000 in the tobacco industry and 200,000–300,000 were miners.

Chang Tso-lin and the imperialists.[73] In Canton itself, at the moment of the start of the northern expedition, labour unrest had been firmly dealt with. After the departure of the northern expedition, Kuomintang is said to have devised a new formula for dealing with recalcitrant workers or peasants: "Having set out to make a revolution in the north, we demand quietness in the rear".[74] On July 16, 1926, the Canton government set up a control of trade unions, and prohibited strikes; in the following month compulsory government arbitration was introduced for all labour disputes.[75] But the success of the expedition promoted the mushroom growth of trade unions in the central Yangtze basin, where they had never recovered from the defeat inflicted on them by Wu Pei-fu in 1923.[76] In the autumn of 1926 trade unions were formed in the main industrial centres covered by the nationalist advances — in Hunan, in Hupei, especially in the industrial cities of the Yangtze basin, and in Kiangsi. A provincial congress of Hunan trade unions was held in December 1926; and a congress of the Hupei trade unions in January was attended by 580 delegates of 341 unions, claiming 393,000 members.[77] The organizers appear to have been for the most part communists, some of them students; according to Lozovsky, they proclaimed the slogan, "Long live Profintern".[78] The response was thought to be indicative of the depth of feeling among the workers and of a capacity for self-discipline. In Hupei the growing activity of the workers produced a clash of interest with the peasantry. Increased

[73] *Krasnyi Internatsional Profsoyuzov*, No. 3, 1926, pp. 344–349; for the special situation in Canton see pp. 737–739 below.

[74] *Agrarnye Problemy*, No. 2, 1927, p. 39.

[75] *China Weekly Review* (Shanghai), August 14, 21, 1926; J. Chesneaux, *The Chinese Labour Movement, 1919–1927* (1968), p. 332. K. Radek, *Izmena Kitaiskoi Krupnoi Burzhuazii Natsional'nomu Dvizheniyu* (see p. 813, note 148 below), pp. 8–9, quoted a speech of Chiang Kai-shek of June 26, 1926, alleging that there were no capitalists in China, but only businessmen, and calling on workers "to subordinate their interests to general national interests".

[76] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 690.

[77] For an account of these developments see J. Chesneaux, *The Chinese Labour Movement, 1919–1927* (1968), pp. 321–325; for the Hunan and Hupei congresses see J. Chesneaux. *Les Syndicats Chinois, 1919–1927: Répertoire, Textes, Presse* (1965), pp. 255–267. V. Vishnyakova-Akimova, *Dva Goda v Vosstavshem Kitae* (1965), p. 331, reported that, when she arrived in Wuhan in March 1927, the workers' movement was only a few months old; of the members of trade unions, 20 per cent were industrial workers, 80 per cent artisans and coolies.

[78] *Sed'moi S"ezd Professional'nykh Soyuzov SSR* (1927), p. 257.

wages for the workers, extorted by strikes, meant increased prices for goods bought by the peasants; and peasant dissatisfaction was exploited by the gentry to encourage hostility to the workers' movement.[79]

Strikes and wage demands by workers in foreign-owned factories went on throughout the winter. Strikes were indeed an essential part of the programme, since the unions were financed mainly out of the proceeds of wage settlements. The campaign had a strong anti-foreign flavour, and in places something like anarchy prevailed.[80] The fact that foreign interests were its main specific target might have seemed to align it with Kuomintang objectives, and to make it less obnoxious, even to the Kuomintang Right, than peasant disturbances directed against Chinese landlords. But fear of provoking imperialist reprisals still paralysed the revolutionary leaders. Chang Kuo-t'ao, who was at this time the representative of the central committee of the CCP in Wuhan, recorded that the party "did not want to have incidents of encroachment on the life and property of foreigners which would give the foreigners a pretext to intervene", and "often made such explanations before the masses of workers, calling on them to refrain from retaliatory measures against foreign concessions and foreign individuals".[81] Clashes between troops and workers were reported from Hupei province (of which Wuhan was the capital) in the winter of 1926–1927, and shootings of workers took place "under the nose of the government itself".[82] It was not long before workers' insurgency came, like peasants' insurgency, to be seen as a threat to a nationalist movement interested in liberation from foreign rule, but not in the overthrow of the existing social order.

The divided counsels which embarrassed the CCP were still more fatal to the solidarity of Kuomintang. A well-informed Soviet analysis of the situation in Kuomintang in the autumn of

[79] *Agrarnye Problemy*, No. 2, 1927, p. 45.

[80] V. Vishnyakova-Akimova, *Dva Goda v Vosstavshem Kitae* (1965), pp. 325–330; for the affair of the British concession in Hankow see p. 740 below.

[81] Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, i (1971), 553; for Eugene Chen's attitude see p. 796 below.

[82] K. Radek, *Izmena Kitaiskoi Krupnoi Burzhuazii Natsional'nomu Dvizheniyu* (see p. 813, note 148 below), p. 10.

1926 showed that both Right and Left wings had been seriously weakened. The Right had been either eliminated, like the former Western Hills group, or reduced, like Sun Fo and C. C. Wu, to positions of personal subordination to Chiang. The Left had been deprived by the incident of March 20 and by the decisions of May 17, 1926, of its active communist nucleus: it still had many members but no leaders. Chiang, whose victories had made him impregnable, occupied a central position based on military power, and supported by a group of Kuomintang intellectuals under the leadership of Tai Chi-t'ao, and was heading for a military dictatorship.[83] A session of the Kuomintang central committee was held in Canton in the second half of October 1926. Communists were well represented, and the majority of delegates belonged to the Left.[84] The committee had before it a request from Chiang, now established in Nanchang, to transfer the seat of the central committee to Hankow. It failed to reach agreement on this proposal, which was left momentarily in abeyance. But it decided to invite Wang Ching-wei, who had been abroad since March 1926, to return to China. Though Wang had been the leader of the Left wing in Kuomintang, Chiang also pressed for his return — perhaps in recognition of his prestige as the "heir" of Sun Yat-sen, perhaps in the hope that he would restrain his more extreme Left and communist supporters.[85] The committee also adopted a programme which, though primarily directed to the economic and political re-unification of the country, could be interpreted as a move towards the Left in social policies.[86] It is not surprising that, while the generals who held the key to the political situation in Canton did not formally disown these policies, nothing was done

[83] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 121, October 5, 1926, pp. 2063–2064; the article was signed "Junior", and was probably written by Dalin, a former representative of KIM who had recently arrived in China (see p. 755 below). For the replacement of C. C. Wu by Eugene Chen as Minister for Foreign Affairs see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 791.

[84] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 8 (82), 1927, p. 10.

[85] *Documents on Communism, Nationalism, and Foreign Advisers in China*, ed. Wilbur and How (1956), pp. 370–371, 523, note 25; for Chiang's ambivalent attitude to Wang Ching-wei see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 776, note 2.

[86] For the *communiqué* of the conference and the programme see *China Year Book, 1928* (Tientsin, n.d.), pp. 1343–1348; see also *Documents on Communism, Nationalism, and Soviet Advisers in China*, ed. Wilbur and How (1956), p. 523, note 24.

to put them into effect.[87] But enough had been said to nourish the illusion, still prevalent in Moscow and among the Soviet representatives in China, of a powerful and independent Kuomintang Left, capable of holding in check the Right wing of the party and its military leaders.

For the moment, the prevailing mood in Canton was one of triumphant satisfaction at the victories of the nationalist cause. On November 16, 1926, after celebrating the two great anniversaries of the Bolshevik revolution (November 7) and of Sun Yat-sen's birth (November 12), Borodin and the principal members of the government, without any fresh recorded decision, left for Hankow to organize the transfer of the seat of government and party headquarters.[88] Travelling overland in palanquins and by river steamers,[89] they reached Chiang's headquarters at Nanchang on December 3, 1926, and two days later had a meeting with Chiang, which evidently did not remove Chiang's mistrust.[90] *En route* from Nanchang to Hankow, the party was greeted by mass demonstrations of workers, which led Borodin to exclaim: "This is a real revolution".[91] In Hankow on December 11, 1926, an enthusiastic mass demonstration was addressed by Borodin.[92] The complex of three contiguous industrial cities on the Yangtze — Hankow, Wuchang and Hanyang — was proclaimed as the national capital under the name Wuhan. On the following day, a joint council composed of representatives of party and government, which included Borodin, was set up — the embryo of what came to be known as the "Wuhan government". Victory was in the air; and the satisfaction of the demands of workers and peasants was assumed to be one of its main objectives. But the question of priorities could wait. A year later, after his return to

[87] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 8 (82), 1927, p. 11; for the shift of the Canton government towards the Right at this time see p. 737 below.

[88] *Documents on Communism, Nationalism, and Soviet Advisers in China*, ed. Wilbur and How (1956), pp. 370–371; V. Vishnyakova-Akimova, *Dva Goda v Vosstavshem Kitae* (1965), pp. 284–285. The All-China General Labour Union also moved its headquarters from Canton to Hankow (J. Chesneaux, *The Chinese Labour Movement, 1919–1927* (1968), p. 330).

[89] The journey is described in detail in S. Dalin, *Ocherki Revolyutsii v Kitae* (n.d. [1927]), pp. 89–144.

[90] A. Cherepanov, *Severnyi Pokhod* (1968), p. 206.

[91] S. Dalin, *Ocherki Revolyutsii v Kitae* (n.d. [1927]), pp. 148–149.

[92] *China Year Book, 1928* (Tientsin, n.d.), p. 737, which also records a further demonstration addressed by Borodin and Kuomintang leaders on December 20, 1926.

Moscow, Borodin consistently defended his point of view. Nobody doubted that Chiang Kai-shek was "a champion of the bourgeois hegemony in the national revolution". But this was not the point. "All that we demanded of him was that he should carry his bourgeois revolution to its end."[93] After all, as he observed on another occasion, "the purpose of the northern expedition was not, in my mind, the establishment of a proletarian state, but the creation of conditions which would give an impetus to the mass movement".[94] Like nearly all the Soviet leaders, Borodin assumed that the Chinese mass movement would conform to a time-table drawn up, in accordance with the best prescriptions and precedents, in Moscow.

It was only the central committee of the CCP which, at a special conference hastily summoned on the arrival of the party from Canton, exhibited signs of dissent and anxiety. It was presumably on this occasion that Borodin delivered on December 12, 1926, what was afterwards referred to as "the notorious Right Kuomintang speech of comrade Borodin", in which he cautiously spoke of the agrarian question in terms of "buying back land from the landlords". Such views were little to the taste of members of the central committee who, two months earlier, had been proclaiming a radical agrarian programme. The Canton communists in particular were a grave source of embarrassment. A Canton party member had been reported as saying: "On March 20 Kuomintang died, and after May 15 it began to stink; why do we still hold in our hands this rotting corpse?" And the Canton party organization had said of Kuomintang: "As for a Left wing, such a Left wing simply does not exist". The Kwangtung provincial party

[93] *Problemy Kitaya*, iii (1930), 223; the passage was quoted from an unpublished speech of Borodin to the Society of Old Bolsheviks on October 23, 1927. The *rapporteur* on this occasion called Borodin's position "Menshevism of the purest water" (*ibid.* iii, 230).

[94] L. Fischer, *The Soviets in World Affairs* (1930), ii, 661; S. Dalin, *Ocherki Revolyutsii v Kitae* (n.d. (1927)), p. 18, similarly explained that, "by supporting the national-revolutionary army, *the proletariat and peasantry have obtained the possibility of beginning the struggle for their class interests*". Soloviev, the counsellor of the Soviet Embassy in Peking, dispensed even with this justification, explaining to a Japanese correspondent that the communists were "marching on a path incompatible with their own creed, because there is no way in present China but proceeding with bourgeois capitalism" (K. Fuse, *Soviet Policy in the Orient* (Peking, 1927), pp. 269–270). The newly established nationalist government is said to have issued a decree guaranteeing the inviolability of private property (S. Dalin, *Ocherki Revolyutsii v Kitae* (n.d.) p. 22).

committee came out in support of a policy of mass uprising — even at the cost of a break with the national government and the Left Kuomintang. The central committee in its resolutions refused to accept the view of "the Kwangtung communists", and asserted that the Kuomintang Left, though not yet "strong and responsible", was "the pivot of our cooperation with Kuomintang". This attitude determined the party's agrarian policy; "since a Kuomintang Left which would favour a solution of the land question [i.e. confiscation of land] has not yet emerged", the CCP must also move cautiously:

> The land is not yet a problem. The immediate problems of the peasantry are pressing demands for the reduction of rent and interest, freedom of organization, armed self-defence, resistance against local bullies and bad gentry, and opposition to excessive taxes and irregular levies. To lead the peasantry away from the actual struggle for these demands in order to study the blocked land problem is to stop struggling.

In another resolution the conference expressed its anxieties in more general terms:

> The movement of the masses advances towards the Left, while the political and military authorities, seeing the rapid growth of the mass movement, are seized with fear and begin to lean to the Right.
>
> If these extreme tendencies continue to develop in the future, an ever wider abyss will be dug between the masses and the government, the united front will end by being broken, and the whole national movement will appear to be in danger.

The cautious conclusion was, however, the need to avoid the "illusions" implicit in the excessive demands of workers and peasants, "in order to cure ourselves of the infantile disease of Leftism".[95] For the moment misgivings could be stifled. The

[95] The resolutions of the conference are summarized, mainly from Chinese sources, in *Documents on Communism, Nationalism, and Soviet Advisers in China*, ed. Wilbur and How (1956), pp. 376–377; according to a statement by Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai at the sixth party congress in 1928 (for this speech see pp. 860–861 below), the conference concluded that, "while the national government is in danger of leaning to the Right, the mass movement is too far to the Left" (*Chinese Studies in History*, V, No. 1 (1971), 25). Other evidence comes from the "letter from Shanghai" (see p. 762, note 231 below) in L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., 1932), pp. 392, 401, and from an article in *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 8 (82), 1927,

spectacular triumphs of the nationalist armies made temporary sacrifices seem readily acceptable.

(*b*) *Euphoria in Comintern*

The nationalist triumphs in China coincided with the mood of euphoria in Moscow which dominated the fifteenth party conference meeting at the end of October 1926.[96] The delegates, absorbed in other major topics, paid little attention to Chinese affairs. Bukharin, in a brief passage in his official report, hailed the Chinese revolution as a fact "of immense world significance" and "a gigantic blow to the stabilization of world capitalism". The "central task", he repeated, for the Chinese people, for Kuomintang and for the CCP was "the struggle against foreign militarists". But he frankly exposed the main problem. In Kwangtung much of the land was in the hands of "large landed proprietors, linked with the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie, which supports Kuomintang". Nevertheless, it was "indispensable for the CCP to proceed more vigorously in the struggle for carrying out agrarian reform", though this might lead to unpleasantness with the Kuomintang Right and to a dangerous tendency on the Left "to break up the united national bloc".[97] Bukharin offered no solution. At the very end of his reply to the debate, in response to a note sent up to the platform, he spoke in a slightly embarrassed way of "the close relationship and fairly friendly collaboration between Kuomintang and CCP", express-

pp. 12–15, which pronounced the attitude of the Kwangtung communists "a very dangerous Left deviation", and exhorted the CCP "not to put spokes in the wheels of the revolutionary army led by bourgeois generals or of the national government, but on the contrary to support their revolutionary work". Borodin later recorded that the Canton communists believed that "the Chinese revolution would conquer as an agrarian revolution, and that without an agrarian revolution it cannot conquer" — a view contested by the party central committee (*Problemy Kitaya*, iii (1930), 210).

[96] For this conference see Vol. 1, pp. 11–12, Vol. 2, pp. 17–19.

[97] *XV Konferentsiya Vsesoyuznoi Kommunisticheskoi Partii(B)* 1927, pp. 23–28. Emphasis in Moscow on agrarian policy was not new; it had figured in the IKKI directive of May 1923 and in Borodin's negotiations with Sun Yat-sen late in that year (*Socialism in One Country 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 691, 695–696), and Bukharin, in a report on the peasant question at the fifth IKKI in March 1925, observed in passing that "the Chinese question is the question of the potential resistance of the Chinese peasants to foreign finance capital" (*Rasshirennyi Plenum Ispolkoma Kommunisticheskogo Internatsionala* (1925), p. 306).

ing the hope that the advance of the revolution would bring about "a regrouping in Kuomintang", i.e. a strengthening of the Left wing at the expense of the Right.[98] But Stalin, who launched a massive onslaught on the opposition, did not mention China, and in a passing reference to revolutionary prospects still gave precedence to India:

> It is quite possible that in future the chain of the imperialist front will snap in one of those countries, say, for example, India, where the proletariat has a serious ally in the shape of a powerful revolutionary liberation movement.[99]

The enquiry addressed to Bukharin about relations with Kuomintang was the only indication in the proceedings of an uneasiness which was undoubtedly felt in the party ranks. Trotsky, stimulated by Radek, had already begun to formulate his criticisms of the official line.[100] But, when the conference met, he was too much preoccupied with other issues of the party struggle, or too unsure of his ground, to embark on this thorny argument. None of the opposition speakers mentioned China or Kuomintang; and the conference passed no resolution on international questions.

When the seventh IKKI assembled in Moscow on November 22, 1926, the nationalist armies were extending and consolidating their victory in central China. Victory had been achieved with active communist support and participation; few delegates were inclined to probe the delicate relations between Kuomintang and the CCP, whose delegates appeared side by side at the session. The Chinese question bulked large in the general debate, and also figured as a separate item on the agenda. The importance attached to it was demonstrated when T'an P'ing-shan, the principal CCP delegate, was the first speaker, after Bukharin's customary address of welcome, to proffer greetings from the CCP to the gathering, and was immediately followed by the representative of Kuomintang.[101] Once again no dissent in the Russian

[98] *XV Konferensitya Vsesoyuznoi Kommunisticheskoi Partii(B)* (1927), pp. 99–100.

[99] Stalin, *Sochineniya*, viii, 254; the date of the speech was November 1, 1926.

[100] See pp. 754 below.

[101] *Puti Mirovoi Revolyutsii* (1927), i, 7–8; the presence of a Kuomintang representative was in accordance with recent precedent (see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 766, note 2).

party came into the open. No member of the Russian party opposition spoke in the general debate or in the debate on China, and neither Zinoviev nor Trotsky, speaking in the separate debate on the opposition, touched on China. Throughout the discussion such reservations as were made came exclusively from dissidents in the Chinese or other foreign delegations.

Victory had, however, thrown into relief the latent incompatibilities between the aims of the nationalist armies and those of the peasants, between the national and social goals of the revolution, at which Bukharin had hinted a month earlier at the party conference; and these it was increasingly difficult to ignore. Bukharin in his written report dealt with the rise of Chinese industrial production and consequent growth of the proletariat, but argued that victory over foreign imperialism could not be achieved without also mobilizing the peasantry for the struggle; to support the demands of the peasants was an essential part of revolutionary policy. The chief shortcoming of the CCP had been its failure to give sufficient attention to the problems of the revolutionary peasantry and of agrarian reform.[102] Katayama, avoiding these complexities, preached the virtues of the united front, and thought that it would be "childish" to divorce the CCP from collaboration with Kuomintang. T'an P'ing-shan agreed with Bukharin that the absence of an agrarian programme was the most serious defect of the CCP. But he showed equal awareness of the formidable dilemma when he remarked that it was necessary "to safeguard the interests of the peasantry, but on the other hand to uphold and strengthen the united front of the national-revolutionary movement".[103] A passage relating to China in the general theses submitted by Bukharin, and adopted without further discussion, attempted to hold a nice balance:

> If the chief task of the present moment is a united front of all national-revolutionary forces, including the anti-imperialist strata of the bourgeoisie, it is on the other hand indispensable at once to raise the question of satisfying the fundamental needs of the peasantry.

But the conclusion was inescapable that the "chief aim" of the CCP was "a consolidation of all forces against the foreign im-

[102] *Puti Mirovoi Revolyutsii* (1927), i, 83–85, 89–90, 106–107; for this report see pp. 133–134 above.

[103] *Puti Mirovoi Revolyutsii* (1927), i, 176, 280.

perialists and 'their' militarists", and that further tasks could not be carried out "by leaping over this stage of the revolutionary struggle".[104]

After the general debate T'an made a report on the Chinese question, in which he spoke on well-worn lines of the national revolution and of the relations of the CCP to the Kuomintang, but again emphasized the need for agrarian reform "in order to abolish the semi-feudal system of the militarists".[105] T'an in his written report alleged that even the hatred of Kuomintang for the imperialists was not unconditional:

> It is inclined to fight only against British imperialism; so far as the Japanese imperialists are concerned, it is ready under certain conditions to make a compromise with them.[106]

Manuilsky, who spoke next, and probably, of all the speakers in the debate, most nearly reflected Stalin's personal views, showed no interest in the CCP or in Comintern policy, but dwelt on China's international position, faced by the three great imperialist Powers in the Pacific, and made it clear that a diplomatic alliance with Chinese nationalists against the imperialists was the primary concern.[107] Raskolnikov, at this time the head of the eastern section of Comintern, speaking under the name of Petrov, exposed the divisions within the CCP. While "some comrades exaggerate the importance of united front demands", others claimed that "the national revolution in China is over, the Kuomintang party has played out its historical rôle, and the only revolutionary factor today is the CCP". He refused to accept the second position, declaring the maintenance of the united front at the present stage "a matter of absolute necessity". But he realistically admitted the possibility that, after Chiang Kai-shek's victory, "the big bourgeoisie may play a greater rôle, and come to terms with the imperialists"; this would lead to a "Turkish, Kemalist path of

[104] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), pp. 633, 640.

[105] *Puti Mirovoi Revolyutsii* (1927), i, 395–400. He also submitted a written report in which he recognized more openly the heterogeneous composition of Kuomintang, and the ambiguous attitude of the CCP towards it (*ibid.* i, 401–420); it was significant that the representative of Kuomintang declared himself in agreement with "comrade T'an P'ing-shan's" speech, but added that he had not seen his written report (*ibid.* i, 457).

[106] *Ibid.* i, 406.

[107] *Ibid.* i, 420–435; for Stalin's emphasis on the priority of the struggle for national liberation see pp. 729–730 below.

development for China".[108] Roy, who had disputed amicably with Lenin at the second congress of Comintern in 1920, and crossed swords with Manuilsky on the question at the fifth congress in 1924,[109] now consistently re-asserted his views, derived from his Indian experience, in their application to China. The upper strata of the national bourgeoisie, invited to share in the profits of imperialism, might still support movements of national liberation, but were ready, when it came to the point, to "form a united front with the imperialists against revolutionary China". In a country where the overwhelming majority of the population consisted of peasants, the key to victory over the imperialists must be found, not in an alliance with the national bourgeoisie, but in agrarian revolution — the nationalization of land, and the expropriation of the great landowners. Roy was enough of a Marxist to accept the hegemony of the proletariat and of the CCP as its instrument. But the peasantry, under party and proletarian leadership, must be the driving force of the revolution.[110] T'an P'ing-shan wound up the debate with a speech which went deeper than his earlier pronouncement, but did not attempt to reconcile some realistic assessments with the conventional optimism. He admitted that the Chinese bourgeoisie was becoming "more class-conscious", and was in a position "to utilize Chinese armies recruited chiefly from the unemployed and from impoverished peasants"; "to say that the proletariat already leads the revolution, has already won the hegemony, is not a fact, but an exaggeration". But he boldly proclaimed that, "thanks to the military victories of the Canton troops, the revolutionary forces of China are consolidating themselves day by day, while the forces of reaction are split". He praised the Red Spears, and asserted once more that the victory of the national revolution depended on radical agrarian reform, though "many Chinese comrades ... think that it is not necessary to deal with the agrarian question in China, at any rate now". He concluded by responding to the greetings of the Kuomintang

[108] *Puti Mirovoi Revolyutsii* (1927), i, 444–449; Raskolnikov was appointed co-secretary with Roy of the Chinese commission (*Protokoll: Erweiterte Exekutive der Kommunistischen International* (n.d.), p. 13; the appointment of the commission is not in the Russian edition). For the "Kemalist path" see p. 765, note 243 below.

[109] See *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917–1923*, Vol. 3, pp. 251–259; *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 618–619.

[110] *Puti Mirovoi Revolyutsii*, i, 453–457.

"comrade", and by expressing the conviction that Kuomintang would "satisfy as quickly as possible the demands of the peasant masses".[111]

The clash of opinions, tactfully muted in the plenary sessions, came into the open in the commission which drafted the theses, where much franker speaking was evidently heard. Four alternative drafts were submitted, and German, British, French and Indian delegates took part in the debate, the main bone of contention being the agrarian question.[112] Roy appears to have taken an active and prominent part in the discussion, and to have been the protagonist of a radical agrarian policy. Bubnov, a staunch supporter of the alliance with Kuomintang, defined "Chinese militarism", against which the nationalist campaign was directed, as "a military organization, which serves as a channel for capitalist accumulation, and is surrounded by a whole number of state organs of a semi-feudal system, ... connected with this or that group of foreign imperialists".[113] Stalin, who had not spoken in the open session, intervened in the commission to impose a guiding hand, and to offer an authoritative judgement on the theoretical aspects of the problem.

Stalin started from Lenin's reference to a coming Chinese 1905. He qualified the comparison by insisting on three peculiarities of the Chinese revolution. It was not only a bourgeois-democratic revolution, but also a revolution of national liberation; the "Chinese national big bourgeoisie" was "incomparably weaker" than its Russian counterpart in 1905, and the rôle of the proletariat correspondingly greater; and the Chinese revolution could profit by the example and support of its Russian predecessor. Stalin left no doubt that the struggle for national liberation from the imperialist yoke was the main present preoccupation of the revolutionary cause. "In what does the strength of the Canton armies consist?" he asked in one of his never very impressive outbursts of eloquence. "In the fact that they have the idea, the pathos, which inspires them in the struggle for liberation from imperialism, that they are bringing liberation to China." The revolutionary rôle of the nationalist army was "the most important

[111] *Ibid.* i, 462–466.
[112] *Ibid.* ii, 344–345.
[113] Quoted from unpublished records of the commission in *Komintern i Vostok* (1969), p. 152.

factor in the struggle of the Chinese workers and peasants for their liberation". Even when he looked into the future the same reservation was made. He assumed that the coming revolutionary government in China would conform to Lenin's Russian formula of 1905, and be "something in the nature of a democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, with this difference, however, that it will be pre-eminently an anti-imperialist government". The CCP should not only remain in Kuomintang, but should participate in a future national-revolutionary government. Having thus delivered the core of his message, Stalin, with his customary skill in appearing to balance between two extremes, guarded himself against the imputation of neglecting the social aspects of the revolutionary struggle, and referred contemptuously to "people in Kuomintang and even among Chinese communists who do not think it possible to unleash the revolution in the countryside, fearing that to draw the peasantry into the revolution will shatter the anti-imperialist front". He enthusiastically endorsed the radical demands of Chinese workers and peasants — nationalization of railways and large factories, confiscation of landlords' estates and nationalization of land. But a careful reading of his words showed that this loudly trumpeted programme related to the "prospective" or "long-term" revolution rather than to the revolution in its present historical stage. Stalin gave no hint of a split in the bourgeoisie or of Kuomintang, and avoided any mention of the "national big bourgeoisie" except to note that it was "extremely weak". In these respects, the speech, in spite of its radical colouring, represented a retrogression from his utterances of May 1925.[114]

[114] Stalin, *Sochineniya,* viii, 357–374; it was originally published, perhaps with some careful editing, in *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional,* No. 13 (71), 1926, pp. 9–19. For the speeches of May 9 and 18, 1925 see pp. 702–703 above. A Soviet commentator of the nineteen-sixties severely criticized Stalin's pronouncements of May 1925 as revealing "an under-estimate of the progressive potentialities of the national bourgeoisie in eastern countries"; the indictment of his views on China was framed as follows: "The subsequent development of events in China showed that unfounded exaggerations of the class character of the whole movement had occurred, an over-estimate of the significance of the plebeian-democratic, proletarian strain in the Chinese revolution, exaggerations of the tempos of its development, of the transition from one stage to the next, of its weight in the general balance of world proletarian revolution. Thus, the real social and political processes taking place in China were interpreted to some extent one-sidedly. The wish was sometimes taken for reality, reflecting elements of subjectivism derived from Stalin, which had not yet

Stalin proposed four amendments to the original draft theses, all designed to tone down revolutionary demands. Of these, only one (a proposal to limit nationalization of "large factories, mines and banks" to those "having the character of imperialist concessions") was embodied in the final text; in the other three cases, the phrase to which Stalin took exception disappeared altogether.[115] According to Roy's account, theses drafted in advance by Bubnov, Raskolnikov and Voitinsky were rejected as "useless", and Stalin requested Bubnov, Bukharin and Roy to prepare new ones; those eventually adopted were drafted by Roy.[116] The fact that the theses were submitted to the penultimate plenary session on December 15, 1926, adjourned, and then adopted unanimously without discussion on the next day,[117] suggests that disagreements had to be ironed out even at this late stage.

The theses of the seventh IKKI on China[118] were in the main a conflation of the not always consistent opinions expressed during the debate. The Chinese revolution was one of the factors "destroying the stabilization of capitalism" and was "an inescapable part of the international revolution". Insistence on anti-

been outlived at that time" (*Komintern i Vostok* (1969), pp. 286–291). Neither Stalin's nor other radical pronouncements were, however, allowed to deflect Comintern policies in China. Stalin characteristically managed to combine a conservative and cautious policy with radical and revolutionary utterances; this seems to have been as true in May 1925 as in November 1926.

[115] *Komintern i Vostok* (1969), p. 151, note 31, quoting from unpublished archives; *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional: Kratkii Istoricheskii Ocherk* (1969), p. 264, note 2, describes the amendments as "reflecting Stalin's view of the progressive potentialities of national-bourgeois circles". Roy later claimed that Stalin "was reluctant to agree with the demand for the 'nationalization of land' formulated in the resolution, but gave in finally" (M. Roy, *Our Differences* (2nd ed. 1945), pp. 28–29, *cf. idem, Revolution and Counter-Revolution in China* (Calcutta, 1946), p. 538, note 1).

[116] R. North, *Moscow and the Chinese Communists* (1953), p. 90. Allowance must be made for Roy's self-importance; but his influence at this time is attested by his appointment as co-secretary of the Chinese commission at the session (see p. 728, note 108 above), and subsequently as Comintern envoy to China (see p. 737 below). Roy was also a member of the abortive agrarian commission of the seventh IKKI (see pp. 138–139 above), the *rapporteur* of which noted that in China (and in Indonesia) "civil war has already begun, in which the peasantry is taking an ever larger part in the movement of national liberation", and that the CCP had attained "a certain success in leading the movement and especially in work among peasant organizations" (*Puti Mirovoi Revolyutsii* (1927), ii, 351).

[117] *Puti Mirovoi Revolyutsii* (1927), ii, 345, 368.

[118] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), pp. 668–680 for the analysis of Chinese society in these theses see Note E, p. 1025 below.

imperialism as one of the "peculiar conditions" which differentiated the Chinese revolution from "the classical bourgeois revolutions of last century in western European countries, as well as from the revolution of 1905 in Russia", became the keynote of the official policy of unconditional support for Chiang's nationalist forces.[119] The theses distinguished three stages in the Chinese revolution. In the first stage the driving forces were "the national bourgeoisie and the bourgeois intelligentsia, seeking support in the ranks of the proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie". In the second (the current) stage, the proletariat appears on the scene, and in the struggle against imperialism "forms a bloc with the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie and a part of the capitalist bourgeoisie";[120] this bloc was represented by Kuomintang and the Canton government. In the third stage, on the threshold of which the movement now stood, the main force would be "a bloc of the proletariat, peasantry and urban petty bourgoisie, excluding a large part of the big capitalist bourgeoisie"; this meant that "the whole bourgeoisie as a class is removed from the arena of the national struggle for liberation". The process of transition to the third stage was left discreetly vague. It was indicated that the revolutionary state of the future would not be "a purely bourgeois-democratic state", but would "represent a democratic dictatorship of the proletariat, peasantry and other exploited classes"; and the CCP was called on to "realize finally this prospect of a transition to the rails of non-capitalist development". Finally:

> It would be an error to limit the tasks of the Chinese revolution to the destruction of imperialism and the liquidation of feudal survivals on the plea that in its first stage this revolution has a petty-bourgeois character. The Chinese revolution cannot destroy imperialism without outgrowing the limits of bourgeois democracy.

Statements in the earlier part of the theses that the proletariat "be-

[119] Stalin at the eighth IKKI in May 1927 again described the anti-imperialist character of the Chinese revolution as the "fundamental difference" between it and the Russian revolution of February 1917 (Stalin, *Sochineniya*, ix, 365); for Martynov's polemic against Radek on this point see p. 757 below.

[120] The omission of the intelligentsia from the four-fold enumeration of the sixth IKKI (see p. 703 above) may have been accidental, or have reflected the unpopularity of intellectuals at this time in Comintern (see pp. 404–405 above); "the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia" was later restored to its place (Stalin, *Sochineniya*, ix, 340).

gins to play a leading part in the national-revolutionary movement", and that it "is becoming more and more the leader of the movement", gave place in a later passage to the bold claim that "the proletariat has won the hegemony". But this was quite specifically "hegemony *within* Kuomintang". The proposal that the CCP should leave Kuomintang was once more denounced as "erroneous"; on the contrary, communists should seek to enter the Canton government, in which five out of the six present commissars were members of the Kuomintang Right.[121]

In the autumn of 1926, the successes of the northern expedition made it impossible for Comintern to evade the agrarian question or to relegate it to a secondary place. On the eve of the meeting of the seventh IKKI an article by Mif in the journal of Comintern put forward a radical programme for the Chinese peasantry — the formation of peasant committees and unions, the reduction of rents, the confiscation of large estates, and the expulsion of landlords and gentry.[122] The theses of the seventh IKKI enunciated the new principle with emphasis:

> *The agrarian revolution, including confiscation and nationalization of land, is the fundamental internal, social-economic content of the new stage of the Chinese revolution.* What is fundamental at the present time is a "plebian" resolution of the agrarian question by tens and hundreds of thousands of the peasants themselves from below.

Opposition between the aims of the national and the social revolution was denied. An attempt was made to escape from the underlying dilemma by distinguishing, not only between different stages of the revolution, but between the two parts of China — territories not yet under nationalist control, where revolutionary de-

[121] For the theses see p. 731, note 118 above. The entry of communists into the Kuomintang government was apparently much debated. According to the "letter from Shanghai" of March 1927 (see p. 762, note 231 below), the central committee of the CCP in Shanghai was against entry, and dissuaded party members from taking any posts in the administration; Voitinsky also opposed it out of fear that it would provoke clashes between the CCP and the Kuomintang Right government; Borodin favoured it as "a cover for a Right policy" (L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., 1932), pp. 421–422). It was not till May 1927 that communists entered the Wuhan government (see p. 796 below).

[122] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 10–11 (68–69), 1926, pp. 26–36, No. 13 (71), pp. 20–28.

mands of the peasants could be supported and encouraged, and territories under nationalist control, where milder measures of support for the peasantry were in order, and where confiscation would be confined to "monastery and church lands and lands belonging to reactionary militarists, or to conspirators, landlords and gentry who are at war with the Kuomintang national government". An optimistic assessment was offered of the rôle of the proletariat as "the only class capable of carrying out a radical agrarian policy". But the awkwardness remained. A section of the theses on the "tactical problems of revolutionary policy in China" invoked the precedent of Brest-Litovsk, and pronounced tactics of "*tacking and manoeuvring* in face of foreign imperialism" to be "entirely permissible"; it would be foolish if the CCP "rejected *in any and every circumstance* a tactic of compromise".[123]

Study of the theses of the seventh IKKI raises in an acute form an issue which, from 1927 onwards, dogged relations between Comintern and the CCP — the constant allegation that the errors and disasters of the Chinese party were due to its failure to comply with directions received from Moscow. The allegation could be supported by selected texts of resolutions and instructions of IKKI, which had found no application in party policy. But this begged a more embarrassing question. By this time sharp differences of opinion divided the Russian party; and it was necessary for the party leadership to build up a body of doctrine on contested issues which would unite a majority of the party, and could be used to fend off attacks of the opposition. Those who drafted the pronouncements of IKKI were more preoccupied by these considerations than by the problems of the party to which the resolution related; and compromises designed to secure agreement in Moscow involved qualifications and contradictions which baffled those who sought to interpret the texts on the spot. The complexity and ambiguity of instructions emanating from IKKI often made them difficult to understand, and still more difficult to carry out.

It was therefore not surprising that the formulas of the seventh IKKI which satisfied and reconciled the disputants in Moscow were less convincing to those members of the CCP who had to grapple with the agrarian question in Wuhan. The waverings of the party central committee in July 1926, its bold pronouncements

[123] For the theses see p. 731, note 118 above.

in October, and the firm restraining hand laid by Borodin on the party conference in December,[124] all testified to the intractability of the problem. The position of Mao Tse-tung seems to have been ambivalent. Since the beginning of 1926 he had been constantly preoccupied with the plight of the Chinese peasantry.[125] In September 1926, when the nationalist armies were sweeping into central China, he published an article on "The National Revolution and the Peasant Movement", opening with a phrase which echoed Lenin's comment on the Russian revolution of 1905: "The peasant question is the central question of the national revolution". He declared that "the greatest enemy of revolution in an economically backward semi-colony is the feudal-patriarchal class in the villages". The foreign imperialists relied on the "feudal-landlord" class, and could be overthrown only by mobilizing the peasants against the warlords who were their agents. "The Chinese revolution has only this form and no other."[126] In December 1926, however, he rallied to the party line, and at a congress of worker and peasant organizations in Changsha is said to have made a dramatic gesture of renunciation: "During the course of the national revolution we do not wish to take any land for ourselves".[127]

When the text of the Chinese resolution of the seventh IKKI, with its emphatic insistence on agrarian revolution, coupled with equally firm recognition of the need for manoeuvre and compromise, finally reached Shanghai in January 1927, it caused a keen and inconclusive debate in the central committee of the CCP between those who assumed that it broadly endorsed the line hitherto pursued, and those who saw in it a demand to abandon "the united front in the countryside" for the sake of promoting

[124] See p. 722 above.

[125] See p. 712 above.

[126] See an article by S. Schram in *The Polity and Economy of China* (Tokyo, 1974), pp. 233–234. For Lenin's remark on the Russian revolution of 1905 see p. 700, note 6 above; "semi-colony" and "patriarchal" are also echoes of Lenin's vocabulary. The concluding sentence was a challenge to Plekhanov's famous peroration at the congress of the Second International in 1889: "the revolutionary movement in Russia will triumph as a workers' movement, or it will not triumph at all" (G. Plekhanov, *Izbrannye Filosofskie Proizvedeniya*, i (1956), 421). Mao had evidently been studying the Russian Marxists.

[127] *Agrarnye Problemy*, No. 2, 1927, p. 51; a Chinese source quoted in S. Schram, *Mao Tse-tung* (1966), p. 98, describes the congress as the first Hunan provincial peasant congress.

agrarian revolution.[128] Any practical effect which such radical views had on the spot must have been to intensify the suspicion and hostility felt towards the CCP, not only by Chiang Kai-shek and his supporters, but also by a part of the so-called Kuomintang Left. But no consciousness of any such complications disturbed the celebration in Moscow of the triumphal progress of the Chinese revolution.[129] Any remaining uncertainties appeared to be resolved in an authoritative article by Martynov in the Comintern journal early in 1927 on the results of the seventh IKKI. Martynov argued that the revolutionary anti-imperialist initiative of 1919 in China had come from "the industrial bourgeoisie and the bourgeois intelligentsia". The Chinese proletariat and communist party could not simply adopt the attitudes towards them which were appropriate in the Russia of 1905. While the CCP must struggle to install the revolutionary dictatorship of proletariat, peasantry and petty bourgeoisie, it must at the same time "try not to create obstacles for the revolutionary army commanded by bourgeois generals, or for the national government, but to support their revolutionary work". It was only in virtue of such support that "the national government will consistently practise a policy corresponding entirely to the interests of the workers, peasants and urban petty bourgeoisie".[130] The prevailing euphoria inspired the proceedings of the Brussels congress of the League against Imperialism in February 1927. It was attended by 25 Chinese delegates — a number exceeded only by Germany's 26;[131] and speeches by a delegate of the central committee of Kuomintang, by a representative of the All-China Labour Union, and by

[128] *Problemy Kitaya*, i (1929), 16–17. A year later Roy, with the wisdom of hindsight, claimed that the theses of the seventh IKKI were "in fact a rejection of the tactics of the central committee of the CCP as set forth in T'an P'ing-Shan's report", and "conveyed a censure of Ch'en's appraisal of the rôle of the bourgeoisie, and of his opportunist tactics in the agrarian question" (*Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, N. 38 (112), 1927, p. 17); but it is doubtful whether anyone thought in those terms at the time.

[129] A horrifying example of the complacent mood prevailing at this time on Chinese affairs was a remark made by a "Soviet expert on China" (perhaps Radek) to the German economic expert Schlesinger, reported by the latter in a letter to Dirksen of January 24, 1927: "The duration and extent of the Chinese revolution and the dimensions of the blood-bath will be determined by us" (*Auswärtiges Amt*, 4829/242489).

[130] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 8 (82), 1927, pp. 15–17.

[131] *Das Flammenzeichen vom Palais Egmont* (1927), p. 229; for this congress see pp. 296–301 above.

a general of the nationalist army, hymned in perfect harmony the struggles and the victories of the united front against imperialism.[132]

(c) *Chiang's Counter-revolution*

A sequel to the seventh IKKI was the departure from Moscow, in the new year of 1927, of a large and miscellaneous party bound via Vladivostok for China. It consisted of Roy, newly designated as a Comintern envoy, accompanied by Mif and probably other Comintern officials; a "workers' delegation" consisting of Tom Mann, Browder and Doriot, invited by Chiang Kai-shek to visit the provinces liberated by the nationalist armies; 40 or 50 Asian delegates who had attended the session of IKKI; and a number of Asian students returning from France.[133] The party reached Canton — still the safest place of entry for communists travelling to China — early in February 1927. The revolutionary reputation of Canton rested, however, on its fame as the headquarters of Sun Yat-sen and the birthplace of Kuomintang rather than on any current conditions favourable to the Left. Since the transfer of the headquarters of Kuomintang to Wuhan, and of Chiang's military headquarters to Nanchang, in the autumn of 1926, Canton had become a reactionary backwater. A new provincial government, set up in November 1926 as the result of a *coup* by the local military commander Li Chi-shen, included only two members of the Kuomintang Left, and moved progressively to the Right. A law prohibiting strikes and the carrying of weapons by workers, and imposing compulsory arbitration in industrial disputes, was promulgated on January 5, 1927; as the journal of Comintern coyly confessed, it contained provisions which "limit the freedom of strikes more than is required by the interests of defence in a period of revolutionary war".[134]

Nor did the workers' movement in Canton provide a promising

[132] *Das Flammenzeichen vom Palais Egmont* (1927), pp. 19–22, 28–29, 29–31.

[133] The composition of the party is recorded in *Political Science Quarterly*, lxxix, No. 2, July 1964, p. 311.

[134] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 8 (82), 1927, p. 11; for earlier legislation to curb labour unrest see p. 718 above. Ch'en Tu-hsiu, in his letter of December 10, 1929 (see p. 906, note 434 below), recalled that the CCP journal criticized "the suppression of all labour movements in the rear [of the northern expedition] and was attacked by Kuomintang for so doing".

model or focus for the rise of proletarian revolution. South China possessed none of the large-scale modern machine production of Shanghai and central China. The situation in Canton was described by Dalin, who had known the city since 1922:

> The worker here is a craftsman, an apprentice, a hand-worker. The enterprises are as a rule small hand-working enterprises. Side by side with them are very large workshops of huge dimensions. Near Canton there are scattered silk-working enterprises, where tens of thousands of people work, but they are all hand-workers. There are no factory workers here, and the coolie is the typical representative of the Canton proletariat.[135]

The Canton trade unions were divided between two groups, revolutionary or Left, and moderate or "reformist", the former vaguely affiliated to the All-China General Labour Union, the latter to a Labour Federation. Though the revolutionaries claimed 139 unions and the moderates only 39, these figures meant little, since very few of the unions had any effective organization or regular membership. The reformist federation was dominated by the Mechanics' Union, composed of metal workers who were the highest paid workers in Canton. It was described as "the strongest single union in Canton", and "the most conservative of all the unions", being bitterly opposed to the communists. It consisted mainly of skilled workers and artisans in the metal-working trades, with a sprinkling of higher-grade technicians, and was said to be the only union which retained something of "the old guild outlook". It was persistently hostile to the embryonic mass unions of the Left, notably the seamen's and railwaymen's unions; and, when cooperation was attempted, it soon collapsed.[136] A workers'

[135] S. Dalin, *V Ryadakh Kitaiskoi Revolyutsii* (1926), p. 73; for Dalin see p. 755 below.

[136] *China Year Book*, 1928 (Tientsin, n.d.), pp. 1038–1041, quoting a report of July 1927; S. Dalin, *Ocherki Revolyutsii v Kitae* (n.d.), p. 87; J. Chesneaux, *The Chinese Labour Movement, 1919–1927* (1968), pp. 164, 295, 303–305, 404. Bubnov, when he was in Canton in March 1926, rebuked the numerous but weak revolutionary unions for "inability or unwillingness to work with the reactionary-minded trade unions, especially with the reformist Mechanics' Union" (A. Cherepanov, *Severnyi Pokhod* (1968), pp. 85–86). An article in *Bol'shevik*, No. 21, November 15, 1927, p. 69, mentioned the existence of the "reformist" Mechanics' Union and its opposition to the "revolutionary" unions, but betrayed no knowledge of the weakness of the latter.

council was reported to have been formed with communist leaders, and to have been affiliated both to the workers' section of Kuomintang and to Profintern;[137] but nothing is known of its activities.

The delegates from Moscow, who spent two or three weeks in Canton, and enjoyed the compromising hospitality of Li Chi-shen,[138] could do nothing to improve the lot of the Canton workers. They were warmly received, with much speech-making, by the provincial administration and local trade union leaders, and visited the Whampoa Military Academy, where 5000 students cheered and shouted international slogans.[139] Roy busied himself ineffectively with the confused politics of Canton, and persuaded the local communists to issue on February 27, 1927, an appeal "to all popular organizations to rally round Kuomintang with even greater solidarity and greater faith than ever before", and a petition to Wang Ching-wei "to return to his native land at once".[140] Then the whole party proceeded on the long overland trek to the north. Halting at Nanchang on March 26, 1927, the workers' delegates were received, not by Chiang himself, but by one of his generals, who entertained them at a banquet; but they also attended meetings of the garrison and of the trade unions, where protests were voiced against Chiang's reactionary policies. They arrived in Wuhan on March 31, 1927.[141]

[137] V. Vishnyakova-Akimova, *Dva Goda v Vosstavshem Kitae* (1965), p. 262.

[138] Doriot had later to defend himself against the charge of accepting the general's hospitality at a time when the latter was oppressing the workers (*Humanité*, December 22, 1927).

[139] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 23, February 25, 1927, p. 469, No. 40, April 14, 1927, p. 836, No. 48, May 6, 1927, pp. 994–995; *Labour Monthly*, No. 7, July 1927, p. 423. At this time 90 per cent of the cadets at the Whampoa academy were said to support the Left.

[140] *M. N. Roy's Mission to China*, ed. R. North and X. Eudin (1963), pp. 150–155; Roy later claimed that the purpose of the request for Wang's return was "to rally the bulk of the Kuomintang membership in the struggle against Chiang Kai-shek's Napoleonism" (M. N. Roy, *My Experiences in China* (2nd ed. Calcutta, 1945), p. 36).

[141] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 57, June 3, 1927, p. 1231. Doriot on his return to Paris addressed a meeting of 15,000 workers on June 17, 1927, at the Cirque d'Hiver (*Humanité*, June 18, 1927); and *Humanité* from June 25, 1927, onwards carried the story of his journey in more than 20 instalments. Browder's account of the mission dated Hankow April 10, 1927, (*Labour Monthly*, No. 7, 1927, pp. 415–425) contains some interesting points; Mann's account (*ibid.* No. 8, 1927, pp. 483–489) adds little.

While Comintern aspired to shape the course of the revolution in China by the drafting of resolutions and the despatch of more and more envoys, events in China aggravated the increasing friction within Kuomintang. The ferment generated by the arrival in Wuhan of the political headquarters of the revolution culminated on January 3, 1927, in a mass demonstration of workers who, in a frenzied assault on foreign imperialism, overran the British concession in Hankow and drove out the British authorities; and this spontaneous and entirely successful *coup*, confirming belief in the revolutionary spirit and power of the workers, brought fresh encouragement to Borodin and to the newly established authorities in Wuhan.[142] The impression that "the working class in the big cities was more active in attacks on foreign capital than on native capital"[143] also perhaps supported the conclusion that this was, in its present phase, a national rather than a proletarian revolution. The joint council which exercised authority in Wuhan[144] quickly found itself at loggerheads with Chiang Kai-shek, who would have liked to move the effective seat of party and government to his military headquarters at Nanchang. A visit by Chiang, accompanied by Blyukher, to Wuhan in the middle of January 1927 merely intensified the friction.[145] The existence of two rival centres at Wuhan and Nanchang, the former claiming to represent the tradition of Kuomintang and the heritage of Sun Yat-sen, and enthusiastically supported by Borodin, the latter the seat of military power, produced an unstable equilibrium. Discord arose over military plans. It might have seemed natural for Chiang, having brought his armies so far, to pursue the advance towards Peking — the long-announced goal of the "northern expedition". But this

[142] For a description by a CCP eye-witness see Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, i (1971), 563–566; as the central committee of the CCP later admitted in its circular letter of August 7, 1927 (see p. 827 below), it "was not only not directed by the party's leading organ, but was even criticized by the central committee after the event"; see also *Problemy Kitaya*, i (1929), 14–15, and L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., 1932), p. 396.

[143] L. Delyusin, *Agrarno-Krest'yanskii Vopros v Politike KPK* (1972), p. 322.

[144] For Chiang's attitude see pp. 720–721 above.

[145] V. Vishnyakova-Akimova, *Dva Goda v Vosstavshem Kitae* (1965), p. 311. Blyukher still enjoyed Chiang's confidence, and was a popular figure in Nanchang; another Soviet adviser has recorded the ovations accorded to him by the population when he appeared on the street (*Istoricheskii Arkhiv*, No. 4, 1959, p. 125).

meant a direct challenge to Chang Tso-lin; and Chiang found greater attraction in the project of an eastward move down the Yangtze, where only the weak forces of a minor warlord, Sun Ch'uan-fang, formerly associated with Wu Pei-fu, but now a *protégé* of Chang, stood between him and Shanghai. To this course, carrying implications of a truce or a tacit bargain with Chang, the representatives of the CCP and Kuomintang in Wuhan, as well as Borodin, were unalterably opposed. Blyukher, prompted by Borodin, did his best to dissuade Chiang from the enterprise.[146] Chiang at this time developed a profound animosity to Borodin, whom he held responsible, not without reason, for the recalcitrance of the Wuhan group. He first proposed that Borodin should return to Moscow to report, and a few days later openly called for his resignation, suggesting that Radek or Karakhan might replace him.[147] Friction also arose between Borodin and Voitinsky, who after a visit to Wuhan in January 1927 is said to have telegraphed to Moscow advising Borodin's recall on the ground that his presence was prejudicial to friendly relations with Chiang.[148] Nor could tactful utterances allay the perpetual tensions of the agrarian problem. Borodin in a speech to the joint council of January 31, 1927, is said to have denounced the shootings of landlords by peasants as "against the law", but called on the local authorities and the courts to pay more attention to the demands of the peasants.[149]

[146] A wealth of evidence of friction between Wuhan and Nanchang is collected in *Documents on Communism, Nationalism, and Foreign Advisers in China*, ed. Wilbur and How (1956), pp. 381–384.

[147] A. Cherepanov, *Severnyi Pokhod* (1968), pp. 215–216. According to a dubious statement attributed to Chiang in the "letter from Shanghai" (see p. 762, note 231 below), he disapproved of Blyukher as well as of Borodin, since both wanted the communists to remain in Kuomintang, and would have preferred Radek or Karakhan as supposed representatives of the Left (L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., 1932), pp. 398–399); Borodin made a public speech deprecating "personal dictatorship", which he afterwards regretted as an indiscretion (*ibid.* p. 401).

[148] *Ibid.* p. 400; for this quarrel, which seems to have been largely personal, see Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, i (1971), 570–571. Voitinsky was more volatile in his opinions, or more of a time-server, than Borodin; originally (1922–1924) mistrustful of the Kuomintang connexion, he became (1925–1926) its most fervent advocate, but later (1927) was less optimistic than Borodin about the prospect of restraining Chiang (*Vidnye Kommunisty-Uchastniki Kitaiskoi Revolyutsii* (1970), pp. 73–75, 81). He was more successful than Borodin in rehabilitating himself in 1930 (*Problemy Kitaya*, iv–v (1930), 99–104).

[149] Quoted in L. Delyusin, *Agrarno-Krest'yanskii Vopros v Politike KPK*

Awareness in the ranks of the CCP of the impending danger of a rift in Kuomintang was blunted by total inability to find means of averting it. Ch'en Tu-hsiu, in the CCP journal of March 1, 1927, attacked the die-hards of Kuomintang who wanted to break with the workers and peasants and with the USSR, and to come to terms with Chang Tso-lin. But he did not name Chiang, and had no action to suggest.[150] It must have been about this time that Ch'en sent his lieutenant P'eng Shu-chih to Wuhan to consult the authorities there "on how to attack the forces of Chiang Kai-shek"[151] — a gesture of political naivety born of desperation. In Moscow the party central committee, in a resolution of March 3, 1927, expressed its anxiety in a series of rhetorical injunctions. It was "indispensable to strengthen the work of Kuomintang and communist cells in the army", and to "strive for *the arming of workers and peasants*". Since the Chinese revolution, thanks to "a regrouping of class forces", was passing through a critical period, the CCP should expose "the treacherous and reactionary policy of the Rightists in Kuomintang", and mobilize the masses round Kuomintang and the communist party".[152] The apprehensions were vague and ill-defined. The instructions showed little understanding of what was practicable on the spot. But the Kuomintang Left was no more realistic in its assessment of the courses open to it. For political leadership it seems to have counted on the vacillating Wang Ching-wei, now on his way back to China from his temporary exile in Paris, and for military leadership on T'ang Sheng-chih, a local general who chafed under Chiang Kai-shek's dictatorial command, but had no greater leanings than Chiang to the revolutionary camp.[153]

Early in March 1927 the Kuomintang central committee held a session in Wuhan, which was boycotted by Chiang and the

(1972), pp. 246–247, from a Chinese source which presumably had access to Kuomintang archives.

[150] Quoted in K. Radek, *Izmena Kitaiskoi Krupnoi Burzhuazii Natsional'nomu Dvizheniyu* (see p. 813, note 148 below), p. 12.

[151] See Ch'en's letter of December 10, 1929 (see p. 906, note 434 below).

[152] The resolution was never published in full; a long passage was quoted by Stalin in his speech to the party central committee on August 1, 1927 (Stalin, *Sochineniya*, x, 20). Shorter extracts from the same passage appeared in Stalin's theses of April 1927 (*ibid.* ix, 224–225; for these theses see p. 763 below), and in Bukharin's report to the eighth IKKI in May 1927 (*Die Chinesische Frage auf dem 8. Plenum* (1928), p. 17).

[153] For T'ang see p. 776 below.

Rightists, and represented the peak of communist influence in the Left Kuomintang. It decided, in accordance with the resolution of the seventh IKKI of November 1926, to include two communist ministers in national government — a pledge of closer co-operation between Kuomintang and the CCP. Responding to the call of the seventh IKKI for emphasis on agrarian revolution, it decided to set up a ministry of agriculture in the national government, and adopted a resolution on the peasantry more radical than anything that had yet issued from Kuomintang, together with a manifesto to the peasants. Finally, it drew up a new statute, which abolished the old military and political councils, of which Chiang was president, and provided for the election of a politburo of 9 members and 6 candidates, and a new military council of 16 members. Both Chiang and Wang Ching-wei were elected to the presidiums of these bodies. Chiang kept his own counsel, and politely proffered his resignation.[154] He was perhaps by this time convinced that communist opposition to his designs was both implacable and impotent.

A steady flow of unofficial emissaries from Moscow bore witness to the widespread concern about events in central China as well as to an unduly simple faith in the possibility of influencing and controlling them. The workers' delegation, newly arrived in Wuhan, attended a session of the political council of Kuomintang on April 2, 1927, addressed a mass meeting of workers on the following day, addressed a further meeting of 100,000 workers in Changsha on April 6, 1927, and issued an appeal for "*immediate action by the international proletariat*", and appeals to British, French and American soldiers and sailors in China not to fire on the Chinese people, but to fraternize with them.[155] A meeting at the Wuhan Political–Military Academy on April 8, 1927, ended with shouts of "Down with Chiang Kai-shek".[156] Secret informers of

[154] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 34, March 29, 1927, p. 733; T'ang Leang-li, *The Inner History of the Chinese Revolution* (1930), pp. 264–265; V. Vishnyakova-Akimova, *Dva Goda v Vosstavshem Kitae* (1965), pp. 327–328. For the resolution and manifesto on the peasants see p. 785 below; and for the appointment of the two ministers pp. 796–797 below.

[155] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 36, April 5, 1927, p. 771; No. 37, April 8, 1927, p. 798; No. 60, June 9, 1927, pp. 1274–1275. For protests by the CPGB against the despatch of British troops to China see pp. 341–342 above; for a similar protest from the International Propaganda Committee of the transport workers see *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 13, February 1, 1927, p. 249.

[156] *Labour Monthly*, No. 7, July 1927, p. 424.

the Indian Government did not fail to report a meeting held on April 13, 1927, to commemorate the anniversary of the Amritsar massacre, at which Tom Mann and Borodin made speeches.[157] Kuznetsova, the wife of Voitinsky, arrived as an emissary of Profintern to organize the women textile workers of Wuhan.[158] Even cultural propaganda was not neglected. Members of the Isadora Duncan ballet school from Moscow gave performances in Hankow which led to scandalous reports of a parade of naked dancers.[159] The well-advertised Soviet presence in Wuhan was unlikely to mitigate Chiang Kai-shek's suspicions or to relieve his annoyance.

An unexpected and hitherto unsuspected factor strengthened Chiang's position and facilitated his change of front. The British Government, impressed by the rapid triumph of Chiang's armies and the collapse of any other authority in central China, had quickly decided that it might be more prudent to propitiate the nationalists than to fight them. On December 18, 1926, with the new nationalist authorities established in Wuhan, it addressed a note to the other Washington treaty Powers proposing unconditional approval of certain tariff increases foreshadowed in the Washington treaty, and negotiations for the progressive abandonment of the so-called "unequal treaties";[160] and the newly appointed British minister in Peking arrived post-haste in Wuhan, about the same time as Borodin, to open friendly discussions with Eugene Chen, now foreign minister in the nationalist government.[161] These overtures did not save the British concession in Hankow from being overrun, on January 3, 1927, by Chinese workers demonstrating their hatred of imperialism.[162] But the sequel was surprising and significant. No retaliatory action was taken. Another British diplomat from Peking arrived in Wuhan to conduct negotiations with Eugene Chen; and these culminated in the signature on February 19, 1927, of an agreement for the sur-

[157] Government of India, *Communism in India, 1924–1927* (1927), p. 221.

[158] V. Vishnyakova-Akimova, *Dva Goda v Vosstavshem Kitae* (1965), pp. 320–321.

[159] *Ibid.* pp. 321–323, 353.

[160] A. J. Toynbee, *Survey of International Affairs, 1926* (1928), pp. 488–494; the text was released to the press, but not published officially.

[161] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 760–761, 795.

[162] See p. 740 above.

render of the Hankow concession and its return to Chinese jurisdiction.[163]

These hints were not lost on Chiang. Great Britain was not the only imperialist Power which might be amenable to the idea of a *détente* with the nationalists. From the autumn of 1926, Chiang's diary recorded increasingly frequent secret contacts with Chang Tso-lin, the northern warlord and *protégé* of Japan;[164] and reports of these overtures soon began to circulate in communist circles.[165] The basis of such an understanding could only be an agreement by Chiang not to impinge on Chang's sphere of influence in the north in return for Chang's willingness, implicitly endorsed by his Japanese patrons, to connive in his occupation of Chekiang and Shanghai, and to leave Sun Ch'uan-fang to his fate. Some time early in 1927 the dazzling prospect confronted Chiang Kai-shek of realizing his personal ambitions and reuniting southern and central China with the collusion of the imperialist Powers, and at the expense of the communists, Soviet advisers and other champions of the Left who had long been a thorn in his side. Chiang was a cunning man who burned no boats prematurely. While increasingly impatient of the advisers, he continued to protest his warm attachment to the Soviet Union. He had effusive words of welcome for Wang Ching-wei, who arrived in Shanghai from Moscow on April 1, 1927.[166] Policies and attitudes did not change overnight. Chiang was still concerned to dispel the image of China as an "unequal" Power, a prey to foreign tutelage and exploitation. With tensions still acute within Kuomintang, he could not afford to leave to the Wuhan government a monopoly of the campaign against foreign imperialism. Anti-imperialist slogans were still in use; and outrages against the persons and property of

[163] A similar agreement for the return of the concession in Kiukiang was signed on March 2, 1927; for these agreements see *China Year Book, 1928* (Tientsin, n.d.), pp. 739–742.

[164] *Documents on Communism, Nationalism, and Soviet Advisers in China*, ed. Wilbur and How (1956), pp. 373–374.

[165] A statement drafted by Roy and published by the Canton committee of the CCP at the end of February 1927 referred to rumours of collusion between the armies of Chiang Kai-shek and Chang Tso-lin, which were to be "flatly repudiated"; an article by Roy expressing these apprehensions in far franker terms was not published (*M. N. Roy's Mission to China*, ed. R. North and X. Eudin (1963), pp. 153, 156–159).

[166] These points are documented from Chiang's speeches in *Documents on Communism, Nationalism, and Soviet Advisers in China*, ed. Wilbur and How (1956), pp. 387–388.

foreigners perpetrated by nationalist troops continued to provoke reprisals, as well as indignant protests by British residents against the lenient attitude of the British Government.[167] But Chiang's transition from one side to the other was effectively under way in the spring months of 1927.[168]

The illusion that the advance of the nationalist armies on Shanghai was an invitation to the workers to revolt against their foreign employers was not yet shattered. On February 17, 1927, Sun Ch'uan-fang's forces were defeated by Chiang Kai-shek at Hangchow. Two days later the Shanghai General Labour Union proclaimed a general strike in Shanghai.[169] Chiang made no move, and the strike was put down, with the usual quota of executions, by Sun's forces which still held the city. An attempt on February 22, 1927, at an armed rising was also crushed.[170] Blyukher, who

[167] For detailed and documented records of such disorders at the time of the capture of Nanking on March 24, 1927, see *China Year Book, 1928* (Tientsin, n.d.), pp. 723–726; A. J. Toynbee, *Survey of International Affairs 1927* (1929), pp. 382–384; A. Smedley, *The Great Road* (1956), p. 189 (the CCP version). British and American warships fired by way of reprisal on the city with many Chinese casualties; this was denounced in *Pravda*, March 27, 1927, as "a terrible and atrocious crime", and was the subject of a protest by IKKI (*Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 34, March 29, 1927, pp. 725–726). By May 9, 1927, Chamberlain had convinced himself, and informed the House of Commons, that the responsibility for the "Nanking outrages" rested with the "Third International", which wanted "to embroil Chiang Kai-shek with the foreign Powers" (*House of Commons: Fifth Series*, ccvi, 19).

[168] Right leaders of Kuomintang were quoted as saying that "our most important task is the northern expedition — the slogan 'Down with imperialism' should not be used at present", and that "the great Powers are ready to recognize the national government — we must stop the anti-imperialist movement, in order to remove the obstacles to recognition" (*Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 8 (82), 1927, p. 12).

[169] For the proclamation calling the strike see J. Chesneaux, *Les Syndicats Chinois, 1919–1927: Répertoire, Textes, Presse* (1965), pp. 267–271; though it contained workers' demands, it was in the main a demonstration of support for the nationalist armies. The executive organ of the General Labour Union at this time had 41 members with a presidium of 7; it represented 600,000 workers (200,000 of them textile workers) organized in 17 unions (*Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 40, April 14, 1927, p. 835).

[170] J. Chesneaux, *The Chinese Labour Movement, 1919–1927* (1968), pp. 354–355; this was referred to as the second rising, the first being an equally abortive attempt — also a demonstration against Sun and in favour of the nationalists — in October 1926, the third the more serious *coup* of March 21, 1927 (see p. 747 below). The CCP played no part in organizing the strike, and is said not to have been aware of it in advance. The party's attitude to the rising of February 22, 1927, was hesitant and equivocal (*Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, xiii (1928), 8–11); a claim that Chou En-lai organized the strike

had a realistic appreciation of the danger, telegraphed from Nanchang to Borodin on February 25, 1927, pointing out the importance of a prompt advance on Shanghai, where the striking workers might otherwise be destroyed; he made it clear, however, that this reason should not be disclosed to Chiang's generals, who might prefer to see the Shanghai workers' movement crushed before their arrival on the scene.[171] An uneasy truce followed, during which authority in the city outside the international settlement and the French concession gradually broke down. On March 21, 1927, when Chiang at length began to move advanced detachments into the outskirts of the city, the General Labour Union declared another general strike, which involved 600,000 or 800,000 workers. This time a take-over of power was plainly envisaged. A provisional municipal government, nominally responsible to Kuomintang, and with strong communist backing, was set up.[172] Detachments of armed workers appeared in the streets. The first nationalist troops to arrive outside the city sympathized with the workers. *Pravda* on March 22, 1927, proudly proclaimed that "the keys of Shanghai have been handed to the Canton army by the victorious workers"; and all concerned hailed Chiang as the national liberator.[173] On March 23, 1927, the presidium of IKKI telegraphed to the central committee of the CCP its congratulations on the victory in Shanghai.[174]

The reversal of fortune which followed these extravagant displays of optimism was so staggering that attempts were made to salve the reputation of the Soviet leaders for sagacity by pretend-

(A. Smedley, *The Great Road* (1956), p. 188) is apocryphal. For a later account of the "three Shanghai risings" see *Problemy Kitaya*, ii (1930), 63–86.

[171] A. Cherepanov, *Severnyi Pokhod* (1968), p. 238.

[172] According to Ch'en's letter of December 10, 1929 (see p. 906, note 434 below), Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai, now one of the top CCP leaders, was concerned in "the selection of the municipal government ... and how to unite the petty bourgeoisie and the middling and small traders to fight the big bourgeoisie".

[173] J. Chesneaux, *The Chinese Labour Movement, 1919–1927* (1968), pp. 357–358. For an account of the situation by a Soviet observer see L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., 1932), pp. 269–270); for the picture as seen through western eyes see A. J. Toynbee, *Survey of International Affairs, 1927* (1929), pp. 370–374.

[174] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 33, March 25, 1927, p. 712; an article in *Novyi Vostok*, xvi–xvii (1927), p. xxiv, hailed "the joyful news of the conquest of Shanghai".

ing that Chiang's change of front had been foreseen and discounted in Moscow. The conviction that the revolutionary bourgeoisie, having achieved its own ends, would betray the cause of the revolutionary proletariat, had long been a commonplace of Bolshevik thought. At the end of 1926 a Soviet expert, reviewing "the class struggle in China" in the journal *Novyi Vostok*, had conclusively diagnosed the essence of the crisis:

> The circumstance that the Chinese bourgeoisie, at the moment of the upsurge of the national-revolutionary movement "platonically" forms a bloc with the proletariat, changes nothing in the class character of the bourgeoisie or in its relations with its antithesis, the proletariat.... The Chinese bourgeoisie is ready to "sympathize" with the struggle of the masses of the people against foreign capital on the irreversible condition that the exploitation of the proletariat by the Chinese bourgeoisie itself shall not be curbed.[175]

But, whatever the theoretical knowledge at their disposal, none of the Soviet leaders or officials seems for a moment to have suspected that Chiang was about to conform to these bourgeois-national stereotypes. The illusion of the fundamentally revolutionary character of Kuomintang still persisted.[176] The resolution of the party central committee of March 3, 1927, while it denounced "the treacherous and reactionary policy of the Rightists in Kuomintang", expressed unqualified belief in the capacity of Kuomintang and the CCP to "mobilize the masses".[177] Faith in Chiang's personal commitment to the Soviet or communist cause had been tarnished after March 20, 1926. But confidence was still expressed that "the revolutionary pressure from below is so strong that Chiang Kai-shek ... is compelled to manoeuvre, to pay homage to the principles of the revolution, to submit to the leadership of the Kuomintang mass party".[178] An article written before the Nanking disorders of March 24–25, 1927, but published in *Pravda* only on April 10, 1927, assumed that "the taking of

[175] *Novyi Vostok*, XV (1926), 97.

[176] Of 278 delegates at the second congress of Kuomintang in January 1926, 168 belonged to the Left, 45 to the Right, and 65 to the Centre; of 250,000 members, 150,000 were said to belong to the Left, 30,000 to the Right, and 70,000 were soldiers (*Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 8 (82), 1927, pp. 9–10); these statistics presumably impressed those who quoted and read them.

[177] See p. 742 above.

[178] *Pravda*, March 16, 1927.

Shanghai" would lead to the satisfaction of workers' demands, and that Chang Tso-lin was the enemy against whom operations were being conducted.[179] Wittfogel, a German communist expert on China, in an article written for the second anniversary of Sun Yat-sen's death on March 15, 1927, but actually published after the Shanghai *coup*, observed that "Kuomintang, in accordance with Sun Yat-sen's programme, is striving at present to free China from the militarist generals".[180]

Nor was the CCP any more sensitive than the leaders or experts in Moscow to the premonitions of disaster, or better equipped to avert or lessen its impact. A later critic attributed the passivity of the party to the adoption by it of "a theory which denied in practice the rôle of the proletariat as leader", and which was "entirely the fruit of the petty bourgeois elements of Kuomintang". After the failure of the CCP to participate significantly in the abortive rising of the Shanghai workers in February 1927, a group in the party came out in favour of "decisive support of the revolution". But the response was equivocal:

> The party leadership was against revolution, against a decisive struggle with the Right, and therefore against raising the slogan of the hegemony of the proletariat.... Nevertheless, the leadership was obliged to take decisions with which, in essence, it did not agree.

In the March risings, no contact was made with the army, and "our party did nothing to organize the mass rising in any real way". The one firm order given by the party, on direct instructions from Moscow, was to collect and conceal the arms in the possession of the workers. The workers parted reluctantly with their arms on the condition that they were stored at trade union headquarters: these were the first buildings to be seized and occupied by the troops in the subsequent *coup* of April 12, 1927.[181]

[179] For this article see p. 760 below.

[180] *Die Internationale*, viii, No. 8, April 15, 1927, p. 245.

[181] *Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, xiii (1928), pp. 6–22. This article was written some months after the event for the obvious purpose of discrediting Ch'en Tu-hsiu and the other leaders; but the main facts seem broadly correct. Bukharin in his speech of April 4, 1927, cautiously defended the instruction "to hide the arms, not to accept battle, and thus not to permit oneself to be disarmed" (N. Bukharin, *Problemy Kitaiskoi Revolyutsii* (1927), p. 13; for this speech see p. 759 note 217 below). The order to "hide the arms, not to give them up" was commended in Mandalyan's *Pravda* article of July 16, 1927

A confused situation was rapidly cleared up when Chiang's forces took possession of the city, and still more when Chiang himself arrived on March 26, 1927. Both the powers of the provisional municipal government and the legality of the workers' militia were called in question. More or less disciplined armies did not fraternize easily with disorderly guerrillas or demonstrating workers. Even now the Shanghai General Labour Union seems to have had no inkling of what was in store. On April 4, 1927, it issued a manifesto proclaiming that "we have won a great victory, but it is only a first step to final victory"; the fear expressed was of foreign intervention.[182] But Chiang proved amenable to appeals made in the name of law and order; and it was soon apparent that he had no use either for communists or for revolutionary workers. Communists and trade union agitators were rounded up to the keen satisfaction of prosperous Chinese merchants and of foreigners entrenched in their concessions. Then at dawn on April 12, 1927, the signal was given; and an indiscriminate massacre of real or suspected communists and of leading members of workers' organizations went on throughout the city. A formal decree disbanded the General Labour Union, and its leader, Wang Shu-hua, was tortured and executed.[183] Having thus established his claims to the favour of the Chinese bourgeoisie and of the foreign Powers, Chiang set up at Nanking on April 18, 1927, a new nationalist government in opposition to the rump government in Wuhan. His abandonment of the revolutionary cause, and his counter-revolutionary status, could no longer be disguised.

(see p. 815 below); it was cited by Ch'en with indignation in his letter of December 10, 1929 (see p. 906, note 434 below), and frequently mentioned in later controversy. When the trade union buildings and the arms were seized on April 12, 1927, the CCP sent a delegation of workers to the authorities to protest and to demand the return of the arms, the only result of which was that the delegates were at once arrested and shot (*Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, xiii (1928), 21).

[182] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 37, April 8, 1927, p. 794; *Pravda*, April 2, 1927, still feared British military action against Chiang.

[183] These events were described in a protest of April 15, 1927, from the Shanghai General Labour Union to the central committee of Kuomintang and the Wuhan government, accusing Chiang of "capital crimes" and imploring aid for "the 800,000 oppressed comrades in Shanghai who remain faithful to the revolution" (J. Chesneaux, *Les Syndicates Chinois, 1919–1927: Répertoire, Textes, Presse* (1965), pp. 276–281; *Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, ix (December 1927), 45–57; for a further appeal see *ibid.* ix, 71–73). For Wang Shu-hua, a former student and a Moscow-trained communist, see. J. Chesneaux, *The Chinese Labour Movement, 1919–1927* (1968), p. 282.

Meanwhile fresh blows had fallen on Soviet interests and prestige in China. Since April 1926 Peking had been under the indirect but effective control of Chang Tso-lin, whose position in Manchuria made him the implacable enemy of the Soviet Government;[184] and relations between Moscow and the puppet régime in Peking were confined to the periodical delivery of fruitless protests against Chang's high-handed actions on the Chinese Eastern Railway.[185] It was doubtless owing to Chang's renewed pressure that Karakhan was recalled to Moscow in September 1926.[186] During the winter of 1926–1927 the total collapse of any central authority in northern and central China, together with the growing hostility to Russians and communists, further stimulated by the western Powers, made the situation of Soviet citizens and representatives in China precarious. On February 28, 1927, a Soviet ship, the *Pamyat' Lenina*, travelling up the Yangtze to Wuhan was seized by a local warlord in league with a group of Russian *émigrés*;[187] and the whole Soviet crew, as well as Borodin's wife and three Soviet couriers who were passengers on the ship, were placed under arrest, and removed to Tsinan. A flood of Soviet protests to the impotent Peking government[188] proved ineffectual. Borodin's wife and the three couriers were transferred some weeks later to Peking, where they were interrogated about the contents of their diplomatic mail, and finally released in July 1927. The 47 members of the crew were incarcerated for many months.[189]

The second assault on Soviet citizens was more serious and significant, and took place on the direct initiative of Chang Tso-lin, who dominated the Peking government, and with the connivance of the diplomatic corps. On April 6, 1927, the Peking

[184] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 788–789.

[185] See, for example, *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, ix (1964), 115–116.

[186] For earlier demands for Karakhan's recall see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 771, 788; he left Peking on September 10, 1926, and arrived in Moscow on October 12 (*Izvestiya*, September 10, October 13, 1926).

[187] A large number of Russian *émigrés* were scattered over the treaty ports, most of them living in great poverty; of 25,000 foreigners in Shanghai 15,000 were said to be Russian (*Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 31, March 18, 1927, p. 666).

[188] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, x (1965), 74, 80–81, 101, 111–114.

[189] *China Year Book, 1928* (Tientsin, n.d.), pp. 789–792; *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 48, May 6, 1927, p. 994; No. 64, June 21, 1927, p. 1350; No. 66, June 28, 1927, p. 1398; No. 71, July 15, 1927, p. 1513. The crew was not released till January 5, 1928 (see p. 896 below).

police raided a number of buildings in the legation quarter belonging to the Soviet embassy, including the offices of the military attaché (though not the embassy building itself),[190] and arrested a number of Soviet citizens (of whom 15 were detained in custody), as well as 30 or more Chinese, employed there; the latter included Li Ta-chao and 19 other leading Chinese communists, who were summarily executed some days later — apparently with great brutality. A hoard of confidential documents were seized.[191] Vigorous diplomatic protests, notably a long note of April 9, 1927, from Litvinov to the Chinese chargé d'affaires in Moscow, were met by the charge that the premises had been used to shelter members of Kuomintang and the CCP engaged in subversive activities against the régime: it was admitted that the raid had been carried out on the orders of Chang Tso-lin and with the permission of the diplomatic corps.[192] On April 16, 1927, the Soviet chargé d'affaires reported that the British legation had built a mound behind the wall separating it from the Soviet legation, and posted soldiers on it to observe what went on in the Soviet compound.[193] Litvinov, in his protest note of April 9, 1927, had announced that, in default of a withdrawal of Chinese troops and police from the Soviet premises and a return of the seized documents and other property, the Soviet diplomatic mission would be withdrawn, leaving only consular staff in Peking. On April 22, 1927, he informed the chargé d'affaires that, Soviet demands having been refused or ignored, this step would now be taken;[194] and the Soviet chargé d'affaires and his staff left Peking a few days

[190] Primakov, visiting Peking in June 1925, noted that, while the American legation in Peking was guarded by two armed sentries standing in front of massive metal gates, the Soviet embassy had only two Chinese doorkeepers in black robes (V. Primakov, *Zapiski Volontera* (1967), p. 75).

[191] *China Year Book, 1928* (Tientsin, n.d.), pp. 792–793; for the documents see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 693, note 4.

[192] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, x (1965), 141–143, 149–152, 631, note 30. Eugene Chen telegraphed from Hankow to Karakhan in Moscow expressing indignation at the outrage (*ibid.* x, 152); Chiang, on the eve of the Shanghai massacre, sent a similar telegram to the Soviet chargé d'affaires (*Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 39, April 12, 1927, p. 819; this item, also quoted in *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 16 (90), 1927, p. 3, is omitted from the official collection of documents). A circular telegram from Comintern to communist parties described the raid as "a conspiracy organized by Great Britain to provoke war with the USSR" (*Kommunisticheskii Internatsional: Kratkii Istoricheskii Ocherk* (1969), p. 278).

[193] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, x (1965), 167.

[194] *Ibid.* x, 169–170.

later. *Pravda*, in a leading article of April 30, 1927, described the murder of the arrested Chinese communists as a crime, not of Chang alone, but of "international imperialism", and compared it with the murder of Liebknecht and Luxemburg, and the atrocities of the Horthy, Mussolini and Zankow régimes. The prompt publication in English and Japanese of alleged selections from the seized documents indicated the eagerness of the Peking government and of its foreign backers to bring discredit on the communist movement and the Soviet Government. These events, coinciding in time with Chiang Kai-shek's treachery at Shanghai, completed the defeat and humiliation of the Soviet and communist cause in China.

(*d*) *Rifts in Moscow*

The disaster at Shanghai, even more than the Peking outrage, was an almost intolerable blow to the party leaders in Moscow, especially since the fiasco of their policy in China made them vulnerable to the shafts of the opposition. For some days they evaded the issue. When Stalin, in an address to the sixth Komsomol conference on March 29, 1927, with the Shanghai situation already critical, broke his four months' silence on Chinese affairs, he spoke mainly of the Nanking shootings of the past few days, which he attributed to a determination of the imperialists to pass "from armed peace to armed war against the Chinese people". He still placed his hopes in "a new consolidation of the forces of Kuomintang" and a fresh move to the Left. He barely referred to Shanghai, did not mention either the CCP or Chiang Kai-shek, and ended with a jibe at "the wise men of the conservative camp".[195] A resolution of the conference denounced "the bloody provocation of Anglo-American imperialism at Nanking", which would "still further strengthen the Chinese revolution by uniting the broadest strata of the Chinese people round Kuomintang".[196] Two days later Trotsky delivered his first broadside on China in the form of a memorandum to the Politburo, which was the starting-point of prolonged and bitter strife between the majority and the opposition.

[195] Stalin, *Sochineniya*, ix, 198–202; for the Nanking incident see p. 746, note 167 above.

[196] *VLKSM v Rezolyutsiyakh* (1929), p. 282; for this conference see Vol. 2, p. 166.

Exactly when Trotsky began to think of the entry of the CCP into Kuomintang as a grave political error remains uncertain.[197] Circumstantial evidence suggests that the impetus to his serious preoccupation with the Chinese question came from Radek, who, having partially lived down the disgrace incurred by him in January 1924 through the German fiasco and his association with Trotsky,[198] had been appointed in 1925 director of the newly founded Sun Yat-sen University of Toilers of China.[199] In July, 1926, and again in a letter of September 28, 1926, Radek, perhaps prompted by questionings of his Chinese students, applied to the Politburo for guidance on policy in China. He pointed to the embarrassment of the "military dictatorship" established by Chiang Kai-shek after the *coup* of March 20, 1926, with the support of Borodin; of the attitude adopted towards peasants and workers; and of the "semi-Menshevik tone" of pronouncements of the CCP which played down the class struggle. The Politburo vouchsafed no answer to these enquiries.[200] Trotsky was evidently informed of Radek's doubts and embarrassments. In a letter to Radek of August 30, 1926, written on holiday at Kislovodsk, he expressed some rather hesitant views on the relation of the CCP to Kuomintang. The question was whether the party was strong enough by itself to lead a workers' movement. Trotsky believed that it was; but this required to be proved.[201] In the next month his opinions became less tentative. In an unpublished memorandum of September 27, 1926, he argued that, while participation in Kuomintang had been correct down to 1925, when "the communist party represented a propaganda society, only preparing itself for future independent political activity", the time had now come to transform the CCP into an independent party forming a bloc with Kuomintang; blame for the errors perpetrated in the resolution of the CCP of July 14, 1926, rested "on the ruling group in our party", since the policy of remaining in Kuomintang

[197] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 748, note 1.

[198] See *The Interregnum, 1923–1924*, pp. 235–239.

[199] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 725. Eulogies of Sun Yat-sen in articles in *Pravda*, March 14, 1925, March 12, 1926, show Radek at this time as a strong supporter of collaboration with Kuomintang; for his earlier views see *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917–1923*, Vol. 3, p. 535.

[200] *Die Chinesische Frage auf dem 8. Plenum* (1928), p. 121.

[201] Trotsky archives, T 889.

had been "dictated from Moscow".[202] In another memorandum of the same period, prepared in advance of the fifteenth Russian party conference in October 1926, Trotsky denounced "the opportunist character" of the party line, and repeated that "the CCP can no longer remain a propagandist group within Kuomintang, but must set before itself the tasks of *an independent class proletarian party*".[203] But, having said so much, he once more let the question slip into the background. It was not raised by him or by any other opposition speaker at the party conference or at the seventh IKKI a month later.[204]

The rapid developments in China, together with a further initiative by Radek, at length led Trotsky to break silence. In August 1926 Dalin, a former KIM leader now working in the Sun Yat-sen university, who had been the first in 1922 to discuss with Sun Yat-sen the project for the admission of Chinese communists to Kuomintang,[205] went on a mission to China, and appears to have sent reports to Radek on what he found.[206] Radek, in a cautiously worded article dated February 6, 1927, expressed disappointment with Kuomintang's failure to carry out social reforms in the areas under its control. The chief problem was "the lack of a decisive peasant policy". The landowners were organizing and arming "*kulak* detachments"; and the nationalist armies "do not always help the revolutionary forces".[207] But on March 3,

[202] Trotsky archives, T 3008 (for this memorandum see also *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 784, note 1); for the CCP resolution of July 14, 1926, see pp. 706–707 above. Trotsky also quoted a declaration of the CCP published in the party journal *Hsiang-tao Chou-pao*, July 12, 1926, which he described as inspired by a desire "not to win the proletariat, but to convince the bourgeoisie" and as having "nothing in common with Marxism".

[203] Trotsky archives, T 3006.

[204] Katayama at the seventh IKKI in November 1926 referred critically to Radek's rôle at the Sun Yat-sen university (see p. 140 above).

[205] See *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917–1923*, Vol. 3, p. 533.

[206] K. Radek, *Izmena Kitaiskoi Krupnoi Burzhuazii Natsional'nomu Dvizheniyu* (see p. 813, note 148 below), pp. 31–32. According to this account, Radek sent Dalin to China without consulting the party central committee, which was annoyed with his action and intercepted their correspondence; the eastern secretariat of Comintern refused to "pass an article by comrade Dalin which sounded the alarm". Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Communist Party*, i (1971), 616–617, reports a private conversation in Wuhan in March 1927, in which Dalin expressed his agreement with Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution as applied to China. Dalin's account of the visit, published under the title *Ocherki Revolyutsii v Kitae*, with a preface dated November 23, 1927, was less outspoken than the record of his earlier visit, S. Dalin, *V Ryadakh Kitaiskoi Revolyutsii* (1926).

[207] *Novyi Mir*, No. 3, 1927, pp. 157–159.

1927, he sent Trotsky a memorandum which, while defending "our view of the inadmissibility of the entry of the CCP into Kuomintang", argued that, at the present stage of the revolution, formal withdrawal from Kuomintang was impracticable; the CCP should, however, be encouraged to take an independent line on such issues as the abolition of rent and compulsory arbitration. He added that "our mistakes" had helped to unite the big and the petty bourgeoisie, and that "this may mean the defeat of the Chinese revolution for a number of years". Trotsky replied angrily and uncompromisingly on the following day. He admitted that he had not followed Chinese affairs closely enough to say when the question of withdrawal from Kuomintang should have been raised — in 1923, 1924 or 1925. But the theory of stages and of the unripeness of conditions in China for a mass workers' party played into Stalin's hands. If the CCP did not *want* to withdraw from Kuomintang, this proved that it was a Menshevik party, and a Bolshevik party must be created.[208]

The acute crisis in Shanghai, reinforcing Trotsky's protests and Dalin's reports, now induced the impetuous Radek to burn his boats. On Sun Yat-sen's death in March 1925, and again on its first anniversary, he had written commemorative articles in *Pravda*.[209] In 1927 his anniversary article appeared not in *Pravda*, but in *Izvestiya* — perhaps already a significant change. It was longer and more substantial than its predecessors, and, while not openly heretical, contained some realistic touches not altogether comfortable for defenders of the official policy.

> The Chinese bourgeoisie which participates in the national revolutionary movement [wrote Radek] is striving to deal a *blow* at its Left sector — the communist and Left sector of Kuomintang.[210]

In an address on March 17, 1927, at the Sun Yat-sen university, Radek made an open attack on the failure of Comintern to support the workers against the nationalist leaders. In a further address on the following day in the Communist Academy, he argued that the Chinese revolution must be either in its bourgeois or in its socialist phase; the meaningless term "non-capitalist path" merely obscured the issue. With the provocative frankness which he had not

[208] Trotsky archives, T 933, 934.
[209] See p. 754, note 199 above.
[210] *Izvestiya*, March 11, 15, 1927.

yet unlearned, he pronounced that the nationalist government was "a government of the capitalist bourgeoisie", and looked forward to the moment when "our comrades will come out on the street and overthrow the dictatorship of the general staff", and to "an open struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie". On this occasion he found "literally everybody" arrayed to do battle against him — the representatives of the eastern secretariat of IKKI, Raskolnikov, Shumyatsky, Martynov, Joffe and Voroshilov. All these denied the existence of any crisis, and attributed Radek's strictures to "panic" and to an "ultra-Left" lack of faith in the capacity of the Chinese proletariat to seize the hegemony.[211] Meanwhile events in China confirmed Trotsky's worst fears. On March 22, 1927, he expressed in a private memorandum acute anxiety at the turn of events in Shanghai, and looked forward to a discussion in the Politburo, though even now he did not think that communists could cease to support the Wuhan government or the nationalist armies, or forgo participation in a national government. He recognized the danger that his adversaries in the Politburo would "turn the question into a factional quarrel instead of discussing it seriously", but asked himself how he could keep silent when "what is literally at stake is the head of the Chinese proletariat".[212] In a letter of March 29, 1927, to a party member who had written a book about China, he insisted that there were three — not two — camps in China: the reactionaries, the liberal bourgeoisie and the workers. Kuomintang and the CCP were parties of two different classes. He could not understand "*why the slogan of Soviets is not raised in China*".[213]

This was the background of Trotsky's memorandum to the Politburo of March 31, 1927. It opened with the complaint that he had not been given access to confidential reports by Comintern representatives or Soviet advisers in China. He emphasized the rising strength of insurgent workers and peasants, who alone could save the revolution from a military *coup*, and enquired why they

[211] K. Radek, *Izmena Kitaiskoi Krupnoi Burzhuazii Natsional'nomu Dvizheniyu* (see p. 813, note 148 below), p. 33. Neither speech seems to have been published; but the speech at the academy was extensively quoted in Martynov's article in *Pravda*, April 10, 1927 (see p. 760 below).

[212] Trotsky archives, T 3033.

[213] *Ibid.* T 938; Trotsky later called Kuomintang "the party of the liberal bourgeoisie, which leads, deceives and betrays the workers and peasants" (*ibid.* T 3077).

had received no encouragement. He specifically did not raise the question of "the mutual relations of the CCP and Kuomintang", but advocated the formation of workers' Soviets, and thought that under a Soviet system this question would automatically be posed in a correct form.[214] Three days later he submitted a much stronger article to *Pravda*, which was not published. Here he dubbed Chiang Kai-shek a "Chinese Pilsudski", and described the participation of the CCP in Kuomintang as "an unequal treaty" between the Chinese proletariat and the bourgeoisie. He protested against "the policy of a shackled communist party serving as a recruiting agent to bring the workers into Kuomintang"; this policy could lead only to "the successful establishment of a Fascist dictatorship in China".[215]

These attacks, and the events at Shanghai, provoked some restiveness in the party, which Stalin and Bukharin were concerned to dispel. On April 4–5, 1927, a large meeting of the Moscow party organization was held in one of Moscow's biggest halls — the Pillar Hall of trade union headquarters. Bukharin spoke on the first day, Stalin on the second; and Radek also intervened on the second day.[216] Bukharin excused the shootings of

[214] *Ibid.* T 3036; the cautious tone reflected a disagreement with Zinoviev, who was unwilling to come out in favour of withdrawal of the CCP from Kuomintang. In an unpublished memorandum of Trotsky of April 3, 1927, a passage arguing that "in the last two years" the rise of a mass workers' movement had made participation in Kuomintang obsolete was struck out with the marginal note, "Concession to Zinoviev" (*ibid.* T 3038); and the declaration of the 83 in May 1927, again in deference to Zinoviev's views, dissociated its signatories from the demand for withdrawal from Kuomintang which Trotsky had wished to include (*ibid.* T 1509). Zinoviev in his theses prepared in April 1927 for the eighth IKKI (see p. 761, note 237 below) demanded "not withdrawal from Kuomintang, but *the immediate announcement and realization of the complete political and organizational independence of the CCP from Kuomintang*" (L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., 1932), p. 356). Trotsky, in another unpublished memorandum, called this "a *transitional* formula which would have offered to our central committee a bridge to retreat from a false road to a correct one", but still thought it a mistake (Trotsky archives, T 3072). According to Stalin, Trotsky and Zinoviev also differed fundamentally on the question of Chinese Soviets: Trotsky wanted them in order to overthrow the Wuhan government, Zinoviev in order to support it (Stalin, *Sochineniya*, x, 155).

[215] Trotsky archives, T 3056. Trotsky in a marginal note says that it was not published owing to the coup of April 12, 1927; it is doubtful whether Stalin would in any case have permitted its publication.

[216] Trotsky, in an unpublished article of September 1927 (Trotsky archives, T 1031), noted that "Radek's intervention in the Pillar Hall on April 5 is widely known"; impulsiveness and lack of restraint was one of Radek's more attractive

Chinese workers and peasants on the plea of insufficient control by Kuomintang at the centre. He attacked Radek for failing to recognize the existence of feudalism in China, and thus implicitly denying the bourgeois character of the revolution. The struggle against feudalism and the struggle against imperialism were the essential tasks of the bourgeois revolution; in China "antagonism against foreign capital is so strong that a considerable part of the bourgeoisie marches for the present in one bloc with the broad masses".[217] Stalin, propounding the same analysis, firmly deprecated any action against the Kuomintang Right:

> Why make a *coup d'état*? [he asked] Why drive out the Right when we have a majority, and the Right has to listen to us?[218]

He also criticized Radek by name, and denounced prophecies of disaster as "revolution-mongering [*revolyutsionnost'*]". "Borodin", he explained reassuringly, "is not asleep." Chiang was "ten heads higher than Tseretelli and Kerensky"; he fought against imperialism, whereas they fought an imperialist war. He added that Chiang, however little he might like the revolution, was leading his armies against the imperialists, and that "the men of the Right" had valuable contacts with Chang Tso-lin's generals and with rich merchants who had money to contribute:

> They should therefore be utilized to the utmost, squeezed like a lemon, and then thrown away.[219]

qualities, and he is unlikely to have pulled his punches. The speech is mentioned, but not quoted, in K. Radek, *Izmena Kitaiskoi Krupnoi Burzhuazii Natsional'nomu Dvizheniyu* (see p. 813, note 148 below), p. 55; Radek estimated the audience at 3000 (*ibid.* p. 33).

[217] N. Bukharin, *Problemy Kitaiskoi Revolyutsii* (1927), pp. 23–26; according to K. Radek, *Izmena Kitaiskoi Krupnoi Burzhuazii Natsional'nomu Dvizheniyu* (see p. 813, note 148 below), p. 38, this was a "re-worked" version of his speech, revised in the light of later events. Another version appeared in an article in *Pravda*, April 19, 1927, six of the seven sections of which were said to reproduce this speech. For the argument about feudalism see Note E, pp. 1023–1029 below.

[218] Trotsky tellingly ridiculed the supposition that "by means of ordinary elections at Kuomintang congresses power would pass from the hands of the bourgeoisie to the proletariat" (L. Trotsky, *The Third International After Lenin* (N.Y., 1936), p. 218).

[219] The speech, having been so disastrously overtaken by events, was never published or distributed; on April 18, 1927, Trotsky wrote to the secretariat of the central committee asking — in vain — for the text (Trotsky archives, T 947). Vujovič read extracts, from notes which he had taken at the time, to the eighth IKKI six weeks later (see p. 771 below), where their accuracy does not

The signal to make Radek the chief target was read by party journalists. A much-quoted article by Martynov in *Pravda* on April 10, 1927, censured "individual members of the opposition", but mentioned only Radek by name. Martynov set out to maintain that the resolution of the seventh IKKI on China was still a valid and adequate guide to policy. He attacked Radek for neglecting the all-important rôle of the struggle against imperialism.[220] Radek's line would simply "hand over Kuomintang to the big bourgeoisie", thus making a bloc of the big and petty bourgeoisie inevitable, and creating "a rift in the revolutionary front". Only Trotsky, in an unpublished comment of April 12, 1927, on Martynov's article enquired ironically: "Who does not know that the bourgeoisie prefers to be beheaded by its own proletariat rather than cooperate with foreign exploiters?" And he went on to predict that the Chinese bourgeoisie, if the chance offered, would "come to an agreement with foreign rulers, i.e. would discount the blood of the Hong Kong, Shanghai and Nanking proletariat at great profit to themselves".[221]

The Shanghai *coup* of April 12, 1927, rudely disturbed this fool's paradise. The extent of Chiang's treachery was hard to digest. *Pravda*, in a leading article of April 15, 1927, while putting the principal blame on the imperialists, denounced Chiang in no uncertain terms as "the executioner of the Shanghai proletariat", and recognized that this act had opened "*a new chapter in the history of the great struggle for liberation in China*", in which hopes must rest on "a *revolutionary* Kuomintang, a Kuomintang without Chiang Kai-shek". In a manifesto printed in the same issue, IKKI denounced Chiang as a traitor; and a separate statement was issued, signed by Humbert-Droz, Šmeral,

seem to have been challenged (*Die Chinesische Frage auf dem 8. Plenum* (1928), pp. 123–124); other quotations from it are in K. Radek, *Izmena Kitaiskoi Krupnoi Burzhuazii Natsional'nomu Dvizheniyu* (see p. 813, note 148 below), pp. 33–34.

[220] Radek argued that, since May 30, 1925, the Chinese proletariat had been fighting, "not only against the foreign bourgeoisie, but also against the Chinese bourgeoisie", and that "there is not, and never has been in the history of mankind, a revolution directed solely against an external enemy" (K. Radek, *Izmena Kitaiskoi Krupnoi Burzhuazii Natsional'nomu Dvizheniyu* (see p. 813, note 148 below), pp. 1, 43.

[221] Trotsky archives, T 3041.

Kuusinen and Murphy, confirming the news that "Chiang Kai-shek has gone over to the side of the imperialists".[222] Trotsky's response, recorded in a memorandum of April 16, 1927, was a demand to set up Chinese Soviets, though he denied that this was tantamount to a rupture with the Kuomintang Left.[223] But official reactions were still embarrassed and guarded. Rykov's speech to the fourth Union Congress of Soviets on April 19, 1927, was discursive and unrealistic. He depicted China as the main target, together with the USSR, of imperialist aggression. His only reference to the Shanghai *coup* was to remark that "the latest events in south China — the split in the nationalist camp, the *volte-face* of Chiang Kai-shek — did not take place without preparations behind the scenes by certain representatives of imperialist states"; and he spent much time denying that Borodin represented the Soviet Government.[224] A resolution of the congress, which denounced the raid on the Soviet Embassy in Peking, and expressed "sympathy with the national liberation movement of the Chinese people", did not mention Chiang at all.[225] Meanwhile, on April 18, 1927, the Comintern secretariat sent out a routine circular to party leaders inviting them to autograph their portraits for presentation to Chiang. Trotsky later published his outraged reply.[226]

By this time the magnitude of the Shanghai disaster could not be concealed. No record was published of what transpired at a session of the party central committee of April 13–16, 1927, except that decisions of the Politburo on various international matters, including the Chinese question, were approved, and "the platform of the opposition", according to Stalin, "decisively rejected".[227] Since the main Chinese topic was probably the attack

[222] The manifesto and the statement were reprinted in *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 41, April 16, 1927, pp. 859–861.

[223] Trotsky archives, T 3047.

[224] *SSSR: 4 S"ezd Sovetov* (1927), pp. 15–18; a few weeks later, at the graduation ceremony of the Communist University of Toilers of the East, Rykov is said to have expressed satisfaction that the Soviet Government had not directly supported the Chinese revolutionaries, since this would have led to war with Great Britain (A. Ciliga, *Au Pays du Grand Mensonge* (1938), pp. 22–23).

[225] *S"ezdy Sovetov SSSR*, iii (1960), 113–114.

[226] *Byulleten' Oppozitsii* (Paris), No. 28, July 1932, pp. 21–22; the original is in the Trotsky archives, T 946.

[227] *KPSS v Rezolyutsiyakh* (1954), ii, 358; Stalin, *Sochineniya*, ix, 230. Zinoviev's theses, formally endorsed by Trotsky and published in *Der Kampf um die Internationale* (1927), pp. 14–66, and in L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., 1932), pp. 307–375, were prepared for this session,

on the Peking Embassy,[228] and since news from Shanghai must still have been confused and incomplete, any serious discussion of the intractable problem of Chiang Kai-shek and Kuomintang may have been momentarily shelved. About the same time a complacent unsigned leading article in the Comintern journal declared that Chiang's treachery had been "foreseen by Comintern", which in the resolution of the seventh IKKI in December 1926 had contemplated "the exclusion of a large part of the capitalist big bourgeoisie" from the anti-imperialist front. The article congratulated the CCP on the "rapid growth of its influence", and concluded by hailing the Shanghai workers, the "revolutionary Kuomintang" and the CCP as leaders in the struggle against foreign imperialism and against the danger of war.[229] But the facts were too dramatic and notorious. In an unpublished note of April 19, 1927, Trotsky compared the issue of Kuomintang and the CCP with that of the Anglo-Russian committee; in both cases supposed allies had turned out to be traitors.[230] It must have been about this time that a letter addressed to the party central committee by three members of visiting party or Comintern delegates, dated from Shanghai on March 17, 1927, reached Moscow. The letter, written before Chiang's *coup*, but when the impending *dénouement* could be foreseen, dissected in critical detail the policies pursued by Comintern in the past year, and exonerated the CCP, which had only yielded to continuous pressure by Borodin and Voitinsky, from any share of the blame. It was not distributed or published, but quickly became known to members of the opposition.[231]

but it is not known whether they were actually submitted to it; they were discussed at the eighth IKKI in May 1927 (see p. 769 below).

[228] See pp. 751–752 above.

[229] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 16 (90), 1927, pp. 3–10; the issue is undated, but the article must have been written before the publication of Stalin's theses in *Pravda*, April 21, 1927 (see p. 763 below), to which it does not refer. Internal evidence suggests Martynov as the probable author.

[230] Trotsky archives, T 3048; for the demise of the Anglo-Russian committee see pp. 354–357 above.

[231] It was first published by the French opposition in a pamphlet *La Vérité sur la Chine: Lettre de Shanghai* (1927), with an introduction by Treint: its signatories, Nasonov, Fokin and Albrekht were said to have renounced their views on their return to Moscow, and Nasonov, who was a worker in Komsomol and KIM, was apparently in good standing a year later (see p. 1001 below). A German translation was published by the German opposition early in 1928 with a preface dated September 19, 1927, and a postcript of January

The issue had to be faced; and on April 21, 1927, *Pravda* published a set of "theses for propagandists", approved by the party central committee, and expressly stated to have been drafted by Stalin, under the title "Questions of the Chinese Revolution". Stalin now silently abandoned the view expressed by him in May 1925, but never perhaps taken very seriously, that "the united national front against imperialism" had even then become untenable through "the defection of a part of the national bourgeoisie".[232] He now defined "the first stage of the Chinese revolution", which lasted down to the launching of the northern expedition in July 1926, as "the revolution of a united national front". Chiang's attempt in March 1926 "to drive the communists out of Kuomintang" had been "the first serious attempt of the national bourgeoisie to curb the revolution". The establishment of a new centre of government in Nanchang in February 1927 marked "a regrouping of class forces". The Shanghai *coup* of April 12, 1927, completed "the abandonment by the national bourgeoisie of the revolution", and opened its second stage. This meant that the old policy — described as "a policy of preserving the unity of Kuomintang, a policy of isolating the Rightists within Kuomintang and utilizing them for the purposes of the revolution" — was no longer effective. What was now needed was "close collaboration between the Left and the communists within Kuomintang". But this must derive its strength from "a further development of the revolutionary movement of workers and peasants and a strengthening of their mass organizations"; to arm workers and peasants was "the best antidote to counter-revolution". The theses ended with a section on the errors of the opposition, identified as "Radek and Co." (no other names were mentioned); these consisted of mistaken advocacy of Soviets, and rejection of continued participation in Kuomintang.[233] Trotsky re-

27, 1928; and an English translation is in L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., 1932), pp. 391–426.

[232] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 718; in an article of July 1927, Stalin wrote still more emphatically that, in the first stage (the "Canton period") of the revolution, "the revolution was the revolution of a national *united front*", and included the "national bourgeoisie" among the allies of the proletariat (Stalin, *Sochineniya*, ix, 340). For Stalin's change of front see p. 730 note 114 above.

[233] Stalin, *Sochineniya*, ix, 221–230; the theses were prepared after the April 13–16 session of the party central committee, which is referred to in them as "recent". According to Trotsky's counter-theses of May 7, 1927 (see p. 764

plied in the form of an article intended for *Bol'shevik* pouring contempt on the theses, which was rejected by the Politburo.[234] Having pressed in vain for a discussion of the issue between party leaders,[235] he penned a set of counter-theses, dated May 7 (with a postscript dated May 17), 1927; these were distributed to the delegates arriving in Moscow for the forthcoming eighth IKKI, due to open on May 19, 1927.[236]

Trotsky's analysis, elaborated in the first months of 1927, and propounded before and during the eighth IKKI in May 1927, rested on the assumption that precedents should be sought for the Chinese revolution in the Russian revolution, not of 1905, but of 1917.[237] It was substantially an application to the Chinese revolution of the theory which he had formulated between the revolutions of 1905 and 1917 of the necessary progression from the bourgeois-democratic to the socialist revolution.[238] Trotsky had never accepted Lenin's 1905 formula of a "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants". The difference between them had withered away in 1917. But in terms of the Chinese revolution Trotsky recalled the formula after Chiang's Shanghai *coup* of April 1927 and the establishment of the Wuhan government, and once more denounced it.

> *This historically obsolete slogan* [he wrote in a memorandum of September 1927] *will become the weapon of forces acting against the revolution.*[239]

The relevant texts from Lenin were the pronouncements of 1917 in which Lenin proclaimed the transition from the first, exclusively bourgeois, stage of the revolution to the second stage, marked by the revolutionary dictatorship of workers', peasants' and soldiers' Soviets. Since in China large landed estates were not feudal in character, but were linked with urban capital, native and

below), the Politburo entrusted Stalin, Bukharin and Molotov with the task of agreeing a text and publishing it in the name of the central committee.

[234] Trotsky archives, T 3053, 3059.

[235] Trotsky archives, T 951 (letter to Krupskaya of May 17, 1927, for which see Vol. 2, p. 24, note 5).

[236] *Ibid.* T 3054; for a translation see L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., (1932), pp. 17–76.

[237] "The 'February' revolution in China took place in 1911", wrote Trotsky in 1928 (L. Trotsky *The Third International after Lenin* (N.Y., 1936), p. 173).

[238] See *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917–1923*, Vol. 1, pp. 57–60.

[239] Trotsky archives, T 3089; for Lenin's formula see *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917–1923*, Vol. 1, p. 55.

foreign, the Chinese agrarian revolution would pass through no stage corresponding to the period immediately after the October revolution in Russia, when the *kulak* marched with the middle and poor peasants against the landowner. Agrarian revolution in China would be directed from the outset, not only against landowners and bureaucrats, but against *kulaks* and usurers.[240] What was now required was a dictatorship of the proletariat supported by the poor peasantry, which, in the process of completing the bourgeois revolution, would simultaneously usher in the socialist revolution.[241] Trotsky in his counter-theses unambiguously put forward the demand for Soviets:

> The slogan of Soviets means a call for the creation of real organs of government through the transitional régime of the "dual power".

Soviets were now the essential form of revolutionary action, since they were identified with the dictatorship of the proletariat. Echoing Plekhanov's famous dictum about the Russian revolution, Trotsky declared:

> *The Chinese bourgeois-democratic revolution will go forward and be victorious either in the Soviet form or not at all.*[242]

The official line stood for the subordination of the class struggle to the exigencies of the united national front against imperialism, and therefore the subordination of the CCP to Kuomintang, following the attitude formerly adopted to Turkish communists.[243] Trotsky, who believed that the progress of the revolution de-

[240] L. Trotsky, *The Third International after Lenin* (N.Y., 1936), pp 182–183.

[241] This was one of the main themes of Trotsky's letter to Preobrazhensky of March 27, 1928; Preobrazhensky argued on the other hand that China had not yet had its "February revolution", so that talk of its transition to a proletarian or socialist revolution was premature (for this correspondence see pp. 854–855 below).

[242] L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., 1932), pp. 97–98; by a striking coincidence Roy had written in Canton in February 1927: "The Chinese national liberation movement will either continue to develop and emerge victorious as a workers' and peasants' revolution, or it will not win at all.... The bourgeoisie cannot lead the revolutionary struggle" (*M. N. Roy's Mission to China*, ed. R. North and X. Eudin (1963), p. 149). For Plekhanov's dictum see p. 735, note 126 above.

[243] See pp. 672–673 above. Official apologists were uneasy about the application to China of the Turkish or "Kemalist" precedent; it was rejected by Stalin at the meeting of May 13, 1927, at the Sun Yat-sen university (Stalin,

pended on the transition to its socialist stage, logically reversed the priorities, and denounced the sacrifice of workers and peasants to Chiang Kai-shek as pure Menshevism. In his note on Martynov's article in *Pravda* of April 10, 1927, he observed that Martynov, who had been a Menshevik before 1917, "defends word for word, letter for letter, in regard to China the same policy which, in the period of 1905 and after, he defended in regard to Russia.[244]

These differences culminated in opposing attitudes to Kuomintang and to the Wuhan government. Comintern clung till the last moment to the belief that the Wuhan government could be transformed into a revolutionary instrument committed to the cause of a democratic dictatorship. The strength of Trotsky's case lay in his recognition that the revolutionary forces in China were of a different order of magnitude from the puny forces of the Turkish or Persian revolutionaries, and in his prediction that the pragmatic expedients of the official line were doomed to fail. He foresaw that the split between the big bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie, and the alliance of the latter with the proletariat, would prove a short-lived illusion; the petty bourgeoisie stood nearer to the big bourgeoisie than to workers and peasants. This made nonsense of the view of Kuomintang as a coalition of different classes, and meant that no reliance could be placed on Kuomintang, Right or Left. Kuomintang and the CCP were parties of different classes and could not blend. Kuomintang represented an alliance between the bourgeois-democratic national movement and Sun Yat-sen's "reformist" socialism. Sunyatsenism was essentially "a petty bourgeois doctrine ... aimed not only against imperialism, but against the proletarian class struggle". What was taking place was "a struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie for the leadership of the oppressed masses of town and country within the framework and on the foundations of the national democratic revolution". For this it was necessary to have "an *independent proletarian party* which fights under its own banner and never

Sochineniya, ix, 256–258; see also the passage quoted in *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 643). An article by a Turkish communist headed "The Chinese Revolution must not Follow the Kemalist Path" appeared in *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 24 (98), 1927, pp. 32–37. But it was the phrase rather than the substance which gave offence.

[244] Trotsky archives, T 3041; for Martynov's article and Trotsky's note on it see p. 760 above.

permits its policy and organization to be dissolved in the policy and organization of other classes".[245] As Radek put it:

> The basic error of Comintern lies in an under-estimate of the class contradictions between proletariat and bourgeoisie in China, and in an over-estimate of the contradictions between imperialism and the big bourgeoisie.[246]

Trotsky's views possessed a theoretical cogency and coherence which contrasted with the confused thinking of the party leaders in Moscow. But, unlike the official line, they were never exposed to the harsh test of experience on the spot. That an immense revolutionary ferment was at work in China, and that masses of workers, and still more of peasants, were potential revolutionaries, is not in question. That this spontaneous movement was discouraged and checked on orders from Moscow with ultimately disastrous consequences for the Chinese communists is incontestable; in this sense, as Trotsky alleged, Stalin "cut the throat of the Chinese revolution, and with it of the young CCP, for years to come".[247] But it is less easy to accept the unspoken belief, underlying all Trotsky's denunciations of the official policy, that these masses could, on a resolute call from the CCP or from Comintern, and without the material support which Moscow was unable to supply, have been welded into a powerful revolutionary movement, which would have swept away counter-revolutionary military leaders, and successfully confronted the imperialist Powers.[248] Even the events of 1927 did only a little to dim Trotsky's revolutionary optimism. In an unpublished article of May 11, 1927,

[245] L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., 1932), pp. 21–35 (theses presented to eighth IKKI), 96–105 (second speech to eighth IKKI); these views were reiterated in all Trotsky's writings of the period. For the eighth IKKI see pp. 769–773 below.

[246] K. Radek, *Izmena Kitaiskoi Krupnoi Burzhuazii Natsional'nomu Dvizheniyu* (see p. 813, note 148 below), p. 50.

[247] *Byulleten' Oppozitsii* (Paris), No. 1–2, July 1929, p. 33.

[248] In his critique of the Comintern programme in July 1928 Trotsky argued that, while it could not be claimed that, if a correct Bolshevik policy had been pursued, the CCP would infallibly have come to power, "it is contemptible philistinism to assert that such a possibility is entirely out of the question" (L. Trotsky, *The Third International after Lenin* (N.Y., 1936), p. 185). Mao Tse-tung in retrospect ten years later did not "think that the counter-revolution would have been defeated in 1927, ... even if the communist party had carried out a more aggressive policy", though "the Soviets could have got an immense start in the south" (E. Snow, *Red Star over China* (1938), p. 148).

intended for *Pravda*, he expected a new wave of revolutionary action by the proletariat "in a few months"; in a memorandum of September 20, 1927, he looked for a new revolutionary upsurge" "in six months, a year or even a few years".[249] Trotsky, however, believed as firmly as the party leaders in the necessity of proletarian hegemony in the revolutionary movement;[250] the conception of a revolutionary initiative based on the peasantry would have been anathema to him. "Revolutionary ferment" among the peasants in south-western China did nothing to support a contrary view:

> It is quite evident that this movement would be only a belated echo of the battles of Shanghai, Hankow and Canton.... In the period under consideration it is only one form of the dissolution and liquidation of the CCP; for the party, by losing its proletarian nucleus, ceases to be in conformity with the historical destination.[251]

Cogent as were Trotsky's criticisms of the leaders, it is not clear that his proposals for action would have been more immediately effective than theirs. The Chinese revolution was to develop on lines unforeseen by anyone in Moscow.

Stalin's last pronouncement on China on the eve of the eighth IKKI was made on May 13, 1927, to the students of the Sun Yat-sen university, where he faced a barrage of no doubt carefully sifted questions. He again insisted that Kuomintang was "an *anti-imperialist* party", and that "Kuomintang, without its Rightist members, is a centre of the struggle of the Chinese toiling masses *against* imperialism". In an outburst of optimistic bravado, he declared that the confiscation of land was already being carried out in some provinces, and would spread in the immediate future to the whole of China; this was cited as evidence that Chiang's treachery, far from being detrimental to the revolution, had re-

[249] Trotsky archives, T 3056, 3091.

[250] At the third congress of Comintern in 1921 he had said: "For the peasantry of India and China there is no other possibility, no other form of concentration, than the young fighting proletariat" (*Protokoll des III. Kongresses der Kommunistischen Internationale* (1921), p. 137).

[251] L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., 1932), p. 155; the original, dated October 4, 1928, is in the Trotsky archives, T 3142.

sulted in a cleansing of Kuomintang from "filth", and in a movement of its "hard core" to the Left. He observed that "the Wuhan government is not yet a democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry", but that "it can become one", though he scouted an idea propounded in Martynov's recent *Pravda* article (which he professed not to have read) that the transition from the democratic dictatorship to the dictatorship of the proletariat might be achieved "without a second revolution", i.e. by peaceful means. Far from seeking to overthrow the Wuhan government, communists must "transform it into an organ of the struggle against Chang Tso-lin, against Chiang Kai-shek, against the landowners and gentry, against imperialism". He once more rejected as premature the demand for Soviets, which would be meaningless except as an attempt to set up a rival authority to the Wuhan government.[252] The policy was clear. Its only defect was that it totally failed to take account of conditions in Wuhan. Two questioners at the meeting cited Radek's opinions, which Stalin politely but firmly refuted; about this time Radek was deposed from the directorship of the university, and succeeded by his deputy, Mif.[253]

The fresh humiliation of the Arcos raid in London, which was carried out on May 12, 1927, with the evident intention of breaking off relations with the USSR, distracted attention for some days from the Chinese question. It was on May 23, 1927, the fourth day of the session of the eighth IKKI, that Bukharin at length presented his report on China. Zinoviev's theses submitted to the party central committee a month earlier, and Trotsky's counter-theses to Stalin's theses, proved convenient targets. Bukharin made effective debating points of inconsistencies in Zinoviev's statements, and of Trotsky's silence, on the Chinese question during the past two years, and ingeniously dissected Trotsky's criticisms. In substance he reproduced Stalin's argument. The revolutionary movement of workers and peasants should be encouraged and supported; but it was necessary for the CCP to remain within Kuomintang and to collaborate with the Kuomintang Left as re-

[252] Stalin, *Sochineniya*, ix, 239–281; for Martynov's article see p. 760 above.

[253] Mif (real name Fortus), deputy director of the Sun Yat-sen university under Radek, went to China with Roy early in 1927 (see p. 737 above), and was present at the fifth congress of the CCP in Wuhan in April–May 1927, returning to Moscow shortly afterwards. He was director of the university from 1927 to 1929.

presented by the Wuhan government.[254] A declaration submitted by the opposition accused Wang Ching-wei and the Wuhan government of "playing with the bourgeoisie, and putting the brakes on the workers' and peasants' movement".[255] The atmosphere of the debate was bitter; and Trotsky contributed his full share of acrimony to it. His speech, in which he accused Bukharin of falsehood and lying, was several times interrupted.[256] Stalin began in a more moderate tone than usual, but went back to Lenin's criticism of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution and to Lenin's and Roy's theses at the second congress of Comintern in 1920 on the colonial question. This was the speech in which Stalin, taking his cue from the news of the breaking off of diplomatic relations by Great Britain, which had been announced on that very day, made the famous charge of "something like a united front from Chamberlain to Trotsky". He was at some pains to rebut Trotsky's analogy between the Chinese situation and the Russian revolution of 1917:

> Russia then faced a proletarian revolution, whereas China now faces a bourgeois-democratic revolution.... The provisional government in Russia at that time was a counter-revolutionary, imperialist government, whereas the present government in Wuhan is an anti-imperialist government and revolutionary in the bourgeois-democratic sense of the word.

The call for Soviets sprang from a confusion between the two types of revolution: "it is possible that there would have been no Soviets in Russia in 1905, if a broad revolutionary organization of the kind of the present Left Kuomintang in China had then existed in Russia". Stalin concluded by invoking the precedent of Marx, who in 1848 in the struggle against German absolutism had temporarily entered a bourgeois-democratic alliance in the Rhineland.[257]

[254] *Die Chinesische Frage auf dem 8. Plenum* (1928), pp. 7–25. This small volume, published in German only nearly a year after the session, contains speeches delivered on the Chinese question and the report of the commission appointed to draft the resolution; it prints Trotsky's first speech in full, but omits his second speech, for the first publication of which see Vol. 2, p. 25. Both Trotsky's speeches are in L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., 1932), pp. 77–105.

[255] Trotsky archives, T 3060; a further opposition statement is quoted in L. Trotsky, *The Real Situation in Russia* (n.d. [1928]), pp. 151–152.

[256] *Die Chinesische Frage auf dem 8. Plenum* (1928), pp. 32–43.

[257] Stalin, *Sochineniya*, ix, 282–314; this was the only speech to be published

The only speaker in the debate who supported Trotsky was Vujovič, who quoted at length Radek's vain efforts to elicit a pronouncement from the Politburo and Stalin's unpublished "squeeze the lemon" speech of April 5, 1927, delivered "almost at the moment when workers' blood flowed in streams in the streets of Shanghai".[258] Trotsky, speaking a second time in the debate made a striking prediction:

> We do not want to assume even a shadow of responsibility for the policy of the Wuhan government or for the leadership of Kuomintang, and we urgently advise Comintern to reject this responsibility. We say directly to the Chinese peasants: the leaders of the Left Kuomintang of the type of Wang Ching-wei and Co. will inevitably betray you if you follow the Wuhan leaders instead of forming your own independent Soviets. The agrarian revolution is a serious thing. Politicians of the Wang Ching-wei type, under difficult conditions, will unite ten times with Chiang Kai-shek against the workers and peasants.... We say to the workers of China: the peasants will not carry out the agrarian revolution to the end if they let themselves be led by bourgeois radicals instead of by you, the revolutionary proletarians.

He concluded that "*the Chinese bourgeois-democratic revolution will go forward and be victorious either in the form of Soviets or not at all*".[259] And the joint protest made by Trotsky and Vujovič against the decision to expel them from IKKI repeated that "the Kuomintang leaders in Wuhan of the type of Wang Ching-wei and Co. are beginning to play with the bourgeoisie, to put the brake on the agrarian movement and the workers' movement, and if they do not succeed in stopping it will join with Chiang Kai-shek against the workers and peasants".[260] The next two months brought a complete fulfilment of these prophecies, without however providing any evidence that Trotsky's alternative proposal to

at the time, appearing in *Pravda*, May 31, 1927. Trotsky in a letter to IKKI of June 27, 1927, complained that the proceedings of the session had not been published, and that a selective record distributed to party members did not include his speech (Trotsky archives, T 3074).

[258] *Die Chinesische Frage auf dem 8. Plenum* (1928), pp. 119–127; for Radek's letters see p. 754 above, for Stalin's speech p. 759 above.

[259] L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., 1932), pp. 96–105.

[260] For this protest see Vol. 2, p. 25, note 2.

organize the independent revolutionary movement of workers and peasants would have been crowned with greater success. Bukharin in his final speech, which was frequently interrupted by Trotsky, described Trotsky's views as "so pessimistic that they do not correspond to reality".[261]

Trouble arose in the commission, consisting of Bukharin, Togliatti and Treint, appointed to draft the appropriate resolution. Bukharin argued that, "if we do not curb the agrarian movement, we shall lose our Left allies, and it will be impossible for us to win a majority in Kuomintang". Treint retorted that he would rather sacrifice the Left national bourgeoisie than the insurgent peasants. Stalin, called in by Bukharin to quell Treint's revolt, explained forcefully that the choice was "to manoeuvre or to fight", and that to fight meant certain defeat. Much to the annoyance of Stalin and Bukharin, Treint announced that he would formulate his reservations in the full session next day. But, when the moment came, he found the audience so hostile that he failed to make his point with precision.[262] Togliatti, replying to Treint, repeated that it was premature to raise the slogan of Soviets, and that the CCP must maintain its hold on Kuomintang, which was a mass organization of workers, peasants and petty bourgeoisie.[263] The final text of the resolution left all options open. It started with some bravado by claiming that "the latest events have entirely confirmed the point of view of the Communist International on the Chinese revolution, and brilliantly justified Lenin's prediction of its international rôle". Admitting "a partial defeat of the Chinese revolution and a definite increase in the forces of the counter-revolutionary bloc", it none the less found in "the uninterrupted growth of the communist party and the Left Kuomin-

[261] *Die Chinesische Frage auf dem 8. Plenum* (1928), p. 137. It was while IKKI was in session that the "declaration of the 83" (see vol. 2, pp. 25–26) was delivered to the Politburo; it attributed the "colossal defeat" in China to the "false line" of the Comintern leaders.

[262] Treint gave a brief account of the proceedings in the commission in *La Vérité sur la Chine: Lettre de Shanghai* (1927), pp. v–vii (for this pamphlet see p. 762, note 231 above), and a longer account to H. Issacs in 1935; for the latter see *China Quarterly*, xlv (1971), 112–114 (this appeared in an English version in *The New Militant* (N.Y.), February 8, 1936). Treint, in the last paragraph of this account, confused T'ang Sheng-chih, the Wuhan general whose troops crushed the peasants at Changsha, with T'an P'ing-shan, the communist Minister for Agriculture in the Wuhan government, who did not, and could not, do anything to prevent the massacre.

[263] *Die Chinesische Frage auf dem 8 Plenum* (1928), pp. 150–151.

tang" a symptom of "the further development and deepening of the Chinese revolution".

> The Wuhan government and the Left Kuomintang [it continued] express in their fundamental tendency a revolutionary bloc of the urban and rural petty-bourgeois masses with the proletariat.... Kuomintang is in China the specific form of organization in which the proletariat cooperates with directly within the petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry.

"*An agrarian revolution, including confiscation and nationalization of land*", was proclaimed as a necessary ingredient of the revolution. Yet it was indispensable at the same time to guarantee to the petty bourgeoisie "the inviolability of its working property". IKKI reaffirmed its belief in "the powerful revolutionary rôle" of the Left Kuomintang and the Wuhan government and in the continued participation of communists in them. "The banner of Kuomintang ... must not be surrendered to those who betrayed it". At the same time, "to play with insurrection" was inadmissible: "the tactics of insurrection *at all costs*" were declared to be "not Leninist tactics". The demand for Soviets was condemned as bound in present conditions to lead to the creation of a rival authority to Wuhan.[264] Through his elaborate exercise in wishful thinking, Stalin and Bukharin must have hoped that they had won a respite. An embarrassed leading article in *Pravda* explained that "to oppose the tasks of the national revolution to the tasks of the class struggle of the Chinese proletariat" was a form of "liquidationism". But the only direct injunctions were negative — not to leave Kuomintang, not to leave the Wuhan government, and not to proclaim Soviets. The IKKI resolution was declared to constitute "the application of the principles of Leninism to the great events of the present".[265] It was symptomatic of the embarrassment of the leaders that, contrary to all precedent, the proceedings of the eighth IKKI, other than the text of the resolutions, were not published; an abbreviated record of the Chinese debate appeared in German a year later.[266]

[264] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), pp. 717–729.
[265] *Pravda*, June 1, 1927.
[266] See p. 770, note 254 above.

CHAPTER 85

REVOLUTIONARY CHINA: II THE EBB

(*a*) *The Wuhan Débâcle*

CHIANG'S reversal of policy completed the demoralization of the CCP. Most members of its central committee moved to Wuhan early in 1927, though Ch'en and some of the top leaders had remained in Shanghai, safely ensconced in the French concession, where "they lived under the hypnosis of the old line, and could not imagine a revolutionary government without the participation of the bourgeoisie".[1] In an increasingly desperate situation, all sides looked to the long-expected return of Wang Ching-wei as the factor which would resolve the deadlock and reconcile the contending factions. When Wang reached Shanghai on April 1, 1927, his first visitor was Chiang Kai-shek, who clearly hoped to use him to heal the growing rift between Nanking and Wuhan and to regain the allegiance of the Kuomintang Left.[2] Still seeking to smooth over differences, Wang next turned his attention to the CCP; and on April 5, 1927, after conversations in which pressure is said to have been brought to bear on Ch'en Tu-hsiu by Voitinsky, Wang and Ch'en issued a joint statement in the name of Kuomintang and the CCP. In this document the CCP recognized that Kuomintang was "necessary to the Chinese revolution"; that questions of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the transition from capitalism to socialism would not "come up in the near future"; and that what was now required was "a democratic dictatorship of all the oppressed classes to deal with the counter-revolution, not a dictatorship of the proletariat". The communist party was represented as standing for "the maintenance of order in the liberated territories", and "the collaboration

[1] *Bol'shevik*, No. 21, November 15, 1927, p. 67; the criticism was, however, not less applicable to the Wuhan communists, or to Voitinsky and Borodin.

[2] For some puzzled reactions to the meeting see *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 37, April 8, 1927, p. 795; for an account of it from Wang's standpoint see T'ang Leang-li, *The Inner History of the Chinese Revolution* (1930), pp. 265–266.

of all classes".[3] The declaration, which marked the extreme point of CCP subservience to Kuomintang, was afterwards described by Ch'en as "a shameful document", accepted by him under Comintern pressure.[4] On April 6, 1927, Wang left Shanghai by river steamer for Wuhan; and Voitinsky, Ch'en and other CCP leaders still in Shanghai accompanied him. The party reached Wuhan on April 10, 1927.[5]

The discussions in Shanghai had reflected both Chiang's well-defined ambitions and Wang's always mild and compromising inclinations. But they bore no relation to the tense situation which awaited Wang in Wuhan. The limited domain of the Wuhan government, forming an oasis at the centre of hostile or potentially hostile territories, found its normal outlets blocked and trade relations severed. Its economic and financial resources dried up. Constant revolts were inspired as much by economic catastrophe and widespread unemployment as by political discontent.[6] The authorities, in the words of a critic, were "overwhelmed by fear of an economic blockade, of armed intervention and of disorders all over the place among the people", and were incapable of action.[7] The military situation of the Wuhan government was unenviable. The military resources needed for confrontation with Chiang were

[3] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 37, April 8, 1927, p. 769; for an English translation made from the Chinese text see H. Isaacs, *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution* (1938), pp. 188–190.

[4] According to Roy six months later, "the Comintern delegation reacted severely to Ch'en's statement, threatening to remove him from his leading post in the party if he did not correct his mistakes" (*Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 38 (112), 1927, p. 17). This is not confirmed by any other evidence; apparently Borodin protected Ch'en (see p. 778, note 19 below). For Ch'en's later comment see his letter of December 10, 1929 (see p. 906, note 434 below).

[5] Vishnyakova-Akimova, *Dva Goda v Vosstavshem Kitae* (1965), p. 349, T'ang Leang-Li, *The Inner History of the Chinese Revolution* (1930), 268–269. According to Ch'en's letter of December 10, 1929, he had already pressed for consultation "on how to attack the forces of Chiang Kia-shek, but the Wuhan communists "were not very much concerned about the Shanghai *coup*, but telegraphed to me several times to go to Wuhan", on the plea that the nationalist government was at Wuhan at that time, so that important problems should be settled there.

[6] *Bol'shevik* No. 23–24, December 31, 1927, p. 105; No. 5, March 15, 1928, pp. 64–65; according to Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai, "the imperialists ... severed commercial relations with Wuhan, closed the banks, suspended all trade with Hunan and Hupei, and shut down the factories", so that the number of unemployed in Wuhan reached 120,000 (*Chinese Studies in History*, v, No. 1 (1971), p. 18).

[7] *Problemy Kitaya*, i (1929), 25.

wholly lacking. Its hopes rested on T'ang Sheng-chih, one of Wu Pei-fu's old generals, a native of Hunan, who had gone over to Chiang, but now professed loyalty to Wuhan, and on Feng Yü-hsiang, whose pro-Soviet and Kuomintang sympathies, fortified by his recent stay in Moscow,[8] seemed to assure his support. But T'ang, though a rival of Chiang Kai-shek, was no advocate of social revolution;[9] and, when Feng's new adviser Sangursky, who was appointed to succeed Primakov during Feng's stay in Moscow, tried to induce him to commit himself, Feng avoided any discussions of his relations with Chiang.[10] The hard fact about the Wuhan government after the break with Chiang Kai-shek was its dependence on other military leaders who, like Chiang, were anti-imperialist, but, like Chiang after April 1927, were hostile to revolution in any other sense. The Left Kuomintang was no longer a revolutionary force in the sense understood and desired by Comintern. Caught between two irreconcilable extremes, it soon ceased to be an effective force in any sense at all.

Chiang's Shanghai *coup* was the harsh reality which demolished a house of cards. On the very day of Wang's arrival in Wuhan, the Wuhan government, still in euphoric mood, decided to mobilize its forces for an advance towards Shanghai. Three days later, on April 13, 1927, when the news of the *coup* was received from Shanghai, the decision was hastily cancelled.[11] On the following day Wang, nothing daunted, issued a reaffirmation of the three essential points of his programme: alliance with the Soviet Union, cooperation with the communists, and defence of the interests of peasants and workers.[12] It seemed impossible to resolve on any line at all. On April 18, 1927, Chiang himself made the break by installing his own nationalist government in Nanking. On the following day, the Wuhan government replied bravely by a de-

[8] See p. 711 above.

[9] T'ang had in the past "earnestly expressed his friendship towards the CCP", and was wooed by Borodin as a counterweight to Chiang (Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of The Chinese Communist Party*, i (1971), 541, 557); according to one dubious source, he approached the Hunan provincial committee of the CCP with a proposal to enrol in his army peasant volunteer members of "peasant unions", and met with a refusal (*Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 32 (106), 1927, pp. 10–11).

[10] A. Cherepanov, *Severnyi Pokhod* (1963), p. 287. Primakov apparently fell under suspicion in the summer of 1926 as a sympathizer with Trotsky (see Vol. 2, p. 5); Sangursky's pseudonym in China was Usmanov.

[11] V. Vishnyakova-Akimova, *Dva Goda v Vosstavshem Kitae* (1965), p. 347.

[12] *People's Tribune* (Hankow), April 15, 1927.

claration denouncing Chiang, and formally expelling him and his principal associates from their offices and from Kuomintang. It also appointed Feng Yü-hsiang commander-in-chief of its military forces.[13] Three days later the Comintern delegation in Wuhan branded Chiang as an "instrument of imperialism", and defined in no uncertain terms the duty of the Wuhan government:

> *Supported by the combined forces of the town and village democracy, that is, the proletariat, the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie, the national government will be in a position to rebuff the attack of imperialism, and to develop the revolution in a direction which will lead to the consolidation of its base in the popular masses.*[14]

Chiang Ching-kuo, a son of Chiang Kai-Shek, who was a student at the Sun Yat-sen university in Moscow, wrote an indignant letter of protest to his father, which was published in the Comintern press.[15]

These gestures did nothing to solve the problems of the Wuhan government or of the CCP. By an unfortunate coincidence the fifth congress of the CCP was due to assemble in Wuhan on April 27, 1927, a fortnight after the Shanghai massacre. The moment could scarcely have been less propitious; and Ch'en on his arrival had tried in vain to secure its postponement.[16] Rifts were beginning to appear in the party leadership. The intoxication of victory had led many Chinese communists in Wuhan, in the first weeks of 1927, to believe that "the October revolution had already arrived, and that one could finish with Kuomintang, since socialism was now on the agenda".[17] In February 1927, Ch'en's

[13] *China Year Book, 1928* (Tientsin, n.d.), pp. 1367–1376; *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 43, April 22, 1927, pp. 885–886. The latter source also records a decision to advance against Nanking; this seems to be a confusion with the decision of April 10, 1927, already cancelled. According to T'ang Leang-li, *The Inner History of the Chinese Revolution* (1930), p. 277, the declaration expelling Chiang was accompanied by a decision "to mobilize the Wuhan forces against Chang Tso-lin only", i.e. not to take military action against Chiang.

[14] *M. N. Roy's Mission to China*, Ed. R. North and X. Eudin (1963), pp. 178–185.

[15] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 43, April 22, 1927, p. 886, No. 45, April 26, 1927, p. 924.

[16] *Bol'shevik*, No. 23–24, December 31, 1927, p. 98.

[17] Quoted from a pamphlet by Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai in L. Delyusin, *Agrarno-Krest'yanskii Vopros v Politike KPK* (1972), p. 241.

closest associate, P'eng Shu-chih,[18] published a pamphlet in which, by way of discouraging these extravagant hopes, he argued that every revolution had to pass through three phases — agitation, organization and armed rising — the implication being that the Chinese revolution was still in its preliminary phase; P'eng apparently called for "a complete cessation of military actions" till the proletariat was ripe to assume its functions as leader of the revolution. In the following month Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai, an ambitious member of the party central committee, who had spent some time in Moscow, and was better versed in Comintern idiom than the other Chinese leaders, published a reply to P'eng which, though Ch'en was not mentioned by name, was a covert criticism of Ch'en's leadership. Ch'ü conceded that the Chinese proletariat, like the Chinese peasantry, had its defects; it had grown out of a "lumpenproletariat". But, in spite of its weakness and its small numbers, it had "become the backbone of the national revolution", and had reached the point when it could "in practice seize the leadership of the national revolution". Nevertheless, the predominance of the peasantry led Ch'ü to admit that "the Chinese revolution is not socialist because the peasant-agrarian revolution constitutes the basis of the economic needs of the country", and to reach an enigmatic conclusion:

> The Chinese revolution is bourgeois and not bourgeois, socialist and at the same time not socialist. The victory of such a revolution will in the final analysis be socialist.

The maintenance of a united front with the national bourgeoisie was possible only on the condition that "it will not interfere with work among the peasants". The pamphlet seems to have been an ingenious intellectual exercise, weak in concrete proposals. But it pronounced the final verdict that the party leadership was "infected with the disease of opportunism".[19]

In preparation for the forthcoming congress regular meetings of the party central committee, now all assembled in Wuhan, were

[18] For P'eng see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 714, note 3, 799–800.

[19] For a long summary of the pamphlet see L. Delyusin, *Agrarno-Krest'yanskii Vopros v Politike KPK* (1972), pp. 266–275; P'eng's pamphlet has not been traced. According to Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, i (1971), 201, 618, Ch'ü began to intrigue against Ch'en at the time of the Shanghai *coup*, but was restrained by Borodin.

held — the participants being Ch'en Tu-hsiu, Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai, T'an P'ing-shan, Ts'ai Ho-shen, Li Li-san, Chou En-lai and Chang Kuo-t'ao — and were attended by Borodin, Voitinsky and Roy; the status of this enlarged body, which met in Borodin's house, was subsequently regularized by calling it the politburo of the central committee.[20] The situation was overshadowed and confused, not only by differences within the CCP itself, but by the presence of two rival representatives of Comintern, Borodin and Roy, whose relative status was undefined and uncertain. Roy reached Wuhan from Canton in the first days of April 1927, invested with all the prestige of his active participation in the seventh IKKI in Moscow in the previous November–December, and of his informal status as Stalin's personal envoy. But any impression that Roy's flamboyant personality dominated the proceedings exaggerates his power to influence the course of events. Borodin's standing in Moscow had been eroded by long absence from the capital. But on the spot his authority as the mouthpiece of Soviet policy was still high. His appraisal of the situation was realistic. He was reported as saying in February 1927: "We shall get as far as Peking with Chiang Kai-shek, but hardly with the party".[21] While there were 10,000 more or less organized workers in Wuhan, T'ang Sheng-chih had an army of 75,000 under his command. "To organize a Red Army would have meant to antagonize the generals, and to equip it would have been impossible"; and "to organize Soviets would have meant to provoke a rupture with the Left Kuomintang or petty bourgeoisie".[22] Borodin had close relations with the Left Kuomintang leaders; and his appraisal of what they could, and could not, be induced to accept was more sensitive than Roy's.[23] Mutual jealousies

[20] *Ibid.* i, 620–622. These memoirs, the only detailed source for this period by a member of the CCP, must be treated with caution; apart from the distortions of hindsight and self-justification common to most autobiographies, Chang's memory has played some odd tricks. To misdate Trotsky's expulsion from the Soviet Union, and to place him in Mexico in 1929 (*ibid.* ii (1974), 118, 126), are venial errors; but the story of a journey to China in 1929 by Brandler and Thalheimer (*ibid.* ii, 126) is pure myth.

[21] L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., 1932), p. 401.

[22] L. Fischer, *The Soviets in World Affairs* (1930), ii, 672.

[23] "Comrade R.'s proposals were frequently contradictory, comrade B.'s coherent and systematic because he always took into account the psychology of Wang Ching-wei and the rest" (*Problemy Kitaya*, i (1929), 55 — a source hostile to Borodin). Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, i (1971), 617, suggested that "Roy unrealistically compounded the two

between the two men inflamed political differences between them.[24]

The first major crux which divided Kuomintang and the CCP, and different factions in each, was that of military plans. The choice for the Wuhan forces lay between three courses: to continue the northward advance on Peking along the Peking–Hankow railway, counting on Feng's support against Chang Tso-lin; to move eastward in the direction of Nanking and Shanghai; or to consolidate the position around Wuhan and in the south, and for the present attempt no further advances. Since Chiang's action in Shanghai had revealed the full extent of his power and determination, nobody in Wuhan any longer seriously advocated the second course, which would have involved a direct military clash with far superior forces. The first course, which corresponded to the ambitions of T'ang Sheng-chih, was strongly advocated by Borodin, who clung to the principle of giving the national revolution precedence over social issues. The slogans coined to justify this priority were "First a widening, then a deepening" of the revolution, and "First take Peking, then carry out reforms".[25] Borodin had a firm belief in Feng, and nourished visions of occupying Peking and Kalgan and establishing communications with Mongolia. He propounded a so-called "north-western theory", i.e. a plan to transfer the headquarters of the revolutionary movement from Wuhan to the north-western provinces, where it would enjoy the protection of Feng. In the discussions which preceded the party congress, Ch'en, who throughout the proceedings ranged himself with Borodin rather than with Roy, apparently concurred

different proposals of Stalin and Trotsky"; he supported Stalin's policy of cooperation with Wuhan, but wished, like Trotsky, to promote the revolution regardless of the theory of stages.

[24] Roy afterwards claimed that "it was in the teeth of the opposition of the party leadership, acting under Borodin's instructions, that I persuaded the fifth congress of the CCP to adopt resolutions in conformity with the new line recommended by the Communist International" (M. N. Roy, *My Experiences in China* (2nd ed. Calcutta, 1945), p. 31); the rather cursory narrative of these events in L. Fischer, *The Soviets in World Affairs* (1930), ii, 663–679, derived from Borodin, does not mention Roy at all.

[25] *Pyatnadtsatyi S"ezd VKP(B)*, i (1961), 771; the slogan *"First victory, then reform"* was said by Lozovsky to have been "the official philosophy of the Left Kuomintang" (*Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 37 (111), 1927, p. 19).

in this view.[26] Roy, on the other hand, who suspected that "the scheme was to divert the attention of the masses, and have them suspend their demands pending military operations",[27] supported the third course. He mistrusted all the military leaders, including Feng, and argued that the party must build up mass support among the workers and peasants before embarking on a fresh military offensive.[28] Persuaded by Roy's arguments, the central committee appears to have adopted a resolution laying down strict limits for any further advance of the Kuomintang armies, which two days later, after more mature reflexion, was revoked.[29] Oblivious of these proceedings, and of the forthcoming congress, T'ang Sheng-chih went on with his plans, and on April 19, 1927, before the congress could meet, launched his forces, accompanied by a full quota of Russian advisers, on a further advance to the north.[30]

The second problem, which increasingly threatened to make the rift between the CCP and Kuomintang irreparable, was the prickly issue of the agrarian revolution. In the central provinces, where peasant disorder had preceded the nationalist advance,[31] the

[26] *Bol'shevik*, No. 23–24, December 31, 1927, pp. 106, 117; M. N. Roy, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in China* (Calcutta, 1946), pp. 548–549. According to *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional: Kratkii Istoricheskii Ocherk* (1969), p. 265, the authors of which had access to archives, "the idea of creating main support bases" for the communist movement in north-western China was first mooted in the Chinese Commission of the seventh IKKI in November 1926, where "the leadership of the CCP" argued that this would present "less danger of intervention, where we should be in contact with the USSR and should be able to obtain support from it".

[27] M. N. Roy, *My Experiences in China* (2nd ed. Calcutta, 1945), p. 39.

[28] For a document expounding Roy's views dated April 13–15, 1927, — presumably a speech, or speeches, delivered by him to the committee — see *M. N. Roy's Mission to China*, ed. R. North and X. Eudin (1963), pp. 160–175). According to Roy's account, he referred the question to Moscow, but received an ambiguous answer (M. N. Roy, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in China* (Calcutta, 1946), pp. 548–549).

[29] *M. N. Roy's Mission to China*, ed. R. North and X. Eudin (1963), pp. 176–177. The members of the central committee of the CCP in Wuhan were said to have taken no line at all on the question (*Bol'shevik*, No. 21, November 15, 1927, p. 73); for a summary by a critic who condemned the north-western theory as a "flight" inspired by "profound pessimism" see *Problemy Kitaya*, i (1929), 24–26. Stalin at the meeting in the Sun Yat-sen university on May 13, 1927, cautiously supported an advance against the "Mukdenites" in conjunction with Feng, but was principally concerned to deprecate an offensive against Chiang Kai-shek and Shanghai, evidently demanded by some hotheads in Moscow (Stalin, *Sochineniya*, ix, 254–256).

[30] V. Vishnyakova-Akimova, *Dva Goda v Vosstavshem Kitae* (1965), p. 348.

[31] See p. 713 above.

triumph of the nationalist armies had unleashed a reign of terror which spread over much of the countryside. In Hunan, in the words of a Soviet commentator, the terrified landlords were "fleeing in all directions — from the countryside to the county towns, from the county towns to Changsha, from Changsha to Hankow, to the foreign concessions".[32] In Hupei, in March 1927, when the peasants were beginning to seize landlords' estates, a congress of peasant unions, led by communists, threw caution to the winds, proclaimed the abolition of private property in land, and urged the peasant unions to "lead and direct the struggle now beginning of the peasantry for the land".[33] In this region conditions approaching civil war developed. In some places, peasants murdered landlords and gentry, or handed them over to local authorities for execution. In others, landlords were strong enough to take reprisals; an incident was reported where nine peasant leaders, including six or seven communists, were seized by armed forces, and burned alive.[34]

This was the moment when Mao Tse-tung emerged as a significant figure in party affairs. In September 1926 he had published an important theoretical article on the peasant movement.[35] Two months later, during a visit to Shanghai, he published in the CCP journal an article describing the repression of peasant resistance movements in Kiangsu and Chekiang.[36] In February 1927 he submitted to the central committees of the CCP and of Kuomintang (being a servant of both organizations) a report on the peasant movement in Hunan, which was published in the CCP journal on March 12, 1927, and in the Kuomintang journal three days later. On the strength of a 32-day investigation on the spot in January–February 1927, Mao reported that, since nationalist armies had occupied Hunan in September 1926, the peasant movement had

[32] *Agrarnye Problemy*, No. 2, 1927, p. 41.

[33] *Ibid.* p. 51.

[34] *Ibid.* p. 45; an article in *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 26 (100), 1927, pp. 3–9, attributed the peasant upheavals in Hunan and Hupei to the deepening of a "plebeian movement" led by the CCP.

[35] See p. 735 above.

[36] *Hsiang-tao Chou-pai*, November 25, 1926; the article was published over a pseudonym, but is attributed to Mao in S. Schram, *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung* (1963), p. 178. See, however, the cautious view apparently expressed by Mao at a conference in Changsha in December 1926 (p. 735 above); according to his own later account, it was after his visit to Hunan in January–February 1927 that he began to advocate a major redistribution of land (E. Snow, *Red Star over China* (1938), p. 161).

entered a revolutionary phase, which "in the not distant future" would spread to "some hundreds of millions of peasants" all over China. In many parts of Hunan the landlords and gentry had been dispossessed, and the slogan "All power to the peasant unions" made a reality:

> In the course of some months the peasants have overthrown and smashed the rule of classes of a feudal or class character, the blackguards, the gentry, and the landlords, with the whole basis of their thousand-year political dictatorship, the mainstay of imperialism, militarism, greedy officialdom, and corrupt bureaucrats.

Many acts of violence had been committed by the peasants against their former exploiters. But to denounce these as "excesses", and to dub their perpetrators "good-for-nothings", was the mark of the Right Kuomintang. Of the peasants of Hunan, 75 per cent counted as poor or very poor. Their rôle was essential:

> The leadership of the poor peasants is extraordinarily important. If there were no poor peasants there would be no revolution. To reject them is to reject the revolution. To attack them is to attack the revolution.

Mao directed his appeal both to the "revolutionary régime" and to "all revolutionary parties".[37] It is unlikely that Mao at this time was consciously seeking to revise party doctrine, or thinking in terms of doctrine at all.[38] But the omission to assign any rôle, even

[37] An incomplete Russian translation without signature (though the report is written in the first person) appeared in *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 21 (95), 1927, pp. 22–29, a fuller signed version in *Revolyutsionnyi Vostok*, ii (1927), 107–122. Both refer to its publication in the CCP journal of March 12, 1927; the latter dates it "Changsha, February 18, 1927". Neither of these versions includes the final section "Fourteen Achievements", describing the activities of the peasant unions, and no complete translation of the original text appears to be available. Some significant changes in the earlier sections were made in the official Chinese text published in 1951, in passages describing acts of violence by the peasants and extolling the predominant rôle of the peasantry in the revolution, notably the omission of the statement in the original text that, in "the consummation of the democratic revolution", the share of responsibility of the army and of the cities was three-tenths, and of the peasants seven-tenths. The revised text is used in the Russian translation in Mao Tse-tung, *Izbrannye Proizvedeniya* (1952), i, 35–88, and in the official English translation (in several editions).

[38] Bukharin, referring to it at the eighth IKKI in May 1927 as a report of "one of our agitators", called it "an excellent, interesting account which mirrors life", and did not hint at any doctrinal innovation (*Die Chinesische Frage auf dem 8. Plenum* (1928), pp. 12–13).

a formal rôle of "leadership", to the urban workers had striking implications. Whatever his other conclusions, Mao's experiences in Hunan had given the peasant revolution a central place, which it never lost, in his thought and action.

Soviet theorists, wedded to the doctrine of the bourgeois character of the peasantry, tended to regard the peasantry as the business of Kuomintang rather than of the CCP. Practice revealed little substance in this claim. Kuomintang had hitherto paid only routine attention to the wrongs of the peasants. A peasant department of Kuomintang was set up in February 1924 after the first Kuomintang congress. But its inspiration and leadership seem to have been mainly communist; P'eng P'ai, the communist peasant leader, became its secretary and factotum.[39] Later in 1924 Kuomintang established a Peasant Movement Training Institute with P'eng P'ai as its director;[40] and a resolution of the second congress of Kuomintang in January 1926, adopted on a report of Mao as head of its propaganda department, asserted that "the centre of gravity of Kuomintang is hidden among the countless masses of the exploited peasantry".[41] In Moscow attempts were made to create links between Kuomintang and Krestintern. Krestintern in an open letter of April 30, 1926, told Kuomintang that "the broad peasant masses are your chief support and the pledge of your success";[42] and two Kuomintang delegates who visited Moscow in this period, Hu Han-min and Shao Li-tsin, were both given honorific appointments in Krestintern.[43] The identification of Kuomintang with the peasantry, which was shared by Trotsky,[44] was artificial. According to Kuomintang statistics for December 1926, 40·7 per cent of its members were peasants, 21·4 per cent students, 20·6 per cent workers, 9·6 per cent traders, the rest be-

[39] *China Quarterly*, viii (1961), 179–181; for P'eng P'ai see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 722.

[40] *China Quarterly*, viii (1961), 181–183; Mao Tse-tung became its director in its sixth term, May–October 1926 (S. Schram, *Mao Tse-tung* (1926), pp. 79, 89–92).

[41] *Ibid.* pp. 85–86; Mao afterwards claimed to have realized the revolutionary potential of the peasantry for the first time after the Shanghai events of May 30, 1925 (E. Snow, *Red Star over China* (1938), p. 157).

[42] *Krest'yanskii Internatsional*, No. 3–5, March–May 1926, p. 181.

[43] *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 763; *Pyatnadtsatyi S"ezd VKP(B)*, i (1961), 804; they were probably the Kuomintang delegates whose visit to the International Agrarian Institute in Moscow was recorded in *Pravda*, September 27, 1926.

[44] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 718, note 4.

ing officials or members of the professions;[45] but Roy more realistically remarked that, while its rank and file was "recruited from the oppressed and exploited classes", its leadership represented the big bourgeoisie, the landlords and the village gentry.[46]

In October 1926 the central committee of Kuomintang in Canton had shown a dawning consciousness of the peasants as a crucial problem.[47] Early in March 1927, meeting in Wuhan with strong communist participation,[48] it for the first time addressed itself seriously to their demands, adopting a long resolution on the peasant movement, a manifesto to the peasantry, and a "provisional decree on the punishment of bad gentry and bullies". The resolution proposed the formation of regional and district organs of self-government, based on the peasant unions; the subordination of peasant armed forces, other than those incorporated in the nationalist armies, to these organs; the handing over of public and monastery lands to the organs of self-government, and the punishment of "bribe-taking officials, bad gentry and bullies, and also of all counter-revolutionaries", whose land and possessions should be confiscated "by process of law". The manifesto was addressed to the peasants of the lower Yangtze and of the northern provinces, into which the nationalist armies might now be expected to advance, inviting them to rise in revolt and destroy "the privileges of the feudal-landlord class". The "provisional decree" explained that "bad gentry and bullies do not come within the ordinary laws", and threatened dire punishment for anyone who cooperated with "armed bandits" in harming "workers in local or central party organs", or in sharing out stolen property.[49] The decisions were the expression of a mood, and seem to have no more practical application than the resolutions of the central committee of the CCP. But the problem could not be spirited away. After the

[45] *Pravda*, May 10, 1927.

[46] M. N. Roy, *My Experiences in China* (2nd ed. Calcutta, 1945), p. 30.

[47] See p. 720 above.

[48] For this session see p. 743 above.

[49] L. Delyusin, *Agrarno-Krest'yanskii Vopros v Politike KPK* (1972), pp. 247–250, using a Chinese source which presumably had access to Kuomintang archives. The Chinese phrase translated "bullies and bad gentry" came into common use in CCP pronouncements (see pp. 830, 837, 839 below); it enabled the party to maintain the policy of a united front with "good" gentry, and was based, according to one commentator, on "an under-estimate of the *hidden* process of class differentiation in the countryside" (*Agrarnye Problemy* No. 2, 1927, p. 40).

session Kuomintang set up a special commission to discuss it, in which "almost all the leading members of the central committee" took part, as well as representatives of 15 provinces and of the army. T'an P'ing-shan and Mao Tse-tung were the CCP representatives; and two Soviet agrarian experts, Iolk and Tarkhanov, also attended.[50]

The intractable problem confronting both the CCP and the Left wing of Kuomintang was to reconcile the revolutionary enthusiasm of those who believed that peasant risings were essential to the further progress of the nationalist campaign against the imperialists, and the caution of those who insisted that peasant "excesses" could only antagonize the leaders of the nationalist armies and the nationalist government. The commission spawned two successive sub-commissions, and succeeded in producing a "draft resolution on the agrarian question", which leaned markedly to the side of caution. It proposed to confiscate the land of bad gentry, corrupt officials, militarists and counter-revolutionaries. This was what was called "political confiscation". Confiscation of holdings above a certain size, or not directly cultivated by the landlords, was "economic confiscation"; on this the commission did not venture. Mao, apparently one of the authors of the draft, remarked that political confiscation was a first step, but that in Hunan economic confiscation was "no longer a problem", since "the peasants on their own initiative have already proceeded to redistribute the land". He added that different provinces might handle this problem in different ways.

While the commission was at work, Wang Ching-wei, accompanied by Ch'en Tu-hsiu and other notabilities, arrived in Wuhan. (A few days later the Shanghai massacres occurred, but do not seem to have affected its work.) The commission resumed its labours under Wang's presidency; and later in the month "enlarged" meetings of the commission were attended by such important figures as Wang himself, T'ang Sheng-chih, T'an P'ing-shan and Borodin. Wang was characteristically indecisive. He began by rejecting the draft resolution as inadequate, and is said to have made the radical proposal that all estates of more than 50 mu — a low limit — should be confiscated. But he soon yielded to

[50] For the constitution of the commission see L. Delyusin, *Agrarno-Krest'yanskii Vopros v Politike KPK* (1972), pp. 251–252; *Agrarnye Problemy*, No. 2, 1927, p. 55.

the weight of Kuomintang opinion, and asked whether it was "necessary to realize today the principle 'to every cultivator — his own land' ". T'ang Sheng-chih protested that confiscation would be fiercely resisted by the army, since most officers owned land, though according to one account he dramatically offered his own estate for confiscation; other generals present smiled and said nothing. Of the communists P'eng Pai stood out for the confiscation of all landlords' land. But Mao defended the commission's draft, again pointing out that other provinces lagged behind Hunan; as regards economic confiscation, he proposed "to await a convenient moment and then work out a new draft which will settle the question completely". It may have been on this occasion that Mao found an ingenious formula of appeasement:

> What we call land confiscation consists in not paying rent; there is no need for any other method.... In solving the land question in China, we must first have the reality, and it will be all right if legal recognition of this reality comes only later.

T'an P'ing-shan, having wavered at first, came down on the side of political confiscation. Borodin, who spoke on April 26, 1927, took his cue from the theses of the seventh IKKI, and drew a distinction between the regions liberated by the nationalist armies, where measures of confiscation should be cautiously applied, and other regions where more radical slogans could be used. He called for the establishment of peasant organs of self-administration in the liberated regions, but insisted that they should be controlled "by the party" and "from above". Ch'en followed Borodin, and argued that confiscation should not be applied to small proprietors or army officers. No less than four resolutions were adopted on various aspects of the agrarian problem. They represented an elaborate attempt to give satisfaction to all. But references to peasant power and the struggle against the landlords evidently seemed provocative to some. When the question of publication was raised, Wang and T'an P'ing-shan among others spoke against it; and it was decided not to publish for the present.[51] None of this

[51] The fullest available account of these proceedings is in L. Delyusin, *Agrarno-Krest'yanskii Vopros v Politike KPK* (1972), pp. 252–263; for further details see *Agrarnye Voprosy*, No. 2, 1927, pp. 55–57; S. Schram, *Mao Tse-tung* (1966), pp. 98–102; *Bol'shevik*, No. 5, March 15, 1928, p. 67; V. Vishnyakova-Akimova, *Dva Goda v Vosstavshem Kitae* (1965), p. 350; N. Kostarev, *Moi Kitaiskie Dnevniki* (1935), pp. 129–130. According to A. Bakulin, *Zapiski*

held out much promise of an acceptable compromise. When the politburo of Kuomintang received the report of the commission, it decided "to take the question of agrarian legislation off the agenda".[52]

Simultaneously with these debates in Kuomintang, a peasant conference was held under CCP auspices, at which Mao, P'eng Pai and two Soviet experts, Volin and Iolk, were present.[53] Three proposals were canvassed: to confiscate the land only of large landlords who had come out as counter-revolutionaries, and to await the further northward advance of the nationalist armies before adopting a more drastic agrarian programme; to confiscate the land of all large landlords, exempting only small landowners and officers in the revolutionary armies; and to confiscate and redistribute all land. The third, most radical, solution was adopted by the conference. But the CCP leaders and their Soviet advisers were plainly reluctant to come out with demands calculated to affront their Kuomintang partners; and, when the proposal was submitted to the central committee of the CCP, the committee refused to bring it before the party congress.[54] Waverings on this question were endemic in the situation. In the winter of 1926–1927, when the progress of the northern expedition kindled peasant enthusiasm in the regions through which it passed, and peasant risings gave it material support, peasant demands were easily identified with the cause of the national revolution. But when the consequences and implications of these demands became apparent, and when a regular nationalist government began

ob Ukhanskom Periode Kitaiskoi Revolyutsii (1930), pp. 201–202, the CCP representatives continually changed their points of view, and "several times spoke against one another".

[52] A. Cherepanov, *Severnyi Pokhod* (1968), pp. 252–253.

[53] E. Snow, *Red Star over China* (1939), p. 144; for Volin and Iolk, who published a two-volume work in English in Canton on *The Peasant Movement in Kwangtung* (1927), see V. Nikiforov, *Sovetskie Istoriki o Problemakh Kitaya* (1970), pp. 138–139.

[54] This appears to be the "draft agrarian programme" published in *Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, viii (1927), 96–99, which, according to L. Delyusin, *Agrarno-Krest'yanskii Vopros v Politike KPK* (1972), pp. 280, 285, was prepared by an agrarian commission of the fifth congress, but not accepted by the congress. *Agrarnye Problemy*, No. 2, 1927, pp. 52–53, mentions no peasant conference, and describes the discussion as having taken place in the party central committee; *Problemy Kitaya*, i (1929), 30–31, appears to confuse this discussion with the debate in the Kuomintang commission; see also *China Quarterly*, ix (1964), 162.

to be established in central China, endorsement of these demands by the party leaders was qualified in the light of expediency.[55]

These preliminary skirmishes did not bode well for the fifth congress of the CCP, which opened in Wuhan on April 27, and lasted till May 9, 1927. It was the first major party congress. For the first four years of its existence, the CCP had been a small group of intellectuals and professional revolutionaries. After May 30, 1925, it began to develop into a mass party, whose strength consisted in its appeal, still potential rather than actual, to poor and hungry Chinese workers and peasants just awakening into political consciousness. The triumphs of the northern expedition brought it a new mass influx of members, though how these recruits were organized and registered remains something of a mystery, and it may be suspected that in some places individual membership of the party, as of the trade unions, was more of a fiction than a reality. At its fifth congress in April 1927 the CCP had 57,967 members, of whom 53·8 per cent were workers, 18·7 per cent peasants and 19·1 per cent intellectuals; membership of the youth league was put at 35,000. In addition to these modest totals, the CCP optimistically claimed to exercise an influence over 2,800,000 workers organized in trade unions and 9,270,000 members of peasant unions. The circulation of the weekly party journal reached 50,000 copies.[56] But in spite, or in part because,

[55] Mao afterwards claimed to have sponsored the demand for total confiscation, and accused Borodin of arguing for land redistribution in 1926 and against it in 1927 (E. Snow, *Red Star over China* (1938), pp. 144, 147); but Mao himself was not exempt from some measure of inconsistency. According to M. N. Roy, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in China* (Calcutta, 1946), p. 615, Mao "represented the extreme Right-wing view in the leadership of the communist party"; though Roy is an unreliable witness, this may suggest that Mao was more cautious than Roy in putting forward radical demands.

[56] These figures were given in Ch'en's report to the congress (*Bol'shevik*, No. 23–24, December 31, 1927, p. 110): A. Tivel and M. Kheimo, *10 Let Kominterna* (1929), p. 355, recorded a total of 54,000 members for this date. For earlier figures see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 728–729. The figures suggest a mass recruitment of workers in Wuhan in the first months of 1927; for collective membership of trade unions see p. 809, note 134 below. Profintern claimed a more than threefold increase in the number of its adherents between 1925 and 1927 (*Protokoll über den Vierten Kongress der Roten Gewerkschaftsinternationale* (n.d.), p. 306); of the 9·7 million members of peasant unions, 5·2 millions were in Hunan and 1·7 millions in Hupei (L. Delyusin, *Agrarno-Krest'yanskii Vopros v Politike KPK* (1972), pp. 241–242). For later statistics of the CCP see p. 883 below

of this numerical growth, the resources of the party were limited in relation to the vast geographical area and the numerous fields of activity which it sought to cover. Its dispersal over several widely separated centres was an insurmountable obstacle. The party organizations in Peking, Canton, Shanghai and Wuhan constituted rival "principalities", not readily answerable to centralized control.[57] Other defects stemmed in part from this handicap. Critical members of the Russian party visiting Shanghai observed early in 1927 that, though 70 per cent of the party membership in Shanghai consisted of workers, none of these were included among the 16 members of the party central committee, and that in general "the upper strata of the CCP are not in touch with the masses", and were still animated by the "detestable spirit of the small circle".[58] Lominadze, at the fifteenth congress of the Russian party in December 1927, spoke of an *aktiv* of "petty bourgeois intellectual elements", which stood "between the central committee and the mass of party members".[59]

The congress was attended by 70 delegates of the CCP, and by twice as many guests, including representatives of Comintern, Profintern, KIM and Kuomintang.[60] The spectacular increase in membership announced at the congress made it momentarily possible to forget that the Shanghai organization of the CCP had been virtually wiped out, and that the same fate threatened the party in other large centres. Borodin stayed away;[61] and his absence imparted a certain spurious pre-eminence to Roy, whose speeches, alone of those delivered at the congress, have been published in full.[62] The congress opened on a forced note of optimism. It issued a manifesto to the Chinese people on the forthcoming May 1 celebration, predicting "the victory of the revolution already in the not distant future", and proclaiming that "the revolution is at this

[57] *Problemy Kitaya*, iii (1930), 202–203, where Ch'en Tu-hsiu is held responsible for failure to impose discipline.

[58] L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., 1932), pp. 406–407; for this letter see p. 762, note 231 above.

[59] *Pyatnadtsatyi S"ezd VKP(B)*, i (1961), 238.

[60] V. Vishnyakova-Akimova, *Dva Goda v Vosstavshem Kitae* (1965), p. 350.

[61] Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, i (1971), 622.

[62] See *M. N. Roy's Mission to China*, ed. R. North and X. Eudin (1963) pp. 3–5; a stenographic record of the proceedings was distributed (*Problemy Kitaya*, i (1929), 29), but apparently never published.

moment entering on the path of decisive victory".[63] But this lack of realism contrasted sharply with the first major event of the congress, Ch'en Tu-hsiu's main political report, which laid bare all the ambiguities in the situation of the CCP and in the policies of Comintern. Ch'en, according to his own subsequent account, had told the politburo a few days earlier that two alternatives only remained: to abandon power or to break with Kuomintang. The remark had been received in stony silence.[64] At the congress he was more circumspect. His speech, which lasted for six hours,[65] was divided into eleven sections. (1) The history of the party: here Ch'en expressed doubts about the line pursued since Chiang's *coup* of March 20, 1926. (2) The rôle of the bourgeoisie: Chiang had now taken over the Left as well as the Right bourgeoisie. (3) The petty bourgeoisie: this constantly wavered, but must be drawn into Kuomintang. (4) The land: the alliance with small landowners was still necessary. (5) The proletariat: this had not yet the strength to seize power by itself, and must work with the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie. (6) The military factor: the army had not come from the revolutionary masses, and its hesitations had social roots. (7) The route of the revolution: this must be to the north-west not to the south-east, which was the seat of imperialism. (8) Kuomintang: this was a league of many classes, and the party must participate in it. (9) Reorganization of the army: this meant giving it a new social basis. (10) Revolutionary-democratic power: this could be only a dictatorship of the proletariat, peasantry and petty bourgeoisie. (11) Financial and economic affairs: more attention should be paid to these. But clear-sighted analysis was not matched by resolute prescriptions. Ch'en admitted that the Wuhan government was "not yet a government of the worker and peasant masses, but only a bloc of leaders", and found in this a reason for hastening slowly:

> We have before us the task of beginning to build up a genuinely revolutionary government as soon as ... the threat

[63] Quoted in *Noveishaya Istoriya Kitaya* (1972), p. 108, from a published Chinese text.

[64] For Ch'en's letter of December 10, 1929, see p. 906, note 434 below; Ch'en also quoted a remark of Chou En-lai, which put the issue in a nutshell: "After we withdraw from Kuomintang, the labour and peasant movement will be freer, but the military movement will suffer too much".

[65] V. Vishnyakova-Akimove, *Dva Goda v Vosstavshem Kitae* (1965), p. 351.

of foreign intervention and the offensive of the militarists have disappeared.

The same combination of realism and procrastination marked his verdict on the agrarian question. He admitted that the party had followed "a too pacific policy", and that "now it is necessary to confiscate the large estates", though with "concessions to the small landowners". To confiscate all landlords' estates would be "too radical a measure", and it was "necessary for a certain period to stick to a middle line". The class war in the countryside was developing:

> Nevertheless, it is necessary to await the further development of military operations for the confiscation even of large estates. The only correct decision at the present moment is the principle of deepening the revolution only after extending it.[66]

On the following day, in the debate on the report, Roy delivered his major speech to the congress. He held that the past mistakes of the CCP "stemmed from an over-estimation of the bourgeoisie" and from failure to develop "the energies of the working class as an independent force". Contradicting a pessimistic remark of Ch'en, he regarded it as "perfectly obvious that the next period of the revolution will be a period of development and not one of decline". He expressed once more his mistrust of all militarists and of "the romantic orientation towards the north-west", but tried, rather dishonestly, to show that the decision to continue the northward advance was now so limited as not to contradict his original proposals. He concluded with five points which gave a decidedly revolutionary turn to party policy: the agrarian revolution, the arming of the peasants, rural self-government, a state based on a revolutionary dictatorship, and "the creation of a revolutionary army, not by converting militarists into revolutionaries, but by organizing a revolutionary army on a firm social

[66] A very brief extract from the report appeared in *Pravda*, May 15, 1927, a full summary without textual quotations in *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 56, May 31, 1927, pp. 1212–1214. For some carefully selected quotations see *Bol'shevik*, No. 23–24, December 31, 1927, pp. 99–110; the author of this account, Mif, was present at the congress. For what appears to be a summary rather than a text of Ch'en's remarks on the agrarian question see L. Delyusin, *Agrarno-Krest'yanskii Vopros v Politike KPK* (1972), p. 277; Trotsky criticized the report, on the strength of the *Pravda* extract, in his theses for the eighth IKKI in May 1927 (L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., 1932), pp. 67–73).

basis". In a reply to the debate three days later, Roy firmly rebutted the accusation brought against him by a member of the party of moving too far to the Left, and rebuked the communist Minister for Agriculture in the Wuhan government for saying that agrarian policy should be left to Kuomintang.[67] Roy's would-be tough line brought to light all the symptoms of a split.

The growing tension between Kuomintang and the CCP was manifested when, on May 4, 1927, Wang Ching-wei himself, as an honoured guest, attended the session of the congress at which Roy presented a report on the proceedings of the seventh IKKI in Moscow five months earlier. Much of the report was harmless and uncontroversial. But in a concluding passage Roy unwisely described Kuomintang as "an instrument through which the hegemony of the proletariat can be exercised", and proclaimed it as the task of the CCP "to transform the national movement into a struggle for socialism".[68] The terms of Wang's reply are not recorded.[69] But Roy found it necessary to make a defensive statement, in the name of the Comintern delegation, explaining that "the proletariat is prepared to lead the revolution in collaboration with other classes", and that, far from being "hostile to the interests of Kuomintang", it will "collaborate with Kuomintang until final victory".[70] Matters can hardly have been improved by Roy's final speech to the congress in which he spoke once more of the hegemony of the proletariat, of the arming of workers and peasants, and of the class struggle leading up to the dictatorship of the proletariat.[71]

The main political resolution on Ch'en's report, adopted at the end of the congress, found grounds for self-congratulation in the

[67] *M. N. Roy's Mission to China*, ed. R. North and X. Eudin (1963), pp. 188–218.

[68] *Ibid.* pp. 216–230.

[69] An English-language newspaper *Chinese Information Bulletin*, which published Wang's speech and the agrarian resolution of the congress, was confiscated by the authorities (A. Cherepanov, *Severnyi Pokhod* (1968), p. 253). Roy's claim that Wang expressed "complete agreement" with his report (see p. 797 below) must be taken with a grain of salt; but Wang, with his characteristic desire for compromise, may have veiled his criticisms in more than ordinary Chinese politeness. Mif later accused Wang of "two-facedness and political charlatanry" (*Bol'shevik*, No. 23–24, December 31, 1927, p. 112).

[70] *M. N. Roy's Mission to China*, ed. R. North and X. Eudin (1963), pp. 231–233; Roy admitted that his original statement was regarded by CCP leaders as "tactless".

[71] *Ibid.* pp. 234–242.

spectacular increase in party membership, and in the number of organized workers and peasants, since the Shanghai rising of May 30, 1925, and since the launching of the northern expedition a year later. Emphasis was laid on Chiang's *coup* of March 20, 1926, when he "overthrew the Left national government" in Canton; this had been the prelude to the Shanghai massacres of April 12, 1927. The standard formulas of the alliance of the proletariat and the peasantry under the leadership of the proletariat were repeated. More awkward practical reasons were skilfully evaded. The demand to strengthen the revolution in central and southern China "does not exclude the necessity and the possibility of broadening the area of revolution"; yet the CCP must "struggle against the tendency to renounce its revolutionary foundations, or weaken them, under pretext of expansion". Four years earlier the CCP had entered Kuomintang on two conditions: the maintenance of its independent organization and of its own political line. It had since had to struggle against attempts by the Right wing of Kuomintang to limit its organizational independence. (At this point the Russian translator omitted a passage on the plea that the Chinese text was "unclear".) Nevertheless the link between the CCP and Kuomintang was now closer than ever, witness the decision to include communist ministers in the Kuomintang. The "mechanical theory" that CCP was the party of the workers, the Kuomintang of the peasants, was rejected. The agrarian revolution against "feudalism and patriarchalism" was led by "the most revolutionary class".[72]

The proceedings of the congress on the agrarian question were governed by the hesitations and ambiguities of the resolution of the seventh IKKI in Moscow and of the recent abortive debates in the Kuomintang agrarian commission. If Mao pressed his proposals for an intensification of peasant activity and for expropriation of the landlords, he received no support either from the leaders of the CCP or from the spokesmen of Comintern. In Mao's judgement, Borodin stood "just a little to the Right of Ch'en"; Roy stood "a little to the Left of both Ch'en and Borodin", but

[72] *Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, vii (1927), 5–12; when a Kuomintang delegate at the congress, while recognizing the CCP as the party of the proletariat, claimed for Kuomintang the right to speak for the peasantry, the claim was resisted by a delegate of the CCP (L. Delyusin, *Agrarno-Krest'yanskii Vopros v Politike KPK* (1972), p. 275).

"talked too much, without any method of realization".[73] Mao probably enjoyed more sympathy in the rank and file of the party, which had grown impatient of the stern tutelage of Borodin. But he became so discouraged by the weight of opposition that he feigned illness and absented himself from the rest of the proceedings.[74] The document included in the records of the congress, though more moderate than the proposals put forward in the pre-congress debates, evidently failed to secure unanimous support, and was called a "Draft Resolution on the Agrarian Question". It asserted the doctrine that "a radical solution of the agrarian question calls for a thorough-going redistribution of the land, based on the principle of equality". But it recognized that this was unattainable "so long as private property in land exists". The immediate programme was modest. Landlords' estates rented to peasants, as well as land held by religious and other communal institutions, were to be confiscated, and distributed to tillers of the soil. But estates of less than 500 mu — a high limit — were exempt from confiscation, and estates belonging to officers of the revolutionary armies were also protected. Nothing was said of the principles on which the confiscated land was to be distributed to the peasants. Peasant self-administration, the formation of a peasant militia, reduction of rents and the limitation of usury were, however, recommended, though without indication how these desiderata were to be achieved.[75]

The congress, in spite of its insistence on the leadership of the proletariat, paid less attention to the industrial workers. A resolution, said to have been drafted by Borodin, well stocked with quotations from Lenin on the need for temporary concessions to the imperialists, and dwelling on the danger of foreign intervention, was submitted to the congress. It condemned popular "excesses", especially when directed against foreign property or interests. "Hooligan elements" among the workers must be curbed. Trade union discipline should be strengthened, and those

[73] E. Snow, *Red Star over China* (1939), 144–145, 147; Mao thought Roy "a fool", Borodin "a blunderer", and Ch'en "an unconscious traitor".

[74] See Chinese sources cited in J. Ch'en, *Mao and the Chinese Revolution* (1965), pp. 117–118, and S. Schram, *Mao Tse-tung* (1966), p. 110.

[75] *Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, viii (1927), 22–28. Mif described it as "dictated by tactical considerations" and "extremely contradictory" (*Bol'shevik*, No. 23–24, December 31, 1927, p. 115); another Soviet commentator said that it "provided a loop-hole for opportunist tactics" (*Problemy Kitaya*, iii (1930), 105).

who offended against it punished.[76] Hitherto strikes had occurred almost exclusively in foreign enterprises,[77] and could be said to have served national-revolutionary as well as class interests. The need to propitiate the foreigner introduced a new factor; Eugene Chen, the foreign minister of the Wuhan government, is said to have "insisted that there should be no strikes in factories owned by foreigners, because they disturbed his diplomatic dealings".[78] But these outspoken limitations and reservations are unlikely to have been aired on the floor of the congress. A separate resolution on the trade unions, like the agrarian resolution, appears not to have been formally adopted by the congress, being described in the records as "the basis for a definitive resolution to be formulated by the central committee". It accused Chiang of forming yellow trade unions, and the Wuhan bourgeoisie of attempting to blunt the class struggle by offering the workers participation in the management and profits of industry. It urged trade unions to pursue a political struggle for the nationalization of banks, mines, railways and large-scale undertakings. But the main emphasis was on economic demands. The authors of the resolution (Lozovsky would certainly have had a hand in it) were clearly embarrassed by the weakness of the unions and the lack of organization; the All-China Federation of Labour was bluntly described as "a nominal institution", which did not lead the unions under its aegis, or even maintain relations with them. "Correct and reasonable relations" between the CCP and the unions had never been established. The appeal to remedy these shortcomings carried little conviction.[79] A routine resolution on party organization admitted that the CCP was still "in its youth", and that, in view of the rapid increase in membership, it did not dispose of "complete organization and authority".[80] After the congress, two members of the CCP entered the government in accordance with the still unexecuted demand of the seventh IKKI five months earlier — T'an P'ing-shan, who

[76] *Problemy Kitaya*, i (1929), 29–30. The resolution is said to have been adopted unanimously because nobody ventured to speak against it; the text has not been traced.

[77] *Ibid.* ii (1930), 32.

[78] M. N. Roy, *My Experiences in China* (2nd ed. Calcutta, 1945), p. 33; Chen was described by a Soviet critic as no more of a socialist "than the English Fabians" (S. Dalin, *Ocherki Revolyutsii v Kitae* (n.d.), p. 241.

[79] *Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, viii (1927), 13–21.

[80] *Ibid.* viii, 29.

had himself been the principal Chinese delegate at the seventh IKKI, as Minister for Agriculture, and Su Chao-cheng, a communist trade union leader, as Minister for Labour.[81] T'an, according to a later account, inaugurated his term of office with a "shameful" speech, in which he said nothing about agrarian revolution or confiscation of land, but confined himself to "liberal phrases about improving the position of the peasants" and warnings against "excesses".[82]

The scarcity of published records, and the flood of recrimination and self-justification let loose by the proceedings, make it difficult to draw up a balance-sheet of this confused and self-contradictory congress. It had not attempted to discuss the military question, thus tacitly recognizing its inability to control or influence the generals. What it had failed to recognize was that helplessness in this respect spelt ineffectiveness in every other. On a superficial view the congress appeared to have launched the CCP on a more radical course, and to represent a victory for Roy over Borodin. In an article written a few days after the end of the congress Roy triumphantly summed up its conclusions. "*The national revolution must now become in reality an agrarian revolution*"; what was required was "*democratic dictatorship of the proletariat, the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie*". But the illusion was revealed when he went on to assert that Wang Ching-wei had expressed full agreement with his views on the prospects of the Chinese revolution, and had declared that "the petty bourgeoisie must march with the proletariat to socialism".[83] In fact, no escape had been offered from the dilemma implicit in the Comintern instructions: it was impossible both to lead a workers' and peasants' revolutionary movement and to remain in Kuomintang. Neither Borodin nor Ch'en retained any belief in the feasibility of an early revolution.[84] The one concrete result of the congress had been to widen the rift between the CCP and whatever authority existed in Wuhan and the surrounding territory.

For the CCP the congress marked a further stage in the humili-

[81] For announcements in the local press see C. Brandt, *Stalin's Failure in China* (1958), p. 96; for the decision of the seventh IKKI see p. 733 above.

[82] *Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, viii (1927), 32.

[83] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 69, July 8, 1927, pp. 1478–1479; the article was dated "Wuhan, May 15, 1927".

[84] See a report of a conversation between them in A. L. Strong, *China's Millions* (1936), pp. 38–39; the writer arrived in Wuhan in May 1927.

ating exposure of its inability to formulate a policy which would conform either to the realities of the situation or to the instructions of Comintern. In Moscow it did not seem difficult to reconcile firm support for Kuomintang and the national revolution with advanced demands of workers and peasants. In the turbulent conditions of the Chinese revolution, alliance with Kuomintang meant deliberately putting the brake on the second stage of the revolution till the first stage had been successfully completed. The dilemma presented by this question of priorities, the very existence of which was denied in Moscow, could not be evaded by the Chinese leaders, who were under the imputation of sacrificing the interests of workers and peasants to Chiang Kai-shek. The position of Ch'en Tu-hsiu, in spite of his acknowledged authority and prestige in the party,[85] was ambiguous and unenviable. Though not a declared Trotskyite before his expulsion from the CCP in November 1929, he shared Trotsky's belief that feudal relations were no longer significant in China, which had reached the capitalist stage of development. But he seems to have believed, unlike Trotsky, that this implied a transitional period of bourgeois rule, and that the Chinese proletariat was not yet an effective revolutionary force, thus exposing himself to the charge of Menshevism.[86] Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai did not play a prominent part at the congress. But, when it was over, he published a long article in the party journal maintaining that "the present new stage of the Chinese revolution is characterized not only by the treason of the reactionary bourgeoisie, but by the fact that workers, peasants and petty bourgeoisie have acquired the possibility of undertaking a freer, more open offensive". What was needed was "to establish peasant power, to carry out the agrarian revolution". He appealed to all "true members of Kuomintang" to unite for the struggle

[85] According to R. Chitarow, *Geschichte der Kommunistischen Jugendinternationale*, iii (1930), 110, Ch'en was "not only the leader of the party, but literally its idol"; the party was run on "a patriarchal system", and even the Communist Youth League was subject to "the absolute authority of the party leadership".

[86] *Problemy Kitaya*, iii (1930), 201–202, 209; it was alleged that, ever since March 20, 1926, the party central committee in Shanghai under his guidance had followed "a social-democratic line", i.e. called on the workers to assist the bourgeoisie to win power and to make no demands incompatible with a bourgeois democratic régime (*Problemy Kitaya*, i (1929), 14). But Ch'en was often irresolute, and it was difficult to distinguish between his own inclinations and his submission to the Comintern line.

against Chiang Kai-shek.[87] The article, though weak on detail, was a clear call for a more active policy and an attempt to stake out Ch'ü's claim to the leadership of the CCP.

Some months later, on September 17, 1927, one of the Comintern representatives at the congress gave the eastern secretariat of IKKI in Moscow an account of the attitude of the Chinese delegation. Though the report was obviously inspired by desire to discredit Ch'en and the former party leaders, and contained elements of caricature, it did not lack some plausibility. Only three members of the central committee of the CCP were said to have been present at the congress. Of these one (evidently Ch'en Tu-hsiu) was sceptical about the directives of the seventh IKKI, but thought that the experiment of applying them must be tried; the second (perhaps Chang Kuo-t'ao) thought that they introduced nothing new; the third (presumably Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai) accepted them unreservedly. Most of the delegates simply did not understand them. Formally nobody objected to the resolutions submitted to the congress. But nobody wanted to discuss them; and even delegates who felt some doubts about the policies of the central committee were unwilling to express these doubts in open session. Eventually the Comintern delegates forced a discussion of the "most important political questions"; and most of the Chinese delegates showed dissatisfaction with the policy of the central committee and with the old leaders, though no new leaders emerged.[88] The picture of a blind mass of delegates, shattered by the Shanghai disaster, bewildered by the harsh criticisms levelled at their hitherto revered leader, and passively allowing themselves to be driven into helpless and uninformed opposition to the old party leaders, reveals the total despondency into which the CCP had sunk at this time. The congress raised the numbers of the party central committee from 9 to 40 — a step probably designed by the Comintern representatives to dilute the authority of the old leaders. But most of the new members dispersed at the end of the congress, leaving effective power in the hands of a politburo of seven.[89] Ch'en's prestige enabled him to retain without challenge

[87] The article is summarized and quoted in L. Delyusin, *Agrarno-Krest'yanskii Vopros v Politike KPK* (1972), pp. 288–290.

[88] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 41 (115), 1927, p. 46; Mif was probably the author of the report.

[89] *Ibid.* No. 41 (115), 1927, pp. 46–47.

his office as secretary of the party. But his leadership had been discredited; and his critics in the party, notably Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai and Li Li-san, were elected to the new politburo.[90] Mao, in spite of his discomfiture at the congress, was appointed president of a newly founded All-China Peasants' Union.[91] Immediately after the congress, on May 10, 1927, the Communist Youth League held its fourth congress. The league, which had had only 2000 members at the beginning of 1925, increased its membership after the Shanghai events of May 30, 1925, to 10,000 and claimed 40,000 members on May 1, 1927,[92] though Chiang Kai-shek's terror in Shanghai must have begun to decimate its ranks. It endorsed the decisions taken at the CCP congress. But its leader, Jen Pi-shih, seems to have come out as a critic of Ch'en Tu-hsiu's temporizing policies; and this must further have eroded Ch'en's standing in the party.[93]

The fifth congress of the CCP was followed by a pan-Pacific trade union conference held in Hankow from May 19 to 26, 1927, and modelled on the pattern of the conference of Pacific transport workers in Canton in June 1924.[94] The original proposal, on the invitation of the Australian trade unions, had been to hold the conference in Sydney in July 1926; and this was welcomed at the fourth session of the central council of Profintern in March 1926.[95] But the remoteness of the *rendezvous*, and Australian restrictions on the admission of coloured workers, caused the abandonment of this project; and, when the Australian trade union congress met in Sydney in August 1926, agreement was reached, with the concurrence of a delegate of Profintern, on a plan to meet in Canton

[90] *Bol'shevik*, No. 23–24, December 31, 1927, p. 117.

[91] E. Snow, *Red Star over China* (1938), p. 145.

[92] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 728, note 5; *Young Communist International: Between the Fourth and Fifth Congresses* (1928), p. 190); another source quoted in *China Quarterly*, xii (1962), 80, claimed 75,000 members at this time. Kuomintang was said to have tried in 1925–1926 to set up its own youth organization in competition with the Communist Youth League, but without success (*Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 271).

[93] *China Quarterly*, xii (1962), 79.

[94] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 621–623.

[95] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 11 (48), 1925, p. 176; *IV Sessiya Tsentral'nogo Soveta Krasnogo Internatsionala Profsoyuzov* (1926), p. 85.

on May 1, 1927. On October 12, 1926, the executive bureau of Profintern gave its approval; and the proposed conference was announced by Lozovsky to the seventh IKKI a month later.[96] But this plan, too, suffered shipwreck. Since the transfer of the headquarters of the nationalist government, of Kuomintang and of Borodin's mission to Wuhan in the autumn of 1926, authority in Canton had moved steadily towards the Right, and legislation to curb the power of the trade unions dated from January 1927.[97] Chiang's Shanghai *coup* of April 12, 1927, served as an example to Canton. On April 15, 1927, Li Chi-shen rounded up communists and trade union leaders, carried out a number of executions, and broke up the organization of the Red unions; and the proceedings were condoned or supported by the Mechanics' Union.[98] The few Soviet military advisers remaining in Canton prudently took their departure.[99]

When, therefore, Lozovsky, accompanied by Andreichuk and a CGTU representative, Racamond, arrived in Canton on April 14, 1927, he found the city in the throes of a counter-revolutionary *coup* directed mainly against the revolutionary trade unions and their leaders. Lozovsky and his two colleagues interceded with Li Chi-shen for the workers under arrest, but met only with polite evasion. Lozovsky was effusively received by the president of the Right-wing Federation of Labour, who defended the suppression of the Red unions and offered, in the name of the sole authorized organization of Chinese workers, to assist in organizing a Pacific conference. Li Chi-shen also interested himself in the projected conference, and arrested the three Indonesian delegates, though these were later released. Clearly the only way to save the conference was to transfer it to Wuhan. Owing to the changed political situation the overland route taken by Roy and his party two months earlier was no longer safe. Lozovsky's party, and other delegates who had arrived for the congress, broke up into small groups to escape attention, and proceeded to Wuhan via Hong Kong and Shanghai. When the conference opened, delegates of eight countries were present: China, the Soviet Union, Japan,

[96] *Mezhdunarodnoe Rabochee Dvizhenie*, No. 42 (86), October 21, 1926, pp. 17–18; *Puti Mirovoi Revolyutsii* (1927), i, 553.

[97] See p. 737 above.

[98] J. Chesneaux, *The Chinese Labour Movement, 1919–1927* (1968), p. 371.

[99] V. Vishnyakova-Akimova, *Dva Goda v Vosstavshem Kitae* (1965), p. 289.

Indonesia, Korea, France, the United States and Great Britain. These were said to represent 14 million organized workers, of whom the Soviet Union accounted for 9·5 and China for 2·8 millions. The Indian Government had prevented the despatch of an Indian delegation; the Australian Government had cancelled the permits of the Australian delegates two days before they were due to sail; the Philippine delegates, having learned of the *coup* in Canton, thought it prudent not to proceed. A Mexican delegate arrived late. The opening of the conference was marked by a one-day strike in Wuhan and a mass demonstration of 100,000 workers.[100]

Lozovsky delivered the main report on the Chinese revolution and the international workers' movement;[101] and the resolutions adopted by the conference were numerous and varied.[102] A resolution against the danger of imperialist war and for the defence of the Soviet Union included a protest against the attacks on Soviet official buildings in Peking and London. A special appeal was issued to "expel the imperialist pirates from China".[103] Messages of greeting and support to the Chinese, Indian and Australian workers were proposed by Lozovsky, Tom Mann and Browder respectively and enthusiastically voted.[104] Greetings were also sent to "the national-revolutionary government", though this item, in view of later events, did not appear in any of the official reports.[105] The conference issued a moderate and conventional programme of workers' demands, beginning with the eight-hour day.[106] An awkward resolution on the rôle of the trade unions in the Chinese revolution called for "a concentration of the national-revolutionary

[100] *Krasnyi Internatsional Profsoyuzov*, No. 8–9, 1927, pp. 128–132, 149; *Labour Monthly*, No. 8, 1927, p. 510.

[101] *Rabochii Kitai v 1927 godu*, ed. A. Lozovsky (1928), pp. 166–190; none of the other speeches appears to have been published.

[102] A complete text of the resolutions does not appear to have been published. The fullest summary of the proceedings, with many quotations, is in an article by Lozovsky in *Krasnyi Internatsional Profsoyuzov*, No. 8–9, 1927, pp. 127–151 (an English translation was published as a pamphlet, A. Lozovsky, *The Pan-Pacific Trade Union Conference* (RILU, 1927)); this can be supplemented from sources cited in the following notes.

[103] The appeal was published in *Rabochii Kitai v 1927 godu*, ed. A. Lozovsky (1928), pp. 245–246.

[104] *Labour Monthly*, No. 8, 1927, pp. 510–511.

[105] T. C. Woo, *The Kuomintang and the Future of the Chinese Revolution* (1928), pp. 204–205.

[106] *China Year Book, 1928* (Tientsin, n.d.), pp. 1025–1026.

front and the formation of a firm revolutionary bloc consisting of proletariat, peasantry, and part of the urban petty bourgeoisie, under the political leadership of the first". It contemplated continued "participation in the revolutionary government" and support for the "revolutionary army", but added that this cooperation would have no sense if it "refused to realize immediately the fundamental social-economic demands of the worker and peasant masses".[107] A general resolution deplored "the split in the world trade union movement", and demanded "a firm united front and unity of the workers organized in trade unions in every country and in the whole world"; another resolution warned workers against having anything to do with the ILO at Geneva. The conference voted resolutions in favour of independence for Korea, Formosa, Indonesia and the Philippines. Finally, it adopted a statute establishing a permanent Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat, described in an accompanying manifesto as an attempt, not to create a new International, but to "unite the trade unions of the Pacific countries and to mobilize all forces for the creation of a single powerful trade union International embracing the trade unions of all countries, all races and all continents".[108] The secretariat managed to publish two issues of an English-language journal, the *Pacific Worker*, in Hankow before the government clamped down on its activities. Working from other centres, it continued for two or three years to encourage communist or radical trade union activities in the Far East.[109]

The Soviet representatives on the spot, like the leaders in Moscow, were still insensitive to the explosive realities of the situation in Wuhan. Even while the eighth IKKI was in session in Moscow, and while Lozovsky was exhorting the conference of Pacific workers in Wuhan, the march of events shattered what was left of the precarious balance between Comintern, CCP and

[107] Minor discrepancies, presumably due to translation from the Chinese, occur between the text of this resolution in *Rabochii Kitai v 1927 godu*, ed. A. Lozovsky (1928), pp. 247–249, and quotations in *Krasnyi Internatsional Profsoyuzov*, No. 8–9, 1927, pp. 132–133; the former has been followed here.

[108] *Ibid.* No. 8–9, 1927, pp. 142–143, 148; for the text of the statute see *Spravochnik Partiinogo Rabotnika*, vi (1928), i, 242–246.

[109] For the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat see Note F, pp. 1040–1042 below.

Kuomintang. On May 19, 1927, the central committee of Kuomintang issued a warning to workers' and peasants' organizations against "undisciplined behaviour" and "excessive demands".[110] Two days later, a clash occurred in Changsha, the capital of Hunan, between militant peasant organizations and the military garrison; and the troops, imitating Chiang Kai-shek's tactics in Shanghai, carried out an organized slaughter of communists, suspected communists and peasant leaders.[111] At this moment Ch'en, according to his own account, had an interview with Borodin, and pressed strongly for a break with Kuomintang. Borodin expressed personal agreement, but said that "Moscow will never permit it".[112] A resolution of the party central committee of May 26, 1927, frankly admitted that "in the present relationship of forces it would be inappropriate for the party to embark on direct armed conflict with the enemy", and that what was required was "to gain time, to conserve our forces, to prepare for the inevitable struggle". It instructed communists sitting on joint committees with Kuomintang delegates not to press "the maximum demands of the CCP", where these conflicted with "the interests of the development of the national-revolutionary movement".[113] On May 27, 1927, a party headed by T'an P'ing-shan, the newly appointed communist Minister for Agriculture in the Wuhan government, set out for Changsha to investigate the situa-

[110] *Bol'shevik*, No. 5, March 15, 1928, pp. 69–70; V. Vishnyakova-Akimova, *Dva Goda v Vosstavshem Kitae* (1965), p. 345. Lozovsky later denounced "the special theory of the unripeness of the worker–peasant movement, of the excessive demands of the workers, of the excesses of the peasantry etc." propagated in Wuhan at this time (*Kommunisticheskii Internatsional* No. 37 (111), 1927, p. 19).

[111] According to a statement by Khitarov at the fifteenth party congress in Moscow in December 1927 (see p. 811 below), troops numbering 1700 crushed peasant levies 20,000 strong, which were restrained by an instruction of Ch'en, in the name of the CCP, to avoid "open conflict" (*Pyatnadtsatyi S"ezd VKP(B)*, i (1961), 972); for broadly similar accounts of what happened at Changsha see *Bol'shevik*, No. 5, March 15, 1928, p. 66, and Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, i (1971), 633–634. An article in *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 65, June 24, 1927, pp. 1375–1376, tried to conceal the deliberate character of the military action by calling it "an officers' mutiny".

[112] For Ch'en's letter of December 10, 1929, see p. 906, note 434 below; when Roy observed that the central committee of Kuomintang had "become reactionary", Li Li-san protested that such a remark was "tantamount to sending a coffin to the CCP" (note 6 to Ch'en's letter).

[113] Quoted from the resolution of August 7, 1927 (see pp. 826–827 below), in *Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, viii (1927), 25–28.

tion, but was turned back by the military authorities.[114] On June 1, 1927, the central committee of the CCP defined the party's "peasant policy" as a determination to "crush all excesses directed against landowners of petty bourgeois origin and against the military"; and three days later it warned the peasantry against "encroachments" on the land of families of members of the army, and against "infantile actions" which provoked reprisals by bureaucrats and militarists. T'an P'ing-shan issued an instruction "to correct all infantile diseases of the peasantry", exhorting the peasants not to "act capriciously" in the struggle against "counter-revolutionary elements and the bad gentry".[115] On June 4, 1927, the party published in its journal an "open letter" calling on Kuomintang to "remain faithful to its revolutionary principles and continue to lead the peasantry in the struggle against the feudal forces"; to "dissolve the mutineers' committee and appoint a legitimate provincial government"; and to "arm the peasants for defence against counter-revolutionary mutineers". Its lack of realism extended to the point of hailing the Kuomintang generals as "revolutionary leaders who believe in democracy and freedom".[116] The same issue of the journal carried an "Appeal to the Peasant Masses of the Whole Country". After reciting the achievements of the national revolution which "brings you liberation from long exploitation, deliverance from intolerable sufferings, and realization of the slogan 'To every cultivator—his own land'", it warned the peasants that they would need the alliance of "small proprietors" in their struggle, and that to attack the families or the property of any of these could "do only harm to the peasant movement". It ended with the demand to "restore the power of Kuomintang and the national government in Hunan" and to "create organs of village self-administration".[117]

It is not known how quickly, and in what form, news of the Changsha massacre reached Moscow. A leading article in *Pravda* on June 1, 1927, without specifically referring to these events, repeated the familiar dilemma. It was wrong to "*oppose* the tasks

[114] V. Vishnyakova-Akimova, *Dva Goda v Vosstavshem Kitae* (1965), pp. 354–355.

[115] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 392; S. Schram, *Mao Tse-tung* (1966), p. 114.

[116] L. Delyusin, *Agrarno-Krest'yanskii Vopros v Politike KPK* (1972), pp. 294–297.

[117] *Ibid.* pp. 298–301.

of the national revolution to the tasks of the class struggle of the Chinese proletariat"; and to leave Kuomintang would be a "secretarian policy". On the same day, Stalin sent a directive to the Comintern delegation at Wuhan. This began boldly by declaring that without an agrarian revolution victory could not be won, and Kuomintang would become "a wretched plaything of untrustworthy generals". Excesses must be curbed, not by armies, but through the peasant unions. The *de facto* seizure of the land from below was "decisively" approved. Workers and peasants must be brought into the central committee of Kuomintang to replace some of the old leaders. "Dependence on untrustworthy generals" must come to an end, and officers who maintained ties with Chiang, or incited their troops against workers and peasants, must be punished. "If the members of Kuomintang", concluded the missive, "do not learn to be revolutionary Jacobins, they will be lost to the people and to the revolution".[118] Ch'en and his colleagues were thrown into a state of consternation by this unrealistic rhetoric, and sent a reply accepting the instructions, but adding that "the policy which they express cannot be realized immediately".[119] Worse still, Roy, who alone welcomed the directive with enthusiasm, showed it to Wang Ching-wei, who manifested strong disapproval and denounced it as a violation of the Sun–Joffe agreement of 1923.[120] The central committee of the CCP none the less made a desperate and belated attempt to carry out the instruction. In a resolution of June 14, 1927, it kept up the pretence that the Changsha *coup* had been carried out by oppon-

[118] The full text of the instruction was not published; in Stalin, *Sochineniya*, x, 32–33, it appears as quoted by him in a speech of August 1, 1927, being there dated "May 1927". Ch'en's letter of December 10, 1929 (see p. 906, note 434 below) contains a paraphrase which corresponds closely with the above text except for the addition of one important proviso — not to touch the land of military officers. This proviso was certainly authentic (see pp. 787, 795 above); Stalin, in disclosing the text after the breach with Wuhan, presumably omitted a passage which by that time seemed compromising.

[119] For Ch'en's letter of December 10, 1929, see p. 906, note 434 below; "Fanck", said by Ch'en to have been a "special delegate of Stalin", and to have concurred in this reply, was a Soviet military adviser using the name Fan-ko (see p. 821 below).

[120] T'ang Leang-li, *The Inner History of the Chinese Revolution* (1930), pp. 280–282; the further statement that Borodin was indignant with Roy for showing Wang the directive, and telegraphed to Moscow demanding Roy's recall, is plausible, but is unconfirmed by any other source. M. N. Roy, *My Experiences in China* (2nd ed. Calcutta, 1945), pp. 51–52. offers an uneasy defence of his indiscretion.

ents of the commander-in-chief, T'ang Sheng-chih, "since it is known that T'ang sympathizes with the national movement in Hunan, and is very favourable to the oppressed peasantry."[121] On June 16, 1927, it addressed a further open letter to the central committee of Kuomintang summoning it to take "decisive steps" and warning it that it stood "at a parting of the ways". Troops should be sent to Changsha to disband the "mutineers' committee" at present in control there; a regular provincial government should be restored at Changsha, and the arms which had been seized returned to communist workers' and peasant' organizations.[122] After such language a total breach was inescapable and imminent. Borodin and Roy were both reduced to the rôle of spectators.

The military situation had still to be cleared up. During May 1927 T'ang Sheng-chih's Wuhan army had moved north, and won an inconclusive and costly victory over the northern forces. Feng Yü-hsiang, whose troops had taken no direct part in the fighting, occupied Loyang — it was said, with the support of Red Spear levies[123] — and was in a position to dictate terms. The Comintern press continued to proclaim complete confidence in Feng's firmness and loyalty, and denounced as imperialist lies rumours that he was seeking an accommodation with Chiang Kai-shek.[124] On June 8, 1927, Wang Ching-wei and other Wuhan leaders left Wuhan for a three-day meeting with Feng at the latter's headquarters in Chengchow. The Soviet advisers hopefully believed that the aim was a fresh military combination against Chiang Kai-shek; and Blyukher, who had moved from Nanchang to Wuhan after the April coup in Shanghai, accompanied the party. Whatever Wang may have wished, the Left wing of Kuomintang was now as powerless as the CCP to control the course of the negotiations.[125]

[121] *Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, viii (1927), 35.

[122] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 64, June 21, 1927, p. 1350.

[123] Ibid. No. 53, May 20, 1927, p. 1140.

[124] Ibid. No. 57, June 3, 1927, p. 120.

[125] Wang was reported as saying: "The communists invite us to march with the masses. But where are these masses? Where can one see this vaunted force of Shanghai workers or Kwangtung and Hunan peasants? This force does not exist. Chiang Kai-shek stands firm without the masses. To march with the masses means to march against the army. Better for us to march without the masses, but together with the army" (P. Mif, *Kitaiskaya Revolyutsiya* (1932), pp. 132–133); the remark sounds apocryphal, but accurately represents the current mood.

What resulted was a pact, concluded behind the backs of the communist members of the group, to eliminate communists and suppress insurgent workers and peasants, thus consciously or unconsciously paving the way for a reconciliation with Chiang.[126] The conclusions were quickly drawn. Wang's return to Wuhan on June 13, 1927, was the prelude to a round-up a few days later of communists and to widespread massacres of insurgent peasants throughout Hunan. Borodin was officially relieved of the post occupied by him since October 1923 of adviser to the central committee of Kuomintang.[127] Roy, if his own account may be believed, proposed that the Kuomintang government, which now protected feudalism and oppressed workers and peasants, should be overthrown by an appeal to the masses and replaced by a "democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants".[128]

The full significance of what had happened at Chengchow was soon revealed even to the most innocent. On June 19, 1927, Feng travelled to Hsüchow for a conference with Chiang Kai-shek. The two leaders quickly came to a military agreement, and issued a joint statement affirming their determination to continue the northern expedition and to destroy warlords who were tools of foreign imperialism, and their fidelity to Sun Yat-sen's three principles.[129] Exactly what lay behind these bland pronouncements it was not difficult to guess. Feng may have pleaded for moderation, and for reconciliation between Chiang and Wuhan. But what in practice was decided was to eliminate communists from all positions of influence, and to offer to members of the Wuhan government the option of retiring abroad or of joining Chiang in Nanking. Feng also undertook to dismiss all communists and Soviet advisers from his army and administration.[130] No time was

[126] J. Sheridan, *Chinese Warlord* (1966), pp. 225–227, based largely on Feng's own account; V. Vishnyakova-Akimova, *Dva Goda v Vosstavshem Kitae* (1965), p. 356; T'ang Leang-li, *The Inner History of the Chinese Revolution* (1930), pp. 282–284; Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, i (1971), 644–646; A. L. Strong, *China's Millions* (1936), pp. 62–74, the two last having been present at Chengchow. Borodin had remained behind in Wuhan on the plea of illness (L. Fischer, *The Soviets in World Affairs* (1930), ii, 669).

[127] Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, i (1971), 647.

[128] M. N. Roy, *My Experiences in China* (Calcutta, 1938), pp. 45–48.

[129] *North China Herald*, July 2, 1927, p. 1.

[130] J. Sheridan, *Chinese Warlord* (1966), pp. 228–230 and sources there cited; according to V. Vishnyakova-Akimova, *Dva Goda v Vosstavshem Kitae* (1965),

lost in carrying out these decisions. Blyukher and the other military advisers left at once for Shanghai on their way home.[131] The Sun Yat-sen university in Moscow ironically published an instruction of Feng of August 27, 1927, on the struggle against communists side by side with theses which had been published in his army newspaper on May 3, 1927, on cooperation between Kuomintang and the CCP.[132]

A tragi-comic interlude occurring at this moment was the fourth All-China labour congress, which after several postponements met in Wuhan on June 19–28, 1927.[133] It was attended by 431 delegates (of whom 190 belonged to the CCP and 37 to the Communist Youth League), representing nearly three million organized workers;[134] and Lozovsky, who had remained in Wuhan since the pan-Pacific conference in May, was present as delegate of Profintern. For some weeks the All-China General Union, no doubt incited by the CCP or by Lozovsky himself, had applied a restraining hand to the workers. On June 13, 1927, its executive committee vetoed a threatened general strike, and on June 25, 1927, while the congress was in session, issued an order to dissolve armed workers' detachments and to turn in their arms to the gar-

p. 358, it was specifically agreed to get rid of Borodin. Feng is said to have sent a note to the Wuhan government complaining that "merchants, traders, and owners of factories and land are oppressed by workers and peasants" (*Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 70, July 12, 1927, p. 1485).

[131] V. Vishnyakova-Akimova, *Dva Goda v Vosstavshem Kitae* (1965), p. 362; Blyukher was one of the last Soviet advisers to leave China in August 1927 (A. Kartunova, *V. K. Blyukher v Kitae* (1970), p. 49).

[132] *Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, i (x) (1928), 189–191.

[133] For the first and second labour congresses in 1922 and 1925 see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 689, 720; for the third congress held in Canton in May 1926 see J. Chesneaux, *The Chinese Labour Movement, 1919–1927* (1968), pp. 301–302.

[134] *Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, ix (1927), 81–82. When Lozovsky quoted the figure of three million trade union members in China at the fifteenth party congress in Moscow in December 1927, Lominadze pointed out that no Chinese trade union, except the tramway workers' union in Shanghai, was organized on a basis of individual membership; the unions had "a far from complete and poorly developed apparatus", and no *"trade union members"* (*Pyatnadtsatyi S"ezd VKP(B)*, i (1961), 836–737). At the time of a strike all striking workers were automatically enrolled in the union and enormously swelled its membership, but disappeared as soon as the strike was over (*Protokoll: 10. Plenum des Exekutivkomitees der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), pp. 771–772).

rison.[135] The CCP itself is said to have demanded the disbandment of the Red Guard in Wuhan, on the plea that most of its members were not proletarians, but "working artisans and petty bourgeois intellectuals".[136] These activities must have lent a certain unreality to the debates and proceedings of the congress. Lozovsky on behalf of Profintern greeted the delegates at the opening session with a traditional fighting speech on revolution, class war and the need to destroy the forces of counter-revolution; to this end it was "necessary to subject the generals and the military in general to the control of the workers and toiling masses in town and countryside".[137] After this Lozovsky delivered a major report on the international workers' movement, and Li Li-san on the national revolution and the tasks of the trade unions.[138] Neither report was published. But Lozovsky, at any rate, appears to have abandoned the rhetoric of his previous speech, and sought to deter the workers from aggressive or provocative action against the authorities.[139] Notwithstanding these precautions, some plain speaking was heard. An observer recorded that "the speeches of rank-and-file workers' delegates ... had a different ring from those of the leaders of the CCP".[140] On the last day of the congress a demonstration was planned in front of the government buildings to pledge loyalty to the nationalist government. As, however, the

[135] *Bol'shevik*, No. 5, March 15, 1928, pp. 75–77.

[136] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 32 (106), 1927, p. 11; the statement is part of a sweeping indictment of the CCP, and is not precisely dated.

[137] This speech was published in *Rabochii Kitai v 1927 godu*, ed. A. Lozovsky (1928), pp. 258–265, by way of preface to the resolutions of the congress (see p. 812, note 142 below).

[138] *Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, ix (1927), 82. The statement that no time was left for debate, and that the resolutions submitted to the congress were adopted without further discussion, does not seem to have been literally true; but efforts were evidently made to limit awkward discussion, and to exclude it from the record.

[139] At the fifteenth party congress in Moscow in December 1927, Lozovsky, though he claimed that the Chinese trade union movement "belongs wholly and entirely to Profintern" (*Pyatnadtsatyi S"ezd VKP(B)*, i (1961), 698), did not mention the trade union congress in his speech; but, when Khitarov later in the debate criticized it on the ground that "no attempt was made to utilize it in order to organize resistance", and that the delegates had remained subservient to the authorities, Lozovsky interjected: "I frightened them there with my speech" (*ibid.* i, 773). Non-publication of the reports suggests retrospective embarrassment.

[140] *Bol'shevik*, No. 5, March 15, 1928, p. 77; for summary accounts of the congress see A. Cherepanov, *Severnyi Pokhod* (1968), pp. 280–281; A. L. Strong, *China's Millions* (1936), pp. 76–89.

procession was about to start, Su Chao-cheng, the communist Minister for Labour, arrived with the news that all trade union premises in the city had been occupied by troops.[141] The congress broke up in confusion, leaving behind it a large number of resolutions and pronouncements, which had little relation to the character of its proceedings or to the external realities confronting it.

The congress issued three appeals: "to the workers of the whole world" on the struggle against imperialism and support for the Chinese revolution, to the working class and trade unions of India, and to the working class and trade unions of Great Britain. Only two very brief resolutions on Lozovsky's main report are recorded (something is surely missing here): a resolution calling for a united front of workers against imperialism and for unity in the trade union movement, and twelve points on the tactics of the class struggle, couched in inflammatory revolutionary language. The much longer resolution on Li Li-san's political report was ambiguous. The chief political duty of the working class was to form an alliance of workers, peasants and petty bourgeoisie to root out "in the shortest space of time" Chiang's "counter-revolutionary centre" composed of big bourgeoisie, compradors and large landowners. Agitation against the workers' and peasant movements as "too radical" were an attempt by the big bourgeoisie to produce waverings among the petty bourgeoisie, "to accuse the revolutionary masses of 'too radical actions' is tantamount to a denial of the revolution." The Wuhan government (spoken of throughout as the "national government") was exhorted to "punish severely" the counter-revolutionaries guilty of repressive measures against workers and peasants. The first task was to take common action to destroy the counter-revolutionaries; achievement of the "non-capitalist" aims of the revolution would follow later. A brief resolution effusively praised the executive committee of the trade union federation for "leading the workers to participate in the northern expedition, and struggling against limitation of the freedom of workers and peasants in connexion with this expedition". A resolution denouncing Fascism and Fascist trade unions dubbed Chiang "the chief Fascist leader", and called for armed detachments of workers "for the struggle against Fascist murders and Fascist terror"; and this demand was

[141] *Pyatnadtsatyi S"ezd VKP(B)*, i (1961), 773, ii (1962), 1678, note 422.

repeated in a resolution on organization. The congress also adopted an "economic programme" of conventional workers' demands.[142]

More significant, perhaps, than any pronouncement of the congress were the clauses relating to the trade unions in a resolution of the party central committee of July 3, 1927. Armed detachments of workers were to be placed under the authority of the government, and pickets dissolved in order to prevent "misunderstandings". Trade unions were not to interfere with rights of employers, or "threaten employers physically, for example, with arrest, fines, or the wearing of dunce's caps". "Pioneers" (probably members of the Communist Youth League) were forbidden to "arrest and molest passers-by".[143] Lozovsky hurriedly departed via Shanghai and Vladivostok for Moscow, where he arrived in time to deliver a long lecture on August 18, 1927, in the Polytechnic Museum on "Revolution and Counter-Revolution in China",[144] and to express, in an article in the Comintern journal, his unbounded optimism about the Chinese workers' movement:

> Economic strikes follow one after the other. A series of political demonstrations by the workers showed the yellow representatives of the Fascist trade unions that the worker masses know what they are worth. As soon as the workers stirred, the leaders of the Fascist unions fled.[145]

Nothing occurred on the spot to justify this rosy picture. Anything that the congress had hoped or purported to achieve was overtaken by the catastrophic events of the next few weeks; and what remained of the Red trade unions became profoundly illegal. It was claimed, however, that "the activity of illegal unions did not die", especially among the textile workers, municipal workers and printers in Shanghai. Strikes continued to occur; but some of these were sponsored by "reformist" unions.[146]

[142] The text of the resolutions is in *Rabochii Kitai v 1929 godu*, ed. A. Lozovsky (1928), pp. 266–295; a note explained that it had been impossible to obtain "some resolutions of the congress", in particular — and significantly — the resolution on the agrarian question.

[143] *Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, viii (1927), 30; for the bellicose attitude of the youth league see pp. 822–823 below.

[144] It was published in *Pravda* in eight instalments from September 3 to 14, 1927.

[145] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 37 (111), 1927, p. 21.

[146] *Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, xi–xii (1928), 252–255.

The significance of the bargain struck between Feng and Chiang, which implied the impending dissolution of the Wuhan government and of the Kuomintang Left, was perhaps not at once grasped in Moscow, where the news was received in bewildered silence. Evidence of Stalin's personal anxiety may be found in his decision to recall Roy, and to send yet another Comintern envoy to China in the person of Lominadze.[147] It must have been about the same time that Radek published a scathing pamphlet, which reviewed the course of Comintern policy since the entry of communists into Kuomintang, including Bukharin, Stalin, Martynov and Pepper in the broad sweep of its invective. If the central committee of the CCP had spoken "*in the vulgar language of Menshevism*", the blame rested on Comintern and its agents:

> The leaders of CCP can prove from the records that the whole series of documents of surrender which appeared over their signature was authorized by the representatives of Comintern.

The "April defeat" was rooted in "the incorrect policy of Comintern for the whole past year" — a policy which, "while professedly striving for the hegemony of the proletariat in the national movement, in fact promoted the hegemony of the bourgeoisie".[148] On June 25, 1927, Zinoviev summoned up courage to draft a demand for the immediate exit of the CCP from Kuomintang, the proclamation of Soviets, an agrarian revolution and a "revolutionary democratic dictatorship of proletariat and peasantry"; this was sent to the Politburo, the presidium of the central control commission and IKKI over his signature and those of Trotsky, Radek

[147] For Roy's departure and Lominadze's arrival see pp. 818, 821 below.

[148] K. Radek, *Izmena Kitaiskoi Krupnoi Burzhuazii Natsional'nomu Dvizheniyu* (1927), pp. 25, 35, 52. The precise date of publication has not been established; the greater part of it was written before May 1, 1927, and the last few pages soon after (*ibid.* p. 48). The only explicit mention of it that has been traced in the Soviet press is in an article in *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 32 (106), 1927, pp. 9–10; but a violent attack on Radek by Martynov (*ibid.* No. 30 (104), 1927, pp. 9–21) appears to have been provoked by it. No printed copy of the pamphlet has been available; but what purports to be a typewritten copy in the Hoover Library, Stanford, contains the passage quoted from it in the article in *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, which provides *prima facie* evidence of its authenticity. The page numbers of the typewritten copy are used in this note, and in others in the present volume.

and Evdokimov.[149] A letter to the Politburo of July 7, 1927, signed by Evdokimov, Zinoviev and Trotsky, once more drove home the lessons of the defeat, and described the course adopted by the majority as "a classic example of the Menshevik tactic of bourgeois-democratic revolution".[150] This constant hammering on a vulnerable point must have infuriated the leaders; and a scapegoat was plainly required. It fell to Bukharin to gloss over as decently as possible what had happened, and to unload the guilt on to the none-too-broad shoulders of the leaders of the CCP. As recently as June 30, 1927, after news of the agreement between Feng and Chiang had reached Moscow, Bukharin had written an article in *Pravda* opposing the withdrawal of communists from the Wuhan government on the plea that this was exactly what Chiang wanted. It was time to execute an about-turn, and to lay down a fresh line.

This was achieved in a long article by Bukharin in *Pravda* of July 10, 1927, entitled "At a Sharp Turning-Point of the Chinese Revolution". It recorded the "complete capitulation" of the Wuhan government, whose "revolutionary rôle is finished". Bukharin declared that communists should leave the government ("one cannot remain a moment longer in the Wuhan government"), but remain in Kuomintang; the precedent of communists in the British Labour Party was invoked to justify this course. Bukharin accused the CCP leaders (none was named) of having "deliberately *sabotaged* the decisions of Comintern": they had failed to carry out directions about the independence of the CCP, the unleashing of the agrarian revolution, the arming of workers and peasants, reprisals against counter-revolutionaries and the democratization of Kuomintang. He scored a debating point when he contrasted the plea put forward in Zinoviev's theses at the party central committee in April 1927 and at the eighth IKKI in the following month that "communists can and must support the national armies and the national government" with the fierce

[149] Trotsky archives, T 962 (annotated by Trotsky "probably written by Zinoviev").

[150] Trotsky archives, T 973; the phrase was repeated in the platform of the opposition of September 1927 (L. Trotsky, *The Real Situation in Russia* (n.d. (1928)), p. 147). A year later, after the sixth congress of Comintern, Trotsky again described the official line as "a perfect example ... of the application of Menshevik policy to a revolutionary epoch" (L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., 1932), p. 153; the Russian original of this memorandum is in Trotsky archives, T 3142).

denunciation of the tactics of support for Wuhan in the declaration of July 7, 1927.[151] But it was an unconvincing performance; and the fear of the Soviet leaders that the Chinese débâcle would strengthen the hands of the opposition at home came out prominently in the last part of the article, which consisted of a fierce attack on Trotsky, Zinoviev and Radek, well bolstered with quotations from Lenin. The curt instructions to the CCP were categorical: "*an extraordinary conference of the party, new elections to the central committee, unsparing criticism of the leaders, execution of the directives of IKKI, a decisive struggle, to the point of exclusion from the party, against those who take the view that the party must work to please the bourgeois heads of Kuomintang*".[152]

Bukharin's indictment was reinforced a few days later by a resolution of IKKI, which recognized "the feverishly rapid tempo" of events, and the "extreme difficulties" confronting the Chinese revolution, as well as "a number of very serious mistakes made recently by the leadership of the CCP". So far as concerned Comintern, self-justification was the key-note of the pronouncement; but "what was correct at the previous stage of the revolution is absolutely inappropriate today". Communists were to dissociate themselves "demonstratively" from the Wuhan government, which had become "*a counter-revolutionary force*", but were to remain in Kuomintang in order to influence the mass of its members. The leaders of the CCP (Ch'en Tu-hsiu was not named) had failed to carry out instructions; and the party should "disavow those leaders who have violated the international discipline of the Communist International".[153] Wide publicity was given to an article of Mandalyan, a Comintern official, entitled "Why was the Leadership of the CCP Bankrupt?", Radek received a passing censure. But the main theme was to prove that, in spite of the resolution of the seventh IKKI and later Comintern directives,

[151] For Zinoviev's theses see p. 761, note 237 above; the passage referred to is in L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., 1932), p. 351. Trotsky at the eighth IKKI was already demanding complete dissociation from the Wuhan government (see p. 771 above); but he sometimes paid heavily in terms of consistency for his unwillingness to break with Zinoviev.

[152] *Pravda*, July 10, 1927; *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 70, July 12, 1927, pp. 1485–1488, No. 71, July 15, 1927, pp. 1511–1513; it was also published as a pamphlet.

[153] *Pravda*, July 14, 1927; *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 73, July 19, 1927, pp. 1572–1573.

"the leadership of the CCP did not rise to the height of its historic task", but "trotted behind wavering petty-bourgeois politicians". Ch'en Tu-hsiu was repeatedly attacked by name, incurring the stigma of Menshevism; and Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai's pamphlet of March 1927, was quoted as accusing the party central committee of "an opportunism which must be described as Trotskyism of the Chinese brand".[154] This was apparently the first attempt to identify the Chinese leadership with the Russian opposition, and to set up Ch'ü as a rival and potential successor to Ch'en.

This crude battering reduced the hapless leaders of the CCP to a condition bordering on despair. It was about this time that the text of the resolution adopted by the eighth IKKI at the end of May 1927 at length reached Wuhan;[155] its complacent conclusions, drafted with closer attention to the struggle against the opposition in Moscow than to the predicament of the CCP, must have seemed depressingly irrelevant. On July 13, 1927, the party central committee endeavoured to respond to Bukharin's instructions in a "declaration" addressed to Kuomintang. This affirmed that "the life or death of the revolution" was at stake, accused the Kuomintang leaders of "passivity and unheard of hesitations and waverings", as a result of which "the leadership has passed into the hands of reactionary generals", and announced the withdrawal of the communist members from the national government. The CCP would, however, in order to maintain contact with "all genuinely revolutionary elements", remain in Kuomintang.[156] The two communist ministers, who never exercised any authority, anticipated the decision by resigning. T'an P'ing-shan, the Minister for Agriculture, unimpressively explained his resignation on grounds of health, as well as of "the political situation", which rendered him unable "to guide the peasant movement in the right path".[157] By an ironical coincidence it was on the following day

[154] *Pravda*, July 16, 1927; *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 73, July 19, 1927, pp. 1569–1570, No. 74, July 22, 1927, pp. 1588–1589, No. 75, July 26, 1927, pp. 1604–1605. For Ch'ü's pamphlet see p. 798 above; for the identification of Ch'en with Trotskyism see pp. 828–829 below.

[155] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 41 (115), 1927, p. 47; for the resolution see p. 773 above.

[156] L. Delyusin, *Agrarno-Krest'yanskii Vopros v Politike KPK* (1972), pp. 318–321.

[157] *Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, viii (1927), 33. T'an, according to Borodin, "did nothing in the ministry, and looked on the whole affair as not worth an addled egg; he did not take a single step or pass a single law"

that Kuomintang formally banned communists from membership, and set in motion a fresh drive against communist and workers' organizations, resulting in wholesale arrests and executions.[158] During the next few weeks the rank and file of the CCP in Wuhan disintegrated under the pressure of constant persecution. Nine-tenths of its members were reported to have fled; some informed on their fellows. By the beginning of August only 3500 communists remained in Wuhan; and this number was halved after an abortive workers' strike.[159]

Chaos now reigned among the party leaders. Borodin proposed that Ch'en Tu-hsiu and T'an P'ing-shan should travel to Moscow for consultation with Comintern, and that a party school should be set up in Vladivostok. The main organs of the party were to be moved to Kiukiang, and thence to Shanghai.[160] But Ch'en had had enough. On July 15, 1927, he sent in a letter of resignation from his post as secretary of the party, and disappeared from the scene.[161] Meanwhile Borodin himself received orders to return to Moscow. On July 16, 1927, he left Wuhan in the company of Li Li-san and spent ten days at the health resort of Kulin, while Li went on to meet other party leaders in Kiukiang. On July 27, 1927, Borodin returned to Wuhan, and set out on the long trek through north-western China and Outer Mongolia to the Soviet Union. He was seen off with full honours by Wang Ching-wei and other Kuomintang leaders, and was also received by Feng at Chengchow.[162] His house and office in Wuhan were,

(A. Cherepanov, *Severnyi Pokhod* (1968), p. 275); Khitarov at the fifteenth party congress in Moscow in December 1927 described Su Chao-cheng, the Minister for Labour, as "a very decent young man, a good worker-communist, who simply fell into bad company" (*Pyatnadtsatyi S"ezd VKP(B)*, i (1961), 723).

[158] The text of the decree was published in the *People's Tribune* (Hankow), July 26, 1927; see also Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, i (1971), 651.

[159] See the report of the local party leader summarized in *China Quarterly*, xxxiii (1968), 116–117.

[160] *Problemy Kitaya*, i (1929), 63–65.

[161] Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, i (1971), 655. A provisional politburo of five was appointed (*Chinese Studies in History*, v (1971), No. 1, p. 42), but, in the confused conditions of the next few weeks, apparently never functioned; it was the conference of August 7, 1927, which formally removed Ch'en and replaced him by Ch'ü as secretary of the party (see p. 827 below).

[162] V. Vishnyakova-Akimova, *Dva Goda v Vosstavshem Kitae* (1965)) pp. 371–372; A. L. Strong, *China's Millions* (1936), pp. 214–220 (the writer travelled with the party to Ulan-Bator). According to a less reliable account

however, ransacked immediately after his departure, and Wang is said to have telegraphed to Feng to detain him. If this story is correct, the cautious Feng preferred to let Borodin go.[163] Roy returned to Moscow by the same route, but did not travel with Borodin, and had probably left before him.[164]

The expulsion of the communists from Kuomintang coincided with the demise of the Kuomintang government in Wuhan. Its two most prominent Left-wing members, the widow of Sun Yat-sen and Eugene Chen, resigned and went to Moscow, where they were instrumental in forming a Left Kuomintang group in the Sun Yat-sen university;[165] and a reunited national government, though without Wang's personal participation, was proclaimed at Nanking on September 20, 1927. Reunion was facilitated by the formal resignation of Chiang Kai-shek from all his offices. He departed on a visit to Japan; and his two-month absence was a period of confusion and uncertainty in central China. When the Wuhan government collapsed in July 1927, T'ang Sheng-chih, the military commander who had been its main prop, and had since been prominently engaged in the campaign of repression and massacre against communists and insurgent workers and peasants,[166] rebelled against Chiang's authority, attempted to set up an independent military authority in Wuhan, and sent an army under

in Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, i (1971), 653, Borodin originally left Wuhan on July 13, 1927, and was accompanied by Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai.

[163] A. Cherepanov, *Severnyi Pokhod* (1968), pp. 296–297; this volume of reminiscences by a Soviet military adviser concludes with a sympathetic picture of Borodin's personality and achievements in China (*ibid.* pp. 292–298).

[164] The date "late July or early August" in *M. N. Roy's Mission to China*, ed. R. North and X. Eudin (1963), p. 126, rests on a personal reminiscence 30 years later; Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, i (1971), 655, refers to the earlier departure of Roy and Voitinsky. The latest evidence of Roy's activity in Wuhan is a note addressed by him to the politburo of the CCP on June 28, 1927 (*M. N. Roy's Mission to China*, ed. R. North and X. Eudin (1963), pp. 366–369). During his brief and unhappy stay in Moscow in September–October 1927 (see pp. 923–925 below), he wrote an article in the Comintern journal attacking Ch'en, and rebutting the allegation that Comintern was responsible for the errors of the CCP (*Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 38 (112), 1927, pp. 16–21).

[165] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 87, August 30, 1927, pp. 1888–1889, No. 89, September 6, 1927, p. 1944.

[166] One writer suggests that T'ang, seeking the support of "the Chinese bourgeoisie and Chinese militarists" against Chiang, was anxious to outbid Chiang in the severity of his persecution of the revolutionary movement (*Agrar-Probleme*, No. 1, 1928, p. 144).

one of his generals, Chang Fa-k'uei, to occupy Nanchang, the capital of Kiangsi. T'ang was eventually crushed by forces from Nanking, and Wuhan re-occupied, in November 1927. When Chiang Kai-shek returned to Nanking, and was officially reinstated on December 1, 1927, as head of government and commander-in-chief, he exercised, in the name of a reunited national government and a reunited Kuomintang, and with the tacit approval of the imperialist Powers, a recognized, though still precarious, authority over a large part of China.

(*b*) *The Road to Canton*

A period in the history of the CCP, and in Comintern policy for China, had come to its ignominious end. It remained to reject the errors of the past, to strike out anew, and to cover up the disaster with loud professions of confidence in the future. The response to defeat was to be a defiant move to the Left, to the more radical attitudes hitherto associated with the opposition. *Pravda*, in a long and rambling leading article of July 26, 1927, abruptly announced that "the crisis in Kuomintang *now* puts on the agenda the question of Soviets". Hitherto such a move would have been "premature and misplaced". Now communists could embark on "propaganda for the idea of Soviets". Two days later an article by Stalin, of which the greater part was devoted to China, appeared in *Pravda*. Reverting to the ambiguous analogy between the Chinese revolution and the two Russian revolutions, he remarked that the defeat in China might be like the defeat in Russia in 1905 which interrupted the progress of the revolution for twelve years; alternatively it might be like the defeat which drove the Bolsheviks underground in July 1917 to emerge victorious only a few months later. Both alternatives implied that China now confronted its 1917 — a major step in the transition from bourgeois-democratic to socialist revolution. But Stalin at once guarded himself by adding that the analogy was, "of course, conditional", and that differences existed between present-day China and Russia in 1917. He cautiously spelt out the limitations of the new slogan of Soviets, explaining with much emphasis and reiteration that "the most extensive propaganda should be conducted among the broad masses of the toilers for the idea of Soviets, without anticipating and without at the present time forming Soviets, and remember-

ing that Soviets can flourish only in conditions of a mighty revolutionary upsurge".[167] These pronouncements from afar had little relation to the immediate problems which beset the harassed leaders of the CCP on the spot.

The collapse at Wuhan led to the dispersal and virtual abdication of the central committee of the CCP. On July 19, 1927, several members of the committee, including Li Li-san and T'an P'ing-shan, met at Kiukiang. The group was agreed on the necessity of strong measures to counteract the savage blows just inflicted on the party. Nanchang, the capital of Kiangsi, was now occupied by the army of Chang Fa-k'uei, who, as a subordinate of T'ang Shing-chih, was at odds with Chiang Kai-shek.[168] Chang was regarded as a supporter of the Left Kuomintang, and, according to one account, had "repeatedly attempted to come to an understanding with the communists".[169] Two of his generals, Ho Lung and Yeh T'ing, were favourably disposed to the communists.[170] These conditions appeared to justify action. It was decided "to call a revolt of the broad peasant masses during the autumn harvest", and to reinforce this by a more ambitious military plan. It was proposed that Ho and Yeh should proclaim their independence of the Nanking government, and march with their armies southwards from Nanchang into Kwangtung to raise the standard of revolution in south China. Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai, consulted by the group, approved the plan and undertook to submit it to the party central committee.[171] It was at this moment, on July

[167] Stalin, *Sochineniya*, ix, 359; for the analogy with 1905 or 1917 see p. 646 above. Trotsky is an unpublished memorandum of September, 1927, quoted the *Pravda* article of July 26, 1927, and complained that nothing had been heard of Soviets since then (Trotsky archives, T 3089); for Trotsky the call for Soviets meant "the break with the suicidal and infamous 'bloc of four classes', and the withdrawal of the communist party from Kuomintang" (L. Trotsky, *The Third International after Lenin* (N.Y., 1936), p. 205).

[168] See pp. 818–819 above.

[169] *Die Internationale*, xii, No. 6, March 15, 1929, p. 185.

[170] Yeh was said to have been a member of the CCP, and Ho was admitted to it during the march from Nanchang (Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, ii (1974), 21); for a sketch of their contrasted personalities see A. Smedley, *The Great Road* (1956), pp. 183–184.

[171] The Nanchang episode and the discussions leading up to it are described in reports by Li Li-san, Chou I-chun, Chang Kuo-t'ao and Chang T'ai-lei, in a report of the party central committee and in correspondence between Chang Kuo-t'ao and the committee, published in a confidential party journal in the autumn of 1927, and translated in *China Quarterly*, xviii (1964), 9–53; for Chu Teh's account of the discussions see A. Smedley, *The Great Road* (1956), pp.

23, 1927, that Lominadze arrived in Wuhan, carrying all the authority of Comintern and of a personal mandate from Stalin. He was greeted by Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai and Chang Kuo-t'ao as constituting the rump of the party central committee; Chou En-lai had already gone to Nanchang. Lominadze came with clear instructions to place the blame for what had happened squarely on the shoulders of the CCP, to investigate the "opportunist errors" of its central committee, and to demand "the punishment of Ch'en Tu-hsiu, T'an P'ing-shan and others responsible".[172] On these issues he took a strong line, and had no difficulty in cajoling or browbeating the dispirited CCP leaders into compliance. How far he had brought fresh instructions on burning issues of policy was less clear.

A decisive meeting was held in Wuhan in July 26, 1927, attended by Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai, Chang Kuo-t'ao and two other members of the central committees of the CCP, Blyukher and another Soviet military adviser using the name Fan-ko, two interpreters and Lominadze, in the dual rôle of delegate of Comintern and delegate of KIM. Blyukher reported a conversation with Chang Fa-k'uei, and had hopes that the general, who was Cantonese by origin, would agree to take part in the southward march, and not put pressure on Yeh to break with the communists. If he agreed, the expedition would muster 30,000 men, a number sufficient to deal with any opposition likely to be encountered; without Chang, Ho and Yeh would muster at best 8000 or at worst no more than 5000. Nevertheless Blyukher seems to have assumed that in any event the march must be attempted. At this point Lominadze read a telegram just received from Moscow. Comintern, consulted by Lominadze after his first conversation with Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai and Chang Kuo-t'ao, considered that, "if there is no chance at all of victory, the Nanchang revolt should not be started"; in any case, Soviet advisers should not participate. Lominadze is said to have added that no Comintern funds would be available for the expedition. The more optimistic members of the committee took the not unreasonable view that the Comintern

199–200. According to Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, i (1971), 660–661, the Nanchang project was initiated by Chou En-lai, then head of the military department of the CCP, who had remained with him in Wuhan to wind up the affairs of the central committee.

[172] *Problemy Kitaya*, i (1929), 66; Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, i (1971), 669–672.

formula could mean only one thing: if there was a chance of victory, the expedition should go forward. The other provisos were brushed aside as irrelevant. On one point no difficulty arose. Lominadze had brought with him instructions to make no formal break with Kuomintang. Operations were to be conducted for the present under the Kuomintang flag. The fiction of an alliance with a Left Kuomintang was to be maintained. The plan was approved. Neither Blyukher nor Lominadze seems to have opposed it; and Chang Kuo-t'ao reluctantly accepted the mission of conveying the message to Nanchang.[173] It is piquant to note that the meeting took place on the eve of Borodin's final departure from Wuhan.[174] He was evidently not consulted, and no meeting between him and Lominadze is recorded.

The mood in which these decisions were taken is not easy to reconstruct. It is fair to say that nobody in Comintern could have been expected to appraise the prospects of this military venture. Its representative on the spot spoke ambiguously; the Chinese members of the committee were divided. The hapless leaders of the CCP had reason to feel that Comintern offered contradictory advice, calling in principle for action, but reserving the right to place on the shoulders of the CCP the sole responsibility for any specific action in the event of failure. Martynov in the journal of Comintern declared that "the local organizations of the CCP suffered from a Left deviation, while the central committee suffered from a Right deviation", both being deviations "from the correct Leninist line of Comintern".[175] After the disasters of the summer, armed action was said to have been widely demanded by workers and peasants, and by rank-and-file members of the CCP.[176] Evidence both of the bellicose attitude of some Chinese communists and of encouragement given to it in Moscow is provided by the activity of the Chinese Communist Youth League.

[173] The only two accounts of the meeting both come from Chang Kuo-t'ao (*China Quarterly*, xviii (1964), 45–46, and Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, i (1971), 672–675); the statement in the second and much later version that Lominadze had received from Comintern "a telegram to stop the scheme", and the statement that Bukharin admitted having sent such a telegram (*ibid.* ii (1974), 74), are probably distortions of Lominadze's ambiguous instructions, designed to justify Chang's own subsequent behaviour.

[174] See p. 817 above.

[175] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 30 (104), 1927, p. 11.

[176] *Problemy Kitaya*, i (1929), 73.

Bukharin in his *Pravda* article of July 10, 1927, reported with ironical satisfaction that the central committee of the league had "rallied unreservedly to the 'impracticable' resolutions of Comintern, and protested decisively in its own resolution against the hesitations and wobblings of the central committee of the CCP"; it had adopted the correct line "in the question of the expropriation of property and land" as well as on other matters.[177] On July 27, 1927, the league issued a proclamation repeating the familiar denunciations of the treachery of the Wuhan government, and exhorting the masses to "overthrow the power of generals and landlords, take possession of the land, annihilate the gentry, and carry out their dictates by armed force".[178]

The issue of the proposed Nanchang *coup* came to a head when Chang Fa-k'uei was discovered to be in conference with Wang Ching-wei and Sun Fo, and the prospect of support from him had to be written off. By the time Chang Kuo-t'ao, having stopped on the way at Kiukiang, reached Nanchang on July 30, 1927, his mood was one of total scepticism; and his report on the Wuhan meeting was evidently slanted in this sense. But the determination of some at least of the leaders was unshaken. Li Li-san declared that everything was ready, and that no further discussion was needed. Chou En-lai threatened to resign if the start were further delayed.[179] The *coup* in Nanchang was successfully carried out on August 1, 1927 — a date which was thereafter celebrated annually as the anniversary of the creation of the Chinese Red Army. Li Li-san hailed it as "the beginning of the direct seizure of political power by the worker and peasant".[180] Ho Lung and Yeh T'ing, with a total force of perhaps 10,000 men, some of them of doubt-

[177] For Bukharin's article see pp. 814–815 above; *The Young Communist International: Between the Fourth and Fifth Congresses* (1928), p. 190, records a conference of the league in June 1927 in Hunan, the centre of agrarian unrest.

[178] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 76, July 29, 1927, p. 1626. The proclamation is said to have denounced Kuomintang leaders by name; the CCP asked the central committee of the league to omit the names, but the committee refused (R. Chitarow, *Geschichte der Kommunistischen Jugendinternationale*, iii (1930), 111).

[179] *China Quarterly*, xviii (1964), 48–49; for Li's more summary account see *ibid.* xviii, 11. According to Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, ii (1974), 5–8, he and Yeh were alone in wishing to call off or postpone the enterprise.

[180] *China Quarterly*, xviii (1964), 23; a less rosy account described the two generals as having been "expelled by Chang Ka-k'uei", and having "lost the best part of their troops" (*Agrar-Probleme*, No. 1, 1928, p. 144).

ful loyalty, set out on the march to the south.[181] In spite of Lominadze's alleged veto, at least one Soviet military adviser accompanied the march.[182]

After the marchers had set out, a rump of the central committee of the CCP met secretly, probably in Wuhan, on August 7, 1927. The precise status of the session is uncertain. Bukharin, in his article of July 10, 1927, in *Pravda*, had called for "a special conference" of the party; and Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai stated that it had been "convened by telegraphic order from Comintern, and under the guidance of the Comintern delegate".[183] This did not prevent the publication of its conclusions in an official volume as "theses of the central committee of the CCP". According to Ch'ü's speech at the sixth party congress in the following year, twelve members and three candidate members of the central committee, five members of the central committee of the Communist Youth League and two local delegates were present, as well as Teng Chung-hsia, who had been acting secretary of the committee since Ch'en's resignation.[184] Lominadze evidently dominated the proceedings. But difficulties of communication must have been formidable.

[181] For narratives of the expedition see *China Quarterly*, xviii (1964), 12–14, 26–30, 31–34; estimates of the number of troops engaged vary from 25,000 (Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, ii (1974), 17) to 3000 (H. Isaacs, *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution* (1938), p. 346). According to Lozovsky, the expedition started with 20,000 men, later increased by 50,000 by the recruitment of partisan units, and seized towns, arms and money on its march (*Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 37 (111), 1927, p. 22; this account is purely mythical.

[182] *China Quarterly*, xviii, 12, 26, 38, where he is referred to as "Chi-kung". He is named in G. Sokolsky, *The Tinder Box of Asia* (1932), p. 340, as Zigon, *alias* Kumanin, who was arrested on October 1, 1927, and charged with having been adviser to Ho Lung; he denied the charge and, after some months in prison, was eventually released, and returned to the Soviet Union.

[183] Quoted in C. Brandt, B. I. Schwarz, and J. K. Fairbank, *A Documentary History of Chinese Communism* (1952), p. 98; for Bukharin's article see pp. 814–815 above. *Pravda* much later described it as having taken place "under the leadership of the executive committee of Comintern, which appealed to the party masses over the heads of the central committee of the CCP" (*Pravda*, July 17, 1928).

[184] *Chinese Studies in History*, v, No. 1 (1971), p. 43. A hostile witness who claimed to have been present recorded that only three members of the central committee took part in the proceedings (Li Ang, quoted in C. Brandt, *Stalin's Failure in China* (1958), p. 214, note 101); this may mean that only three spoke.

Ch'ü was the only Chinese leader fluent in Russian; Lominadze had no Chinese experience, and, unlike Borodin and Roy, is not known to have been fluent in English, so that even this *lingua franca* of the Far East was not available. Katayama at the sixth congress of Comintern in July 1928 referred to "language difficulties" which "put a brake on rapid action", and helped to account for "grievous errors" such as those of the CCP.[185]

No detailed report was published of what took place. According to a later critical resolution of the Kiangsu party committee, the political report presented at the session admitted that the Wuhan workers after their heavy defeat had abandoned the party leaders, and that no objectively revolutionary situation existed, but claimed nevertheless that the prevailing circumstances, economic, political and social, were favourable to a rising.[186] A memorandum or "letter" submitted to the conference, and included in its published records, was probably written by Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai under the guiding hand of Lominadze. It expounded in detail the wide divergence between the instructions received from Comintern and the actions and pronouncements of the leaders of the CCP. The central committee of the CCP had defied the injunction of the eighth IKKI in May 1927 "to maintain its own special political image", and had done everything "to identify itself completely with the 'Left' leadership of Kuomintang". Ch'en Tu-hsiu was credited with the view that the CCP could not preserve "*hundred per cent independence*", once it was in a bloc with Kuomintang. "The wager on the leaders of the Wuhan Kuomintang" had been "completely defeated"; the future bloc with the "Left revolutionary Kuomintang" must be a bloc "with its lower ranks, with the working mass of its members, with its lower organizations", which would revolt against the treachery of its leaders. The attitude of the CCP leaders provoked the fiercest terms of opprobrium in the Comintern vocabulary: it was not "opportunism", it was not even "conciliationism", it was "liquidationism". A "patriarchal order" prevailed in the party; all questions were decided at the top level, and the opinions of the leaders were regarded not only as binding, but as unconditionally correct

[185] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), i, 303; see also the remarks of Li Li-san and others at the sixth congress of the CCP pp. 866–867 below).

[186] For this resolution see pp. 834–835 below.

in every case". The memorandum ended by recognizing the criticisms of Comintern, and its position in the Chinese question, as entirely just, and exhorting the CCP to "rectify the grave errors of the past and strike out new paths".[187] Reflecting the character of Lominadze's instructions, the condemnation of the past was clear and unequivocal, the prescriptions for the future vague and evasive.

Extensive theses couched in the language of Comintern and adopted by the conference were probably in large part Lominadze's work. "The split between the 'national' bourgeoisie and the worker–peasant movement" was described as inevitable. But the form taken by it was due to errors of the CCP, which before, and especially after, April 1927 had resorted to policies of surrender and liquidation "instead of revolutionary, Bolshevik tactics". The Nanchang *coup* was diagnosed as "a revolt organized by communists in units of Chang Fa-k'uei's army, and a march by units of this army to the south led by communists with the slogan of agrarian revolution"; this was hailed as proof of the existence of "the objective preconditions of a new upsurge". A similar prognostication was deduced from "the presence of centres of a revolutionary peasant movement in a number of provinces (Kwangtung, Hunan, Hupei, Shansi and Honan)". The party was urged "to prepare and organize armed insurrection in provinces which are the centre of the agrarian movement, at once, in the period of the autumn harvest and the collection of rent and taxes". It was to engage in "the immediate preparation and organization of a revolutionary rising in all the provinces of China where ... objective circumstances permit". But, while these enterprises received the blessing of the committee, it was essential "not to play with revolt, but to prepare for it meticulously — technically, organizationally and politically"; subversive work in the "national-revolutionary" armies was an imperative necessity.

> The creation of a new revolutionary army on the principle not of hired mercenaries, but of voluntary enlistment and later even of the forced levy, an army with a broad decentralized network of political workers and commissars, and with a reliable officer corps devoted to the cause of the revolution, is one of the most important tasks confronting the revolutionary movement.

[187] *Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, viii (1927), 26–38.

The revolution was, however, still a "democratic revolution". It was repeatedly emphasized that risings were to be organized "under the flag of the revolutionary Left Kuomintang". The proclamation of Soviets was premature so long as "the wager on a revolutionary Kuomintang" had not proved "completely unsuccessful". The party should "limit itself simply to propaganda for the idea of Soviets".[188]

The session also approved a long circular letter to all party members, amounting to a comprehensive statement of policy. Past failures were unhesitatingly attributed to the errors of the party leaders, Ch'en Tu-hsiu and T'an P'ing-shan being criticized by name. Much attention was given, as in recent directives from Moscow, to agrarian revolution and to the confiscation of land by the peasants. The "opportunism" of which the leaders were repeatedly accused consisted in their attempts to restrain peasant and worker revolts and their failure to arm peasants and workers. On the other hand, the stubborn refusal of Moscow to cut completely adrift from the Kuomintang was responsible for some more cautious injunctions. No more illusions could be entertained about the Wuhan government. But the future alliance with Kuomintang was to be "an alliance with the Left revolutionary Kuomintang, i.e. with its masses and its lower organs".[189] A number of detailed resolutions designed to give effect to these policies were also adopted. The party was "to recognize Kuomintang and make it a genuine mass organization of the urban and agrarian masses", and bring into it "on a broad scale" workers' and peasants' organizations and military units. An emergency politburo of seven was to be set up, and preparations made to reorganize the party on a secret basis.[190] Ch'en was made the principal scapegoat for past sins, and was succeeded as secretary of the party by Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai. Ch'en could scarcely avoid censure for the calamities sustained under his leadership; but the decision to replace him was endorsed, if not inspired, by Comintern in the person of Lominadze. The absent Mao Tse-tung, presumably as a token of

[188] *Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, ix (1927), 4–9; *Programmnye Dokumenty Kommunisticheskikh Partii Vostoka* (1934), pp. 4–13.

[189] *Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, viii (1927), 13–26; for a summary in English made from the Chinese text see C. Brandt, B. I. Schwartz and J. K. Fairbank, *A Documentary History of Chinese Communism* (1952), pp. 102–118.

[190] For a brief summary of the resolutions made from a Japanese text see *ibid.* pp. 118–123.

the importance now attached to the agrarian movement, was appointed a member of the politburo.

Two days later, the Russian party central committee in Moscow, at the end of a session which had been the scene of bitter and continuous controversy with the opposition,[191] adopted a resolution on international affairs, containing a section on the Chinese revolution which echoed the substance, and even the language, of the CCP letter of August 7, 1927. "The unleashing of the agrarian revolution, the seizure of land by peasants from below, the development of the workers' movement, the arming of workers and peasants, the democratization of Kuomintang and the removal from their posts of its temporizing leaders" were announced as "the chief slogans of Comintern". The resolution predicted that "*the temporary defeat of the revolution will be succeeded in a relatively short time by a fresh upsurge*". If the conference of August 7, 1927, was afterwards blamed for encouraging putschist tendencies, the Moscow resolution of August 9 could hardly be exonerated from the same charge. The resolution repeated the formula of "*propaganda for the idea of Soviets*", and cautiously distinguished this from a demand for an "*immediate struggle*" for the organization of Soviets. In this attenuated form, the demand for Soviets was pronounced appropriate to the new stage of the revolution.[192]

An important item entered at this time into the proclaimed orthodoxy of Comintern, and acquired an obsessive character. Since the magnitude of the Chinese disaster could not be denied, responsibility for what had happened must be transferred from the leaders of Comintern to the leaders of the CCP; and, since recriminations about China figured prominently in the struggle with the opposition, now at its peak, kinship must be established between the errors of the CCP and those of the Russian opposition. The synthesis was achieved in an article appearing in August 1927 in the journal of Comintern under the title "The Ideological Sources of the Errors of the Leadership of the CCP". In the view of IKKI and of the Russian party the Chinese revolution combined the characteristics of a movement of national liberation and of an agrarian revolution. The leaders of the CCP had treated it as exclusively national, and, denying the importance of survivals

[191] See Vol. 2, pp. 30–33.
[192] *KPSS v Rezolyutsiyakh* (1954), ii, 367–372.

of feudalism in the Chinese countryside, rejected the agrarian revolution. They had thus, like Trotsky, effected "a mechanical division of the tasks of the Chinese revolution" — an odd perversion of Trotsky's doctrine of permanent revolution. Rejecting, like Trotsky, the Leninist formula of a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants, they had "renounced *the struggle for hegemony, the struggle for the conversion of the Wuhan government into an organ of democratic dictatorship, the struggle for the conquest of the lower apparatus of government*", and, like Trotsky, had arrived at "an opposition of the class interests of the proletariat to the interests of the struggle for national liberation, a narrow conception of the independence of the proletarian movement". Of the guilty leaders of the CCP only Ch'en Tu-hsiu and his faithful follower P'eng Shu-chih were named. Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai was quoted with approval — a further mark of his acceptance as the new leader.[193]

While the central committee of the CCP debated on August 7, 1927, the armies of Ho Lung and Yeh T'ing were already on the march. *Pravda*, in a leading article ironically headed "All Quiet in China", recorded the advance of "revolutionary military units — so far not numerous" from Nanchang to Kwangtung, where "widespread mass turbulence" was rising to meet them. This was hailed as "the beginning of the fight against the Wuhan government".[194] Political operations were directed by a committee, of which communists, headed by T'an P'ing-shan as representative of the party central committee, provided the backbone. The committee, styling itself the Chinese National-Revolutionary Party Committee, avoided the title "communist", and purported to stand for an "orthodox" Kuomintang betrayed both by Nanking and by Wuhan. But the expedition was ill-prepared and ill-organized, and the marchers were a motley force. As one commentator remarked, "it could hardly be expected that hired mercenaries, who constituted the core of these troops, would be converted in a short space of time into convinced revolutionary fighters".[195] Porters were few (the country was unsuited to wheeled

[193] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 32 (106), 1927, pp. 6–11; for P'eng see p. 778 above.

[194] *Pravda*, August 14, 1927.

[195] *Agrar-Probleme*, No. 1, 1928, p. 144.

transport); and money was short. The rugged region through which the armies advanced had no industrial development, and a backward agriculture. No organized peasant movement existed. An agrarian programme calling for the confiscation of land was proclaimed, but applied only to holdings of more than 200 mu, of which there were apparently few in this part of China; protests were provoked by this high limit, which was reduced to 50 mu at a later stage of the march. But, so far as the evidence goes, the programme was not generally implemented. Peasants did not rally to the support of the marchers, and no action was taken against the larger landowners, labelled "local bullies and bad gentry". The army as it advanced was decimated by desertions and by deaths from disease or exhaustion. Only sporadic military opposition was encountered. On September 24, 1927, after nearly two months on the march, the treaty port of Swatow and the neighbouring town of Ch'ao-Chou were occupied without resistance.[196]

In Moscow the character and prospects of this isolated and unplanned expedition were difficult to assess. Trotsky in a memorandum apparently written in the second half of September 1927 professed himself unable to decide whether to treat it as a belated Leftist adventure, or as the start of a grand new chapter in the Chinese revolution.[197] China was once more a bone of contention in the presidium of IKKI on September 27, 1927, where Trotsky revived the charge that Kuomintang was still a member party of Comintern, and Bukharin, in a violently polemical reply, challenged Trotsky to produce "a date of a resolution, a decision, a document relating to the admission of Kuomintang to Comintern". Neither discussed the current situation in China.[198] But a militant mood seems to have prevailed in the party. Lozovsky, recently returned from China, in an article in the party journal, denounced "the counter-revolutionary theory ... of the unripeness of the worker–peasant movement, of exaggerated demands by the workers, of peasant excesses etc.".[199] Mif, also back from

[196] For the sources for this campaign see p. 824, note 181 above; for Ch'ü's trenchant comment see *Chinese Studies in History*, v, No. 1 (1971), p. 47; for the agrarian programme see *China Quarterly*, xviii (1964), 16–17.

[197] Trotsky archives, T 3089.

[198] Trotsky's speech is in Trotsky archives, T 3094, Bukharin's in *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 41 (115), 1927, pp. 10–11; for Kuomintang membership of Comintern see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 766, note 2.

[199] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 37 (111), 1927, p. 19.

China and reporting to Comintern on the fifth congress of the CCP in the previous summer, blamed the party for having taken up a "defensive position" in response to the Kuomintang "offensive", and adopted "a platform of retreat".[200] This was the moment chosen by Stalin for the despatch of yet another envoy to China in the person of the youthful German communist Neumann with instructions to spur the faltering CCP into more revolutionary action.[201] The march from Nanchang was hailed in *Pravda* on September 30, 1927, as "the beginning of a new upsurge of the revolution", with the comment that "not the towns and not the cities of the industrial proletariat" were responsible, but "a partisan movement of the peasants". It marked an advance in the revolutionary programme. With the upsurge of the revolution, and its extension to the industrial centres, "the slogan of Soviets must change from a propaganda slogan to a slogan of action". But any hint of exclusive reliance on workers' Soviets was tempered by the remark that peasant unions and committees, when they seized power, must be transformed into Soviets of peasants' deputies. Moreover, the tasks of the new régime would be "tasks of an anti-imperialist revolutionary-democratic dictatorship"; the socialist dictatorship of the proletariat was not yet in sight. The example of Lenin in 1917 was invoked to justify an empirical conclusion. "All scholasticism and all theoretical Talmudism" must be rejected: "what must be done is what leads to the victory of the revolution". The final words of the article recalled the association of the victories of the Nanchang army with agrarian revolution. But even this barely perceptible shift towards a more active revolutionary programme proved premature. Almost at the moment when these words appeared in print, disaster had struck. By the time the expedition moved away from Swatow on its journey south, loyal nationalist troops from Canton were already massed in its path. In the ensuing battle, the revolutionary army was defeated and destroyed. Individual survivors, including most of the leaders, escaped to Hong Kong. A small number of troops under the command of Chu Teh held together and marched inland, eventually joining Mao Tse-tung's levies on the border of Kiangsi.[202]

[200] *Ibid.* No. 41 (115), 1927, p. 47; for Mif's report see p. 799 above.

[201] For the instructions see pp. 835, note 211, below.

[202] For the sources for this campaign see p. 824, note 181 above. An article

The other movement of revolt originally planned by the party after the Wuhan débâcle, and endorsed in the party central committee's theses of August 7, 1927 — the so-called "autumn harvest risings" in selected provinces of central and southern China — was also unsuccessful, but had more substance, since sporadic and spontaneous outbreaks of violence by peasants were endemic in this period.[203] After the session of August 7, 1927, Mao proceeded to Hunan to carry out the plans approved by the central committee. Here a radical atmosphere prevailed. Soon after Mao's arrival an unnamed comrade brought the news that Comintern had issued a new directive authorizing the immediate formation of Soviets. This was unfounded; the resolution of IKKI of August 9, 1927, like the theses of the central committee two days earlier, had explicitly ruled out this step. But it was hailed with delight by Mao as tantamount to recognition that the Chinese revolution had passed beyond the stage of 1905, and reached its 1917; and from this Mao concluded that the flag of Kuomintang, which had "become the flag of the militarists", should now be abandoned, and that "we must immediately and resolutely raise the red flag". He also decided, as the result of conversations with Hunan peasants, that "a complete solution of the land question" was necessary, and called for the confiscation of all land and its equitable distribution to those who cultivated it. With this programme, he proposed to muster the military forces available, four regiments in all, and launch an attack on Changsha, the provincial capital, the scene of the counter-revolutionary *coup* of the previous May. These plans were embodied in a letter written in the name of the Hunan provincial party committee to the party central committee on August 20, 1927.[204] The Hunan committee is said to have asked the cen-

in *Novyi Vostok*, xxvii–xxvii (1929), 10–17, gives a discursive and episodic account of the adventures of Chu Teh's unit, variously described as a "communist army" and a "worker–peasant army", after the defeat, and its eventual junction with Mao Tse-tung, still a secondary figure in the story.

[203] An exhaustive calendar of peasant risings in central and south China between May and December 1927 compiled by Roy and the Soviet Chinese expert Kara-Murza was published in *Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, xi–xii (1928), 226–231; *Agrar-Probleme*, No. 1, 1928, pp. 146–147, referred to "violent risings of the peasantry in Hupei, Hunan and Kwangtung", which "reached a culminating point in the second half of September", but had no united leadership, and no political plan, and received no support from the towns.

[204] For the sources for this letter and an excerpt in translation see *China Quarterly*, xviii (1964), 58–59; see also S. Schram, *Mao Tse-tung* (1966), pp.

tral committee for two regiments to carry out the assault on Changsha.[205]

This independent initiative, going far beyond the cautious theses of August 7, 1927, was not calculated to please the central committee, whose reply of August 23, 1927, expressed disapproval of the decision to abandon the Kuomintang flag, of the formation of Soviets, and of the drastic programme of land reform, and, while endorsing in principle the plan of an assault on Changsha, thought that this should take the form of mass peasant risings rather than of "a mere military adventure". Mao in a letter of August 30, 1927, retorted sharply. He accused the central committee of "a contradictory policy of neglecting military affairs and at the same time desiring an armed insurrection of the popular masses", and went his own way. The military venture proved, however, a fiasco. The attack on Changsha was repulsed with heavy losses. On September 15, 1927, Mao with a remnant of his forces, said to amount to no more than 1000 men, retreated from the area, and eventually established a base in the Chingkangshan, a remote and inaccessible mountain-range on the borders of Hunan and Kiangsi.[206] The central committee of the CCP reacted to this defeat by censuring Mao for his "betrayal" of Changsha, and issued a futile order to the Hunan provincial party committee to resume the attack. More significant was a resolution of the central committee of September 19, 1927, which, far more than the theses of August 7, 1927, marked a change in the party line and a sharp turn to the Left. It diagnosed "an unprecedented sharpening of the class struggle in both town and country, and a disintegration in "the bourgeois-militarist camp". The decision was taken "to supplement the plan of autumn harvest risings with a plan for armed risings in the industrial centres of China". The committee now came out for the very changes which Mao had advocated a month earlier — the abandonment of the

123–125. For Mao's own account see E. Snow, *Red Star over China* (1938), p. 163.

[205] *Chinese Studies in History*, v, No. 1 (1971), p. 48.

[206] S. Schram, *Mao Tse-tung* (1966), pp. 123–125; E. Snow, *Red Star over China* (1938), p. 128; *China Quarterly*, xviii (1964) 64–65. According to the official version offered by Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai to the sixth party congress in June 1928, "the Hunan provincial committee suddenly lost its courage", and "called off the uprising scheduled for September 16 in Changsha" (*Chinese Studies in History*, v (1971), No. 1, p. 48; for this speech see pp. 860–861 below).

Kuomintang flag, the formation of Soviets and the confiscation of land.[207] It is reasonable to assume that these decisions were taken with the approval of Lominadze. Whether Lominadze had received fresh instructions from Moscow, or considered that these moves fell within the scope of his original instructions, is difficult to determine.

Further trouble for the party leaders arose from an acrimonious dispute with the Kiangsu provincial party committee, whose jurisdiction extended over Shanghai where the central committee also had its headquarters. In September 1927 the Kiangsu committee, taking advantage of the moment of confusion when Chiang had resigned his offices, planned a *coup* to seize and occupy the former premises of the Shanghai General Labour Union; this was denounced by the central committee as "adventurism", and the authority of Lominadze invoked to put a stop to it. On the other hand, the Kiangsu committee proposed to participate in a ceremony of welcome for Wang Ching-wei who visited Shanghai at this time; this was condemned by the central committee as "a remnant of the old opportunism" and of the false tactics of playing off one section of Kuomintang against another.[208] The Kiangsu dissidents vented their annoyance in a resolution which, while purporting to agree with the central committee that armed rising was the end in view, emphatically asserted that this was "not an immediate task of today", and that "to push the masses of workers into an armed rising *today* would be a fatal *adventure*, and would lead the movement and our party to total destruction". The resolution reproached the central committee with its failure "to take account of the defeats and depressed mood of the workers" and of the need to support "the economic struggle of the proletariat", with "putschist tendencies" inherent in its policy, and with its excessive emphasis on peasant risings. It promised to support "the organization of a genuine Left revolutionary Kuomintang", and

[207] No full text of the resolution has been available; one paragraph was quoted in the critical resolution of the Kiangsu provincial committee of October 12, 1927, (see p. 835 below). For further particulars see *China Quarterly*, xviii (1964), 60; S. Schram, *Mao Tse-tung* (1966), p. 125; *Noveishaya Istoriya Kitaya* (1972), where the decision is attributed to a "temporary politburo". It is conceivable that there have been more than one resolution.

[208] *Chinese Studies in History*, v (1971), No. 1, pp. 49–50; the statement in *China Quarterly*, xxxii (1967), 109, note 7, that Lominadze vetoed a communist "plot of insurection" in Shanghai at the time of Chiang's resignation presumably relates to the Kiangsu committee's proposed *coup*.

took the view that "the centre of gravity" of party work should be found in "leadership of the economic struggle of the workers". It concluded, somewhat condescendingly:

> In all other respects the Shanghai organization of the CCP should be guided by the decisions of the general party extraordinary conference [of August 7] and the theses of the central committee of the CCP [of September 19].[209]

The Kiangsu provincial committee in a further resolution of October 12, 1927, claimed that the case for supporting a Left Kuomintang had disappeared, and welcomed the decision of the central committee of September 19, 1927, to abandon the Kuomintang flag. But in resolution of the following day "On the Liquidation of Opportunism", while admitting past errors of its own, it accused the central committee of being "the source of opportunism in the CCP".[210] Rifts in the party, from which no clear decision or recommendation of policy emerged; was the token of a mood of defeat and discouragement. No recent development seemed to justify the belief proclaimed by Comintern and by the central committee of the CCP in an imminent upsurge of revolutionary forces.

The failure of Mao Tse-tung's peasant risings in Hunan, the collapse of the military expedition led by Ho Lung and Yeh T'ing, and the changed party line of September 1927, were the background of the session of the party central committee of the CCP in Shanghai on November 9–10, 1927. The proceedings appear to have been still dominated by Lominadze; but Neumann, Stalin's latest envoy, who brought encouragement, if not explicit instructions, to goad the CCP into more effective action, was probably also present.[211] Leadership of the CCP was in the hands of

[209] *Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, ix (1927), 11–13.

[210] *Ibid.* xi–xii (1928), 16–19.

[211] The only detailed accounts of Neumann's mission are given by M. Buber-Neumann, who in 1929 became his wife, in *Von Potsdam nach Moskau* (1957), pp. 179–181, and *Kriegsschauplätze der Weltrevolution* (1967), pp. 212–214, and owe much either to her or to his vivid imagination. Neumann is said to have received his instructions personally from Stalin at the end of September 1927 (this is plausible enough), at a time when the news of the march from Nanchang was still favourable (see p. 831 above). Neumann met Lominadze in Shanghai, and they travelled together on an adventurous journey to Canton, where they arrived some time in October; it is implied that Lominadze remained in Canton to work with Neumann on preparations for the Canton

the compliant Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai. The political resolution adopted by the session began by endorsing the radical resolution of September 19, 1927. It pronounced the stabilization of a bourgeois-militarist régime to be impossible, rejected any prospect of revitalizing the Kuomintang alliance, and endorsed the slogan "All power to Soviets of workers', peasants' and soldiers' deputies". The dominant note was one of optimism:

> The strength of the revolutionary movement of the toiling masses of China is not only not exhausted, but is at this very moment beginning to take shape in a new upsurge of the revolutionary struggle.

The resolution recognized "an *immediately revolutionary situation* in the whole of China", though with the qualification that "complete victory" was not inevitable "in the nearest future". At this point, by a glaring indiscretion which exposed Lominadze to later criticism, the resolution crossed the narrow line which separated current policy from Trotsky's past heresies. "The Chinese revolution", it observed, "is protracted in character, yet it is uninterrupted. It thus bears the character of what Marx called 'permanent revolution' ". The revolution "continues to be democratic in the present period", but "must solve its democratic tasks in the most radical fashion, and in its further rapid development pass over to the socialist path". The confiscation of land and its distribution to peasant cultivators was to be organized through peasant Soviets. But a one-sided preoccupation with the peasantry was blamed for the failure of the autumn harvest risings: "a purely peasant rising without the help and leadership of the working class cannot achieve decisive victories". Hence "*to forge a link between risings of workers and risings of peasants is the most important task of the party*".[212] The committee adopted, for discussion by local party organizations, a draft agrarian programme, which was marred by another indiscretion. The "conjuncture of historical circumstances" had led to "the formation in China of the social and economic order which Marx, Engels and, after them,

rising. All this is demonstrably false. Neither account mentions the Shanghai session of November 9–10, 1927; Lominadze must have left China immediately after the session, since he was back in Moscow in time to address the fifteenth party congress on December 10, 1927, and it is unlikely that he ever went to Canton.

[212] *Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, i (x) (1928), 3–15.

Lenin called 'the Asiatic mode of production' ". It was "survivals of this order" which stood in the way of a transition to the new mode of agricultural production.[213] A resolution on the trade union question was noteworthy only for a paragraph added to the conventional denunciation of government-sponsored unions:

> Terrorism against government officials in the unions is fully justified and indispensable, on the condition that the broad masses of workers are brought into the struggle (e.g. Canton).[214]

The committee also passed a resolution on party organization which criticized its own past record by admitting that "the leading rôle was reserved for those who came from petty bourgeois strata". The membership of the party, which had reached nearly 58,000 at the time of its fifth congress in April 1927, was now put at "rather more than 10,000". The resolution demanded, somewhat irrelevantly, that "a broad majority of outstanding non-party workers should be drawn *individually* into membership of trade unions", and should be required to pay "monthly membership dues, however small".[215]

The decisions taken by the central committee under the tutelage of Lominadze and Neumann were mandatory for the party. If "putschist tendencies" had been detected in the theses of August 7, 1927, and the resolution of September 19, 1927,[216] the same charge could be levelled with greater force against the resolutions of November 9. The new leaders were in no mood to tolerate opposition. A few days later the party politburo sat in judgement on those whose errors were held responsible for the failures of the past three months. T'an P'ing-shan from the time when he was Minister of Agriculture in the Wuhan government had consistently opposed revolutionary agrarian policies, including the execution and expropriation of "bullies and bad gentry". He had disobeyed party instructions, and had carried on propaganda for the formation of a "third party" of dissidents from the CCP and

[213] Quoted in *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 43 (16), p. 38; since the draft programme was discarded (see p. 864 below), its full text appears never to have been published. For the controversy about the Asiatic mode of production see Note E, pp. 1029–1039 below.

[214] *Materially po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, i (x) (1928), 17.

[215] *Ibid.* i (x) (1928), 18–22. For earlier party statistics see p. 789, note 56 above; for trade union organization and finance see p. 809, note 134 above.

[216] See pp. 826–827, 833–834 above.

the Left Kuomintang. He was expelled from the party. Chang Kuo-t'ao was found guilty of having failed to carry out the instructions given to him by the party committee at Wuhan, and having come out against the Nanchang rising; he had also opposed the expropriation of land. For these offences he was removed from the party central committee and the politburo. Mao Tse-tung, as the "core" of the Hunan provincial committee, which had failed to rely on the peasant masses and had committed the error of "military opportunism", suffered the same fate.[217]

These proceedings were the prelude to a bold plan for the seizure of power in the province of Kwangtung by organized workers and peasants under communist leadership. On November 17, 1927, when Lominadze had already left Shanghai, and had been succeeded as Comintern representative by Neumann, the central committee drew up an elaborate instruction to the Kwangtung provincial party committee in Canton. Workers and peasants throughout the province should be summoned by proclamation "to rise in revolt and establish political power through a conference of Soviets of Workers, Peasants, Soldiers and the Poor". Workers must take the initiative in the revolutionary trade unions, "smash ... the reactionary organizations and kill the reactionary leaders", and declare "a political general strike for the conquest of power". The "revolutionary army of workers and peasants of Haifeng" must "mobilize the peasant masses" in order to "kill the landlords, divide the land, and so spread the agrarian revolution". The surviving unit of the Nanchang army which had retreated into Kiangsi was to march back into the border regions to stir up peasant revolt. The situation in Kwangtung was favourable; the regional party committee should mobilize all its forces to carry out the instruction.[218]

[217] For translated excerpts from this resolution see *China Quarterly*, ii (1960), 32–33, xviii (1964), 53–54; Chang admitted the error of proposing to expropriate only estates of more than 200 mu (*ibid.* xviii (1964), 50). E. Snow, *Red Star over China* (1938), p. 151, claimed that Mao was dismissed "because the programme of the autumn harvest uprising had not been sanctioned by the central committee" (i.e. that he had advocated radical measures of agrarian redistribution not approved by the committee).

[218] The text is in *Die Internationale*, xiii, No. 6, March 15, 1929, p. 182; see *China Quarterly*, xxx (1967), 66–67, for other sources. For the Haifeng Soviet see pp. 842–843 below. Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai at the sixth congress of Comintern dated the decision "November 18 or 19" (*Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 96).

It would be a one-sided verdict to maintain that the policies of adventure leading up to the Canton rising were imposed on a reluctant CCP by pressure from Moscow. Ch'en Tu-hsiu was a cautious man who did not believe that the CCP was ripe for armed insurrection; and, when he was deposed from the leadership of the party on the charge of "opportunism", his successors were almost automatically committed to a more active policy. In the autumn of 1927, the party started a new journal under the title *Purh-se-wei-k'o* (*Bol'shevik*); its first issue contained an article by Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai on "The New Path of the Chinese Revolution after the Collapse of Kuomintang", which uncompromisingly proclaimed a doctrine of action:

> Victorious armed risings of workers, peasants, poor peasants and soldiers must, by developing and extending the class struggle of the masses, lead to the overthrow of old and new militarists (bad gentry, bullies, bourgeoisie), to the overthrow of imperialist domination, and to the establishment of Soviet power in China.[219]

An article in the third issue specifically invoked the example of the Russian October revolution for imitation.[220] In the mood of indignation at the treachery of the Left Kuomintang, following that of the Right, this change was welcome to many rank-and-file members of the party, and most of all to the Communist Youth League.[221] On the other hand, Lominadze, who came with instructions from Moscow to remove Ch'en, clearly had no mandate to launch a general insurrection. The Nanchang *coup* appears to have been planned without any prompting from Moscow; and the radical phraseology of the resolution of August 7, 1927, was qualified by the firm injunction "not to play with revolt", but to make careful preparations with an eye to an undefined future. On October 25, 1927, when the struggle between T'ang Sheng-chih and the Nanking government was at its height, and loyal troops were being sent to crush his rebellion, the Hupei provincial committee of the CCP decided that the moment was opportune for an attempt to seize power. But the local party leader, Lo I-nung, who

[219] Quoted in L. Delyusin, *Agrarno-Krest'yanskii Vopros v Politike KPK* (1972), pp. 353–354.
[220] *Ibid.* pp. 354–355.
[221] See p. 812 above.

had been absent when the decision was taken, came out strongly against the project, and was supported by a woman delegate of Profintern, who spoke in the name of Lominadze. The project was abandoned, and Lominadze telegraphed his approval of the veto.[222] Up to this time the authority of Comintern had been used to restrain hotheads in the CCP from rash adventure.

The decisive turning-point seems to have been the arrival of Neumann in Shanghai early in November 1927. From this time the policy of restraint hitherto inculcated by Comintern was replaced by a policy of incitement to action; and Neumann evidently had at his disposal ample funds, which Lominadze had lacked.[223] The hand of Neumann may be detected in some of the ruthless phraseology of the instruction of November 17, 1927. Nothing in the record suggests, however, that he encountered opposition or reluctance in the leaders of the CCP. Ch'en Tu-hsiu wrote to the central committee protesting against the resolution of November 9, 1927, on the ground that it had abandoned the Comintern view that the Chinese revolution was still in the bourgeois-democratic stage, and, by prematurely invoking the analogy of the Russian October revolution, had put forward a programme of "workers' and peasants' revolution through armed insurrection".[224] But Ch'en was now a discredited and isolated figure; and the present leaders were bent on reversing his temporizing attitudes. The plan was not new. To raise the standard of revolt in Kwantung had been the aim of the march from Nanchang. Canton was its intended destination; and, even after the defeat outside Swatow, a leading article in the Comintern journal continued to speculate on the chances of taking Canton.[225] The

[222] For this episode see *China Quarterly*, xxxiii (1968), 108–110; Lo was, however, censured and recalled to Shanghai by the party central committee, apparently as the result of a protest by the youth league, and was subsequently rehabilitated on January 3, 1928, after the Canton disaster (*ibid.* xxxiii, 112–120). The Profintern delegate may have been Voitinsky's wife (see p. 744 above). According to an article by Mif in *Pravda*, March 1, 1928, the Hunan provincial party committee, undeterred by Mao's defeat at Changsha (see p. 833 above), planned a peasant rising for November 10–17, 1927; evidently nothing came of this.

[223] A chest packed with dollars is the central feature of a mainly fictitious story in M. Buber-Neumann, *Kriegsschauplätze der Weltrevolution* (1967), pp. 212–213; for Lominadze's statement in August 1927 that funds were not available see p. 821 above.

[224] *China Quarterly*, xxx (1967), 65.

[225] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 41 (115), 1928, pp. 3–7.

moment was opportune. A military clash seemed imminent between the forces of Li Chi-shen, who had seized control of Canton in April 1927, and those of Chang Fa-k'uei who was now seeking to oust him.[226] Contrary to these expectations, Li was quickly overwhelmed, and Chang took possession of Canton without resistance on the very day when the party central committee in Shanghi was drafting its instructions for the insurrection; to clear the rest of Kwangtung of Li's troops was a matter only of weeks.

The degree of Stalin's personal responsibility for what followed is a moot point. It is beyond doubt that he sent Neumann to China to galvanize the enfeebled CCP into more aggressive policies;[227] and Neumann's reputation for audacity and unscrupulousness may have commended him to Stalin. But it would have been uncharacteristic of Stalin to commit himself, in explicit and unequivocal detail, to so hazardous a project in a distant field; and the ambitions of the brash and self-confident young disciple may have shaped the intimations of his master's will. According to one story, Neumann consulted Stalin by telegraph after his arrival in China, and received the reply: "Act in a way that you can answer for".[228] It is unlikely that any formal decision was taken by Comintern; and the Comintern leaders, including Bukharin, may not have been fully aware what was afoot. The coincidence of these events with the peak moment of factional strife in Moscow, which blunted interest in them, also encouraged the suspicion that the policy of armed insurrection had been inspired by Comintern as a weapon in the struggle with the opposition; and later it was commonly alleged that the rising had been timed to coincide with the

[226] Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai, in his apologia for the Canton venture at the sixth party congress in June 1928, recalled the "battles" going on all over China in the autumn of 1927 between generals who professed allegiance to the Kuomintang régime; the party central committee on October 10, 1927 (the anniversary of the 1911 revolution), put out the slogan: "Transform the war of the warlords into a war of the people against the warlords". Ch'ü blamed provincial party organizations, other than the Kwangtung provincial committee, for failing to take advantage of this opportunity (*Chinese Studies in History*, v, No. 1 (1971), p. 56); this was the period when Chiang Kai-shek had resigned his command and withdrawn to Japan (see p. 818 above). For Li Chi-shen's *coup* of April 1927 see p. 737 above.

[227] For the appointment of Neumann and the mood in Moscow at the time see p. 835, note 211 above.

[228] M. Buber-Neumann, *Von Potsdam nach Moskau* (1957), p. 184; the source is unreliable, but the text plausible.

fifteenth party congress in Moscow in order to provide Stalin with a victory to announce at the moment of the expulsion of the opposition — a charge that cannot be proved or refuted by evidence.[229]

The instruction of the party central committee of November 17, 1927, was received by the Kwangtung committee on November 26, 1927, and unanimously approved by it.[230] It is reasonable to suppose that it was brought from Shanghai by Neumann himself, and that this was the date of his arrival in Canton. The committee appointed a Revolutionary-Military Council of five, with Chang T'ai-lei, a member of the party politburo, a former secretary of the Chinese Youth League, and now secretary of the Kwangtung provincial party committee, as president, and the absent Yeh T'ing as commander-in-chief, to organize the rising.[231] It was an illusion widely current after the event that the decision represented a transition, deliberately planned by Comintern and by the CCP leaders, from rural to urban, from peasant to proletarian, revolution. This is unfounded. The doctrine of the leadership of the proletariat was constantly reiterated, but was qualified by the equally insistent assertion that the struggle of the proletariat was bound up with the cause of agrarian revolution.[232] The march from Nanchang to the south was inspired by the hopes of stirring up peasant revolts in the provinces of Fukien and Kwangtung through which it would pass; though Canton was thought of as its ultimate destination, it was essentially a peasant operation. The resolutions of the central committee of August 7 and November 9, 1927, differed in the emphasis which they placed on the existence of a revolutionary situation, but did nothing to contradict the long-standing assumption that agrarian revolution was the essential core of the Chinese revolution. The instruction of November 17, 1927, related to the whole Kwangtung province, and placed at least as much emphasis on action by peasants as by workers. An area round the town of Haifeng, between Swatow and

[229] It first appeared in print in *Vorwärts*, December 22, 1927.

[230] *Die Internationale*, xii, No. 6, March 15, 1929, p. 183.

[231] *China Quarterly*, xxx (1967), 67.

[232] See, for example, Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai's article in the Chinese party journal quoted in L. Delyusin, *Agrarno-Krest'yanskii Vopros v Politike KPK* (1972), p. 355.

Canton, had been taken over by insurgent peasants, and a peasant Soviet established there under the direction of P'eng P'ai, the communist peasant leader, which was said to exercise authority over 500,000 peasants;[233] this was one of the key-points in the instruction. Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai, the CCP leader most deeply committed to a radical policy, in an article entitled "Problems of Armed Insurrection", implicitly rejected the Russian precedent of 1917, arguing that power in China could not be seized in the capital cities. Partisan warfare was "the initial stage of armed insurrection"; only when partisan warfare and peasant risings had spread far and wide over the country could decisive revolutionary action be taken by the workers in the urban centres.[234] On the eve of the insurrection, the organizers are said to have counted on the arrival of 1500 armed peasants from the neighbouring countryside.[235] But no effective means existed of appealing to the peasants or of mobilizing them for action. The failure to find any support outside Canton itself was a major factor which doomed the insurrection to disaster.

Nor did plans to mobilize the workers of Canton prove much more successful. The prestige still enjoyed by Canton as the cradle of the Chinese revolution was a dangerous illusion. Whatever its rôle in the national revolution, it was ill qualified to serve as the starting-point for an incipient proletarian revolution; its most depressed class contained more petty traders, coolies and small artisans than factory workers. Much had happened there since the glorious days of Borodin's supremacy and the launching of the northern expedition. The workers' movement had suffered crippling blows. The revolutionary trade unions had been declared illegal and effectively crushed by Li Chi-shen.[236] The Mechanics' Union, the only well-organized trade union in Canton, actively

[233] For this episode see *China Quarterly*, ix (1962), 166–179; *Agrar-Probleme*, No. 1, 1928, p. 146. The Haifeng Soviet held out till March 1928.

[234] *Problemy Dal'nego Vostoka*, No. 2, 1973, p. 105; *China Quarterly*, xxx (1967), 66–67, and sources there quoted. The article, dated December 10, 1927, was published in the party journal *Purh-se-wei-k'o*, No. 10, December 18, 1927, pp. 294–298.

[235] A. Neuberg, *L'Insurrection Armée* (1931), p. 112; for this source see p. 844, note 238 below. Many months later a Chinese delegate at the sixth congress of Comintern detailed plans for peasant units to march on Canton at the moment of the rising, but did not explain why they were not carried out (*Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 143).

[236] See p. 737 above.

helped the authorities to suppress the revolt. The Kwangtung party committee, on receipt of the instruction of November 17, 1927, from Shanghai, set out to create a "Red Guard" of 2000 activist communist workers, and collected a motley assortment of weapons which included crowbars and swords as well as bombs, hand-grenades and a "small number of pistols".[237] No general strike was called to coincide with the armed assault. What had been conceived and planned as a mass rising of peasants and workers was reduced to the dimension of a military *coup*, without adequate forces and without overt popular support.

The operation was launched on December 11, 1927, by its commander-in-chief, Yeh T'ing. The Red Guard, 200 strong, was joined by 1000 men from a military training school, by a handful of cadets from the Whampoa Military Academy, and by a few other volunteers.[238] No attempt had been made to woo soldiers throughout the province, or even in Canton itself, from their allegiance to authority.[239] The insurgents occupied the centre of Canton, disarmed some regular troops in barracks, and set up a Soviet of Worker's, Peasants and Soldiers' Deputies of 16 members, ten representing the Red trade union organization, three the garrison, and three provincial peasant unions, which issued a bold proclamation that "land, peace and liberty can be won only from the hands of the workers".[240] A despatch from

[237] *Die Internationale*, xii, No. 6, March 15, 1929, p. 185; the charge (*ibid.* p. 189) that the attitude of Kwangtung communists to the "yellow" unions, which "wavered between extreme hostility or indifference and united front tactics", was responsible for the failure to mobilize the workers in the Canton rising is not very plausible.

[238] For the fullest available account see A. Neuberg, *L'Insurrection Armée* (1931), pp. 111–120. The authenticity of the volume, and the attribution of this report, plainly written from inside knowledge, to the general staff of the Soviet Red Army, are questionable; M. Buber-Neumann, *Kriegsschauplätze der Weltrevolution* (1967), p. 219, mentions an "obstinate rumour" that its author was Neumann. See also the account emanating from Chang T'ai-lei's widow in Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, ii (1974), 51–53. Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai at the sixth congress of Comintern in July 1928 put the number of insurgents at the absurdly high figure of 30,000, armed with 7000–8000 rifles (*Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 98); another Chinese delegate admitted that the Red Guard did not number more than 2,500 (*ibid.* iv, 141–144).

[239] *Die Internationale*, xii, No. 6, March 15, 1929, p. 190.

[240] Quoted by Neumann at the sixth congress of Comintern in July 1928 (*Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 393); the unrealistic criticism was afterwards made that the Soviet had been nominated, not elected.

Canton of December 12, 1927, recorded this brief moment of triumph.[241]

But by this time the authorities, recovered from the surprise, had mustered a sufficient body of loyal troops to round up the insurgents. What was afterwards known in party history as "the Canton commune" lasted for less than three days. *Pravda* on December 13, 1927, reported the rising in terms of cautious optimism. By the afternoon of the same day organized resistance had ceased, and the butchery of insurgents, communists and suspected radicals began. Chang T'ai-lei had been killed in the fighting; Neumann was one of the few leaders to escape. The Soviet consulate was raided, and its inmates seized. The vice-consul and four other Soviet members of the staff were paraded through the streets and publicly executed. The consul-general himself with several women and children were placed on a ship for Japan.[242] On December 15, 1927, the diplomatic agent of the Nanking government in Shanghai, by way of justifying these brutal reprisals, hastily addressed to the Soviet consul-general a note protesting against the Canton rising, which it attributed to Soviet instigation, and complaining of the use of Soviet consulates and commercial agencies as "centres of Red propaganda" and places of refuge for communists. Chicherin replied rejecting the allegations, and refusing to recognize "the so-called nationalist government in Nanking"; and on December 23, 1927, he issued a statement protesting "to the whole world" against the killing "after every possible insult" of Soviet citizens, and against "the bestialities of the Chinese counter-revolution".[243] A flood of protests included manifestos from the League against Imperialism and from MOPR.[244] These served only to deepen the humiliation of the defeat.

[241] It appeared, belatedly and pathetically, in *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 5, January 17, 1928, p. 100.

[242] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, x (1965), 652, note 116; an account of his experiences given by the consul-general after his return to Moscow on February 1, 1928, is in *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 14, February 14, 1928, pp. 276–277.

[243] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, x (1965), 555–557, 559–560.

[244] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 126, December 28, 1927, 2935–2937.

(c) *Aftermath of Defeat*

The Canton disaster marked the end of the first active period of the Chinese revolution which began with the Shanghai rising of May 1925. The repeated blood-lettings of 1927 all over central China decimated the ranks of Chinese communists and revolutionary workers and peasants; the CCP was reduced to impotence. It was not formally outlawed, and conditions varied from province to province. But nowhere were communist leaders, or organized communist activity, immune from the severest reprisals. Sporadic risings were easily and harshly put down. Recriminations about what had happened in Canton were pointless. The presence of Stalin's emissary made it difficult to blame those in charge on the spot; and Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai could not go back on the policy adopted under his leadership. The party politburo in Shanghai, in a resolution of January 3, 1928, while admitting "insufficiency of preparatory work", considered that "all the conditions for a victorious proletarian uprising" in fact existed, and that insurrection and the establishment of Soviet power were still "practical immediate questions".[245] The party central committee issued a declaration denouncing Kuomintang as a public enemy of the Chinese people, and adopted several resolutions formulating new policies. The most important of these was a resolution "On Principles of Work in Various Provinces" — an attempt to turn to account the sporadic and dispersed outbursts of peasant insurgency which were now the only current forms of revolutionary activity. This contemplated "the possibility of seizing power in one or more provinces", and recommended the setting up of peasant Soviets to organize the uprisings. But a note of mistrust of these tactics was sharply sounded. "Blind activism that plays with uprisings" — further defined as reliance on "assassination of individuals, guerrilla tactics of murder and arson without mass participation, frivolous calls for immediate insurrections in large cities" — was condemned as "a crime against the revolution". Another resolution "On Armed Uprisings" seems to have driven home the same lesson.[246] The

[245] Quoted from Ch'ü's record in H. Isaacs, *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution* (1938), pp. 372–373.

[246] *Chinese Studies in History*, v, No. 1 (1971), pp. 61–62; these documents, which have not been available, were cited in Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai's speech at the sixth party congress in June 1928 (see pp. 860–861 below).

massive defeat of the proletariat in Canton almost imperceptibly shifted the centre of gravity towards the countryside.

Embarrassment in Moscow resulted in the postponement of any verdict. The expulsion of the Russian opposition leaders from the party in December 1927 removed the danger of further direct criticism. But this fresh failure might seem to justify their bitter attacks in the past on party policy in China. Bukharin, in his report to the fifteenth party congress on December 10, 1927, had prefaced his remarks on colonial countries by recalling Lenin's polemic of 1916 with Radek on the national question. Lenin, citing the example of the Irish rebellion, had argued, in such a situation, for common action by the "nationally oppressed proletariat and peasantry" and the "nationally oppressed bourgeoisie" *against* the oppressor nation. This justified collaboration with the bourgeoisie in the first phase of the revolution. Now the treachery of the national big bourgeoisie meant that the Chinese bourgeoisie "has broken up into groups, and cannot act as a single class force". These considerations led to an optimistic assessment of the revolutionary prospect. Bukharin outlined the confused situation throughout China, recorded the establishment of peasant Soviets in five counties of Kwangtung province, and passed on to "the *extraordinarily* tense situation throughout the province of Kwangtung, especially round Canton"; he concluded that "in China very serious events are ripening".[247]

The debate on Bukharin's report took place on the two following days — at the very moment of the Canton rising and before any news of it can have reached the speakers. Lominadze disclaimed any difference of principle with Bukharin, but spoke on China from a position well to the Left. Though he began by referring to three "great defeats" — Shanghai, Wuhan and the recent defeat of Ho Lung and Yeh T'ing in Kwangtung — he breathed throughout a note of optimism, and claimed that "the forces of the Chinese proletariat and peasantry are fully sufficient for the victorious completion of the revolution". The most striking passage in his speech, which excited expressions of scepticism from Stalin and others, was the argument that the Chinese bour-

[247] *Pyatnadtsatyi S"ezd VKP (B)*, i (1961), 668–669. The last words leave it an open question how much inside knowledge Bukharin had of what was planned in Canton; the "tense situation" arose from Chang Fa-k'uei's victory over Li Chi-shen (see p. 841 above).

geoisie had proved to be "an immature abortion of history", and no longer existed as a political force. Kuomintang had "ceased to exist as a political party". This led to the conclusion that the CCP should now place itself at the head of the workers' and peasants' movement. The CCP had made colossal mistakes. Blame was placed on the conservative agrarian policy of T'an P'ing-shan and other party leaders, who had failed to carry out the new directives of August 7, 1927, had proclaimed the confiscation only of estates of more than 200 mu, and had prevented peasants and workers from taking independent action against landowners and gentry. But the speech ended with a eulogy of the party and an expression of confidence in its capacity to face "the question of the struggle for power and the organization of armed insurrection ... under the general slogan of Soviets".[248] Lominadze, one of the emissaries through whom the directives of Comintern had been conveyed to the CCP, did not envisage the possibility that these directives might have been responsible for any of the party's errors.

Khitarov, a worker in KIM who had spent several months in China, criticized the disasters of 1927 in far sharper terms — so sharp, indeed, that two passages of his speech were excised from the published record. In Shanghai, he explained, a communist government had in fact been set up three weeks before the *coup* of April 12, 1927, but was sabotaged by Kuomintang and by Ch'en Tu-hsiu, who was determined at all costs to avoid a clash with Chiang Kai-shek. This was followed by the fiasco of the Wuhan government, which "a majority of our comrades ... considered ... a prototype of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry". Khitarov went on to describe the massacre of Changsha in May 1927, carried out with the connivance of the CCP, and the total retreat and surrender of the Left Kuomintang. He named no communist other than Ch'en among the guilty men. But the finger pointed unmistakably at the leaders in Moscow on whose instructions the CCP leaders acted.[249] Mif, also recently returned from China,[250] tried to redress the balance

[248] *Pyatnadtsatyi S"ezd VKP (B)*, i (1961), 729–741, ii (1962), 1775, note 410; Lozovsky improved the occasion by alleging that Ch'en Tu-hsiu owned 2000 mu of land (*ibid.* i, 740).

[249] *Ibid.* i, 769–774; the omitted passages were quoted in *Byulleten' Oppozitsii* (Paris), No. 15–16, 1930, p. 13, and in L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., 1932), pp. 269–270, 274.

[250] See p. 831 above.

by rebutting Lominadze's attempt to eliminate the Chinese bourgeoisie. He defended policies of "temporary concessions" to any one imperialist Power in order to split the united imperialist front, and of a coalition with the national bourgeoisie.[251] Nobody at the congress seems to have mentioned the Canton disaster. But a few sentences breathing consolation and optimism were hastily inserted in the resolution on Bukharin's report:

> In spite of the temporary defeat of the Chinese revolution, and, in particular, the suppression of the rising in Canton in favour of Soviets, the Chinese revolution continues, accumulating its forces for a new organized advance along the entire front.... The national Chinese bourgeoisie has exhausted its revolutionary possibilities, and has passed fully into the service of international imperialism. The Kuomintang has become a direct instrument of the generals' and executioners' counter-revolutionary clique. The Chinese revolution can and will develop now exclusively as a revolution of the workers, peasants, and urban poor, under the banner of Soviets and the hegemony of the working class. The Communist Party, which has committed opportunist mistakes, has succeeded in renewing its leadership, and is reorganizing its ranks for a new and victorious struggle for the Chinese revolution under the banner of workers' and peasants' Soviets.[252]

The time was not yet ripe for a considered *post-mortem*. But the first reaction was one of revolutionary defiance.

The approach of the ninth IKKI, which assembled on February 9, 1928, made it imperative to formulate an authoritative verdict. On the eve of the session, what was alternatively referred to as a "conference" or a "Chinese commission of IKKI" met to discuss this thorny question.[253] Roy, having spent the winter of 1927–1928 in Berlin, returned to Moscow for the session. But he had now fallen from grace. Stalin refused to see him, and he was not allowed to participate in the discussions on China.[254] Lominadze had hastened in print to the defence of the Canton rising, main-

[251] *Pyatnadtsatyi S"ezd VKP (B)*, i (1961), 801–811.

[252] *KPSS v Rezolyutsiyakh* (1954), ii, 449.

[253] Records of the speeches were kept, but not published; fragments of what took place can be imperfectly pieced together from quotations of these records by participants in the course of recriminations at the sixth congress of Comintern in July–August 1928.

[254] *M. N. Roy's Mission to China*, ed. R. North and X. Eudin (1963), p. 128; for Roy's movements at this time see pp. 926–927 below.

taining that the cause of the defeat "lay not *in the political, but in the military–technical*, weakness of the working class", that the "objective presuppositions" for the rising had been present, and that it was "the signal and the beginning of a new upsurge of the revolutionary struggle of the Chinese people".[255] A long anonymous article in *Pravda*, said to be based on "original Chinese material", claimed that "the worker–peasant revolution is developing under the banner of *Soviets* and under the lead of the *CCP*".[256] Lominadze and Neumann now appeared in the commission as the main upholders of the turn to the Left executed by the CCP under Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai's leadership. Lominadze reiterated the point of view already expressed by him at the fifteenth party congress that the Chinese revolution "no longer has a bourgeois-democratic character", but "an uninterrupted, permanent character". This meant that the organization of mass action by the proletariat and peasantry was the right policy. Neumann was satisfied to attribute the failure at Canton to "military–technical causes".[257] Doriot, the French delegate, who had been in China in 1927, dissociated himself from the Right, and supported Neumann.[258] These views were sharply combated by Bukharin and by Pepper, at this time a staunch supporter of Bukharin in Comintern. Pepper, who in an article in the party journal on the eve of the session had once more insisted that "the period of the bourgeois-democratic revolution has not yet been completed",[259] was concerned to maintain the pressure against the Left, now identified with the heresies of Trotskyism, and to resist a growing tendency in Comintern to discover Rightist deviations in foreign parties. Lominadze had played into his hands by denying the revolutionary rôle of the Chinese bourgeoisie, and by defending the theory of "uninterrupted" or "permanent" revolution; and Pepper made the most of both points.[260] Bukharin rebutted

[255] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 51 (125), 1927, pp. 13–17; Lominadze compared it favourably with the Vienna rising of July 15, 1927, on the ground that in Canton the communists had taken the initiative.

[256] *Pravda*, February 5, 7, 9, 1928; Mif a little later claimed that the CCP had "succeeded in growing into a mass organization embracing under its influence millions of workers and peasants" (*Bol'shevik*, No. 5, March 15, 1928, p. 73).

[257] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 316, 324.

[258] *Classe contre Classe* (1929), p. 245.

[259] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 6–7 (132–133), 1928, p. 21.

[260] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna*, iv, 315–323. According to Lominadze, Pepper had at first condemned the Canton rising as "pre-

Neumann's assertion that the Canton defeat was due to technical shortcomings, and not to a wrong policy.[261] Bukharin was still the ultimate authority in Comintern; and caution and moderation still tempered the application in practice of much revolutionary rhetoric. What happened in the full session of the ninth IKKI was not reported. But it probably confined itself to approving the resolution on China drafted in the Chinese commission.

The resolution presented to the plenary session jointly by the Soviet and Chinese delegations was primarily concerned to disown the theory of "a rising revolutionary wave" and "a decisively revolutionary situation" in China embodied in the resolution of the central committee of the CCP of November 9, 1927. It once more pronounced that the period of the bourgeois-democratic revolution was not yet over; to speak of it as "already growing into a socialist revolution" was incorrect. The "tendency to skip over the bourgeois-democratic stage of the revolution, coupled with a simultaneous appraisal of the revolution as 'permanent'" was described as "an error similar to that committed by Trotsky in 1905". Blame for the incorrect phrase "permanent revolution" was laid on "the representative of IKKI" (Lominadze was not named). "The first wave" of the revolution was over, and had ended in defeat; and "at the present time there is still no mighty new upsurge of the mass revolutionary movement on a national scale". Revolutionary development in China was uneven: "in a number of provinces the *peasant* movement is developing further", while "the *workers'* movement is passing through a certain stage of depression". Attempts, like that of T'an P'ing-shan to "organize a new so-called 'true communist', 'worker–peasant', but really bourgeois–reformist, party" were roundly condemned. A brave appeal to the party "to prepare for the broad upsurge of a new revolutionary wave" was qualified by a warning that "the greatest danger in the whole present situation consists in the possibility that the *avant-garde* of the workers–peasant movement ...may become detached from the masses, rush far ahead of them, dissipate its forces and allow itself to be destroyed piecemeal". To "play with insurrection" in the absence of a mass rising of workers and peasants was "the surest way to ruin the revolution". But a

mature" and an adventure (*ibid.* iv, 452); this was partly confirmed by a Chinese delegate (*ibid.* i, 560). For Pepper's position see p. 601 above.

[261] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna*, iv, 324.

carefully worded paragraph dealt with military activities such as those promoted by Mao Tse-tung:

> In directing spontaneous peasant partisan operations, the party should have in view that these operations may be made the starting-point of a victorious national rising only on condition that they are linked with a new upsurge of the revolutionary wave in proletarian centres.... It is necessary, in the organization of peasant operations, to which the party must in future pay serious attention, to reckon continually and unceasingly with the different conditions of the struggle in different provinces and different parts of Chinese territory, ... especially in those regions where Soviet rule exists under the direction of communists; in this case, IKKI considers that the chief task of the party in Sovietized peasant regions is to carry out an agrarian revolution and organize Red Army detachments.

The verdict on the Canton rising was reserved for the penultimate paragraph of the resolution, where it was hailed as "an heroic attempt to organize Soviet power in China". Errors of leadership had nevertheless been committed; these included "weakness in the political mobilization of the masses (absence of big political strikes, absence of an elected Soviet in Canton as the organ of the insurrection), for which the immediate leaders politically responsible to Comintern (comrade N. and others) bear a share of blame". The resolution ended by denouncing "the slander spread about by social-democrats and Trotskyites that the Chinese revolution has been liquidated", and calling on all sections of Comintern to rally to its aid.[262] Trotsky later called the resolution "an example of disgusting and irresponsible adventurism".[263] But, in spite of much revolutionary phraseology, it was a summing-up against the ultra-Left, and must have been damaging to Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai as well as to Lominadze. Ch'ü was not removed from his post as secretary of the party. But his rivals, Li Li-san, the hero of the Shanghai affair of May 30, 1925, and Hsiang Chung-

[262] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), pp. 763–767. After the session the party journal published an article by Lominadze, evidently written before the session, defending his point of view; this was immediately followed by an article by Mif, which vehemently attacked Lominadze's "permanent revolution", but maintained that "the Chinese revolution has in its first stage a bourgeois-democratic character, and has a tendency to grow into a socialist revolution" (*Bol'shevik*, No. 3–4, February 29, 1928, pp. 86–107, 108–122).

[263] *Byulleten' Oppozitsii* (Paris), No. 3–4, September 1929, p. 9.

fa, an authentic worker and a trade union leader, appeared with Bukharin and Stalin as co-sponsors of the resolution,[264] and gained in prestige at Ch'ü's expense. Lominadze was debarred from further work in Comintern.[265] The guarded assent given in the resolution to Mao's activities does not seem to have won unanimous approval in Comintern. An article by Mif in *Pravda*, without naming Mao, pointedly referred to the defeat at Changsha and subsequent abortive plans for peasant risings in Hunan.[266] In Moscow the claims of the struggle against imperialism were paramount, and, as a Chinese delegate remarked at the sixth party congress a few months later, "insufficient attention to the anti-imperialist movement is the result of excessive emphasis on the peasant movement".[267]

The auxiliary organizations of Comintern were called on to make their contribution to the diagnosis of the Chinese imbroglio. The session of IKKIM immediately following the ninth IKKI[268] praised the Chinese Communist Youth League for "its frequent and open protests against the opportunism of the leadership of the CCP". On the other hand, some officials of the league, at a session of its central committee in November or December 1927, had fallen into the "deviation" of proclaiming its independence of the CCP, and desiring to make the league non-political and to confine it to cultural work among the young. The leaders of the league in Canton had been "infected by these tendencies"; this was held to account for its weak participation in the Canton rising.[269] The

[264] *Pravda*, February 28, 1928; Hsiang was a former Yangtze boatman, who became president of the Wuhan trade union federation.

[265] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), i, 573. This did not, however, prevent him from speaking more than once at the sixth Comintern congress in July 1928; by this time anyone ready to make overt attacks on Bukharin's views or supporters enjoyed a certain latitude. But Lominadze never regained Stalin's confidence (see Vol. 1, p. 178), and was next heard of as head of the Agitprop of the provincial party committee in Nizhny-Novgorod (A. Lunacharsky, *Sobranie Sochinenii*, ii (1964), 399).

[266] *Pravda*, March 1, 1928; for the Changsha and Hunan episodes see pp. 832–833 above.

[267] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VIgo S"ezda KPK* (1930), ii, 56.

[268] See pp. 264–265 above.

[269] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 36, April 11, 1928, pp. 663–666; according to a brief account in *China Quarterly*, xii (1962), 80, Jen Pi-shih had denounced these tendencies at the session. The critical verdict is

fourth congress of Profintern, also meeting in March 1928, could say little to mitigate the plight of the Chinese trade unions. "The ruling classes in China together with imperialist capital" had aimed at "*the literal annihilation* of the vanguard of the working class". A Chinese delegate oddly complained that the party had "often really compelled the workers by force to strike". But he was principally concerned with the growth of "yellow" unions under the auspices of Chiang's national government; these were not, like "reformist" unions in the west, organized by workers, but by the militarists themselves in order to suppress genuine workers' organizations. Lepse, who had visited China in 1926, criticized those who sought "an eventual fusion of the trade union and party apparatus", which would "narrow the basis of trade union work among the broad masses"; it was undesirable to impose strict conditions on workers willing to join the trade unions. The resolution of the congress deprecated the view that "the posting of comrades to the reactionary unions should be stopped or restricted"; this would mean "an abandonment of work within these unions". But neither this nor the instruction to organize revolutionary unions showed any realistic understanding of the situation.[270]

If the task of explaining the defeat in Canton in terms of Comintern policy and the party line was formidable, it proved scarcely less embarrassing to the dispersed members of the opposition in exile. Trotsky and Preobrazhensky, separated by a thousand miles of Siberia, argued over the diagnosis. Early in February 1928, Trotsky wrote to Preobrazhensky that the Canton rising could not be dismissed simply as "an adventure". It had been a significant stage in the abandonment of the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the transition to the proletarian revolution; its aims and programme were not democratic, but socialist.[271] A month later,

repeated in greater detail in R. Chitarow, *Geschichte der Kommunistischen Jugendinternationale*, iii (1930), 114; Mif in his article in *Pravda* (see p. 119 above), accused the league of "an '*avant-garde*' deviation". For earlier restiveness in the league see pp. 822–823 above.

[270] For the speeches see *Protokoll über den Vierten Kongress der Roten Gewerkschaftsinternationale* (n.d.), pp. 142–145, 511–513; for the resolution see *ibid.* pp. 611–614. For the policy of working in unions of every political complexion see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 529–530, 591–592; for workers "compelled to strike" against their will see p. 859 below.

[271] The letter has not been preserved; its contents can be inferred from Preobrazhensky's reply of March 2, 1928, and Trotsky's letter of March 27, 1928 (see note 272 below). It is dated by Trotsky's remark that it was written

before a reply could reach him, Trotsky, taking his cue from a series of articles in *Pravda* on the lessons of Canton, wrote again that the rising had demonstrated beyond dispute the bankruptcy of the bourgeois-democratic revolution: it had been conducted under the slogan "Down with Kuomintang". On the very same day, March 2, 1928, Preobrazhensky sent a sharp reply to Trotsky's earlier letter. He thought it inappropriate to raise this issue at a time when the Chinese revolution was in retreat. The Canton episode had been "undeniably" an adventure, since "it was not an enterprise arising from a movement of the masses"; and its failure could not constitute a significant advance in the character of the revolution. Trotsky had been misled by a false interpretation of the Russian precedent. It was only after the bourgeois-democratic revolution had been victorious in February 1917 that Lenin had proclaimed the dictatorship of the proletariat; and even then, the bourgeois revolution being still incomplete, he had hesitated to proclaim the immediate transition to socialism. Preobrazhensky's letter took 22 days to reach Trotsky, who replied at length on March 27, 1928, reiterating his views; and two days later, having received another letter from Preobrazhensky, he once more returned to the charge. There could be no question, he concluded, of summoning the CCP to "an immediate insurrection for the conquest of power". But the CCP must be imbued with the conviction that "the third Chinese revolution cannot reach a triumphant conclusion except with the dictatorship of the proletariat under the leadership of the communist party".[272] Trotsky remained unshaken by Preobrazhensky's argument, and devoted a long section of his critique of the draft programme of Comintern, prepared for the sixth congress in July 1928, to the Chinese question. The Soviet leaders, declared Trotsky, "seeking to insure themselves against their past sins, ... monstrously forced the course of events at the end of last year, and brought about the Canton miscarriage". Nevertheless, the Canton insurrection, by emphatically repudiating Kuomintang, by proclaiming a Soviet government and by putting forward

"at the moment when I learned of the famous letter of the two musketeers [Zinoviev and Kamenev]", which appeared in *Pravda*, January 27, 1928 (see Vol. 2, p. 54).

[272] The Trotsky archives contain Preobrazhensky's letter of March 2, 1928 (T 1191), and Trotsky's letters of March 2, 27, 29, 1928 (T 1189); for the *Pravda* article see p. 850 above.

a socialist, no longer a bourgeois-democratic programme, had "raised the curtain on a new stage, or, more correctly, on the coming *third* Chinese revolution".[273]

Meanwhile, nothing occurred to dispel the mood of pessimism now current in the CCP. During the spring of 1928, Ch'en Tu-hsiu, excluded from its inner councils, wrote "several letters" to the central committee, protesting against the policy pursued since August 7, 1927, and especially since the Canton rising; the committee had failed to recognize the magnitude of the defeat and the necessity to "retreat and regroup our ranks", had "over-estimated the revolutionary spirit of the masses", and had lost contact with them. These plaints from a discredited elder statesman of the party were ignored by the leaders.[274] It took two months for the text of the resolution of the ninth IKKI to reach China;[275] and this did little to restore confidence. On May 7, 1928, the Kiangsu provincial party committee passed a resolution openly censuring the policies of the central committee, which, ever since the theses of August 7, 1927, had been based, in spite of a succession of defeats, on the estimate of an "uninterrupted upsurge" of the revolution. The central committee in a circular of January 20, 1928, had failed to "notice defeats and pessimistic moods among the workers", and in a circular of March 6, 1928, had pointed to allegedly favourable prospects of insurrection in Hunan, Hupei and Kiangsi; this optimism "sprang from a subjective appraisal of the position, and did not correspond to the objective situation". The line adopted by the central committee failed to take notice of "the divorce of our party from the masses", neglected the importance of the anti-imperialist movement, and was "marked by a peasant deviation". That this outspoken attack on the party leaders was not wholly unwelcome in Moscow was shown by the publication of the resolution in full in the journal of the Sun Yat-sen university with a carefully guarded editorial note, which endorsed the "just criticism of the errors and shortcomings of the

[273] L. Trotsky, *The Third International after Lenin* (N.Y., 1936), pp. 180–181; for this document see Vol. 2, p. 67, note 3. L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., 1932), pp. 122–151, contains a different English translation of the Chinese section.

[274] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 49–50 (227–228), 1929, pp. 62–63.

[275] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), i, 391.

central leadership of the party", but concluded that "the policy of a rising adopted by the August conference of the party" could not be condemned in the conditions prevailing at that time".[276] Meanwhile the Japanese occupation of Tsinan in May 1928, which had provoked the indignation of IKKI, found the central committee of the CCP divided. Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai and the other leaders were apparently unwilling to protest against an act of aggression directed against the national government.[277] The deepening divisions in the party as well as the conditions of terror and the threat to the lives of known communists in the major cities of China, made it prudent to convene the next party congress in Moscow; this also had the advantage of enabling Comintern to control the choice of delegates.[278] Ch'en Tu-hsiu was one of the Chinese leaders "invited" by Comintern to attend the congress, but declined.[279]

The sixth congress of the CCP met from June 18 to July 11, 1928, in a country house on the outskirts of Moscow. Of 84 voting and 34 non-voting delegates 60 per cent were returned as workers — a proportion unrepresentative of the party membership.[280] Some of them appeared under pseudonyms; others were identified in the records only by the number of their mandate and by the province from which they came. The leader of the IKKI delegation was Bukharin, who delivered the main report at the first two sittings; he was not named in the official Russian record, being referred to simply as "the representative of IKKI".[281] The

[276] *Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, xiv (1928), 3–10; for Trotsky's comments on the resolution, which he treated as an unconscious echo of the views of the opposition, see L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., 1932), pp. 210–225. For the Kiangsu committee see p. 835 above.

[277] Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, ii (1974), 72; for the Tsinan episode and the IKKI protest see pp. 101, 622 above.

[278] According to *Komintern i Vostok* (1966), p. 317, the representative of Comintern in China who made preparations for the congress was an old party worker named Mitkevich; the arrangements for the journey of the Chinese delegates were made by a worker in Comintern named Razumova. One delegate alleged that he and others suspected of opposition views had been turned back by the Soviet authorities at Irkutsk (Li Ang quoted in B. I. Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao* (1951), p. 116).

[279] Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, ii (1974), 65–66.

[280] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 39–40 (165–166), 1928, p. 9; *Problemy Dal'nego Vostoka*, No. 2, 1973, p. 102. For the proportion of workers in the party see p. 872 below.

[281] The record, published in six sections as *Stenograficheskii Otchet VIgo S"ezda KPP* (1930), was stated to have been translated from a Chinese version, compiled from secretaries' notes and not checked by the speakers.

other members of the IKKI delegation did not speak in plenary session, but were active behind the scenes and in the commissions which drafted the resolutions. They included Humbert-Droz, Šmeral and Mif; Mif worked "on the mandate of IKKI" in the agrarian, military and organization commissions.[282]

Bukharin's long and discursive report "On the International Situation and the Tasks of the CCP" was a major event of the congress. It was designed primarily to discourage ultra-Left inclinations in the CCP to return to the adventurous policy of the previous autumn. Firmly holding the line of the ninth IKKI of February 1928, Bukharin asserted once more that "*the Chinese revolution is at present in the stage of a democratic revolution of a bourgeois character*". Equal distribution of property was not socialism; the prerequisite of socialism was "the degree of development of heavy industry". This made it dangerous to apply the Russian experience to China. Bukharin continued:

> The task before the workers, the peasants and our political party which leads the working class, is not to call for a direct seizure of power by the working class, not to destroy capitalism and organize a socialist economy. That is to say, the basis of the revolution is still not socialist, not proletarian.... The task in the struggle is *to eliminate feudal forces, to complete the agrarian revolution and to drive out imperialism.*

Among the workers, attention should be concentrated on "such demands as the eight- or nine-hour day, higher wages etc...." This was the content of the bourgeois-democratic revolution; and it was "not necessary to think how things will be in two years' time".

Bukharin then turned to the past errors of the CCP. It had failed to maintain, within Kuomintang, its independence and right to criticize; Borodin shared the responsibility for this error. It had not been prepared for Chiang's treachery, and had not re-

[282] *Problemy Dal'nego Vostoka*, No. 2, 1973, pp. 101–102; *Voprosy Istorii*, No. 2, 1972, p. 62; J. Humbert-Droz, *De Lénine à Staline* (Neuchatel, 1971), p. 308; Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, ii (1974), 76, which also mentions the agricultural expert, Volin. Mif had succeeded Radek as director of the Sun Yat-sen university in 1927 (see p. 769 above), and in May 1928 was appointed head of the eastern section of the Comintern secretariat (*Voprosy Istorii*, No. 2, 1972, pp. 59–62); *Komintern i Vostok* (1969), p. 324, names Kuusinen as head of the eastern secretariat, and Mif, Kuchumov and Mad'yar as specially concerned with China.

acted to it promptly and decisively. Finally, in the Wuhan period, it had failed to make itself "the nucleus of the revolutionary struggle"; here T'an P'ing-shan was singled out for censure, and Borodin and other representatives of Comintern were said not to have informed the politburo of the CCP of instructions sent from Moscow. The convention that no errors had been committed in Moscow was maintained. In speaking of the struggle against imperialism, Bukharin again urged caution:

> Revolutionary courage does not lie in starting a fight at every opportunity and in every circumstance; revolutionary courage lies in starting a fight only under specific conditions, or only when a specific balance of class forces demands it.

He found evidence in "conversations with comrades" and in a report of Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai (the only mention in Bukharin's speech of one of the present leaders) of "very special means" used by the party "to coerce one's own class into action"; workers were almost being forced to strike against their will. This was described as "an extremely Leftist method". For the party "to drive and force the workers to make a revolution" was utterly bad. In conclusion Bukharin insisted that there was "no all-China revolutionary situation", and issued a warning against over-estimating the success of local peasant risings (he did not specifically mention Mao Tse-tung's efforts in the south-west):

> We must not confuse the existence of Soviets in several districts with the victory of the Chinese revolution. Though there are now several district Soviets, and though the comrades there have done excellent work, the Chinese revolution has suffered defeat; this is a definite fact. The victory of the revolution without victory in the industrial centres is utter nonsense.

No section of the harassed CCP can have derived much encouragement from Bukharin's pronouncements.[283]

[283] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI^so S"ezda KPK* (1930), i, 9–53; an English translation of the Chinese text in *Chinese Studies in History*, iii, No. 4 (1970), pp. 261–324, iv, No. 1 (1970), pp. 4–28, has been used in the above summary. The reference to workers "forced to strike against their will" related to an episode in Shanghai in the autumn of 1927, when, according to Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai, "armed terrorist groups were dispatched to the factories to coerce the workers into staging strikes"; the workers later complained that, after they had lost their jobs by striking, and had been thrown into prison, the party did nothing for them (*ibid.* v, No. 1 (1971), pp. 55–59, 65). A directive of IKKI in 1929

Bukharin was followed by Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai, who, still holding office as secretary of the party central committee, reported on "The Chinese Revolution and the Communist Party". Much of his speech was devoted to an extensive view of party history, which throughout the period of association with Kuomintang had been marked by opportunism. It was the period of Ch'en Tu-hsiu's leadership. Ch'en's irresolution was a constant theme; and a book published in 1927 by his lieutenant P'eng Shu-chih was cited as evidence of the party's "Menshevism". Ch'ü attacked both Borodin and Roy, but refrained from calling in question the authority of Moscow, and nowhere mentioned Lominadze or Neumann. The Wuhan collapse, Borodin's departure and Ch'en's resignation paved the way for the party conference of August 7, 1927, which inaugurated a struggle against opportunism. After the defeat of the Nanchang expedition, the Chinese revolution experienced "an upsurge which launched it on another new stage"; and the session of the party central committee on November 9, 1927, following on the August 7 conference, "contributed to the creation of a Bolshevik party". The Shanghai risings which had provoked Chiang's *coup* of April 12, 1927, were placed side by side with the Canton rising of December 1927 as "two heroic proletarian uprisings". The Shanghai risings had "exposed the roots of the old opportunism", and "produced the germ of the anti-opportunist struggle". The Canton rising "marked the beginning of a new stage in the Chinese revolution — the stage of a Soviet revolution". Since then, "the work of reconstructing the party has begun". But the struggle against opportunism had been "exceptionally difficult", and "the birth of Bolshevism requires hard labour".

The problem of the peasantry proved as embarrassing to Ch'ü as to the other leaders of the CCP. In his historical review he cited Mao Tse-tung's famous Hunan report of 1927 as proof that "the agrarian revolution was being carried out by the masses themselves" in face of the apathy of the party central committee. But he criticized Mao's strategy in the peasant autumn risings of 1927. After the Canton rising, the party central committee "failed to point out to the peasants the road of armed struggle, the way of advance from guerrilla mass struggle to the establishment of

condemned "the bad traditions of 'command'" in CCP work, in the trade unions (see p. 895 below).

revolutionary districts and to the taking of cities"; Ch'ü even discerned the possibility of the development in the "peasant masses" of a "communist militarism". He recognized two "new dangerous tendencies: the petty bourgeois socialism of the peasant, and Blanquism which relies only on the party and has no use for the masses". But he did not refer to the ninth IKKI with its warnings against policies of adventure. His speech contained no overt hint of dissent from Bukharin, except perhaps when he asked whether "the equal distribution of land — egalitarianism — is not a socialist movement". He insisted as strongly as Bukharin on the impossibility of a victory of the peasant movement without the support and leadership of the "industrial centre". But his assertion that "a new upsurge is beginning in China", which "objectively points to a rising curve of revolution", and his constant professions of faith in the victory of socialism and of the proletariat, put him at the opposite end of the spectrum to Bukharin's cautious restraint.[284] This was followed by a brief report by Hsiang Chung-fa on the work of the ninth IKKI, in which he faithfully conformed to Bukharin's guide-lines, denouncing such familiar heresies as permanent revolution and refusal to recognize the bourgeois-democratic character of the Chinese revolution.[285]

The debate on the reports, which occupied several sittings, exhibited a wide divergence of opinion among the delegates. Discussion revolved round the party resolutions of August 7 and November 9, 1927, the autumn harvest risings and the Canton commune. It was easier to condemn errors of the past than to agree on prescriptions for the future. The split was broadly between Right and Left, and reopened the cautious compromise recorded in the resolution of the ninth IKKI four months earlier.[286] Chang Kuo-t'ao, who opened the debate, upheld the bourgeois-democratic character of the revolution and the official line of the ninth IKKI, stressing the importance of the campaign against imperialism and, by implication, of not making a total break with the nationalists. He protested that, since the resolution of August 7, 1927, many members of the party had concluded that the

[284] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI^so S"ezda KPK* (1930), 53–100, where he appears under the pseudonym Strakhov; an English translation of the "second part" of the speech is in *Chinese Studies in History*, v (1971), No. 1, pp. 3–72.

[285] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI^so S"ezda KPK* (1930), i, 89–93; the pagination, as elsewhere in these volumes, is erratic.

[286] See pp. 851–852 above.

Chinese revolution had entered on a new stage. A peasant deviation had arisen in the party, consisting of a belief that "the peasantry should lead the revolution". Chang attacked Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai for his support of adventurist policies, and pointed to a discrepancy between his report as delivered and the text previously circulated to the delegates; after listening to Bukharin, Ch'ü had toned down the mention of a current "upsurge" in the Chinese revolutionary movement. Ts'ai Ho-shen, who followed Chang, also denounced the "peasant deviation" as leading to the view that "the Chinese revolution is already on the upsurge, and an immediately revolutionary situation exists". Hsiang Ying repeated that "insufficient attention to the anti-imperialist movement is the result of excessive emphasis on the peasant movement" and complained that the party "sees only the peasantry, and almost always forgets the working class".[287] Condemnation of the errors of the Wuhan period was general. The absent Ch'en Tu-hsiu found only one defender, a delegate using the name Nemtsov, who apparently wished for the present to suspend revolutionary activity, and postpone the socialist revolution to a more propitious future.[288] But, short of this extreme, many delegates were willing to endorse the cautious line laid down in Bukharin's report.[289]

Criticism came, however, not only from those who thought the party leadership unduly prone to adventure, but from those who found it too conservative. Discussions on the eve of the congress revealed "the existence in the party of a very deep-rooted Left tendency".[290] While few delegates were eager directly to contest the view that the Chinese revolution was still in its bourgeois-democratic stage, many clung to the belief that the conference of August 7, 1927, had marked an important point in the transition to socialism. A delegate from Szechwan observed that, "since the

[287] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI^go S"ezda KPK* (1930), ii, 1–13, 13–23, 47–59; the discrepancy between "oral (stenographic) and written variants" of the reports is noted in *Problemy Dal'nego Vostoka*, No. 2, 1973, p. 99.

[288] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI^go S"ezda KPK* (1930), iii, 13.

[289] Ch'en later alleged that one delegate had sought to expose the danger of "putschism", but "under pressure from the central committee dared not express his point of view", and that the resolutions were "not sufficiently discussed" (*Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 49–50 (227–228), 1929, pp. 63, 74); this is not borne out by the record, but may relate to something that happened in the commission.

[290] *Komintern i Vostok* (1969), p. 320.

bourgeoisie no longer plays a part in the revolution, the Chinese revolution must become a socialist revolution";[291] and one delegate insisted so strongly on the early prospect of the revolution in China "growing into" a socialist revolution that he later incurred the charge of "leaping over an essential stage of the struggle" — the familiar characterization of Trotsky's permanent revolution.[292] But the ambiguous achievements of Mao Tse-tung were a source of embarrassment to the Left. The motley army led by Mao and Chu Teh under the banner of peasant Soviets had held together, and could claim to be the sole revolutionary force operating in China. Its achievements earned admiration, and made the peasant the hero of the revolution. But nobody at the congress undertook the ungrateful task of reconciling Mao's peasant socialism with party doctrine. A sustained attack was delivered by a delegate from Hunan:

> In Hunan province there exists a deviation, a special theory, of comrade Mao Tse-tung.... He has a whole system of ideas.... He said that we are now entering on a direct worker–peasant, i.e. socialist, revolution.... I must say that Mao's opinion that the revolution has already become a socialist revolution has obtained extensive currency among the broad masses.[293]

Mif, in a retrospective article on the congress, criticized those comrades who "started from petty bourgeois illusions, understanding by socialism a general and radical distribution and partition of the land", and thus "arrived ... at a definition of the present stage of the Chinese revolution as a socialist revolution".[294] Mao probably enjoyed more widespread sympathy at the congress than was openly expressed.

Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai and Bukharin both replied to the debate. Ch'ü

[291] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI^go S"ezda KPK* (1930), ii, 62.

[292] *Ibid.* ii, 88–89. The "charge" is recorded in *Problemy Dal'nego Vostoka*, No. 2, 1973, pp. 102–103, where the unnamed delegate is erroneously identified with Li Li-san; he appears to have come from Kiangsu.

[293] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI^go S"ezda KPK* (1930), ii, 80–81; a commentator in *Komintern i Vostok* (1966), p. 320, quoting this passage, added that the word "Maotsetungism" was coined at the congress as "a synonym for military adventurism in connexion with the fact that Mao, having carried out the autumn harvest rising in Hunan as a purely military action, launched the slogan 'Act with bayonets' " (*ibid.* p. 321, note 21).

[294] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 39–40 (217–218), 1929, p. 22.

also accused Mao of describing the Chinese revolution as socialist. He then returned to the less troublesome ground of a critique of Ch'en Tu-hsiu, whom he labelled "the Chinese Plekhanov".[295] Bukharin wound up the debate in another long speech. He insisted more strongly than before on the importance of the struggle against imperialism, and in particular against Japanese aggression, which had been neglected by most of the delegates. More sharply than before, he rounded on those party workers who, while professing to accept the decisions of the ninth IKKI, continued to make plans for immediate risings, and expressed impatience with their failure to recognize the absence of a revolutionary situation. It was an unmistakable warning against the policies pursued under Ch'ü's leadership in the autumn of 1927.[296] The conclusion evidently left many delegates uneasy. Two or three days later, when the congress had passed on to other topics, the proceedings were interrupted by the proposal of a delegate from Chihli to send a telegram to the party central committee in Shanghai announcing the change in party tactics. The proposal was unwelcome both to those who, like Ch'ü and his supporters, were unwilling to admit that previous policies had been modified by direction from Moscow, and to those who were unwilling in principle to admit any change of substance in the Comintern line. A long and heated discussion took place, as the result of which a decision was taken by a majority vote — the only vote recorded in the proceedings of the congress — to send the telegram.[297] If it was in fact sent, the text was never published.

Of the other reports the most controversial was that of Li Li-san on the agrarian and peasant questions. The agrarian programme drafted in the radical mood of November 1927[298] insisted both on the uniqueness of Chinese economic development ("the Asiatic mode of production"), and on the confiscation and nationalization of the land as the road to a "directly revolutionary situation". Neither of these views now found acceptance in Comintern; the second had already been an embarrassing item in the main debate on Bukharin's and Ch'ü's reports. Li's report steered carefully between these shoals. Having curtly dismissed the Asiatic mode of

[295] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI^go S"ezda KPK* (1930), iii, 70, 76–77.
[296] *Ibid.* iii, 93–132.
[297] *Ibid.* iv, 54–62.
[298] See pp. 836–837 above.

production, Li explained that three-quarters of the Chinese peasantry owned no land, but leased land from landlords. On the other hand, there were few large landowners, and land was not held in feudal tenure, but changed hands through buying and selling. The mode of ownership of land was bourgeois, but exploitation of the peasant remained semi-feudal. Moreover, "the imperialists support and make use of the survivals of feudalism to exploit the Chinese peasantry through them". Li was thus able to affirm the dual character of the revolution: "the Chinese peasants struggle not only against feudal forces, but against the bourgeoisie and against capitalist exploitation". He put in the now obligatory *caveat* against peasant radicalism. Equal distribution of land was not a socialist measure; and "such comrades as Mao Tse-tung perhaps even now think that we have socialism because this slogan has already been advanced". This was "petty-bourgeois socialism" fostered by the growth of "a lumpenproletariat in the countryside". Li's amended agrarian programme proposed the confiscation of large landowners' land (not of all land, like the draft programme of November 1927), and its distribution to the peasants through the agency of peasant Soviets. The definition of a large landowner and the principles of distribution to the peasantry were left discreetly vague.[299]

The ensuing debate revealed widespread preoccupation with the attitude to be adopted to the "rich" or "well-to-do" peasant. In the general debate on Bukharin's report a delegate from Kiangsu had maintained that the rich peasants were revolutionary, and should be wooed by the party since they too were oppressed by the government.[300] The Kiangsu organization was notoriously on the Right wing of the party.[301] But other delegates voiced similar views in the debate on Li's agrarian report. One logically argued that, so long as the revolution was bourgeois, the rich peasant could be "neutralized"; another more boldly called for a united front with the rich peasant "in the common struggle against militarists and bureaucrats". Even Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai, though he described the rich peasant as a capitalist and rural *entrepreneur*, exploiting the labour of hired workers, advocated a policy of "neutralizing" the rich peasant by concessions calculated

[299] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI^so S"ezda KPK* (1930), iv, 38–53, 62–69.
[300] *Ibid.* ii, 114.
[301] See pp. 834–835 above.

to secure his support "against large landowners and militarists". Eventually he would "betray the revolution"; but "we have not yet reached that point".[302] Li Li-san in his reply to the debate showed himself anxious not to stray from the narrow path of orthodoxy. In China, he repeated, "purely capitalist relations do not exist in the countryside"; relations "are closely bound up with feudal and semi-feudal relations". The party was at present engaged "only in opening up the way for the development of capitalism, not socialism". He enumerated four main prerequisites of socialism: power in the hands of the workers; industrialization of the cities; industrialization of agriculture "with the aid of the cities"; and the organization of the rural proletariat. On the problem of the *kulak* Li admitted that in north China "a certain revolutionary-minded well-to-do section of the peasantry" existed and ought to be drawn into the revolutionary struggle; in south China, a struggle must be waged against all *kulaks*.[303]

The agrarian debate brought to light a technical difficulty which, in greater or less degree, dogged all the proceedings of the congress. Li Li-san in his report put it in frank terms:

> The draft of the resolution was written by foreign comrades in a foreign language, and contains very complex things. The translation was not very good, and may therefore be difficult for comrades to understand. Since the agrarian question is very complex, and since there are very many political and economic terms to which some comrades are entirely unaccustomed, especially in translation, I consider it my duty to warn you of this.[304]

Another delegate said that "the slogan of Soviets is still not entirely understandable for the masses", and that "the word Soviet is incomprehensible to our peasants".[305] But the problem was not confined to illiterate peasants. The Chinese communist leaders had been reared in a different tradition. Not all of them were thoroughly versed in the Marxist idiom, and few of them spoke Russian. At congresses and committees attended by Comintern advisers, the Chinese delegates were constantly bewildered by the

[302] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI^so S"ezda KPK* (1930), iv, 163, 177–178, 181–182.
[303] *Ibid.* iv, 116–122.
[304] *Ibid.* iv, 38.
[305] *Ibid.* iv, 93–95.

sophisticated and sometimes ambiguous terminology of their mentors, and assented to documents whose content was imperfectly understood.[306]

Chou En-lai, appearing in the record as "Moskvin" or "comrade M.", was responsible for two reports, on organization and on military affairs.[307] The latter contained some sharply derogatory remarks about Mao. Mao, observed Chou, had had a sizable armed force at the time of the autumn harvest risings; but he was continually "flying from place to place", and his forces had "a bandit character". Now he was moving along the Hunan–Kiangsi border with an estimated force of not more than a thousand.[308] Chou's report on military affairs was followed by a report by Hsiang Chung-fa, with a co-report by a "representative of the communist fraction in Profintern" (probably Lozovsky), on the trade union movement.[309] The reports on trade union and military affairs were then debated together. The congress had sat continuously for more than a fortnight; and the sixth congress of Comintern was now in prospect. It was time to conclude the proceedings. Resolutions were drafted in commissions, whose proceedings were as usual not reported, with the active participation of the delegates of IKKI.[310] They were then adopted in plenary session, apparently without discussion or dissent.[311]

The main political resolution faithfully embodied the essential character of Bukharin's report as a warning against the radical and ultra-Left tendencies which had manifested themselves in the CCP under Ch'ü ch'iu-pai's leadership, though its slightly milder language and occasional revolutionary gestures probably reflected

[306] At the sixth congress of Comintern a month later Chang Kuo-t'ao complained that "our participation in the debates ... is rendered difficult by ignorance of foreign languages" (*Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), i, 449).

[307] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VIso S"ezda KPK* (1930), iv, 1–23, v, 1–80.

[308] *Ibid.* v, 12–13.

[309] *Ibid.* v, 37–67.

[310] A later account described the important political and agrarian resolutions as having been adopted "on the recommendation of Comintern" (*Voprosy Istorii*, No. 8, 1971, p. 50).

[311] The resolutions were published in Chinese in 1928 by the Sun Yat-sen University of Toilers of China (C. Brandt, B. I. Schwartz and J. K. Fairbank, *A Documentary History of Chinese Communism* (1952), p. 457, where a list of them is given), and in Russian in *Stenograficheskii Otchet VIso S"ezda KPK* (1930), vi (this volume is not continuously paginated); other sources for them are indicated in footnotes below.

some resistance still encountered in the party ranks. The resolution began by accepting the analysis of the Chinese revolution set forth in the resolutions of the seventh, eighth and ninth plenums of IKKI. The revolution, it was asserted yet again, was in its bourgeois-democratic stage, a fundamental task of which was to drive the imperialists from China. But another "fundamental task" was "the struggle for power of Soviets of workers', peasants' and soldiers' deputies as the best form for drawing the broad toiling masses into participation in the administration of the state, as the best form in which to realize the democratic dictatorship of the working class and the peasantry". Past opportunist errors were said to have been eradicated by the conference of August 1927, which was "a turning-point in the history of the party". Nevertheless, the party central committee at its session of November 1927 committed fresh errors, which "encouraged putschist tendencies existing at that time"; and "subsequent events demonstrated the great harmfulness of this ultra-Left tendency". The Canton rising was summarily dismissed as "objectively a rear-guard action in a process of defeat for the revolution". The emphasis should have been shifted "from the conduct of armed risings on a large scale to day-to-day work to improve the organization and mobilization of the masses around the party", and to "overcome putschist inclinations". The "then party leadership" had not been equal to this task. The resolution then turned uneasily to what was going on in south-western China. "The unequal tempo of development of the revolutionary movement" meant that side by side with a "deep depression of the workers' movement in the cities", an uneven and dispersed "partisan movement of the peasantry" was still progressing. This might be one of the symptoms of a "new revolutionary upsurge":

> Important elements in this new upsurge may be the centres of Soviet power still holding their own in the southern provinces of China, and the small units of a worker–peasant army based on them. The congress issues a warning, however, against an over-estimate of these phenomena.

The reason for the warning was clear. It was necessary "to struggle decisively ... against the tendency which shows itself in the peasant armies to eliminate the cities, to depreciate the leading rôle of the urban proletariat". The party should campaign actively

to recruit more workers, and pay "special attention to the trade union movement of industrial workers, which strengthens the leading rôle of the proletariat in the peasant movement". In its concluding paragraph the resolution repeated the "total and complete" adhesion of the party to the decisions of the ninth IKKI.[312]

The political resolution laid a firm restraining hand on the CCP, and defined the limits within which it should work. The resolution on the agrarian question, the most extensive treatment of the subject yet enshrined in any party document, followed the same formula, but evidently encountered some stiff opposition. It began by calling agrarian revolution "the fundamental content of the current period of the Chinese revolution", and by proclaiming that "the current stage of the Chinese revolution develops in conditions of a deepening and sharpening of class contradictions and class struggle in the countryside". But, while these bold pronouncements were supported by much detailed description, the main point of the resolution was its insistence, constantly reiterated, that the struggle was "against all feudal practices and all forms of mediaeval tyranny in agriculture", or, more cautiously, that "the bourgeois form of cultivation is combined in China with semi-feudal forms of exploitation". This meant a reversal of the analysis by which the party central committee in its resolution of November 1927 had attempted to justify a transition to the socialist revolution:

> The social-democratic way of life of the contemporary countryside is shot through and through with survivals of feudal relations of the past. Various peculiarities of the historical development of Chinese feudalism, and differences in the past from the feudalism of western European countries ... in no way change the fundamental fact that the above-mentioned characteristics of agrarian relations can and should be described only as semi-feudal relations.

An italicized passage reminded the party of another over-riding preoccupation of Comintern:

> *The Chinese peasantry cannot be freed from the tyranny of landlords and usurers, from the oppression of the bureau-*

[312] *Programmnye Dokumenty Kommunisticheskikh Partii Vostoka* (1934), pp. 14–33; for an English translation from the Chinese text see C. Brandt, B. I. Schwartz and J. K. Fairbank, *A Documentary History of Chinese Communism* (1952), pp. 127–155.

cratic feudal system and of its chief representatives in the countryside, ... without destroying the oppression of imperialism; and at the same time the Chinese peasantry cannot overthrow imperialism without abolishing the tyranny of landlords and usurers in the countryside.

These elaborate provisos led up to some cautious concluding prescriptions of policy. "Overthrow of the power of landlords, gentry and officials, disarmament of the armed forces of counter-revolution for the purpose of arming the peasantry, and the establishment of the power of Soviets of peasants' deputies in the countryside", struck a revolutionary note. But only the estates of large landowners, and ancestral, temple, and monastery lands were marked out for immediate confiscation; and the transitional measures were weak and anodyne. After, but only after, the consolidation of Soviet power, "the communist party will support the desire of the revolutionary peasantry for the abolition of private property in land and the transfer of all land into the common possession of the whole people".[313] This was agrarian revolution in the ambiguous and emasculated form in which it had been proclaimed by Comintern ever since the seventh IKKI in November 1926.[314]

The resolution of the congress on the peasantry, which was said to be related to the agrarian resolution as tactics to strategy,[315] exhibited the same ambiguities. It noted that "armed peasant risings and partisan operations" had occurred over an extended area, but had revealed "the local and unbalanced character of the peasant movement". As the movement progressed, "the *kulaks* often took up a passive, *neutral* or *hostile position*, and often passed over into the camp of counter-revolution". But "where the *kulak*, in consequence of oppression by militarists and bureaucrats, *has not yet exhausted his revolutionary potentialities* and continues the struggle, *the CCP should strive to draw the* kulak *into a common peasant front against militarists, landlords, bullies*

[313] *Programmnye Dokumenty Kommunisticheskikh Partii Vostoka* (1934), pp. 34–51; an English translation from the Chinese text is in *Chinese Studies in History*, iv, No. 2–3 (1971), pp. 76–101. A commentary on the resolution in *Komintern i Vostok* (1966), p. 321, noted the importance of the mention of semi-feudal relations "in the light of the well-known over-estimate of the development of capitalism in Chinese agriculture".

[314] See 725–734 apove.

[315] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 43 (169), 1928, p. 45.

and bad gentry". Nevertheless, "the struggle for the interests of *batraks* and poor peasants must be continued, and concessions to the *kulaks* for the sake of preserving a united front were inadmissible". Alliance with the middle peasants was declared to be "the main condition guaranteeing the success of the agrarian revolution". In regions where poor peasants predominate, the slogan of equal distribution of land should be "supported". But at the same time the party should criticize "illusory, petty-bourgeois notions that the application of the slogan of equal distribution means the realization of socialism". In regions where middle peasants, whose interests would be damaged by equal distribution, predominate, "*no forced distribution can be carried out*". Special attention should be paid to "the proletarian and semi-proletarian classes" in the countryside. The formation of mass peasant unions should be encouraged; these, "after the victory of the rising" would become "the backbone of the rural government of Soviets of peasants' deputies". Where the class struggle was rife, "daily petty clashes are inevitably transformed into armed conflict", the goal of which would be "*the creation of a Red Army*". On the other hand, "tendencies leading to the destruction of towns, senseless mass murders, arson etc." should be curbed. The resolution of the ninth IKKI of February 1928, insisting that "spontaneous partisan activities" must be "linked with a new upsurge of the revolutionary wave in the proletarian centres", was recalled. What was essential was "*a close link* with the workers' movement, and a strengthening of the ideological and organizational leadership of the peasant movement by the working class and by the CCP".[316] The resolution rested on two beliefs which proved difficult to justify. The first was the assumption that, by an ingenious combination of irreconcilable formulas, the support of the poor peasant could be won without alienating the well-to-do peasant, the second the assumption that the CCP was in close touch with what went on in the Chinese countryside, and could exercise effective control over it. A resolution on the formation of Soviets and the future seizure of power was a utopian exercise, but noted that Soviets were to include "representatives of the lower petty

[316] The Russian text is reprinted in *Problemy Dal'nego Vostoka*, No. 2, 1973, pp. 150–157; for an English translation of the Chinese text see C. Brandt, B. I. Schwartz, J. K. Fairbank, *A Documentary History of Chinese Communism* (1952), pp. 156–165.

bourgeoisie", while guaranteeing the leading rôle of the workers. The full name "Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies" might be abbreviated in rural areas to "Soviets of Peasants' Deputies" — a concession to current practice.[317]

Other resolutions of the congress were designed to counteract excessive preoccupation with the peasantry. The resolution on the trade unions frankly lamented that "the workers' movement is at a lower level than the peasants' movement", and described this as "a great and special danger in the Chinese revolution at the present stage". In the industrial and mining areas in the north, and on the railways, "no long-term planned trade union work has ever been developed". The resolution admitted that the revolutionary unions were the creation of the party, were not democratically organized, and failed to appeal to the masses of workers. Strikes should be organized for attainable goals that could be readily understood by the workers; they should not be imposed "from above". It was dangerous to put forward demands, or proclaim strikes, in the name of the revolutionary and now illegal All-China Labour Union; this only frightened away "backward workers", and provoked repression. The reformist unions in Canton and Shanghai held the masses. Party members must work in them, expose their reactionary leaders and win the masses. The slogan of a united front was, however, "at present ... inappropriate". At the same time the revolutionary unions must seek to recruit workers in the major industries; and they must also establish close connexions with the peasants, and foster the growth of trade unions in rural districts. The resolution tempered anxiety to conform to the current prescriptions of Comintern with a dose of realism, but was unlikely to have much practical effect.[318] A draft resolution on party organization was remarkable chiefly for its frank recognition of existing defects. Peasant members were seven times as numerous as worker members, and constituted 76 per cent of the membership. The party was "not a party of the proletarian masses", and had "no plan for winning over the masses, especially in the important industrial areas". Progress in replacing the "intellectual elements" which filled the leadership with "worker and peasant elements" was very slow, and the leader-

[317] *Programmnye Dokumenty Kommunisticheskikh Partii Vostoka* (1934), pp. 51–68; *Chinese Studies in History*, iv, No. 2–3 (1971), pp. 102–126.

[318] *Ibid.* iv, No. 1 (1970), pp. 50–70.

ship lacked "theoretical training". The party tended to swing between "tail-endism" and adventurism. Exhortations to work in the trade unions, in peasant associations, in the imperialist armies, as well as in "reactionary semi-feudal armed groups", offered little that was new.[319]

Military affairs, including the formation of a Red Army, had been touched on in the resolutions on the Soviets and on party organization. But a separate resolution relating to them was drafted, though apparently not formally adopted, at the congress. The call of the ninth IKKI of February 1928 "to prepare for the broad upsurge of a new revolutionary wave", quoted out of context, served as a starting-point. Lack of military preparedness had been responsible for the disasters of the past. Agitation, including the formation of party cells, must be carried in the armies of the warlords and of the foreign imperialists who sent their troops to China. Workers and peasants must receive military training. "The peasants are a main force of the Chinese revolution under proletarian leadership"; but "a peasant revolt separated from the revolutionary movement of the workers is doomed to failure". Where workers' and peasants' movements had succeeded in establishing Soviets, partisan forces should be converted into a regular Red Army, equipped, like the Red Army of the Soviet Union, with political commissars and political departments. Finally, all military activities should be supervised by a central military department of the CCP.[320] Resolutions on propaganda, on the Communist Youth League and on work among women followed well-worn lines.[321] Another resolution provided for the annual celebration on December 11 of the anniversary of the Canton rising.[322] The vexed question of the programme was shelved by a formal resolution instructing the central committee

[319] *Ibid.* iv, No. 1 (1970), pp. 29–50; this resolution was apparently adopted by the congress in draft form with instructions to the central committee to prepare a final text.

[320] *Ibid.* iv, No. 4 (1971), pp. 204–212; this resolution was not included in the Chinese collection of resolutions of the congress issued in 1928 by the Sun Yat-sen university in Moscow (C. Brandt, B. I. Schwartz and J. K. Fairbank, *A Documentary History of Chinese Communism* (1952), p. 497). For the resolution of the ninth IKKI see pp. 851–852 above.

[321] *Chinese Studies in History*, iv, No. 4 (1971), pp. 213–240; the congress was immediately followed by the fifth congress of the youth league which obediently endorsed the decisions of the party congress (*China Quarterly*, xii (1962), 80).

[322] *Chinese Studies in History*, iv, No. 4 (1971), pp. 242–243.

to draw up a draft programme and submit it to local party organs for discussion in preparation for the next congress.[323]

It was significant of the spirit of compromise prevailing at the congress that most of the leading party members appear to have been re-elected to the party central committee. Mao Tse-tung was elected in his absence, thus regaining the place which he had forfeited at the fifth congress a year earlier.[324] His activities in a remote corner of China had received grudging endorsement at the congress. At a time when the CCP had little to boast of, they could be hailed as successes; the difficulty of fitting them into an orthodox pattern of Marxist theory or party practice was met by an ineffective proviso that they should be conducted under party or workers' leadership. But they were, literally and figuratively, a peripheral problem. More important was the choice of the inner ring of the party leadership. The initial session of the newly elected central committee which appointed the party politburo was attended by Bukharin and Mif, whose proposals met with no opposition. Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai's term of leadership had been brief and inglorious. He was deposed from the office of secretary-general, and succeeded by Hsiang Chung-fa. The appointment to this post of a reliable worker, more likely than an intellectual to be amenable to directives from the central authority, followed the precedents of the selection of Thälmann, Thorez and Pollitt to head the German, French and British parties. But Ch'ü evidently retained much support and prestige in the party, and was not disgraced. The new politburo was to consist, apart from Hsiang Chung-fa, of three faithful supporters of the cautious line of the ninth IKKI, Chang Kuo-t'ao, Ts'ai Ho-shen and Hsiang Ying, and three who were associated with more radical policies, Li Li-san, Chou En-lai and Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai.[325] Li Li-san was placed in charge of party organization, Chou En-lai of military affairs, Ts'ai Ho-chen of propaganda, and Hsiang Ying of labour affairs; P'eng Pai became head of the peasant department. Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai was appointed representative of the CCP in Comintern; and

[323] *Ibid.* iv, No. 4 (1971), p. 243; *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 39–40 (165–166), 1928, p. 10.

[324] Ho Chiao-mu, *Tridtsat' Let Kommunisticheskoi Partii Kitaya* (Russian trs. from Chinese, 1952), pp. 33–35; Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, ii (1974), 81–82.

[325] Hsiao Tso-liang, *Power Relations within the Chinese Communist Movement* (1961), p. 61.

Chang Kuo-t'ao was apparently also instructed to remain in Moscow.[326] The over-riding preoccupation in Moscow was to keep the CCP intact and united as a faithful instrument in the struggle against imperialism; and the device of holding the balance between representatives of different groups and opinions in foreign parties in the hope of reconciling them, and perhaps also in the secret belief that a divided leadership would be easier to control, was familiar in Comintern at this time.[327]

The sixth congress of the CCP had, not without some friction between the leaders and some restiveness in the ranks of the party, endorsed the policies of restraint which Comintern had followed in China since 1923, and condemned, by implication, if not directly, the rash excursions into revolutionary adventure which had marked the latter part of 1927. It was a view particularly associated with the period of Bukharin's supremacy in Comintern; it had no doubt been strongly pressed on the congress by Bukharin and by his lieutenant, Humbert-Droz. But in the brief interval which elapsed before the opening of the sixth congress of Comintern on July 17, 1928, much happened in Moscow. An open rift occurred between Stalin and the group in the Politburo consisting of Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsky — an opposition no longer from the Left but from the Right.[328] Though the dispute turned initially on internal policies, Stalin quickly manifested an intention to undermine Bukharin's hitherto uncontested mastery of Comintern. Bukharin presided at the congress without open challenge to his authority. But he entered it with already diminished prestige, of which delegates were made increasingly aware as the congress proceeded.[329] The uncertainty of Bukharin's standing gradually infected every major issue debated by the congress. The Chinese question was no exception.

The sixth congress, which lasted from July 17 to September 1, 1928, and at which the CCP had 29 delegates, 20 with voting rights,[330] held no separate debate on the Chinese revolution. But

[326] Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, ii (1974), 82.

[327] For its application under Bukharin's direction in the Polish party see pp. 573–575 above.

[328] See Vol. 1, pp. 76–82, and, for a conversation between Bukharin and Humbert-Droz, Vol. 2, pp. 68–69. [329] See Vol. 2, p. 69.

[330] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), v, 105.

the theme figured in Bukharin's opening report and in Kuusinen's report on the national and colonial question, and in the debates and resolutions on both these reports. Bukharin in his report firmly dismissed the idea that the failures of the CCP had been "linked with false tactics pursued by Comintern", and detailed the three major mistakes. The leadership of the CCP had not insisted on "the independence of our party"; it had failed to take into account "the change in the objective situation" due to the defection of the national bourgeoisie (here "the Chinese central committee, and in part our representative, committed a grave error"); and it had put a brake on "the mass movement", on "the agrarian revolution", and on "the workers' movement". Thereafter, however, "some comrades went to the opposite extreme: they too light-heartedly prepared risings, and displayed plainly putschist tendencies, adventurism of the worst kind". Bukharin was unwilling to affix "Right" and "Left" labels to these deviations.[331]

Surprisingly and significantly, it was Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai, deposed at the sixth congress of the CCP from the secretaryship of the party for ultra-Left leanings, who appeared, under the pseudonym Strakhov, as the main spokesman of the CCP in the debate. Bukharin, in the general section of his report, had distinguished the "second stage" in the history of Comintern — the period of temporary capitalist stabilization — from the "third stage", now beginning, when the increasing contradictions of capitalism prepared the way for a fresh revolutionary advance, and the dangerous deviations in communist parties came not from the Left, but from the Right;[332] to this last generalization, however, he admitted an exception for the CCP where the danger of an ultra-Left deviation still existed. Ch'ü, having followed the convention of professing complete agreement with Bukharin, proceeded to challenge him on these points. The third period, in his view, "differs very little from the second". While "the third period

[331] *Ibid.* i, 46–47; in his report to the Moscow party organization after the congress Bukharin expatiated more fully on the "Left" deviation: "The danger was that, when the revolutionary wave was already ebbing, when important cadres of our party had been physically exterminated, when a new revolutionary wave had not yet begun, risings in some places were organized, so to speak, off the cuff, which were from the outset doomed to fail. This led to the further extermination of the reserve of our best communists" (*Pravda*, September 12, 1928).

[332] See pp. 197, 202–203 above.

should remain in our theses", some clearer explanation was required of why the threat of war against the USSR had suddenly become imminent. He did not directly attack the claim that Comintern had no responsibility for the errors of the CCP, but found a subtler formula of protest:

> It is not important to us to establish the share of other people in our mistakes, it is not important to us that we should be charged with fewer mistakes than we really committed; what is important is to know and ascertain in what our mistakes consist.

Ch'ü admitted the errors of the Wuhan period and passed over the rest in silence. He admitted the danger of "putschism", but thought that the deviation currently most in evidence was "*a recrudescence of opportunism*"; *some* comrades had wished to appeal once more to Kuomintang, and put forward the slogan of a "national assembly".[333] Bukharin was nettled by Ch'ü's failure to detect any great difference between the second and third periods, and in replying to the debate tartly accused him of pretending that the third period did not exist. Ch'ü put in a written rejoinder that the third period did exist, but that the differences between it and the second had not been sufficiently explained to make them intelligible to many.[334] Chang Kuo-t'ao mildly and obscurely reproached Ch'ü with not having "clearly explained" the demand for "a restoration of the mass movement", which had also been made by Kuomintang. But he was careful not to involve himself in the muted clash between Bukharin and Ch'ü.[335] The irrepressible Lominadze intervened in the debate to retract the error which he had committed in the Chinese commission before the ninth IKKI, when he had described the Canton rising not as a "rear-guard action", but as "the beginning of a new revolutionary upsurge". He also denounced an article in the Comintern journal by one Reiberg, who had written that "*the Canton rising was defeated, and was bound to be defeated, because the social basis of*

[333] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), i, 390–396. Ch'en Tu-hsiu had apparently called for a "national assembly" (Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, ii (1947), 126); after the congress Trotsky defended "the slogan of the national (or constituent) assembly" as appropriate to the democratic stage of the revolution (L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., 1932), pp. 183–184; the memorandum is in the Trotsky archives, T 3142).

[334] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929) i, 591, 617.

[335] *Ibid.* i, 449–454.

the rising was not sufficiently broad, because conditions for a victorious rising in Canton and in Kwangtung province were not sufficiently ripe"; this, said Lominadze, was identical with the view of Pepper.[336]

It was not till August 14, 1928, when the congress was four weeks old, that Kuusinen delivered his report on the national and colonial question.[337] Bukharin, engaged on the drafting of the programme, was absent, and covert sniping at his position had grown in volume. Even more remarkable than Ch'ü's prominent rôle in the debate on Bukharin's report was the invitation extended to him to appear as co-*rapporteur* in the colonial debate.[338] In this capacity he provided in his report the most thorough analysis of the Chinese revolution ever heard from a Comintern platform. Without openly transgressing the bounds of orthodoxy, he contrived to give a radical twist to the argument. The central problem, he observed, was not whether to enter into an agreement with the national bourgeoisie, but to ensure that "*the struggle should be directed against imperialism, but should at the same time paralyse the national reformism of the bourgeoisie*". The national bourgeoisie could not be treated as the only ally of the proletariat; "the chief attention of the proletariat should be turned to the peasantry as its ally". After the Wuhan fiasco the party had "frankly recognized its opportunist errors, and begun an energetic struggle against the remnants of opportunism". The importance of the Canton rising was that "it had a social base and a mass character"; it failed owing to inadequate political and organizational preparation. Ch'ü ended by denouncing all attempts to found a "third party", or to compromise with alleged Left elements in Kuomintang. The vital question was: "What is your relation to the peasantry, which struggles for the land, which struggles against survivals of feudalism, against the militarists, against the militarist armies?"[339]

Chinese affairs were discussed intermittently in the far-ranging debate. A Chinese delegate using the name Vorovsky, evidently a supporter of Ch'ü, cautiously defended the Canton rising, the

[336] *Ibid.* i, 467–472; for Reiberg's article see *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 25–26 (151–152), 1928, pp. 68–79.

[337] Its only significant reference to the CCP was to remark on the "abnormality" of its predominantly peasant membership (see p. 872 above).

[338] For the four co-*rapporteurs* see p. 213 above.

[339] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 79–105.

failure of which he attributed to "lack of firm leadership", political "and especially military". He dismissed the view that the "opportunist errors" detected in the party in the past no longer existed. Without mentioning Ch'en Tu-hsiu by name, he denounced "comrades in Shanghai, very influential comrades, who have come out with the theory that the revolution is destroyed", and who held that "great danger resides in peasant risings, since they are outbreaks of anarchism, and the proletariat may lose its hegemony in the revolution".[340] The faithful Pepper was the only delegate who was content to repeat the carefully balanced formulas of the ninth IKKI and of Bukharin's report. He distinguished between two successive errors in the history of the CCP, the first, before April 1927, marked by "*failure on the part of an opportunist leadership to understand the independent rôle of the proletariat in the struggle against the bourgeoisie*", the second, and current, error by "*the assertion that the Chinese revolution is already a proletarian trade union revolution*". The first was the phase of Sunyatsenism, the second of "permanent revolution in the spirit of Trotsky". Both were due to "*an insufficiently sensitive understanding by the leadership of the CCP of the present phase of development of the revolution*", i.e. of its bourgeois-democratic character.[341] But the weight of opinion was now swinging the other way. Neumann contributed a highly theoretical speech, liberally interlarded with quotations from Marx and Lenin, and even from Hilferding and Rosa Luxemburg, in which he cautiously gave a radical twist to the debate. He quoted the famous passage from Lenin on "uninterrupted revolution" ("of course, not in Trotsky's sense, but in Marx's"); and complained that, while the Chinese revolution was no doubt still in its bourgeois-democratic stage, Kuusinen's draft theses failed "to differentiate, to work out the difference today, after Canton and after the treachery of the bourgeoisie, in comparison with earlier stages of the bourgeois-democratic revolution". A long speech was rounded off with a routine attack on Pepper, who had seen nothing but errors in the record of the CCP and ignored its achievements.[342]

Lominadze spoke once more, devoting most of the Chinese

[340] *Ibid.* iv, 143–144; he was described as "the only Chinese comrade to have survived from the leaders of the rising" (*ibid.* iv, 529).

[341] *Ibid.* iv, 314–315.

[342] *Ibid.* iv, 379–393; for Lenin's "uninterrupted revolution" see *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917–1923*, Vol. 1, p. 56.

section of his speech to a savage attack on Pepper, who had given ample provocation.[343] Two other Chinese delegates spoke without declaring themselves on the controversial issues.[344] Ch'ü, exercising his right of reply, put his points more briefly and more pungently than in his opening report. He proposed the slogan of "turning militarists' wars into class civil wars", and went on:

> We can really overthrow imperialism only when the proletariat raises the mass millions of the peasantry to revolt under the slogan of agrarian revolution.

He, too, found Pepper a convenient target, contriving to separate him from Bukharin and — more remarkably — identifying him with Trotsky; Pepper "wants to persist in our old errors of overestimating the national bourgeoisie". Ch'ü ended by quoting the rhetorical peroration of an "Appeal to the Workers and Toilers of China" adopted at the opening session of the congress:

> The Canton rising has entered into the consciousness of the toilers as a model of the greatest heroism of the Chinese workers. May the future rising of the broadest masses of workers and peasants, organized on the disciplined and consistently tested principles of Leninism, supported by the international proletariat, be China's victorious October.[345]

The words did not perhaps mean anything very precise. But they seemed to seal China's place in the turn to the Left proclaimed by the sixth congress of Comintern. While, however, Ch'ü had made a brilliant recovery from the set-back incurred by him at the sixth congress of the CCP, his victory was not unqualified. Kuusinen, who wound up the whole debate, was in a cautious mood. Ch'ü, "if I rightly understood him", had admitted that some petty-bourgeois groups, which supported "national reformism", exercised "a fairly significant influence" on the masses; and "many elements which to-morrow perhaps will become our opponents are today revolutionary-minded on the national plane". Kuusinen rounded sourly on Neumann, who had omitted "to tell us about

[343] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 449–452; at the end of the debate Pepper made a further statement attacking Lominadze and reverting to the conclusions of the ninth IKKI, and the Chinese delegation put in a written reply dissociating itself from Pepper (*ibid.* iv, 501–503, 529).

[344] *Ibid.* iv, 270–272, 480–484.

[345] *Ibid.* iv, 492–501; for the appeal see *ibid.* i, 19–21.

the experience of the Canton rising, to explain exactly how to prepare better an important rising, how to organize it better, how to win over the masses more quickly, how to prepare the broad masses for such an operation".[346] It was an inconclusive ending to the debate. Finally, a Chinese delegate using the name Petrashevsky made a formal declaration in the name of the Chinese delegation dissociating it from the conclusions of Pepper, who was said to have expressed "a point of view coinciding with the opinion of Trotsky that the revolution is moving on a declining course", and to have employed "Trotskyite arguments".[347]

In the resolution of the congress on Bukharin's report, a description of the Chinese revolution as "in its objective content and in its present stage a bourgeois-democratic revolution, which is inevitably growing into a proletarian revolution", came perilously near to recognition of the thesis of permanent revolution. What appeared to be a realistic verdict on the Canton disaster led up to an incongruously optimistic conclusion. "Disastrous defeats" had "physically exterminated a significant part of the cadres of the communist party". Nevertheless, the party is "growing stronger and welding itself together"; and "where peasant risings have been successful, organs of peasant power, sometimes peasant Soviets, have been created", so that the current period must be called "a phase of preparation of mass forces for an upsurge of revolution". The "heroic" CCP had redeemed its past opportunist errors. But the leaders had not sufficiently resisted "patently putschist, adventurist moods", while some had fallen into the new opportunist error of calling for a national assembly. The Canton rising was briefly characterized as "an heroic rear-guard action of the Chinese proletariat", and the conclusion was enigmatic:

> The slogan of mass insurrection is transformed into a propagandist slogan, and only in line with a real mass preparation and ripening of a new revolutionary upsurge can it once more become a slogan of immediate application on the highest level, under the banner of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry founded on Soviets.[348]

[346] *Ibid.* iv, 519, 526–527.

[347] *Ibid.* iv, 529.

[348] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), pp. 778–779; in the debate on the programme of Comintern, Bukharin tried a more cautious formula: "In China ... in the present phase of development, the bloc of workers and peasants means a struggle *against the bourgeoisie*, and not only

The theses on the national and colonial question attempted to fit China into the pattern of Asian nationalism, rehearsed the familiar catalogue of errors of the CCP, and ended with a passage which characteristically combined revolutionary prospects for the future with cautious prescriptions for the present:

> In China the coming upsurge of revolution will confront the party anew with the regular practical task of preparing and carrying out armed insurrection as the one way to complete the bourgeois-democratic revolution and overthrow the power of the imperialists, landlords and national bourgeoisie, the power of Kuomintang.... At the same time the party must explain to the masses the impossibility of a radical improvement in their situation, the impossibility of an overthrow of the domination of the imperialists and the consummation of the tasks of the agrarian revolution without overthrowing the government of Kuomintang and the militarists and creating of a government of Soviets.[349]

It was a hackneyed and uninspiring conclusion. But the struggle which ended in Bukharin's dismissal was paralysing Comintern. Interest in China was everywhere at a low ebb. An attempt by Profintern to organize an international campaign of aid for the Chinese workers' movement was a fiasco.[350] Trotsky, in an unpublished memorandum of October 4, 1928, challenged the basis of the conclusions of the sixth congress in a summary verdict:

> There is not at the present time a revolutionary situation in China. It is rather a counter-revolutionary situation which has been substituted there, transforming itself into an inter-revolutionary period of indefinite duration.[351]

Brave words could no longer disguise the magnitude of the decline from the high hopes engendered in the period that ran from the Shanghai events of May 30, 1925, to Chiang Kai-shek's Shanghai massacre of April 12, 1927.

against feudal domination. But at the same time we have in China not yet a proletarian revolution, but only a bourgeois-democratic revolution" (*Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iii, 149).

[349] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), pp. 832–870.

[350] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 261–265.

[351] L. Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (N.Y., 1932), pp. 169–170; the memorandum is in the Trotsky archives, T 3142.

(*d*) *The Twilight of the CCP*

The two congresses in Moscow in the summer of 1928 had spoken with an uncertain voice, and bequeathed to the CCP an unenviable task. The party had instructions to prepare for armed insurrection, but without incurring the charge of "putschism"; it was to support the agrarian movement as the key factor in the bourgeois-democratic revolution, but under proletarian hegemony. Conditions on the spot provided none of the ingredients for such a policy. The party had been decimated, the proletariat cowed. An estimate of 230,000 persons killed since April 1927[352] was probably not exaggerated; a majority of these would have been workers suspected of Left-wing or trade union activities. The CCP, after its claim of more than 50,000 members at the fifth party congress in May 1927,[353] issued no further official statistics of membership, and was scarcely in a condition to compile any. A figure of 15,000 for August 1928 is conjectural; and the total of 13,365 produced by the Comintern secretariat at the tenth IKKI in July 1929 shows a spurious exactness.[354] The worker component in the membership had suffered out of all proportion to the rest. The proportion of peasants in the party was returned at the sixth party congress as 76 per cent,[355] and by Kuusinen at the sixth congress of Comintern a month later as 80 per cent; according to Lozovsky, the leadership both of the party and of the trade unions was in the hands of "intellectuals from a petty-bourgeois milieu".[356] A Comintern document of February 1929 put the maximum number of

[352] *Internationale Presse Korrespondenz*, No. 69, July 20, 1928, p. 1253.

[353] See p. 739, note 56 above.

[354] R. North, *Kuomintang and Chinese Communist Elites* (Stanford, 1952), p. 110; *Protokoll: 10. Plenum des Exekutivkomitees der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), p. 271. A claim by Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai at the sixth congress of Comintern in July 1928 of "more than 100,000 members, of whom a very considerable number are peasants" (*Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 493) must be treated as fantasy. The membership of the Communist Youth League fell from 40,000 in May 1927 to 10,000 in the middle of 1928 (*The Young Communist International: Between the Fourth and Fifth Congresses* (1928), pp. 73–74, 188–191); for the earlier figures see p. 789, note 56 above.

[355] See p. 872 above. At the fifth congress in April 1927 workers were said to have constituted 53 per cent, and peasants 18 per cent, of the membership (see p. 789 above); but these figures, which reflected the peculiar conditions of the Wuhan period, were quite unrealistic.

[356] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), 25, 378.

workers in the party at 1300 in Shanghai, 600 in Hong Kong, very few in other cities; in Wuhan, Tientsin and Canton "no work is being done".[357] Chou En-lai reported in April 1929 that the proportion of workers in the party, which had stood at 10 per cent at the time of the sixth party congress, had fallen to 3 per cent.[358] In central China the only legal organs of the workers were a network of "yellow" unions under the patronage of the Nanking government.[359] These unions, which purported to stand for the economic demands of the workers, but disclaimed political action, enjoyed some success in Shanghai in agitating for shorter hours and better wages, and had a substantial mass following.[360] Unions under communist leadership had been wiped out.[361]

The consequences of the two congresses for the leadership of the CCP were equally ambiguous. Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai, though removed from his post as secretary of the party, remained a member of the party politburo; and his prominent rôle at the sixth congress of Comintern showed his high rating in Moscow. When therefore it was decided that Ch'ü and Chang Kuo-t'ao should remain in Moscow, this seemed to mark the determination of the Comintern secretariat to keep a firm hand on the party leadership. Of the five members of the politburo who returned to Shanghai after the congresses, Hsiang Chung-fa, the titular secretary, proved little more than a figure-head, and Li Li-san emerged as the strong man. He

[357] *Strategiya i Taktika Kominterna*, ed. G. Kara-Murza and P. Mif (1934), p. 234.

[358] B. I. Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao* (1951), p. 129; according to the precise data of the tenth IKKI (see p. 883, note 354 above) worker members of the party numbered 3455, or 25 per cent of the total.

[359] *Problemy Kitaya*, ii (1930), 51–62; these unions, said to have been first created after the Shanghai *coup* of April 1927, were to be distinguished from the Canton Mechanics' Union and the Kwangtung Labour Federation (see p. 738 above), which represented a labour aristocracy and the old guild tradition, but were equally submissive to the authorities (*Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 69, July 20, 1928, p. 125). Later the same distinction was drawn between government-sponsored unions and "reformist" Left Kuomintang unions (see p. 854 above).

[360] H. Isaacs, *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution* (1938), 388; *Protokoll: 10. Plenum des Exekutivkomitees der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), pp. 842–843.

[361] The Chinese Communist Youth League is said on somewhat dubious authority to have organized strikes of young workers in Shanghai in 1927–1928 (R. Chitarow, *Geschichte der Kommunistischen Jugendinternationale*, iii (1930), 115–116).

had hitherto played no conspicuous rôle in the controversies of the CCP. No serious evidence exists that Stalin, or anyone else in Moscow, designated him for the leadership, or had any particular desire, in the autumn of 1928, to intervene in the choice of leaders.[362] The party, weak, dispirited and rudderless, and with a divided leadership imposed by Comintern, fell an easy prey to dissension; and Li, who was both determined and unscrupulous, seized the opportunity. A circular letter of the central committee of November 11, 1928, contained warnings, not only against political errors, such as "opportunism" and "putschism", but against demands for extreme democratization and the development of cliques.[363] The most serious of these quarrels occurred between the party central committee and the Kiangsu provincial committee, which had already, in the spring of 1928, attacked the party central committee for its rashly optimistic assessment of the revolutionary situation.[364] The dispute seems to have been mainly a struggle for power between two ambitious men, Li Li-san and the Kiangsu leader Hsü Hsi-kiu, and to have reflected Li's effort to establish the authority of the central committee dominated by himself over a dispersed and fissiparous party. But the argument was conducted in terms of doctrine as well as of organization. The Kiangsu committee accused the central committee of neglecting the cautious estimate in the resolution of the sixth party congress of the current political situation, and the emphasis placed by the congress on agrarian policy; and Li replied by attempting to pack the Kiangsu committee with his supporters.[365] Chou En-lai published a pamphlet in which he alleged that the Kiangsu committee had not carried out the decisions of the sixth congress, and "to this moment fails to understand the character of the present Chinese revolution".[366] The "fractional struggle" reached a dan-

[362] Chang Kuo-t'ao's story, told forty years later, that he had been detained by Stalin in Moscow as the strong man of the Right in order to leave a free hand to Li Li-san and the Left (R. Thornton, *The Comintern and the Chinese Communists* (1969), pp. 64–65), should be treated with caution.

[363] Quoted in R. Thornton, *The Comintern and the Chinese Communists* (1969), 68–69; Chou En-lai reported in April 1929 that the party branches were riddled with "deviations, sectarianisms and extreme democratic tendencies" (B. I. Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao* (1951), p. 132).

[364] See p. 834 above.

[365] For the Chinese sources for the dispute see R. Thornton, *The Comintern and the Chinese Communists* (1969), pp. 67–74.

[366] *Komintern i Vostok* (1966), p. 325.

gerous peak in March 1929, after which the central committee succeeded in asserting its authority over the rebels.[367]

After the agonized debates of the past two years, Comintern was not eager to involve itself in the affairs of the depleted CCP. A "standing Chinese commission" set up by the secretariat[368] left little mark; and an attempt to interest Stalin personally in the affairs of the CCP was abortive.[369] But Moscow was always sensitive to China's international relations, and was concerned that the CCP should pull its full weight in the struggle against the enemies of the Soviet Union. The CCP was itself at this time apprehensive of the influence on the workers of "the reformist mottoes of the bourgeoisie" and of Wang Ching-wei's "reorganization" group in Kuomintang.[370] An enigmatic letter of IKKI of February 9, 1929, censured the party for appearing to distinguish American from British and Japanese imperialism: all were equally concerned to maintain China's colonial status. The "national-reformist" platform of the Chinese industrial bourgeoisie, while different from that of "the old landlord-militarist government", none the less "presupposes a policy of constant compromises with the imperialists, and in practice leads to *capitulation* of the national bourgeoisie to imperialism". Those who predicted a new revolutionary upsurge in the immediate future, and those who predicted that it would be "delayed for a long period", were both equally condemned. The Chinese bourgeoisie and the Kuomintang government (presumably unlike Kemal in Turkey) had been unable to solve the problems of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. Collaboration with these elements constituted "in present condi-

[367] *Protokoll: 10. Plenum des Exekutivkomitees der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), p. 448.

[368] *Komintern i Vostok* (1969), p. 325.

[369] Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, ii (1974), 114–117, records a meeting with Stalin to which he and Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai were summoned in November 1928; Stalin expressed satisfaction with the resolutions of the sixth congress of the CCP in June 1928, and had nothing new to suggest. The impression left was that Stalin had no more than a perfunctory interest in Chinese affairs. A three-man commission, of which Stalin was a member, was said to have drafted a directive to the CCP; this may have been the letter of February 9, 1929 (see below).

[370] See party documents quoted in B. I. Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao* (1951), pp. 129–130; an article in *Novyi Vostok*, xxvi–xxvii (1929), 1, asserted that "Kuomintang 'reformism' consists of empty chatter, and cannot disguise the surrender of Kuomintang to feudal elements in the Chinese countryside".

tions *a Right deviation*". The fundamental task now was "*to reinforce the illegal communist party, to strengthen its organization, its authority and its directing influence*". On the other hand, the sixth party congress had rightly called for "the elimination of 'Left' deviations", including putschism, military adventurism, individual terror and a system of "commands" from above. An essential part of the duty of the party to appeal to the masses of workers was not only to strengthen "the illegal and semi-legal revolutionary unions", but "to penetrate the main Kuomintang unions and win the masses away from the yellow leaders". The last section of the letter drew pointed attention to the weakness of the party in numbers and organization in the great urban centres. It was followed, however, by a postscript:

> Attaching profoundly important significance to the peasant question, we have not touched on it in the present letter, preferring to address you on this question in a special letter.[371]

The CCP had to wait for guidance from Moscow on this profoundly important question for a further four months. The reasons for the delay were not far to seek.

During this period the consolidation of the partisan movement led by Mao Tse-tung and Chu Teh proceeded without the support, and sometimes without the knowledge, of the leaders of the CCP. The collapse of the autumn harvest rising in Hunan, and of the attack on Changsha, had been followed by Mao's retreat with the small remnant of his forces to the Chingkangshan[372] where he began to collect a motley army of fugitives and malcontents. Here he was joined early in 1928 by Chu Teh with a regiment of survivors from the army which had set out from Nanchang in August 1927 — a nucleus of the future Chinese Red Army. The session of the party central committee in November 1927 dropped Mao

[371] *Strategiya i Taktika Kominterna*, ed. G. Kara-Murza and P. Mif (1934), pp. 221–235; Mif, who was certainly one of its authors, wrote at this time in an article in the Comintern journal of "the atomization, disorganization and disintegration" of the party rank and file, and of the "revolutionary impatience" of individual communists who postulated "a too rapid growth of the new upsurge of revolution" (*Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 11 (189), 1929, pp. 11–20).

[372] See p. 833 above.

from the politburo and from the central committee, no doubt in consequence of the failure of the Hunan rising; and for some time he appears to have had no direct contact with party headquarters in Shanghai. He learned of decisions of the party central committee — and *a fortiori* of IKKI — only after an interval of weeks or months. It is doubtful whether much was known of his activities in Shanghai or in Moscow; what was clear was that they entirely eluded any kind of guidance or control by Comintern or by the CCP. When on November 2, 1928, Mao belatedly received the resolution of the ninth IKKI of February 1928,[373] he expressed full agreement with "the resolution of the Communist International concerning China".[374] But these polite assurances in no way guaranteed smooth relations between Mao and the central committee of the CCP in Shanghai. A report of the committee of October 1928 on the sixth party congress noted that "the congress recognized the danger that the bases of our party may shift from the working class to the peasantry, and that we must make every effort to restore the party's proletarian base"; and a party circular of the following month repeated the message:

> In every province we must concentrate our main strength in the important political and industrial centres.... Activities in the village should not be ignored. Relatively, however, greater emphasis must be placed on urban activities.[375]

In a letter of November 1928 Mao reacted sharply to these or other attempts at tutelage by the party central committee:

> Henceforth, in issuing directives, we earnestly request that you study our reports, and do not rely simply on one-sided reports of your inspectors.... The letters of the central committee must take account of the conditions in which we are operating. It must leave us some room to manoeuvre.[376]

[373] S. Schram, *Mao Tse-tung* (1966), p. 130.

[374] S. Schram, *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung* (1963), p. 147; the resolutions of the sixth congress of Comintern did not reach him until some months later (see p. 889 below).

[375] Quoted in B. I. Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao* (1951), pp. 128–129.

[376] *Ibid.* p. 179; Mao later recorded that "the Li Li-san line dominated the party then outside the Soviet areas, and was sufficiently influential to enforce its acceptance to some extent in the Red Army against the judgement of the field command" (E. Snow, *Red Star over China* (1938), p. 178).

Mao and Chu did not long remain on the defensive. On January 4, 1929, they led their followers to the number of 4000 down from their mountain fastness to the sparsely populated plains, where they began to evict and plunder landlords, and rally the peasants in the villages round local Soviets.[377] What came to be known as "the descent of the armies from the Chingkang mountains", and was afterwards celebrated as an important date in the history of the Chinese Red Army, was the prelude to the establishment of its authority, in the form of local Soviets, over a large area of southern Kiangsi. By this time Mao, according to his subsequent statement, had collected an army of "more than 10,000 men".[378] Increasing successes must have given him a new self-assurance in his dealings with the party central committee, which clearly mistrusted the whole venture, and offered unsolicited advice on the disposition of his forces. Early in 1929, in the small town of Tingchow in western Fukien which had just been occupied by his forces, he at length received from the party central committee in Shanghai the resolutions of the sixth party congress in June 1928, which gave a qualified blessing to "the spontaneous partisan warfare of the peasants in various provinces", together with the resolutions of the immediately following congress of Comintern. He once more expressed agreement.[379] How much obstinacy in practice could be combined with deferential acceptance of orthodox formulas was, however, shown in a letter addressed by him to the committee on April 5, 1929:

> Proletarian leadership is the sole key to the victory of the revolution.... But in our opinion it is also a mistake — if any of our party members hold such views — to fear the development of the power of the peasants lest it should overwhelm the leadership of the workers, and hence become detrimental to the revolution. For the revolution in semi-colonial China ... will never suffer just because the present struggle develops in such a way that the peasants become more powerful than the workers.[380]

[377] A. Smedley, *The Great Road* (1956), pp. 236–237, based on Chu's narrative.

[378] E. Snow, *Red Star over China* (1938), p. 177.

[379] A. Smedley, *The Great Road* (1956), pp. 251–252; according to E. Snow, *Red Star over China* (1938), pp. 166–167, Mao believed that "the differences between the party leaders and the leaders of the Soviet movement in the agrarian districts" had disappeared, and "party harmony was re-established". For the resolutions see pp. 870–871, 881–882 above.

[380] S. Schram, *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung* (1963), pp. 188–189.

Mao is said to have condemned a communication from the party central committee to the Red Army as "pessimistic" and "incorrect in spirit", and about the same time, in defiance of the committee's cautious attitude, put forward a plan "to take possession of Kiangsi province within a year".[381] Mao's apparent success and self-confidence in so unorthodox an operation presented a baffling problem. Trotsky, reading a report a few months later that an "armed communist detachment under the leadership of Chu Teh" had grown in numbers from 5000 to 20,000, speculated whether this was sheer "adventurism", or an experiment in "opportunism" encouraged from Moscow.[382]

The most explosive point of discord was the crux of differentiation within the peasantry. Mao may have wavered in the past on the immediate application of the agrarian revolution to the relatively well-to-do landowner.[383] The sixth congress of the CCP had exhibited an ambiguous indulgence for the *kulak* or well-to-do peasantry,[384] and a circular issued by the party central committee two months later explained that the party "need not intentionally step up the struggle against the rich peasant, but should not abdicate the class struggle against the landlordly characteristics of the rich peasants", and urged the leaders in the Soviet areas to "unite with the petty bourgeoisie and the rich peasants against all reactionary forces".[385] But a partisan army, consisting mainly of outcasts and landless peasants, cannot afford to be tender towards landed proprietors of any category. Some time early in 1929 the party central committee addressed a letter to Mao warning him that, "in accordance with the general tactical line (the struggle against the landlord class), it is indispensable to conclude an alliance with the rich peasant", though it made the reservation that "the class war of the poor peasantry against *kulaks* and rich peasants" must not be abandoned.[386] This was, to say the least, a controversial formulation. Dissension broke out between Li Li-san and Ts'ai Ho-shen, his colleague in the politburo, hitherto counted as a member of the Right. Ts'ai published an article in

[381] *Komintern i Vostok* (1966), p. 325.
[382] *Byulleten' Oppozitsii* (Paris), No. 7, November 1929, pp. 27–28.
[383] See p. 782, note 36 above.
[384] See pp. 870–871 above.
[385] R. Thornton, *The Comintern and the Chinese Communists* (1969), pp. 27, 87.
[386] Quoted in the letter from IKKI of June 7, 1929 (see below).

the Chinese party journal criticizing the policy of alliance with the rich peasant, and was answered by Li.[387] Ts'ai now travelled from Shanghai to Moscow, perhaps not without encouragement from Comintern.[388] The campaign against Bukharin and the Right deviation was at its height, and cast its shadow over debates about the Chinese *kulak*. Borodin, true to his policy in the Wuhan period, pleaded for indulgence to the *kulak* as an ally against the imperialists, and was assailed by Mif, a faithful follower of the new line in Comintern, who denounced the *kulak* as a semi-feudal exploiter of the mass of peasants and an irreconcilable enemy of the revolution.[389]

In these conditions, on June 7, 1929, the political secretariat of IKKI at length despatched the long-promised letter to the CCP on the peasant question. It began by drawing attention to "the very serious mistakes" of "individual leading comrades"; the letter of the central committee to Mao on "the alliance with the rich peasant" was cited as an example. Much space was occupied in expounding the ambiguous resolutions of the sixth congress of the CCP. The exhortation "not to sharpen the class struggle against the *kulak*", might lead to "a weakening, an elimination of the fundamental contradiction between the peasantry and the landlord class", and could, if divorced from the general purpose of the resolution, "give ground for false political deductions". Members of the central committee, however, "instead of *correcting the imprecise formulations of the resolution of the sixth congress*", had aggravated the error by advocating "an alliance of the proletariat with the *kulak*". A significant passage ran:

> The partisan detachments of Mao Tse-tung and Chu Teh, in spite of frequent attempts on the part of the reaction to crush them, have not only been able to maintain their cadres, but have recently achieved some successes in the province of Fukien.

Armed risings of peasants had occurred in other parts of China; all this called for more decisive effort by the party "to win the

[387] R. Thornton, *The Comintern and the Chinese Communists* (1969), p. 89.

[388] The circumstances of Ts'ai's journey are certain. According to Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, ii (1974), pp. 120–121, Li expelled him from the politburo and "sent him to Moscow"; on arrival there he refused to discuss the affairs of the CCP with Chang or with Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai.

[389] This account comes from Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, ii (1974), 122–124, which adds that Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai attempted to adopt a moderate position, and was rebuked by Mif.

leadership of these spontaneous, objectively revolutionary movements of the peasantry". The letter ended with a warning to avoid "Trotskyite deductions about the socialist character of the revolution". While awaiting "the initial period of the approaching upsurge of the revolutionary wave", the revolution retained its bourgeois-democratic character.[390] About the time of the despatch of this letter, a long and evasive article by Ts'ai Ho-shen appeared as the first item in a new periodical publication of the Sun Yat-sen university under the title "A History of Opportunism in the CCP". It appeared to advocate a more active agrarian policy, claiming that the peasants of Hunan had demanded an uprising after the Changsha *coup* of May 21, 1927. It called for a reorganization of the party on the principle that "members of the leading organs should be elected by the masses and enjoy their absolute confidence", and was evidently designed as an attack, without mentioning names, on Li Li-san's autocratic methods. The mild editorial reservation which accompanied it did not make it any less plain that Li could no longer count on unconditional backing from Moscow.[391]

Later in June 1929 the central committee of the CCP held a six-day session in Shanghai, and on July 9, 1929, despatched a circular letter to members of the party reporting on the proceedings. No mention was made of the Comintern letter of June 7, 1929, which had presumably not yet been received.[392] The first concern of the committee was to re-affirm Li's leadership by proclaiming that it had "correctly applied the policies decided on by the sixth congress", and by approving the disciplinary measures taken against the Kiangsu committee. In a review of the international situation, mindful of the rebuke in the Comintern letter of February 9, 1929, it noted that, though "England and Japan are drawing closer to each other to oppose America", yet "basically ... there is not the slightest difference in their aggressive policy towards China." The deepening world crisis justified, however,

[390] *Strategiya i Taktika Kominterna*, ed. G. Kara-Murza and P. Mif (1934), pp. 236–244; an article by Mif in *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 28 (206), 1929, pp. 40–47, closely followed the terms of the letter.

[391] *Problemy Kitaya*, i (1929), 1–77.

[392] Confidential communications between Moscow and the Far East were extremely slow; the conjecture in R. Thornton, *The Comintern and the Chinese Communists* (1969), p. 91, that Li concealed its receipt is hardly plausible.

a conventionally optimistic picture of revolutionary achievement:

> The workers' struggle is beginning to revive, the agrarian revolution is developing, certain Soviet armies under the command of Chu and Mao are still in existence, revolts of troops still occur frequently, and these troops then join the agrarian uprisings.

Unfortunately it had to be confessed that "in the peasant movements, in the Soviet districts", there had been "a lack of positive direction from the central committee". Extreme caution marked the conclusion that it would be "equally incorrect to maintain that the upsurge of the revolutionary wave is very remote or that it is imminent". A single sentence in the political resolution of the session and in the circular letter recorded, in contradiction to the still unknown Comintern letter of June 7, 1929, that, in view of the possibility of securing the cooperation of rich peasants in the struggle against imperialists, militarists and landlords, "unconditional opposition to the rich peasants would be very erroneous". No hint was allowed to appear of any incompatibility between the injunction "to strengthen our leadership of the peasant movement" and the admittedly "weak proletarian base of the party".[393] At the same session the central committee issued a manifesto protesting against the attack on the Soviet consulate in Harbin on May 27, 1929, which it described as a Kuomintang "provocation".[394]

Little encouragement or guidance could be derived by the CCP from the tenth IKKI, meeting in Moscow from July 3 to 19, 1929. Neither Kuusinen nor Manuilsky, who made the main reports, broached the subject; and Molotov observed cautiously that "it would still be too early to speak of the rise of a new revolutionary

[393] See C. Brandt, B. I. Schwartz and J. K. Fairbank, *A Documentary History of Chinese Communism* (1952), pp. 166–179 for the letter, and p. 498 for the list of the resolutions of the session; for the passage on the rich peasants see R. Thornton, *The Comintern and the Chinese Communists* (1969), p. 91. According to an account by Hsiang Chung-fa, it was at this session that Chou En-lai began to dissociate himself from Li (*ibid.* p. 92, note 37). In November 1929 the central committee published the resolution of its June session in a pamphlet which also contained the Comintern letter of June 7, 1929, and a reply of the politburo of the CCP accepting it.

[394] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 51 (229), pp. 17–28.

wave in China".[395] An American Negro delegate incautiously enquired "why the position in China is as it is", and whether "a part of the errors does not fall on IKKI". A Chinese delegate not only admitted that the party leaders did not enjoy the confidence of the masses (when challenged, he fathered this criticism on the Rightists, supported by Trotskyites), but was bold enough to repeat current charges that Comintern guidance was weak and useless, and that, "since Bukharin's departure, no qualified people remain in Comintern".[396] Nobody took up these remarks. The only Chinese problem discussed was that of the trade unions. The fourth congress of Profintern in March 1928 had repeated the long-standing injunction to party members to work in yellow trade unions, and had specifically condemned the reluctance of Chinese communists to apply this policy.[397] But, when Pyatnitsky reiterated this criticism at the tenth IKKI in July 1929, a Chinese delegate retorted by dwelling on the practical difficulties involved, and denounced the opposite deviation of seeking to work exclusively in the Kuomintang unions, and to disband the illegal Red unions, as "Right opportunism". Lozovsky, manifestly embarrassed, pointed out that communists exercising functions in Kuomintang unions were exposed to the alternative of betraying the party or of being beheaded.[398] Later another Chinese delegate under the name of Deng, who spoke at length on the labour movement, began with the illusory assurance that "the class struggle in China has once more begun to rise and grow sharper", and ended with the demand "to enrol land workers in an organization as allies of the proletariat". But Pyatnitsky accused both him and Lozovsky of evading the issue of the Kuomintang unions.[399] Mif, who in his first speech distilled official optimism, and reproached the CCP with exaggerating "the facts of the defeat of the revolution and the victory of reaction", intervened at the end of the proceedings with the classic compromise formula on the trade unions. Revolutionary trade unions were to be maintained and strengthened; but

[395] *Protokoll: 10. Plenum des Exekutivkomitees der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), p. 415.

[396] *Ibid.* pp. 273, 291.

[397] For the Profintern resolution see p. 854 above.

[398] *Protokoll: 10. Plenum des Exekutivkomitees der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), pp. 269–270, 289–290, 711.

[399] *Ibid.* pp. 764–772, 804.

communist workers were to form a Left wing in the yellow unions "in order not to split them, but to organize them and forge organizational links with the party".[400] Nobody except Pyatnitsky, whose ignorance of Chinese conditions was total, seems to have taken the issue seriously. The debate was unreal and perfunctory; and China was scarcely mentioned in the resolutions of the session.

Some weeks after the session, IKKI issued a directive on the work of the CCP in trade unions. Communists were to form independent Red unions, and also work "in Kuomintang (government) and yellow (Left-Kuomintang) unions"; the two categories were distinguished, though some of both types had "transformed themselves into broad mass organizations of workers". Where a revolutionary trade union could be organized side by side with such unions, it should work within them for the purpose of liquidating them. At the same time "the bad traditions of 'command' and of creating trade unions from above" should be resolutely abandoned, and Red unions which existed only on paper should be liquidated. Finally the Red unions should form factory committees and put forward the economic demands of the workers, not leaving this to the yellow and Kuomintang unions. Some of these instructions seemed mutually incompatible, and few of them were realizable in Chinese conditions.[401] It was at this moment that events in northern China brought about a return to the situation of March 1926,[402] when the threat to Soviet interests in Manchuria absorbed attention in Moscow, and eclipsed in importance anything that was happening elsewhere in China.

(*e*) *The Manchurian Crisis*

Diplomatic relations between Moscow and the puppet Chinese Government in Peking dominated by Chang Tso-lin had been entirely severed after the raid on the Soviet Embassy and the arrest of 15 Soviet employees in April 1927;[403] only a Soviet consul remained in Peking, enjoying intermittent recognition by the

[400] *Ibid.* pp. 486, 816–817.
[401] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional* No. 38–39 (216–217), 1929, pp. 56–58.
[402] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 769–772.
[403] See pp. 751–752 above.

authorities. A break came at the turn of the year with the release on January 5, 1928, after ten months in custody, of the crew of the *Pamyat' Lenina*.[404] Desultory discussions proceeded in Peking during the next few weeks with a view to starting negotiations for a formal resumption of relations. It was clear that the negotiations would in effect be conducted with Chang Tso-lin's administration, and would have to take place in Harbin or Mukden. The Soviet Government attempted to make the release of the 15 Soviet employees a preliminary condition. This was refused.[405] A conversation at the end of March 1928 between the Soviet consul in Mukden and the Chinese consul in the Soviet town of Nikolsk paved the way for further discussion in Mukden with an emissary from Peking, with whom terms of a projected agreement were actually drawn up.[406] By this time, however, another change in the Chinese kaleidoscope was being prepared. In April 1928 Chiang Kai-shek opened a fresh campaign, which was referred to as the "new northern expedition". Chang Tso-lin's position in and around Peking was gradually undermined by armies under the control of Chiang and the nationalist government in Nanking. At the beginning of June 1928 Chang withdrew his last forces from the city in order to consolidate his position in Manchuria; and nationalist forces took possession of the old capital a few days later.[407] On June 4, 1928 Chang Tso-lin was mysteriously assassinated on his way back from Peking to Mukden,[408] and was succeeded by his son, Chang Hsüeh-liang, commonly dubbed "the young marshal". At the same time, the Japanese Government made it clear that it would resist any intrusion of Chinese nationalist forces into Manchuria.

The main effect of these events on official Soviet–Chinese relations was that the Peking government now spoke with the voice not of Mukden, but of Nanking. The constantly changing constellation of military power in China, together with the fluctuating mutual relations of the three imperialist Great Powers, united by

[404] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, xi (1966), 13; for this incident see p. 751 above.

[405] *Dokumenty Vneshei Politiki SSSR*, xi (1966), 39–40, 49, 56.

[406] *Ibid.* xi, 258, 274–275, 285–287, 728, note 82.

[407] *Ibid.* xi, 370–371, 728, note 116.

[408] The assassination was apparently planned by Japanese officers; but their precise motive, and the degree of complicity of higher Japanese authorities, remain uncertain.

hostility to the Soviet Union and to the Chinese revolution, but divided by profound divergences of interest and outlook, continued to puzzle Soviet and communist observers. The resolution of the sixth congress of Comintern in July 1928 on the international situation, refraining from wilder current speculations, was content to conjure up the picture of "a fierce Anglo-American rivalry unfolding prospects of a vast collision of forces", and of "contradictions between the cynical, openly acquisitive imperialism of Japan and the huge strength of American imperialism draping itself for the present in the sham toga of pacifism".[409] Karakhan, surveying the Chinese scene from Moscow in September 1928, discerned an ambivalent attitude on the part of the Nanking government towards the Soviet Union. While relations were conducted *de facto* with Soviet consuls in the principal cities, a formal renewal of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union might have alienated Great Britain and the United States.[410] But symptoms of a *détente* were not lacking. On September 13, 1928, a Chinese court pronounced its verdict on the 15 Soviet employees held since April 1927. All but one were now declared not subject to Chinese jurisdiction, and the remaining one was acquitted of the charges against him; they left China for Vladivostok a few days later.[411] Vague proposals in the following month to initiate negotiations for a resumption of diplomatic relations came to nothing.[412]

A more significant change occurred in December 1928. The nationalist government at the moment of its triumph had been weakened by dissensions between warlords nominally subject to the supreme authority of Chiang Kai-shek; and the position of the "young marshal" in Manchuria was less assured than that of his father. A common sense of insecurity, combined with a common allegiance to the "nationalist" cause, however vaguely defined,

[409] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), pp. 772–773; a wide variety of conjectures had been heard at the congress. One delegate accused the nationalist government of trying to incite the United States against Japan, while itself conducting secret negotiations with Japan; another thought that Kuomintang was divided between a Left wing committed to the United States, and a Right wing which wanted to come to terms with Great Britain and Japan (*Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), ii, 187, iv, 482).

[410] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, xi (1966), 509–520.

[411] *Ibid.* xi, 544.

[412] *Ibid.* xi, 745, note 191.

probably brought the two leaders together. The Japanese Government, which had at first opposed the reunification of Manchuria with southern China, was persuaded in the autumn of 1928 that this would not be detrimental to overriding Japanese interests in Manchuria, and might perhaps prove the best insurance against Soviet penetration.[413] Chang Hsüeh-liang now accepted the formal sovereignty of the Nanking government in return for recognition of the complete autonomy of the four north-eastern provinces; and the Kuomintang flag was hoisted in Mukden on December 29, 1928, in token of the reunification of the Chinese republic. These measures of reunification and pacification were received with some satisfaction in the western world. The authority of the Nanking régime was described by Roy as resting on the urban big bourgeoisie and the feudal landlords, with "the Holy Ghost of imperialism" in the background to complete the trinity.[414]

The administration of the four provinces could now count on the full backing of the Nanking government in its dealings with the Soviet authorities on the always delicate issue of the Chinese Eastern Railway. Since the crisis of 1926,[415] no major clash between Chinese and Soviet authorities on the CER had been reported. But minor attacks on Soviet institutions and Soviet citizens had occurred at intervals during 1927. Pressure was brought to bear on the CER to deposit its cash reserves in local banks; and a compromise agreement to deposit half the amount was reached on August 13, 1927. A demand that the accounts of the CER should be drawn up, and its tariffs fixed, in local currency was refused.[416] An attack on the line by bandits was the subject of a vigorous Soviet protest in July 1928.[417] An explicit or unspoken corollary of the agreement of December 1928 between Nanking and Mukden seems to have been a determination to present an uncompromising front to the Soviet Union. It was followed by a cumulative series of hostile incidents — the seizure of a telegraph station of the CER, the incursion of a drunken

[413] For a somewhat speculative analysis, based partly on Japanese sources, of relations between Nanking and Mukden in the six months before December 1928, and of the Japanese attitude, see *Journal of Asian Studies*, xx, No. 1, November 1960, pp. 33–43.

[414] *Die Internationale*, xii, No. 7, April 1, 1929, p. 228.

[415] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 758–760.

[416] V. Avarin, *Imperializm i Manchzhuriya* (1931), pp. 214–219.

[417] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, xi (1966), 415.

policeman with a rifle into the Soviet consulate at Mukden, unrestrained attacks on the Soviet Union in the *émigré* press in Harbin, and finally on May 27, 1929, the occupation and search of the Soviet consulate at Harbin, and the arrest of some 40 Soviet citizens found on the premises.[418] The last affair, which was followed by accusations of subversive activities and by the publication of incriminating papers, and recalled the raid on the Soviet Embassy in Peking two years earlier, was the subject not only of local protests, but of a long note from Narkomindel to the Chinese chargé d'affaires in Moscow, which was duly forwarded to Nanking.[419] The Soviet consul in Peking, forgotten in the midst of all this activity, reported gossip in diplomatic circles that the Harbin incident had been engineered to mask aggressive Chinese designs on the CER.[420]

This speculation proved well-founded. On July 10, 1929, Chinese authorities took over all the telegraph installations of the CER, closed the Soviet trade delegation and other Soviet establishments in Manchuria, arrested Soviet officials and employees, including Emshanov, who had succeeded Ivanov in 1926 as general manager of the CER, and was now required to hand over his functions to a Chinese nominee; this was a flagrant breach of the agreements about the CER concluded in 1924. Emshanov and 60 other Soviet officials were expelled from Chinese territory. These events were recited in a note from Karakhan to the Chinese chargé d'affaires in Moscow of July 13, 1929, which ended by demanding the cancellation of all these arbitrary measures and a

[418] *Ibid.* xi (1966), 635–638, xii (1967), 56–58, 73–75, 85–88, 326; on March 21, 1929, the Chinese members of the board of the CER again demanded that all railway transactions should be in Chinese money (*Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, xiii (1929), 137).

[419] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, xii (1967), 334–336; *China Weekly Review* (Shanghai), quoted in *Pravda*, June 11, 1929, suspected that the attack on the consulate had been planned "by English secret organs with the knowledge, and perhaps even with complete approval and financial support, of the Conservative government".

[420] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, xxi (1967), 365. In February or March 1929 a Muslim prince from Sinkiang visited Nanking to solicit governmental aid for that province, painting a vivid picture of the richness of its resources and the backwardness of its population. The Nanking government passed on the proposal to Feng's administration in Kaifeng; Feng is said to have contemplated the despatch of a mission to Sinkiang (*Materialy po Kitaiskomu Voprosu*, xiii (1929), 134–135). Neither Chiang nor Feng is likely to have been unaware that aid was being sought to counteract growing Soviet influence in the province; evidently neither was tempted.

conference to settle outstanding questions relating to the CER.[421] A truculent statement by Chiang Kai-shek in Nanking admitted that these measures were designed "to take the Chinese Eastern Railway into our hands";[422] and the reply of the Chinese chargé d'affaires in Moscow, dated July 17, 1929, countered the protest with accusations of illicit activities by Soviet officials in Manchuria and arrest of Chinese citizens in Soviet territory. This provoked a further note of the same date from Karakhan, in which he announced the decision of the Soviet Government to withdraw all its representatives and its employees on the CER, and to suspend railway communications with China, and requested the withdrawal of Chinese officials from the Soviet Union.[423] IKKI on July 18, 1929, issued a protest addressed to "the toilers of the whole world", alleging that Chiang Kai-shek, at the dictation of the imperialist Powers, was seeking to provoke a fresh war against the Soviet Union.[424] A return to the stalemate of 1927, aggravated by the exclusion of the USSR from Manchuria, seemed to be in prospect.

From these anxious events the CCP was totally excluded. But on July 12, 1929, two days after the Chinese *coup* in Manchuria, the party central committee, certainly not without prompting from Moscow, issued a manifesto proclaiming the slogan "Defence of the Soviet Union" and declaring:

> The only right which the USSR does not renounce in China is the right to the CER; it has retained this only because this railway is the military base which can be used for an attack on the territory of the Soviet Union.[425]

This produced correspondence between the outcast leader Ch'en Tu-hsiu and the central committee, the scholastic phraseology of which revealed some of the dilemmas confronting the CCP. What

[421] *Ibid.* xiii, 380–386; for the agreements of 1924 see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 685–687.

[422] *The Sino-Russian Crisis* (Nanking, 1929), pp. 22–24; on July 23, 1929, the Nanking government claimed that "the seizure of the railway had been carried out after full consideration by, and under the direct instructions of, Nanking" (*Documents on British Foreign Policy*, Series II, viii (1960), 1016).

[423] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, xii (1967), 388–329.

[424] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 36, July 26, 1929, pp. 773–774.

[425] Quoted in Ch'en's letter of July 28, 1929 (see p. 906, note 434 below).

was seen in Moscow as a flagrant threat to Soviet security appeared to patriotic Chinese, including some members of the CCP, as a move to liberate Chinese territory from foreign, i.e. Soviet, control. Ch'en in a letter of July 28, 1929, pointed out that Kuomintang, through the Nanking government, was demanding "the return of the CER to China", and purported to defend "the interests of the nation". The formula of the party central committee was inappropriate to counter this propaganda:

> The masses will oppose the slogan of the defence of China to our slogan of the defence of the USSR, and will draw their own conclusion.

The central committee replied on August 4, 1929, that the affair of the CER "reflects the fundamental contradiction between the socialism of the Soviet Union and world imperialism":

> The broad masses will answer Kuomintang: "In order to support the Chinese revolution, we must support the Soviet Union. Support of the Soviet Union is support of the Chinese revolution."[426]

Ch'en pressed the attack in a second more theoretical letter. He accused the central committee of confusing principles and tactics, and quoted Lenin's acceptance of Brest-Litovsk as an example of a correct departure from principle on tactical grounds. The slogan of "Defence of the USSR" was right in principle, but was "not enough to win over the broad masses". The proletarian revolution could be successful only if "the revolutionary masses enjoy the support of even the most backward masses."

> In practice [he continued], China will never be able by herself to recover the CER, and the seizure of the CER will be used by the reactionaries and imperialists as a pretext for engineering an imperialist, anti-Soviet war, or a war between the imperialists themselves. These wars will still further aggravate the miserable condition of the toiling masses.... You limit yourselves to a protest against war *which is dangerous to the Soviet Union*, and say not a word of the danger which threatens the toiling masses of China.

[426] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 48, (226), 1929, pp. 43–47; this and Ch'en's two subsequent letters were addressed to the party politburo, but the replies came from the central committee.

The question was: "Is it possible to mobilize the Chinese proletariat merely with the slogan of support for the USSR?" Ch'en also attacked a CCP proclamation of July 21, 1929, denouncing Kuomintang as "a party dedicated to democracy" which had been guilty of an act of betrayal. This presupposed the existence of a so-called "'Left' wing of the bourgeoisie", and was based on an illusion which the CCP should expose. The party central committee again replied reproaching Ch'en with failure to recognize the fundamental difference which distinguished war against the Soviet Union from war between the imperialist Powers. In sharper terms than before, it pointed to the dangers of, "on the one hand, the infantile disease of Leftism, and on the other, opportunism and even insubordination", and dismissed Ch'en's arguments as "a clever trick".[427] It must have been about this time that the central committee drew up a further directive which showed how unwilling it was to dissociate itself completely from Kuomintang:

> The fundamental danger of war was provoked by contradictions between bourgeoisie, landlords and compradors. For the economic expansion of the bourgeoisie it is important to expand local markets and contract the imperialist sector of the economy. Hence the bourgeoisie desired to deliver a certain blow at feudal power, to improve the position of the peasants, to squeeze out the imperialist Powers and achieve tariff autonomy.... The landlord class strives for intensified exploitation of the peasantry, the compradors for the expansion of imperialist commerce. These interests cannot be reconciled.[428]

As the situation in Manchuria became more critical, the issue acquired wider dimensions. On October 26, 1929, IKKI addressed to the central committee of the CCP a letter which betrayed anxiety lest any remaining tenderness for Kuomintang might weaken the party's resolve, and exhorted it more insistently than ever before to mobilize all manner of resistance in China to the aggressive nationalist régime. The party was urged to "begin at once to prepare the masses for a revolutionary overthrow of the

[427] *Ibid.* No. 48 (226), 1929, pp. 47–55; neither Ch'en's second letter nor the second reply of the party central committee are dated.

[428] Quoted, but not precisely dated, in *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 51 (229), 1929, pp. 22–23, and referred to in Ch'en's "third letter" (see p. 903 below).

bourgeois-landlord bloc, for the establishment of a dictatorship of the working class peasantry in the form of Soviets, actively developing and extending more and more the revolutionary forms of the class struggle (mass political strikes, revolutionary demonstrations, partisan campaigns etc. etc.)". The "united counter-revolutionary bloc of imperialists, landlords, and the whole bourgeoisie" was admittedly divided into two groupings, each with its own "militarists" (by a revealing oversight Feng Yü-hsiang was included in both). The first represented landlords and big native bourgeoisie. The second, representing small capitalist entrepreneurs, malcontents among the small landowners, and petty-bourgeois exploiters in town and country, purported to stand for a "reorganization" of Kuomintang. But the second grouping was as reactionary as the first, and must be resisted with equal firmness by "the one revolutionary camp, the proletariat, the peasantry and the urban poor". The party was reproved for having failed to become "the inspirer, organizer and leader" of mass movements of peasants and workers. Only towards the end of the letter was "the conflict in Manchuria" specifically mentioned; it was imperative to "organize a campaign under the direct slogans of the defence of the USSR, exposing all factions of Kuomintang, including the 'reorganizers', as agents of imperialism". Partisan warfare was to be intensified, "especially in regions of Manchuria, and in regions where Mao Tse-tung and Ho Lung are active". Finally, a word of censure was reserved for "the liquidationist platform of Ch'en Tu-hsiu" and for "the counter-revolutionary substance of Trotskyism".[429]

Meanwhile Ch'en Tu-hsiu, having digested the caustic reply of the party central committee to his second letter, launched another broadside in the form of a third letter, which dissected at length the policies pursued by the central committee since his own dismissal from the leadership at the conference of August 7, 1927. He struck a pessimistic note. "After the Canton rising was smashed, it was clear that we were beaten." But, instead of adopting defensive tactics, "it was firmly decided that the revolutionary wave is incessantly rising". Putschism became endemic in party

[429] The letter appeared belatedly in *Pravda*, December 29, 1929, and is dated "December 1929" in *Strategiya i Taktika Kominterna* (1934), pp. 252–258; it is correctly dated in *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 51 (229), 1929, p. 23.

policy, and, though condemned in name at the sixth party congress, was encouraged by the repeated claim that the situation was favourable for revolutionary action. This attitude was rooted in a false analysis of the class character of the Chinese revolution, which treated the feudal landlords as "a force in rivalry with the bourgeoisie or even more important than the bourgeoisie." In fact, "Chinese feudalism has over a long period been closely intertwined with commercial capital", and both "exploit the peasantry together". The wars fought by Chiang Kai-shek were "wars between opposing cliques of the ruling class, not wars of the bourgeoise against landlords". The party failed to understand the character of the agrarian revolution. The rich peasants, in league with commercial capital, actively exploited the peasant masses; "the commercial bourgeoisie, the compradors, the *kulak* peasantry, just as much as the landlords, are the enemies against whom the struggle will be waged in the time of the agrarian revolution". Most damaging of all, Ch'en denounced the repressive régime now established in the party. "Under the pretext of a struggle against 'extreme democracy' ", democracy in the party had been liquidated, and "comrades who differ from the central committee on tactics and methods of work are deprived of the possibility of expressing their opinions"; a dissenter was at once labelled "petty bourgeois", "oppositionist" or "Trotskyite". Ch'en concluded by regretting that "a party built up on the bones and blood of an incalculable number of comrades is entering a state of decline and decay thanks to the incorrect line which we have adopted".[430]

This letter of total defiance could have only one result. On November 15, 1929, the party politburo expelled Ch'en from the party.[431] No answer was vouchsafed by the party to his third letter; but the journal of Comintern published a long article by Martynov, entitled "Ch'en Tu-hsiu's Parting Word", which replied to all three letters. Its most effective point was to hold Ch'en, now saddled with the derisory title of "professor", responsible "in no

[430] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 49–50 (227–228), 1929, pp. 62–74; for the controversy about Chinese feudalism see Note E, pp. 1023–1039 below. Ch'en in his letter of December 10, 1929 (see p. 906, note 434 below) also mentioned a letter to the central committee of October 10, 1929, in which he put forward the slogans "Nullify the unequal treaties", "Against the militarist dictatorship of Kuomintang", and "Summon the National Assembly", and a letter written jointly by himself and P'eng Shu-chih on October 26, 1929; neither of these has been traced.

[431] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 51 (229), 1929, p. 27.

small degree" for the past errors of the CCP. The Comintern policy of alliance with Kuomintang had been "opportunistically distorted by the leadership of the party"; the party had failed to assert its independence within Kuomintang, and had not asserted "the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolutionary movement"; it had failed to take the lead in the agrarian revolution. What was not said was that most of Ch'en's errors stemmed from his faithful, if often unwilling, subservience to the instructions of Comintern and its representatives. Quotations from Lenin were adduced to show that Lenin had never accepted Ch'en's distinction between "principle" and tactics. The article indulged in the technique of guilt by association. Ch'en was compared to Brandler. Like Trotsky, he denied the reality of Chinese feudalism, asserted that the Chinese bourgeois revolution was already finished, and described the Canton rising as a putsch. Finally, his attitude to the Manchurian conflict showed that he had returned to his origins as "a petty-bourgeois nationalist and patriot".[432]

Nothing in Ch'en Tu-hsiu's record had hitherto commended him to supporters of Trotsky. He had submissively accepted the official line; on the rare occasions when he had manifested symptoms of dissent, he had appeared to lean towards more cautious rather than to more radical policies. On November 15, 1929, the very day on which he was expelled from the party, a group of "Chinese Bolshevik-Leninists" wrote to Trotsky branding him as an "old opportunist of the CCP", and censuring him for not having resisted "the opportunist Stalinist leadership".[433] But on December 10, 1929, Ch'en addressed an open letter to all members of the CCP, which was published as a pamphlet. In it he reviewed the history of the party since its inception, and, frankly admitting his own errors, attributed them to the pressure of Comintern and its representatives. He spoke of the "young" and "very immature" CCP, which "does not yet have the ability to invent any theories or formulate any policy on its own". But the verdict was unsparing:

> We should very frankly and objectively recognize that all past and present opportunist policies came from Comintern. Comintern should bear the responsibility.... The leading organ of the Chinese party ought to bear the responsibility for blindly

[432] *Ibid.* No. 51 (229), pp. 17–28.

[433] *Byulleten' Oppozitsii* (Paris), No. 9, January 1930, pp. 28–29.

executing the opportunist policy of Comintern without the slightest understanding or protest.

In conclusion Ch'en recorded the verdict that "comrade Trotsky's views are Marxist–Leninist", and urged his supporters to "unite solidly together, and stand up on the side of the international opposition led by comrade Trotsky".[434] The scandal caused by the letter in Comintern circles was partly eclipsed by the intense current preoccupation in Moscow with the Manchurian scene.

Whatever analogies might be found between the campaign against the Soviet Union in 1927 and that of 1929, events took a very different course. Chiang Kai-shek's position in the summer of 1929 was less secure than it seemed. It is doubtful whether the call to action in IKKI's letter of October 26, 1929, had much effect, though it was afterwards claimed that demonstrations and strikes had been organized by the Chinese section of Profintern in Shanghai, Harbin and Tientsin, and in the Soviet areas.[435] But both Feng Yü-hsiang in the north-western provinces and Chang Fa-k'uei, who held Canton, showed signs of throwing off Chiang's authority.[436] Moreover, Chiang seems to have been guilty of two major miscalculations. The first, based on the experience of 1927, was that, while the Soviet Government might protest loudly, it neither could nor would take any effective action. Belief in the military impotence of the Red Army was widely current.[437] The

[434] Ch'en Tu-hsiu, *Kao Ch'üan-tang t'ung-chih shu* (1929). A complete translation, superseding the defective and incomplete version published in 1930–1931 in *The Militant* (see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 698, note 2), is in *Chinese Studies in History*, iii, No. 3 (1970), pp. 224–250); Roy and Voitinsky, previously disguised as Lois or Louis and Wu Ting Kong, regain their real names, though the latter is erroneously described as "secretary of the eastern department" of Comintern (instead of the eastern bureau in Shanghai).

[435] *Pyatyi Kongress Krasnogo Internatsionala Profsoyuzov* (1931), p. 317; for the letter of October 26, 1929 see pp. 902–903 above.

[436] If Feng at this time received support from his old Soviet patrons, no evidence of this has come to light; they had in the interval become thoroughly disillusioned with him. An article probably written at the end of 1928 remarked that Feng, "in spite of his flirtation with the so-called Left Kuomintang . . . , remains in the eyes of bourgeois China a militarist-feudalist in revolt against the central government" (*Novyi Vostok*, xxvi–xxvii (1929), 3).

[437] According to Feng Yü-hsiang (quoted in P. Chubb, *Twentieth Century China* (N.Y., 1965), p. 162), Chiang told Chang that "anyone can beat the

1927 precedent was, however, not valid. Soviet interests in central China had never been substantial, and no means existed of defending them. But to abandon the Russian-built CER and the long-established Russian position of pre-eminence in northern Manchuria, to be reduced to the long *détour* via Khabarovsk as the sole means of communication with the vital Pacific port of Vladivostok, would have been a staggering blow to Soviet power and prestige in Asia. Any such intention was vigorously disclaimed by the Soviet leaders, and was fathered, as it had been in the past, on Trotsky and the opposition.[438] Moreover means now existed to implement a firm policy. By 1929 three years' work on the building up of the Red Army had begun to yield results. It was true that the Soviet authorities could not have faced a major war, and that the Red Army was not equipped for it. But, so long as Japan held aloof, it was more than a match for the primitive Chinese levies which had fought in the civil war.

Chiang's other miscalculation was that the western Powers would be as warmly favourable as they had been in 1927 to forceful action against the Soviet Union.[439] But here too the climate had changed. Western fears of communism had begun to evaporate; and a British Labour government was in process of renewing relations with the Soviet Union. The seizure of the CER by the Chinese authorities fell into a pattern only too familiar in recent years — the violation of treaty rights of foreign Powers. The American minister in Peking reacted at once by calling it "an act of aggression by the Chinese against Russian rights in the Chinese Eastern Railway" and "an act of confiscation".[440] The British

Soviet Union"; according to a British report, the Nanking goverment "relied on the opinion expressed by their German military advisers, who stated that Russia was not in a position to undertake large-scale operations in Manchuria" (*Documents on British Foreign Policy*, Series II, viii (1960), 1020).

[438] Trotsky in October 1929 rejected a proposal put forward by Belgian communists "to surrender the railway voluntarily to the oppressor of Manchuria and agent of Japan"; and a month later he again denied a report, said to emanate from Moscow, that he was in favour of surrendering the CER (*Byulleten' Oppozitsii* (Paris), No. 6, October 1929, p. 28; No. 7, November 1929, pp. 28–29). For past accusations in the same sense see p. 706, note 24 above).

[439] The same view was taken by Ch'en Tu-hsiu, who, in his letter to the central committee of the CCP of July 28, 1929 (see p. 901 above), assumed either that the USSR would resist, and would be attacked by the imperialist Powers "under the pretext of defending China", or that the USSR would give way, in which case the Powers would fight over the spoils.

[440] *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1929*, ii (1943), 226–227.

minister reported that "the situation with which they [the Soviet Government] were faced in July 1929 was one of which other Powers have had all too common experience — a forcible attack on rights secured by treaty, but which were represented as an infringement of China's sovereignty".[441] Nor were the potential consequences of a Chinese victory altogether reassuring to the western countries. A Soviet withdrawal would leave a vacuum in Manchuria, which only Japan might have ambitions to fill. Nobody wished to plunge into that imbroglio. The still cautious Japanese Government declared its neutrality in the dispute. The American Secretary of State sought to invoke the Kellogg pact, to which both the disputants had acceded.[442] The high-handed Chinese action which had started the trouble was blamed; and, almost for the first time, most foreign diplomatic opinion was sympathetic to the Soviet cause.

Chiang had made yet another miscalculation. He evidently assumed that the administration of the Manchurian provinces was eager and ready to take over the CER from the expelled Soviet authorities. It soon transpired that Chang Hsüeh-liang was experiencing qualms about the wisdom of his drastic action. Immediately after the rupture was announced, and before Melnikov, the Soviet consul in Harbin, had taken his departure, the Chinese diplomatic commissar hastened to Harbin from Mukden, and on July 22, 1929, made overtures which included a promise to release the arrested Soviet officials, agreement to a conference to settle the dispute, and recognition that nothing done since the *coup* of July 10, 1929, prejudiced the terms of the settlement. Melnikov, on instructions from Moscow, replied on July 25, 1929, demanding as a condition of the proposed conference a preliminary declaration that the régime established by the treaty of 1924 was still valid.[443] He then left Harbin with his family and staff. But on July 30, 1929, when he was already on Soviet soil, he was overtaken by the Chinese commissar, who delivered a personal letter from

[441] *Documents on British Foreign Policy*, Series II, viii (1960), 1027.

[442] *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1929* (1943), ii, 215–217, 234–236, 242–243.

[443] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, xii (1967), 426–427. According to *Documents on British Foreign Policy*, Series II, viii (1960), 1019–1020, Melnikov went to Changchun on July 23–24, 1929, for secret negotiations with Chinese military and civil authorities; this visit, if it occurred, led to no result, and does not figure in Soviet published records.

Chang Hsüeh-liang to Karakhan. This proved to be no advance on the proposals of July 22, 1929, and was rejected by the Soviet Government.[444] The Chinese authorities in Mukden, according to a report from the German consul, continued to display a "demonstrative optimism".[445]

The time had come for more active measures. In August 1929 Soviet troops under the command of Blyukher moved up to the frontier and carried out one of two minor raids into Chinese territory. Negotiations conducted through the German Government, which had taken charge of Soviet relations with China after the rupture, came near to success,[446] but eventually broke down. For the next two months Chinese negotiators were evasive; and the Soviet Government, now conscious of its strength, stood for the integral fulfilment of its demands. In November 1929 more serious military operations were undertaken. Soviet troops, supported by aeroplanes crossed the frontier, routed disorderly Chinese forces, and captured two small towns almost without resistance.[447] This display of Soviet power and Chinese impotence at last produced serious negotiations. A protocol signed at Khabarovsk on December 22, 1929, provided for the revocation of all Chinese measures taken since July 10, 1929, and the complete restoration of the *status quo ante*, reserving any disputed questions for a Soviet–Chinese conference.[448] For the first time Soviet power had scored a resounding victory over the Chinese warlords.

The last months of 1929 were a turning-point in Soviet relations with China. The Soviet Union had emerged from the Manchurian episode as a military and diplomatic force in the Far East, and had forged links of common concern with the western Powers. As Soviet diplomacy gained self-confidence, the inclination in Moscow to interpret the interests of the Chinese revolution in terms of the urgent demands of Soviet national security became more apparent. The CCP, reduced to a handful of devoted communists in the major cities, exposed to the constant danger of arrest and execution, was a prey to intrigue and disintegration. Though Li Li-san had already lost the confidence of Moscow in

[444] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, xii (1967), 428–429.
[445] *Ibid.* xii, 446.
[446] See a statement by the Soviet Government in *Izvestiya*, August 31, 1929.
[447] For reports from American consular officers on these operations see *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1929* (1943), ii, 344–350.
[448] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, xii (1967), 673–676.

the summer of 1929, Ch'en Tu-hsiu's fierce assault on the party record probably helped to postpone any change in the leadership. Li's hold on the party machine, though not on the loyalty of his principal colleagues, was strong, and it was not till the end of 1930 that he was finally dislodged. By this time the impotence of the CCP in the urban centres could no longer be disguised. The peasant levies of Mao Tse-tung and the local Soviets established by them in remote provinces paid at best hypocritical lip-service to the rulings of the CCP and of Comintern. The Chinese communist movement survived, and, much as it owed to Russian inspiration and example, would ultimately conquer in forms unplanned and mistrusted by Moscow.

CHAPTER 86

INDIA IN FERMENT

THE centre of gravity of the Indian communist movement in the middle nineteen-twenties still lay outside the country. Its native growth was inhibited by the firm hand of authority. But direction from Moscow was ambiguous and intermittent. The dispute between Lenin and Roy at the second congress of Comintern in 1920 about support for the national bourgeoisie in the struggle against foreign imperialism[1] had been smoothed over, but never completely resolved. Roy since that time had taken many opportunities to bolster his view of the impossibility of an alliance with the Indian national bourgeoisie by insisting on the growing importance of Indian industry, on the complicity of Indian industrialists with the imperialist régime and on their exploitation of Indian workers, but was once more rebuffed by Manuilsky at the fifth congress of Comintern in 1924.[2] When in 1925 the experience of the Chinese revolution and of the apparently fruitful alliance of Comintern and the CCP with the nationalist Kuomintang began to make its impact on policy in Moscow, Voitinsky issued a warning that the upper stratum of the Indian bourgeoisie, unlike the Chinese bourgeoisie, "has already become a conservative class more afraid of revolution within the country than of the national oppression of imperialism".[3] Roy's appointment at the sixth IKKI in February 1926 to preside over the important Chinese commission showed that, whatever his views on India, he had already learned the lesson of flexibility. Talk of revolution sweeping Asia was in the air, and the resolution drafted by the commission on the Chinese question hailed Kuomintang as a "revolutionary bloc of workers, peasants, intelligentsia and urban democracy".[4] Roy's first attempt to apply the Kuomintang analogy to India seems to have been made in a letter to his sup-

[1] See *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917–1923*, Vol. 3, pp. 251–259.

[2] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 662–665.

[3] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 4 (41), 1925, p. 66; for this article see p. 702 above.

[4] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 762–766.

porters there in February 1926. He proposed dual organization: "a legal nationalist party with a radical republican programme (a People's Party), with an illegal Communist Party inside it". The communists were invited to convene a conference "not as communists, but as nationalists"; and the People's Party was to publish "a legal organ".[5]

Even in India, meanwhile, some progress had been made. The Cawnpore congress of the suspect and unpromising Indian Communist Party in December 1925[6] had the unexpected result of a take-over of its embryonic organization by a group of communists who were followers of Roy, or had had some contact with Moscow. Ghate and Bergerhotta became its joint secretaries, and among the members of a newly elected central committee were Ahmed from Bengal and Iyengar from Madras. The name of the party was changed to Communist Party of India (CPI) — a symbolical act designed to bring it into line with other member parties of Comintern. Satya Bakhta, its original progenitor, disappeared from the scene.[7] Roy greeted the news with enthusiasm, and in March 1926 sent a letter of instruction to the CPI, calling on it to affiliate to Comintern, to form communist fractions in the National Congress and in the All-India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), and to build up an illegal party side by side with the legal apparatus. But he sent no funds. This grievance was aired at a meeting of the group in April 1926; and a letter was written to Roy, complaining of his neglect and broadly hinting that he had diverted to his own purposes funds intended for "the cause". The young party was so poor that it could barely afford to maintain an office in Delhi, to which its headquarters had been transferred.[8] Simultaneously with the constitution of the CPI another event occurred of great promise for the immediate future, in which Ahmed was also closely concerned — the transformation of the Labour Swaraj Party, which was formally a member of the National Congress, into an independent Peasants' and Workers' Party of Bengal. The title of its

[5] Government of India, *Communism in India, 1924–1927* (1927), p. 105; for Roy's views at this time as expressed in a book entitled *The Future of Indian Politics* (see pp. 920–921 below).

[6] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 669.

[7] Government of India, *Communism in India, 1924–1927* (1927), pp. 53–54, 175–180; M. Ahmed, *Communist Party of India: Years of Formation* (English translation, Calcutta, 1959), pp. 16–21.

[8] Government of India, *Communism in India, 1924–1927* (1927), pp. 107–110.

journal, *Langal* (*Plough*), showed that its appeal was directed mainly to the peasantry. The name of the party was, however, later changed to Workers' and Peasants' Party, and the title of its journal to *Ganavanee* (*Voice of the Masses*); and its public manifestos were said to have been drafted by members of CPI.[9]

The seventh IKKI in November brought Roy to the pinnacle of his success as Comintern expert on China. He again took a prominent part in the debate on the Chinese question, and was secretary of the drafting commission which prepared the resolution on the subject. Roy was conscious of the application to India — indeed, the Indian parallel was never absent from his mind — of his denunciation of the upper strata of the national bourgeoisie, now ready to "form a united front with the imperialists", and of his insistence on the need for an alliance between workers and peasants, with agrarian revolution the central theme of his programe.[10] On the eve of the session he had written in his journal *Masses of India*:

> The Kuomintang has been successful in uniting all revolutionary nationalists in the struggle against foreign imperialism. The same thing can be done by the Indian nationalist movement.[11]

In an article on India in the Comintern press during the session, he noted the "*process of class differentiation in the ranks of the nationalists*". The "*rising activity of the proletariat*" and a "*new wave of peasant revolts*" were driving the "petty-bourgeois revolutionary nationalists" into a "*fighting united front*" with the workers and peasants.[12] Notwithstanding these generalizations, Roy's specific instructions to his Indian followers were complex and baffling. During the summer of 1926 he advised them to drop the name of the CPI altogether, and to constitute a Workers' and Peasants' Party (WPP) as "a veiled communist party", while constituting a People's Party as a separate "revolu-

[9] M. Ahmed, *Communist Party of India: Years of Formation* (English translation, Calcutta, 1959), pp. 22–24; the journal survived for only a few months. For the change of name of the party see p. 916 below; for the Labour Swaraj Party see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 669.

[10] See p. 728 above.

[11] Quoted in P. Haithcox, *Communism and Nationalism in India* (1971), p. 50; a further article in *Masses of India* in March 1927 called for a movement in India modelled on Kuomintang.

[12] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 146, November 30, 1926, pp. 2548–2550.

tionary national party". Towards the end of the year, at the time of the seventh IKKI, he repeated the proposal to "change the name of the communist party". The WPP should fill the necessary rôle of "a working-class party" and communists would function as "an illegal fraction" within it, the aim being "to gradually develop the Workers' and Peasants' Party into a real communist party". (Elsewhere in the letter he confusingly spoke of the WPP operating "inside of the communist party".) He proposed that the WPP of Bengal should be expanded into a WPP of India. All these organizations were to be independent of the separate nationalist People's Party.[13] These instructions may well have seemed enigmatic to Indian communists unfamiliar with the Chinese precedent which had helped to inspire them.

Roy left Moscow for China in the first days of 1927, and for nine months was isolated from any contact with Indian affairs. It was a period of growing political activity in India, and of a sharp turn to the Left in national opinion. Events in China had done more than provide Indian communists with a pattern of organization. Waves of anti-foreign feeling, set in motion by the Shanghai shootings of May 30, 1925, spread to India, through the large number of Indians resident in China, and the smaller number of Chinese resident in India, many of the latter members of Kuomintang, as much as through normal propaganda channels. The victories of the Chinese armies in the summer and autumn of 1926 encouraged belief in the potentialities of a nationalist movement and hatred of the imperialists. A protest in the Indian Legislative Assembly against the presence of an Indian contingent in the British forces in Shanghai was vetoed by the Viceroy.[14] Mass meetings to express sympathy with the Chinese revolution were held in the larger Indian cities in the winter of 1926–1927. A conference of MOPR was held during the annual session of Indian National Congress in December 1926 as an indirect effort to woo national sympathy for communist policies;[15] and the executive committee of

[13] Government of India, *Communism in India, 1924–1927* (1927), pp. 115, 120–121; for the earlier letters of February and March 1926 see pp. 911–912 above.

[14] Government of India, *Communism in India, 1924–1927* (1927), p. 216; for the influence of Kuomintang in India see *ibid.* pp. 249–253. The long chapter on China in this report (pp. 203–254) is evidence of the anxiety in official quarters caused by the influence in India of the Chinese revolution.

[15] *Ibid.* p. 142.

Congress in May 1927 passed a resolution assuring "its Chinese brethren of its complete sympathy in their struggle for independence" and calling on the government to send no further Indian troops to China.[16] On the other hand, "the sending of Indian soldiers to crush the Chinese revolution" was said to have been "supported by Indian capitalists" on the ground that "they were sent for the defence of Indian interests among others".[17] An Indian writer in the journal of the Moscow University of Toilers of the East, recording these events, noted that, "thanks to the successes of Kuomintang, the idea of a national people's party has become very popular in India", though it might be wiser to join the communist party, "which alone can lead the national movement".[18]

By pure chance Roy's withdrawal from the scene also coincided with the first serious attempt by the CPGB to participate actively in the Indian communist movement. Glading's mission in 1925 had been purely one of enquiry.[19] Allison, a British trade unionist, was sent to India under Profintern auspices in the spring of 1926 to work in the Indian trade union movement, but seems to have had no contact with the CPI. After a few months he was arrested and deported.[20] In December 1926 a young party member named Spratt was despatched to India. He received instructions (and no doubt funds) from Clemens Dutt, brother of Palme Dutt,[21] and from Petrovsky, *alias* Bennett, who told him to write a pamphlet urging the Indian movement to follow the Kuomintang precedent; and he was given the names of such Indian communists as were known in London, notably Ghate, the secretary of the CPI, and

[16] *Report of the Forty-Second Indian National Congress* (Madras, n.d.), p. 4.

[17] Statements quoted from *Bombay Chronicle*, February 16, 1927 in *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 33 (107), 1927, pp. 27–28.

[18] *Revolyutsionnyi Vostok*, ii (1927), 96–106; the article was signed Savdar, who has not been indentified, but who wrote frequently in the Comintern press in the next few years.

[19] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 607. The controversy whether the Indian communist movement should be directly controlled by Comintern and its agents, or by the CPGB (see *ibid.* Vol. 3, pp. 666–668) had never been resolved; Moscow preferred to keep both lines open.

[20] Government of India, *Communism in India, 1924–1927* (1927), pp. 111–112; P. Spratt, *Blowing Up India* (Calcutta, 1955), p. 32.

[21] Palme Dutt (see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 667), who had poor health, was exclusively a writer and theorist, and lived at this time in Brussels; Clemens, who acted as a link between the CPGB and Indian communists, was less influential, but more active.

Ahmed, who had recently established the Peasants' and Workers' Party in Bengal. On arrival, Spratt found a situation scarcely more satisfactory than that on which Glading had reported two years earlier. A communist party now existed, but its membership did not exceed twenty, divided between Bombay and Calcutta.[22] The prospects of extending the movement initiated by Ahmed's Peasants' and Workers' Party of Bengal were, however, more promising. Spratt and Ahmed set to work, and at a meeting on February 8, 1927, established a Workers' and Peasants' Party (WPP) of Bombay.[23] A few days later, the Bengal party, in order to conform to communist orthodoxy, was renamed the Workers' and Peasants' Party (WPP) of Bengal at a conference in Calcutta.[24]

This success served as a spur to fresh activity in the trade unions. Both the Amsterdam International and Profintern had made sporadic and intermittent efforts to woo the nascent Indian trade union movement.[25] The movement was ready to find support where it could; one of its leaders, Chaman Lal, on a visit to Great Britain in September 1926, spoke both at the Bournemouth congress of the TUC and at a meeting of the National Minority Movement in Poplar.[26] Lozovsky warned the seventh Soviet trade union congress in December 1926 of the efforts of the "reformist" trade union organization to win over the growing Indian movement.[27] The meeting of the All-India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) in March 1927 was the first such occasion on which communist influence made itself conspicuously felt. Saklatvala, an Indian member of the CPGB and the one British communist MP, was a distinguished guest; and Spratt was also present. Ghate, the secretary of the CPI, was elected one of the secretaries of the congress.[28] Communist inspiration was revealed in a resolution calling for "Hands off China", and in resolutions supporting the Anglo-Russian trade union committee and protesting against imperial-

[22] P. Spratt, *Blowing Up India* (Calcutta, 1955), pp. 29–30, 35.

[23] G. Overstreet and M. Windmiller, *Communism in India* (1959), p. 87.

[24] Government of India, *Communism in India, 1924–1927* (1927), pp. 143–144; M. Ahmed, *The Communist Party of India and its Formation Abroad* (English translation, Calcutta, 1962), p. 161.

[25] Communist efforts were described, and perhaps exaggerated, in Government of India, *Communism in India, 1924–1927* (1927), pp. 298–300.

[26] *Ibid.* p. 296.

[27] *Sed'moi S"ezd Professional'nykh Soyuzov SSSR* (1927), p. 259.

[28] V. Karnik, *Indian Trade Unions* (2nd ed. 1966), p. 53; P. Spratt, *Blowing Up India* (Calcutta, 1955), pp. 36–37.

ism.[29] A plan was made to send an Indian delegation to the pan-Pacific trade union conference to take place in Canton on May 1, 1927, and Roy promised that funds would be provided; but the authorities refused exit permits.[30]

It was about the same time that the executive committee of the CPI discussed and rejected Roy's proposal to dissolve the party and merge it in an All-India Workers' and Peasants' Party.[31] What was in effect the conception of legal and illegal parties existing side by side was accepted. At the end of May 1927 a congress of the CPI was held in Bombay. According to an intelligence report, not more than a dozen people were present. Its demands included national independence and the formation of a democratic republic; liquidation of large landed estates; promotion of industrialization; the eight-hour day; and a minimum wage. The decision was taken to cooperate with "radical nationalists" to form a "strong Left wing" in the National Congress. A statement was issued explaining that the communist movement "is neither imported from abroad, nor a group maintained by Russia for its propaganda in India". An ambitious constitution was adopted providing for a central committee of 15 and a presidium of five; those elected to the presidium included Ghate, the secretary-general, Ahmed, the contact man with the various WPPs, Iyengar, a founder member of the CPI, though no longer actively associated with it, and now a prominent figure in the National Congress, and Dange, who represented the nascent interest of the party in the trade unions.[32] In September 1927 Spratt was joined by Bradley, another member of the CPGB, who worked with him for the next 18 months.[33] The moment was propitious; and the evidence suggests that these young men did more to promote the communist and Left-wing movement in India, and at far less cost to Comintern, than Roy had achieved in the previous seven years. The largest measure of success was achieved in the WPPs with their loose organization

[29] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 35, April 1, 1927, p. 762.

[30] Government of India, *Communism in India, 1924–1927* (1927), pp. 222–223; for the conference which was eventually held in Wuhan see pp. 800–803 above.

[31] Government of India, *Communism in India, 1924–1927* (1927) p. 116; for the proposal see p. 913 above.

[32] *Ibid.* pp. 121–124, 148; *Novyi Vostok*, xxiii–xxiv (1928), 23–24; G. Overstreet and M. Windmiller, *Communism in India* (1959), p. 89.

[33] P. Spratt, *Blowing Up India* (Calcutta, 1955), p. 35.

and floating membership. The Bengal party by the beginning of 1928 claimed 125 active members, consisting of intellectuals, peasants and a few workers, and 10,000 "associate members" throughout the province. The Bombay party, with perhaps about the same number of active members, had been able to mobilize 30,000 workers to demonstrate against the Simon commission, and played a part in encouraging the massive Bombay textile strike in the summer of 1928.[34]

Meanwhile more direct contacts were being established between the Indian national movement and the Soviet Union. Jawaharlal Nehru, an increasingly influential leader of the National Congress, figured prominently at the Brussels anti-imperialist congress of February 1927 and in the League Against Imperialism founded by it.[35] This was a keypoint in Nehru's conversion to an openly revolutionary position. He was among the distinguished foreigners who celebrated the tenth anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution in Moscow in November 1927; and he returned to India to attend the annual session of the National Congress in Madras in the following month. The British Labour Party at its annual conference in October 1927 had adopted a resolution proposed by Lansbury in favour of dominion status for India,[36] and the British Government announced the appointment of a commission headed by Simon to report on constitutional reform for India; Indian opinion was exacerbated by the fact that not a single Indian was nominated to the commission.

The National Congress, therefore, when it met in Madras in December 1927, was in a mood to move towards the Left; Iyengar was its president for the year. Congress unanimously voted a resolution proposed by Iyengar to boycott the Simon commission, and resolutions proposed by Nehru, and clearly inspired by his European experiences, affirming that India would not take part in the war which Great Britain was preparing, calling for the affiliation of Congress to the League Against Imperialism, and demanding independence (as opposed to dominion status) for

[34] *Die Komintern vor dem 6 Weltkongress* (1928), p. 538; for the demonstration and the strike see pp. 919–920 below.

[35] See pp. 298–299 above; messages were also received by congress from Iyengar on behalf of the National Congress and from Gandhi (*Das Flammenzeichen vom Palais Egmont* (1927), pp. 274–275).

[36] *Report of the Twenty-Seventh Annual Conference of the Labour Party* (n.d.), pp. 255–259.

India.[37] A manifesto was addressed to the Congress by the WPP of Bengal.[38] A leading article which appeared in *Pravda* while the session was in progress rejoiced that "the *anti-imperialist* character of the Indian national movement is now coming to light". Contrary to previous assertions, it argued that the Indian bourgeoisie had not yet advanced nearly as far as the Chinese bourgeoisie. But the Chinese experience showed that a rift between the two strands — liberal-bourgeois and peasant-revolutionary — in the bourgeois-democratic movement was inevitable. Without for the present quitting the national movement under its bourgeois leaders, the young Indian proletariat and Communist Party of India should aim at strengthening and organizing the workers' and peasants' movement, "which alone is capable of developing to its full extent the task of struggling against imperialist oppression".[39] Roy, back from China, contemptuously dismissed the proceedings of the National Congress as "play acting". But he praised the WPP which, a year earlier than Congress, had put forward the demand for national independence, and prepared "a comprehensible programme for the national revolution".[40]

Events in India in 1928 pursued the same uncertain course. Congress, after its bold gestures in Madras, convened an all-party conference to consider constitutional reform. This in turn appointed a committee presided over by Motilal Nehru, father of Jawaharlal Nehru, which worked intermittently during the year, and a majority of whose members appeared to prefer dominion status to independence. On the other hand, the arrival of the Simon commission in February 1928 was met by hostile demonstrations and a widespread boycott. The demonstration 30,000 strong organized by the Bombay WPP carried banners with slogans such as "Long Live the Revolution", "Down with Imperialism" and "Full Independence".[41] The year 1928 saw a notable increase in the power and militancy of the trade unions. A massive strike

[37] J. Nehru, *An Autobiography* (1936), p. 167; in retrospect Nehru felt that these resolutions "were either not understood for what they were, or were distorted to mean something else". The proceedings were recorded in *Report of the Forty-Second Indian National Congress* (Madras, n.d.).

[38] J. Haithcox, *Communism and Nationalism in India* (1971), p. 347.

[39] *Pravda*, December 29, 1927.

[40] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 1, January 3, 1928, pp. 1–3.

[41] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 295; M. Ahmed, *Communist Party of India: Years of Formation* (English translation, Calcutta, 1959), p. 31.

against measures of rationalization and wage reductions in the Bombay cotton mills, the centre of the Indian textile industry, dragged on from April to October 1928. The strike movement spread to the steel and jute industries and the railways. In the melodramatic words of a British intelligence report:

> By the end of 1928 ... there was hardly a single public utility service or industry which had not been affected, in whole or in part, by the wave of communism which swept the country during the year.[42]

Spratt, Bradley and Dange, as well as the Bombay WPP, were active in this movement; and Spratt was said to have been instrumental in founding two new WPPs, in the Punjab in September 1928 and in the United Provinces a month later.[43]

The scene must now be shifted to Moscow where the Indian question, like the Chinese question, raised issues of principle which had hitherto been evaded or obscured. When Roy published a book in London in 1926 entitled *The Future of Indian Politics*, the opening sentence was a justification of the thesis which he had defended against Lenin at the second congress of Comintern in 1920:

> Bourgeois nationalism in India has ended in a complete compromise with imperialism, as was predicted years ago by those who judged the situation with Marxist realism.

He brought the picture up to date. By winning a series of concessions from the imperialist government (Roy was careful to point out their forced and self-interested character), the Indian national bourgeoisie had realized its three "cardinal demands": industrialization, fiscal autonomy and tariff protection. This "new economic situation" dominated the future of Indian politics. "The big bour-

[42] Government of India, *Communism in India, 1927–1935* (1935), p. 126.

[43] *Ibid.* p. 118; in fact these parties came into existence somewhat earlier. The report of IKKI to the sixth congress of Comintern in July 1928 stated that four workers' and peasants' parties were founded at this time, of which, however, only the Bombay and Bengal parties were "more or less active" (*Die Komintern vor dem 6. Weltkongress* (1928), p. 535); and a member of the secretariat spoke at the congress of WPPs in four provinces, which were fusing into all-India WPP (*Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 259).

geoisie is practically eliminated from the struggle for national freedom." The Swaraj Party was split; while the Right and Centre would follow the big bourgeoisie, its petty-bourgeois Left was still a revolutionary force, since the petty bourgeoisie was also threatened by the rise of Indian capitalism. Roy ended his pamphlet by advocating the formation of a people's party, representing petty bourgeoisie, peasants and workers; this he called "a historic necessity".[44] By what appears to have been pure coincidence, Dutt published in India, at almost exactly the same moment, a book entitled *Modern India*, whose most arresting point was that India had entered "the culminating stage of imperialism", in which the imperialist Power "proceeds to the expansion of manufacturing industry in the subject country itself, to the export of capital and the industrialization of India". Dutt was slightly more cautious than Roy in deducing political consquences, and believed that it was still possible to appeal to Left nationalist elements both in the National Congress and in the Swaraj Party. But he concluded, like Roy, by advocating a "people's party, gathering together the elements of the peasantry, the workers and the intelligentsia in the struggle for national liberation".[45]

Comintern initially displayed no particular interest in this discussion. The report prepared by the secretariat for the seventh IKKI in November 1926 accepted without question the view that the British Government had abandoned the policy of suppressing industrial development in India, and was now seeking to woo the Indian national bourgeoisie by encouraging such development. It concluded:

> This policy has yielded the desired political result by leading to an extension of the social basis of imperialist rule.... This social differentiation has brought the Indian national movement to a temporary standstill.[46]

Roy at the session continued to propound the theme that Britain, conscious of declining resources, was promoting the development

[44] M. N. Roy, *The Future of Indian Politics* (n.d. [1926]), *passim*; the passage quoted in *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), vi, 427, is on p. 44.

[45] R. P. Dutt, *Modern India* (Bombay, 1926) *passim*, especially pp. 13, 175–176; an edition with a few minor additions, and with a preface dated December 1, 1926, was published by the CPGB in London in 1927.

[46] *Tätigkeitsbericht der Exekutive der Kommunistichen Internationale, Februar bis November, 1926* (1926), pp. 163–164.

of native Indian capital. He looked forward to the time when "this small child, which England is bringing up for its own use, will shortly begin to run by itself".[47] Though Roy's argument evoked no response in the debate or in the resolutions of the session, the implications of these developments were not neglected by specialists in eastern affairs in Moscow. An article in the journal of the Communist University of Toilers of the East early in 1927 observed that "Indian nationalists cannot understand the nature of the exploitation of India by British capitalism, since they themselves are representatives of capital".[48]

An unexpected diversion now, however, occurred. In the summer of 1927, while Roy was still in China, an Indian communist Saumyendranath Tagore, a grand-nephew of the famous poet, arrived in Moscow. Tagore was secretary-general of the WPP of Bengal, and carried some rather dubious credentials from this party.[49] The most obvious motive of his journey was to undermine and discredit Roy's authority in Moscow. He sought an interview with Pyatnitsky, who was shocked to learn that, instead of the "hundreds of communists" reported by Roy, the membership of the CPI did not exceed twelve, and that "hardly any money had been received in India, and the growth of the communist movement was tremendously handicapped due to the lack of money and literature".[50] Whatever was said, it had become clear by 1927 that

[47] *Puti Mirovoi Revolyutsii* (1927), i, 332; Trotsky in an unpublished memorandum of June 1927 used the same argument about China, which could no longer be regarded as "a patriarchal colony" since the imperialists had introduced capitalist industry (Trotsky archives, T 3073).

[48] *Revolyutsionnyi Vostok*, ii, (1927), 27.

[49] The story of his departure related in M. Ahmed, *The Communist Party of India and its Formation Abroad* (English translation, Calcutta, 1962), pp. 159–160, is malicious, but may be true. According to Government of India, *Communism in India, 1924–1927* (1927), p. 137, Tagore had been a terrorist "concerned in assassination plots"; the same source later recorded that Roy was "strongly opposed to individual terrorism as practised by Bengali terrorists" (*idem, Communism in India, 1927–1935* (1935), p. 237), and was presumably on bad terms with Tagore and his group.

[50] Quoted from S. Tagore, *Historical Development of the Communist Movement in India* (Calcutta, 1944), pp. 10–11, in G. Overstreet and M. Windmiller, *Communism in India* (1959), p. 97; the source is biased and unreliable (see a critique in M. Ahmed, *The Communist Party of India and its Formation Abroad* (English translation, Calcutta, 1962), pp. 155–177), but the report of the conversation with Pyatnitsky is plausible. The degree of Roy's alleged financial "dishonesty" will be variously assessed. He certainly received substantial sums from Comintern for several years, maintaining an office in Paris and agents elsewhere, and publishing a journal; he lived in some style, and travelled

the funds entrusted by Comintern to Roy for work in India had yielded no appreciable result. How far the cool reception which awaited him in Moscow on his return from China in the autumn of 1927 was due to realization of this fact, and how far to the failure in China, can only be guessed.[51] Tagore found sufficient favour with the authorities to secure his enrolment in the Lenin International School.[52]

A by-product of Tagore's stay in Moscow was a memorandum submitted by him to the secretariat of IKKI on the development in India of Indian-owned industry. This was in no way a refutation of views expressed earlier by Roy, and hitherto accepted in Comintern; it tended to confirm them. But it sparked off a vast theoretical controversy which, after smouldering for many months, burst into flame at the sixth congress of Comintern in July 1928. During the discussion provoked by this memorandum, the ill-fated word "decolonization" was used to describe the process of Indian industrialization; it was probably coined by Bukharin.[53] What is certain is

freely, but some of his expenses may have been defrayed by his first wife, who was American. How large a part of the funds at his disposal reached India, to whom it was sent, or how it was used, remains a matter of conjecture. British intelligence agents, who found a fictitious list of Indian communists in Roy's correspondence, assumed that it was drawn up by him in order to throw dust in the eyes of Moscow (Government of India, *Communism in India, 1924–1927* (1927), pp. 75–77). Spratt heard of "large sums" sent to India in the earlier years, but "also heard that much of it went astray" (P. Spratt, *Blowing Up India* (Calcutta, 1955), p. 40). Control over Comintern funds at this time seems to have been remarkably lax.

[51] Roy in an open letter written after his denunciation at the tenth IKKI in July 1929 alleged that the charges of heresy against him were brought "in support of a verdict already secretly pronounced against me for some unknown crime" (M. N. Roy, *Our Differences* (Calcutta, 1938), p. 31). In the preface to the volume in which the open letter was published in 1938, he dismissed the view that the "crime" had been committed in China, pointing out that his work there had never been censured, and suggested that "the desire of the CPGB to establish its protectorate over the Indian communist movement had a good deal to do with it" (*ibid.* pp. ii–iii). Motives in Moscow may have been mixed; but it seems likely that Roy's failure, in spite of the large sums entrusted to him, to produce any solid results in India was a principal factor in his disgrace. "The Indian question" was on the agenda of a session of the presidium of IKKI on November 23, 1927 (*Pravda*, November 24, 1927; for this session see Vol. 2, p. 46); but it is not known whether it was discussed.

[52] M. Ahmed, *The Communist Party of India and its Formation Abroad* (English translation, Calcutta, 1962), p. 166.

[53] Both M. N. Roy, *Our Differences* (Calcutta, 1938), p. 30, and S. Tagore, *Historical Development of the Communist Movement in India* (Calcutta, 1944), pp. 9–11 (quoted in J. Haithcox, *Communism and Nationalism in India* (1971), p. 316, note 9), attributed it to Bukharin; and Pepper, a staunch sup-

that an Indian commission of IKKI was set up in the late summer of 1927 to examine the phenomenon, and that the word 'decolonization" occurred in its terms of reference.[54] In September 1927, while the commission was sitting, Roy returned from China obsessed by the experience of Chiang Kai-shek's *volte-face* and of the complicity of the Chinese national bourgeosie with the imperialists. In a draft resolution prepared for the commission he found it easy to apply the Chinese example to the Indian scene:

> From the new policy of imperialism derives the gradual decolonization of India, which will be allowed to pass from the status of a subject country to that of a "dominion". Instead of crushing the Indian bourgeoisie as a potential rival, it will be granted a modicum of participation in the economic development of the country under the hegemony of imperialism....
>
> These changes in the economic sphere have political consequences. The inevitable process of gradual decolonization contains in itself the beginnings of the collapse of the empire.[55]

How far tactical conclusions were drawn in the resolution is not clear. But these appeared fully in an article in Roy's journal *Masses of India* in November 1927, which was based on the same analysis:

> The new economic policy of British imperialism in India sharpens class differentiation and ripens the class struggle, in the face of which national struggle based upon capitalist antagonism loses its importance.... The bourgeoisie are not only withdrawing themselves from the national revolution; the withdrawal is but a prelude to a definite stand against the national revolution together with British imperialism....

And, borrowing Lenin's familiar prescription, he continued:

porter of Bukharin, quoted his words from an unpublished record of the secretariat: "It is necessary to examine properly the communication of our Indian comrades on the question of the industrialization, the decolonization, of India" (*Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 308). Palme Dutt later said that the word was "not actually used by himself or by any comrade in our party, but put forward by one or two comrades abroad" (*Communist Review*, No. 1, January 1929, p. 24). For Bukharin's later, rather uncomfortable, attempt to dissociate himself from the theory see p. 930 below.

[54] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 485–486; the speaker, Luhani, was a member of the commission (see p. 925 below).

[55] *Ibid.* iv, 11; other quotations appear in M. N. Roy, *Our Differences* (Calcutta, 1938), pp. 32–33. The full text was not published.

> Indian national revolution has passed its bourgeois stage. It must still realize a programme which, objectively and historically, is the programme of bourgeois revolution; but it is no longer a bourgeois revolution because it can and will succeed only by breaking the bonds of capitalist society.[56]

Roy, conscious of a chilly reception, did not linger in Moscow, and left for Berlin on October 3, 1927. But the seed continued to sprout. Bukharin at the fifteenth party congress in December 1927 was prepared to admit that Great Britain had made "a number of concessions", and "somewhat broadened the limits of the development of national Indian industry".[57] Luhani, a disciple of Roy who had worked in Comintern, and was a member of the Indian commission, wrote an article in the Comintern journal, in which the term "decolonization" was freely used; Luhani argued that "the Indian bourgeoisie has become a recognized political force, joining issue simultaneously in the struggle against the Indian working masses".[58] A member of the CPGB then in Moscow named Rathbone, an economist who was a friend of Roy, embarked on a statistical study entitled *Industrial India*, a chapter of which appeared in a Soviet journal in January 1928. Its thesis, amply illustrated by statistics, was that since about 1916, when the Indian Government had been allowed to impose a protective tariff on the import of cotton goods, Great Britain had reversed her traditional policy of treating India as a source of colonial products and a market for British manufactures, and had invested large capital sums in the development of native Indian industry; this was diagnosed as a modern and sophisticated method of extracting surplus value from a subject colonial population, characteristic of a period of finance capital and advanced imperialism, and also as a symptom of the cumulative contradictions of capitalism.[59]

What reversed the initially tolerant attitude shown in Moscow to this theory, or at what precise moment this reversal occurred, remains uncertain. The theory did not at first sight seem unortho-

[56] Quoted in G. Overstreet and M. Windmiller, *Communism in India* (1959), pp. 103–104.

[57] *Pyatnadtsatyi S"ezd VPK(B)*, i (1961), 672.

[58] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 48 (122), 1927, pp. 33–39, No. 49 (123), 1927, pp. 23–31.

[59] *Mirovoe Khozyaistvo i Mirovaya Politika*, No. 1, 1928, pp. 75–95; more than a year later the completed work, published in Russian, received a hostile review, *ibid.* No. 5, 1929, pp. 155–161.

dox. Lenin, in the controversy about self-determination in 1916, had maintained that imperialism meant "export of capital", and that "capitalist production transfers itself to the colonies at an ever more rapid rate".[60] But the very word "decolonization" served both to lend support to the theory of a civilizing mission of the imperialist Powers, and to imply that the liberation of the colonial countries might be achieved by peaceful means.

> If decolonization is possible [wrote a Soviet commentator], then one can evidently speak of the progressive rôle of imperialism, and this is the greatest deception of the masses.[61]

Any suggestion that the exploitation of India by British imperialism had been in any way modified or mitigated was unwelcome; and the turn to the Left which was gathering momentum in Comintern at this time encouraged uncompromising reactions. Personal jealousies may have played a part. Roy's vanity and self-importance had earned him enemies; and he had few achievements to his credit in India or in China. But the decolonization theory was not specifically his, though efforts were subsequently made to father it on him. The first open challenge to it came in Varga's quarterly survey of the world economy published in February 1928. A substantial section of the report was devoted to India, and took issue with Dutt, Rathbone, Luhani and Roy, all of whom were cited by name. Varga argued at length that British export of capital to India, since the peak year 1923, had fallen to insignificant dimensions, that the export of capital from 1916 to 1923 had been an abnormal response to war emergencies, and that Great Britain had now reverted to her traditional policy of discouraging Indian industrialization.[62] But Varga's opinion received no official backing, and was not authoritative. The issue was still open.

Roy returned to Moscow for the session of the ninth IKKI in February 1928, and spoke in the British commission on the affairs of the CPGB to defend the "minority" view, which enjoyed the firm support of Comintern. But he did not mention India; and Smeral and Katayama, who criticized the failure of the CPGB to protest against the appointment of the Simon commission, did

[60] Lenin, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, xxx, 35.

[61] *Novyi Vostok*, xxv (1929), p. vi.

[62] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 15, February 15, 1928, pp. 298–306; the report was dated January 20, 1928.

not refer to decolonization.[63] So far as is known, the ninth IKKI did not discuss the Indian question in plenary session. But Roy's fall from favour was now unmistakable. During the session he fell ill; and, after some weeks in hospital, he hurriedly left Moscow for ever.[64] The Indian commission of IKKI once more debated the decolonization issue in March–April 1928, but left it unresolved.[65] In June 1928, Dutt published an article strongly controverting Varga's argument on the ground of official policy pronouncements, and of the growing tendency on both sides to seek, within the framework of the British Empire, a compromise between the Indian national bourgeoisie and British imperialism.[66] An article in the journal of Comintern by his brother Clemens Dutt was more cautiously framed. He maintained that "the policy of promoting industrialization with concessions to the Indian bourgeoisie" had been modified in the light of the "deflation crisis" in Great Britain, but thought that it might be resumed in more favourable conditions. He noted a revival in India of "the national struggle against imperialism", but believed that in the long run the rôle of the national bourgeoisie was necessarily counter-revolutionary.[67] In general, down to the moment of the arrival of the British delegation in Moscow for the sixth Comintern congress in July 1928, the CPGB had accepted without question the views of Roy and Dutt on the industrial development of India, and attached no particular significance to the invention of the word "decolonization" to denote the process.

The sixth congress of Comintern illustrated vividly a disconcerting aspect of the Indian communist movement — an almost complete divorce between Comintern and the communist move-

[63] *Communist Policy in Great Britain* (1928), pp. 33 (Šmeral), 58–61 (Roy), 63–64 (Katayama); for the proceedings of the British commission see pp. 363–364 above.

[64] See the perhaps over-dramatized account, based on personal information, in J. P. Haithcox, *Communism and Nationalism in India* (1971), pp. 84–87; for Roy's exclusion from the debates on China see p. 849 above.

[65] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 395; "British and Indian comrades" took part in the debate, of which, however, no report was published.

[66] *Labour Monthly*, No. 6, 1928, pp. 323–341.

[67] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 23–24 (149–150), 1928, pp. 57–73.

ment in India. Postal communications were intercepted; the overland journey was slow and difficult; and no attempt was made to establish a courier service. For communications with India Comintern relied before 1926 on Roy, and thereafter mainly on the CPGB. Nobody in Moscow received regular information on what happened in India, and Indian communists had only casual and sporadic information on the proceedings of Comintern. The party founded in 1925, and reconstituted in the following year as the CPI, did not seek formal affiliation to Comintern till some years later.[68] Before 1928 India had been represented at congresses and sessions of IKKI only by Roy or by members of his group of expatriate Indians in Europe. Now that Roy had fallen from favour, neither the CPI nor Comintern had any procedure for appointing delegates; and the choice of Indian delegates for the sixth congress seems to have been left to chance. In the early summer of 1928, Usmani, a Muslim communist, travelled with three companions via Iran to Moscow with the intention of attending the congress. Usmani had been recruited by Roy in 1920 for the propaganda school in Tashkent, and had later been one of Roy's few active contact men in India. But he was in jail when the CPI was first constituted, and had had no dealings with its leaders. He did not apprise them of his departure, and carried no credentials.[69]

What happened when Usmani reached Moscow is a matter of guess-work. The forged credentials which his enemies suspected probably did not exist. When the Comintern leaders learned that he had broken with Roy, and was ready to denounce the theory of decolonization, they no doubt took him at his word. Usmani and one of his companions, known as Raza, were given mandates as voting delegates, the other two as non-voting delegates. The third delegate with voting rights was Tagore; though he had de-

[68] See pp. 912 above, 940 below.

[69] M. Ahmed, *The Communist Party of India and its Formation Abroad* (English translation, Calcutta, 1962), pp. 93–94. The story in S. Tagore, *Historical Development of the Communist Movement in India* (Calcutta, 1944), p. 13, that Usmani visited the CPI leaders in Bombay in April 1928, and that they refused to countenance his journey, is dubious; Usmani in his book *I Met Stalin Twice* (Bombay, 1953), p. 27, referred to "talks I had in Delhi with important leaders"; but the first Spratt heard of Usmani's journey was a telegram from London asking whether Usmani was a delegate of the CPI, to which he replied in the negative (P. Spratt, *Blowing Up India* (Calcutta, 1955), p. 41). For the Tashkent propaganda school see *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917–1923*, Vol. 3, p. 268.

nounced Roy, he was hostile to Usmani, and spoke and voted against him in the congress. The third non-voting delegate was Clemens Dutt, who was a member of the CPGB and had not been in India for many years.[70] Usmani's election at the first sitting to the presidium of the congress[71] marked him out as chief Indian delegate and recipient of Comintern favour. It was an odd delegation, symptomatic of the attitude of Comintern at this time. The overriding priority was to ensure a party, and a delegation, subservient to official policies. But this was tempered by reluctance to accord to any foreign group a monopoly of power in its party; and some degree of toleration was therefore extended to mildly dissident groups not openly hostile to the authority of Moscow. A puzzling episode was the visit to Moscow at this time of Iyengar, once a communist and ex-president of the National Congress.[72] He remained aloof from the Comintern congress, but was received by Stalin, to whom he appealed for support for the Indian national movement.[73]

India promised from the outset to be a thorny problem at the congress. Bukharin, in a brief passage in his main report, refused to believe that the Indian bourgeoisie could, like the Chinese bourgeoisie, play a revolutionary rôle over a long period. But he carefully dissociated himself from the view that "India is ceasing

[70] The composition of the Indian delegation presents several mysteries, due to confused reporting, the use of pseudonyms, and uncertainties of transliteration. The official list of delegates included three voting delegates, Sikander (i.e. Usmani), Raza and Spencer, and three non-voting delegates, Dutt, Makhmud (i.e. Muhammed Shafiq) and Ali (i.e. Masood Ali) (*Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), v, 152). The otherwise unidentified Raza consistently spoke and voted with Usmani. The third voting delegate was evidently Tagore, who spoke under the name of Narayan; why he should have appeared in the list with a different pseudonym is not clear. Of the non-voting delegates, Masood was also listed, and spoke, as a delegate of KIM (*ibid.* iv, 461–465, v, 153). Luhani also spoke at the congress (*ibid.* iv, 485–486, 529–530) in order to dissociate himself from the term "decolonization", but did not appear in any list. According to M. Ahmed, *The Communist Party of India and its Formation Abroad* (English translation, Calcutta, 1962), pp. 93–94, Masood turned out to be a British spy, and he and another of Usmani's companions were detained in Moscow and shot. The statement in P. Spratt, *Blowing Up India* (Calcutta, 1955), p. 42, that all three of Usmani's companions were shot is incorrect; Muhammed Shafiq returned to India.

[71] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), i, 4.

[72] See p. 918 above.

[73] The source for this episode is S. Usmani, *I Met Stalin Twice* (Bombay, 1953), p. 27; Usmani states that Tagore accompanied Iyengar on the visit to Stalin after he himself had refused to do so.

to be a colonial country, and a process of decolonization is going on". In the course of the discussion, Usmani, who clung obsequiously to the official line, made the far-fetched assertion that Great Britain "is trying to destroy Indian industry and disorganize some important branches of production in order to facilitate the import of British goods". Raza reproached Bukharin with not mentioning "the new policy of industrialization carried out by the British Government". Bukharin in his reply retorted that, though he had not spoken of industrialization, he had mentioned "large investments of foreign capital", and attempted again to dissociate himself from the term "decolonization".[74] Nobody else mentioned the issue, and the bald statement in the theses that British imperialism "puts the brake on the industrial development of India" was not challenged.[75] In the debate on the draft programme, Arnot and Tagore made reservations on a clause authorizing "temporary agreements" between communist parties and the "national bourgeoisie".[76] The final text of the programme, which was not modified, declared such agreements "permissible only in so far as it [i.e. the national bourgeoisie] does not impede the revolutionary organization of workers and peasants, and carries on a real struggle against imperialism".[77]

The clash on decolonization was reserved for the debate on the revolutionary movement in colonial and semi-colonial countries. Kuusinen in his report rounded sharply on Palme Dutt, Roy and Rathbone — and later on Luhani — who had held out the prospect of "the decolonization of India by British imperialism", warning the congress that this was "a very dangerous word", and that acceptance of the theory would involve "a revision of all our conceptions of the nature of imperialist policy".[78] Usmani's co-report added nothing but the sly remark that those who had only been in India ten years ago (an allusion to Roy) could not judge the present situation, and a comment on the "absurdity" of the idea of decolonization.[79] This emphatic announcement of an official view put

[74] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), i, 48, 129, 161, 608–609.

[75] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), p. 779.

[76] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iii, 101, 119–121.

[77] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), p. 43.

[78] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 6–19.

[79] *Ibid.* iv, 79.

dissenters on the defensive. When the British delegation arrived in Moscow for the congress, firm believers, so far as they had thought about it at all, in the decolonization theory, they learned for the first time that the verdict had been cast against it. The British case was opened by Petrovsky, speaking under the name Bennett, who prefaced a powerful speech with the odd remark that "with the agreement of comrade Kuusinen" he would formulate his objections "in the sharpest possible form". This was both a recognition of his dual status as a Comintern official and a British delegate,[80] and a hint that, Kuusinen notwithstanding, no final decision had yet been taken in the highest quarters, so that differences of opinion were still legitimate. He argued that Kuusinen's view of "classical capitalism" related to "the end of last century", vigorously contested Varga's analysis, and thought it less misleading to speak of "decolonization" than to describe India as "an agrarian hinterland of the British Empire". He took particular exception to a passage in the draft theses which branded "the chatter of the imperialists and their lackeys about a policy of 'decolonization' " as "nothing but an imperialist lie", and pointed out that those, including Bukharin, who had used the term, had used it "for the sole purpose of underlining the fact of the industrialization of India, which brings about changes in the distribution of class forces in that country".[81] Rothstein repeated Petrovsky's charge that Kuusinen's theses rested on an outdated picture of colonialism, and offered detailed criticisms on behalf of the British delegation.[82] Tagore, the first Indian delegate (other than Usmani) to speak in the debate, did not use the word "decolonization", but explained why the policy of British imperialism had changed, and declared that "the process of the industrialization of India is going on". He believed that "the threat of agrarian revolution impelled the national bourgeoisie to betray the [revolutionary] movement" as surely as Kuomintang had betrayed the movement in China.[83]

Strong resistance to the theory of decolonization was offered by stalwarts of Comintern orthodoxy. Martynov and Pepper denounced Petrovsky's backsliding; Pepper accused him of talking

[80] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 128, note 7.

[81] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 176–185.

[82] *Ibid.* iv, 190–194.

[83] *Ibid.* iv, 290–292; in the debate on the programme he had stressed the advance of capitalism even in the Indian countryside (*ibid.* iii, 120).

"as if only two camps existed in India — the camp of the imperialists and the camp of the workers and peasants". The ever-resourceful Remmele delivered a long and learned speech, packed with statistics and citations of authorities supplied by the information section of the secretariat; and Murphy announced his dissent from the other British delegates.[84] Arnot dissociated his British colleagues from the unhappy term "decolonization". None of them had used it except to call it a "bogey"; and it was time to drop the word. He made clear, however, his solidarity with Petrovsky and Rothstein, and submitted a series of proposed British amendments to the theses.[85] Clemens Dutt, anxious to keep a foot in both camps, called the position of the Indian bourgeoisie "an antagonistic fact in relation to imperialism, but ... at the same time counter-revolutionary in relation to the proletariat and the peasantry". Its character as a counter-revolutionary force "does not mean that we cannot utilize it even in the process of developing the mass revolution".[86] The conclusion of the debate engendered a good deal of bitterness. Petrovsky made a sharp reply to Pepper, Murphy and Remmele, and hit slyly at Bukharin who, though he had not used the words "decolonization" and "industrialization" in his report, had said that "large investments of foreign capital" meant industrialization. He ironically begged Bukharin to clarify his position.[87] Shubin, a Soviet delegate, remarked that, while Luhani might have been the "godfather" of decolonization in the sense of giving it a name, its father was Roy in his work on *The Future of Indian Politics* in 1926. He devoted the rest of his speech to an attack on Petrovsky, who several times interrupted with angry exclamations, some of them intended to disclaim responsibility for Roy's opinions.[88]

A practical issue which was overshadowed in the debate by the decolonization controversy was that of the attitude to be adopted to the Indian workers' and peasants' parties. These had always aroused mistrust in Moscow as petty-bourgeois organizations, which might become rivals or substitutes for a genuine communist party. The report of IKKI to the congress, having dismissed decolonization with the brief statement that the British Govern-

[84] *Ibid.* iv, 226–232, 308–314, 328–341, 358–363.
[85] *Ibid.* iv, 393–405.
[86] *Ibid.* iv, 408–409.
[87] *Ibid.* iv, 410–412; for Bukharin's remarks see p. 930 above.
[88] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 426–436.

ment had "ceased to pursue its policy of concessions to the Indian bourgeoisie", devoted a large part of its section on India to a criticism of the WPPs. It conceded that they were significant as "one of the organizing factors of the national-revolutionary struggle", which might "develop into a bloc of the proletariat with the peasantry and the revolutionary strata of the petty bourgeoisie in the present stage of the struggle against imperialism". But the weakness of such a party was that "in practice, it functions rather as a Left wing of Congress than as an independent political party".[89] Kuusinen, in his report, explained that the WPPs were "not organizations on which we could build our communist party". He detected "the danger of giving a communist coat of paint to parties which are not genuinely communist", and of an attempt "to replace the creation of an independent communist party by some kind of worker–peasant parties";[90] and the draft theses contained a sharply worded clause:

> Special worker–peasant parties, however revolutionary they may be, can easily turn into ordinary petty-bourgeois parties, on account of which fact the organization of such parties is not recommended.[91]

The verdict did not go unchallenged. Tagore boldly declared that those who feared the substitution of a worker–peasant party for the communist party were "frightened by some nightmare produced by their own unbridled imagination". Dutt protested against the depreciation of the WPPs which were "one of the important ways in which communists have access to the masses".[92] Only Usmani clung faithfully to the text of the draft theses.[93] But the other British delegates, sharply involved in the major controversy, did not raise this subsidiary issue; Kuusinen also avoided it in his reply to the debate, and it was allowed to go by default. Mistrust

[89] *Die Komintern vor dem 6. Weltkongress* (1928), pp. 535–538.

[90] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 25–26.

[91] *Ibid.* iv, 294, 409; the passage remained unchanged in the final version (*Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), p. 858). Trotsky, in his critique of the programme of Comintern, described the idea of a workers' and peasants' party as "mortally hostile not only to the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolution, but also to the most elementary independence of the proletarian vanguard"; such a party could "only serve as a base, a screen and a springboard for the bourgeoisie" (L. Trotsky, *The Third International After Lenin* (N.Y., 1936), p. 223).

[92] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 294, 409.

[93] *Ibid.* iv, 491.

of petty-bourgeois parties may have been accentuated by hostility to Gandhism, which was recognized as a petty-bourgeois movement wedded to primitive and reactionary forms of the economy, and, though not discussed at the congress, described in the programme as "an ideology directed against the revolution of the masses of the people".[94]

The controversy about decolonization was not so easily shelved. When the theses, in accordance with the usual procedure, were submitted to the congress for approval in principle and referred to a drafting committee to settle the final text, they were carried by a large majority, but with 14 votes cast against.[95] In the drafting committee a less uncompromising mood prevailed. In the final text of the theses, "the powerful anti-imperialist movement" of 1919–1922 was said to have "ended in the betrayal of the national revolution by the Indian bourgeoisie"; it was this victory which had enabled the imperialist government "to return to the policy of putting the brake on the industrial development of India". But the most stubborn objection of the Comintern leaders was to the words "industrialization" and "decolonization". "Industrialization" in the Soviet Union was a process of liberation from economic dependence on the capitalist world, and the term was constantly used in this context; no suggestion that any such process was at work in India could be tolerated. Scorn was poured on the alleged development of Indian industry:

> A minimum of economic construction (railways, ports etc.) is carried on, sufficient only for the military control of the country

[94] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), p. 40. Kuusinen, at the twentieth party congress in 1956, referred to "sectarian errors which in the past found expression in specific utterances of eastern experts and in publications of the Communist International"; these included criticisms of Gandhism which "became so one-sided as completely to decry the positive historical role of Gandhi". He cited in particular "the well-known theses of the sixth congress of Comintern on the national question" as having "a certain trait of sectarianism" (*XX S"ezd Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuza* (1956), i, 503).

[95] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 530; next day Usmani explained that he and another Indian delegate (presumably Raza), through a misunderstanding due to faulty translation, had voted against the theses by mistake; the true number of the minority was 12, presumably all British except for Tagore (*ibid.* v, 53–54). Murphy recorded that four British delegates had voted for the theses (*ibid.* v, 54); the total voting strength of the British delegation was 19 (*ibid.* v, 150–151), so that four were absent, or abstained.

> and to guarantee the smooth operation of tax pressures, as well as for the needs of the trade of the imperialist country.

It was grudgingly admitted that "the needs of the conduct or preparation of war may in a limited degree lead to the creation of various enterprises of the metal-working and chemical industries in certain of the strategically most important colonies (e.g. India)". But the passage in the theses denouncing "the chatter of the imperialists and their lackeys" about decolonization, to which Petrovsky had objected, was not expunged.

> The genuine industrialization of a colonial country [declared the final text], in particular, the creation of a viable machine-building industry which could assist the independent development of the productive forces of the countries, is not encouraged, but on the contrary is held back, by the metropolis.

The essential mark of the present phase of imperialism in decay was "*its usurious and parasitic character*", which "in the last resort leads to an artificial holding back of the development of productive forces of its colonies". On the vexed issue of the WPPs, the final text of the theses, while calling for "the fusion of all communist groups and individual communists scattered over the country into a single illegal, independent and centralized party", and, while rejecting the principle of two-class parties, ambiguously instructed Indian communists "to utilize the links of existing worker–peasant parties with the toiling masses in order to strengthen *their own party*".[96] The unanimous adoption of the theses without further discussion in plenary session closed the debate. Theses issued by IKKI after the congress attempted to explain the difference between the Indian and Chinese situations: in India the bourgeoisie was more powerful and the proletariat more subject to its influence.[97] This did nothing to clarify practical issues of policy. Roy, though discredited in Moscow, rather surprisingly continued to publish articles in the Comintern press, in which he wavered between total denunciation of "the bourgeois leaders and their petty-bourgeois allies" and the belief that the National Congress was divided between big bourgeois and petty-bourgeois

[96] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), pp. 832–870.

[97] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 125, November 9, 1928, p. 2494; for these theses see p. 222 above.

factions, and that the latter might enter into an alliance with the proletariat.[98]

It was symptomatic of the difficulty of communication, of the disorganization of Comintern, and perhaps of divided opinions within it, that no attempt was apparently made to inform anyone in India of the result of these prolonged and acrimonious discussions; and down to the very end of 1928 events proceeded in India without reference to them.[99] The month of December 1928 was an important moment in the rise of insurgency in India. Early in the month the ninth congress of AITUC was held in Jharia. The fourth congress of Profintern in March 1928 had adopted a resolution on the Indian trade unions which betrayed few signs of contact with the Indian movement.[100] But the wave of industrial unrest in India set off by the great Bombay textile strike,[101] and perhaps desire to forestall the efforts of the ILO and of the Amsterdam International to establish a foothold in India, had sharpened interest in Moscow in the Indian unions. The ninth congress of the AITUC was the recipient of a long letter from the executive bureau of Profintern, pointing out the lesson to be drawn from recent strikes that the Indian capitalists were now in league with the British imperialists, and denouncing the leaders of the British Labour Party and the British trade unions as "agents of British imperialism and of the Amsterdam International"; a briefer telegram from the presidium of its central council invited representatives of the Indian proletariat to visit the Soviet Union.[102] The congress fell into two groups, the moderates led by Joshi, who had several times represented the Indian workers at ILO conferences in Geneva, and a militant Left wing; this, according to

[98] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 88, August 21, 1928, pp. 1660–1661, No. 142, December 21, 1928, pp. 2841–2843.

[99] P. Spratt, *Blowing Up India* (Calcutta, 1955), pp. 42–43, states that no instructions were received from Moscow till December 1928, but that "we sensed from the brief press reports that a change had taken place".

[100] *Protokoll über der Vierten Kongress der Roten Gewerkschaftsinternationale* (n.d.), pp. 605–608; Hardy, the British delegate, who sponsored the resolution, pointed out that no Indian representative was present at the congress (*ibid.* p. 511).

[101] See p. 920 above.

[102] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 123, November 2, 1928, pp. 2447–2448, No. 131, November 23, 1928, p. 2607.

Nehru, who was present for the first time at a trade union congress, was "influenced, though by no means controlled, by some communists and near-communists".[103] The efforts of Spratt and Bradley were reinforced by the arrival of two other foreign communists. Johnstone, an American, addressed the congress as delegate of the League against Imperialism. The police at once arrested him, thus provoking from the congress a resolution of protest and a decision to affiliate to the league; Johnstone was subsequently deported.[104] Ryan, the Australian member of the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat, came to press for the affiliation of the congress to that body, but without success.[105] A number of resolutions of Left complexion were, however, passed, and several communists appointed to office. A communist candidate for the presidency for the forthcoming year was well supported, but was defeated by a narrow majority when Nehru was put up by moderates as a compromise candidate.[106]

An increasingly militant mood in the rank and file of the movement also embarrassed the leaders of the National Congress when it met in Calcutta later in December 1928. The report of the Motilal Nehru committee on constitutional reform[107] in favour of dominion status had provoked sharp dissent in Congress ranks, and had led to the formation in November 1928 of an Independence for India League, of which Iyengar was president and Jawaharlal Nehru one of the secretaries.[108] The Calcutta session produced an empty compromise: the British Government was given one year to agree to dominion status, failing which the demand for full independence would be reinstated. The hesitation and diffidence which marked the proceedings of Congress in this cardinal issue were endemic in Indian political life. A resolution,

[103] J. Nehru, *An Autobiography* (1936), p. 186.

[104] Government of India, *Communism in India* (1935), pp. 115–116; P. Haithcox, *Communism and Nationalism in India* (1971), pp. 106–107, and sources there quoted. According to P. Spratt, *Blowing Up India* (Calcutta, 1955), p. 41, Johnstone had been at the sixth congress of Comintern; it was in fact at the fourth congress of Profintern in March 1928 that he had led the American delegation (see p. 599 above).

[105] G. Overstreet and M. Windmiller, *Communism in India* (1959), pp. 371–372.

[106] V. Karnik, *Indian Trade Unions* (2nd ed. 1966), p. 38; J. Nehru, *An Autobiography* (1936), p. 187.

[107] See p. 919 above.

[108] For an account of the league by Clemens Dutt see *Labour Monthly*, No. 1, 1929, pp. 22–28.

similar to that of previous sessions, protesting against British intervention in China and demanding the recall of Indian troops, and a resolution expressing sympathy with the peoples of Egypt, Palestine, Syria and Iraq in their struggle against British imperialism, were also adopted.[109]

It was on December 21, 1928, after the Calcutta session of Congress that the first all-Indian conference of WPPs (of which there were now four)[110] also assembled in Calcutta. The conference had been planned well in advance, and news of the project had reached Moscow. This inspired the secretariat of IKKI to address a long letter to the conference. Dated December 2, 1928, it was entrusted to an Indian communist named Adikhari, for some years resident in Berlin,[111] who was on his way back to India, and actually arrived while the conference was in session. A copy of the theses of the sixth congress of Comintern apparently accompanied it. The letter was couched in terms which must have bewildered anyone not familiar with the vocabulary and preoccupations of Comintern. It hailed "the growing influence of the workers' and peasants' parties" and the (purely mythical)[112] "attendance of thousands of peasants at your provincial conferences". The "fundamental task before the conference" was said to be the organization of "an aggressive fight against British Imperialism and its native allies"; this led to a denunciation of "opportunist bourgeois nationalism" and, in particular, of the newly founded Independence for India League, which "assists official Swarajism in its nefarious play with the slogans of 'independence' and 'dominion status' ", and whose programme was characterized by "confusion and twaddle". True to the decisions of the sixth congress, the letter rejected "the fusion of the workers and peasants into one party", but proposed the formation of a committee to coordinate the activities of local workers' and peasants' organizations, though not of an all-India WPP. One of the few touches of realism was an ironic reference to "the existing (only on paper) Communist Party of India", which

[109] *Report of the Forty-third National Congress* (Calcutta, n.d.).

[110] See p. 920, note 43 above.

[111] Adikhari had been a member of the KPD, and was at once admitted to the CPI on his arrival to India (M. Ahmed, *Communist Party of India: Years of Formation* (English translation, Calcutta, 1959), pp. 27–28).

[112] Raza at the sixth congress said bluntly that "they include no peasants among their members" (*Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 426); the number of peasants actively engaged must have been infinitesimal.

"does not show any signs of revolutionary life".[113] The conference, hastily digesting this missive, produced an embarrassed and ambiguous resolution. It devoted much space to denunciation of the Independence for India League with its "faults of programme and policy, and its fundamentally bourgeois, even Fascist, character". But, while members of a WPP "cannot enter the Independence League as members", they could "work with the Independence League in a united front on the basis of its propaganda for independence". The resolution once more attacked the bourgeois leadership of the National Congress and the Motilal Nehru report with its acceptance of dominion status. Hostility was expressed to "the dominating leadership of Congress". But Congress also embraced some petty-bourgeois elements "of a potentially revolutionary nature", and it was necessary to pursue "the traditional policy of forming fractions within Congress organizations, for the purpose of agitation, ... and of drawing the revolutionary sections towards the Workers' and Peasants' Party". This was, however, described as a "temporary policy" till the party could build up "its own independent organization".[114] By setting up a joint executive for the four existing parties, the conference virtually constituted itself as a national party. A report appeared some months later in *Pravda* of a demonstration of 20,000 workers during the conference with the slogan "For Soviet India".[115]

The conference was followed on December 27–29, 1928, by a session of the CPI. Since communists were also the leaders of the WPPs, the difference was one of form rather than of personnel. The CPI found it, however, less easy to ignore the decisions of Comintern. According to the notes which are the only known record of the session, it decided that the resolution of the sixth congress should be "taken up as a basis, and changed according to the conditions in India", and that "the possibilities of an open party should be tested". This might have meant that the illegal CPI should exist side by side with the "open" WPP, or that the former should be merged in the latter. Neither solution conformed to the demands of Moscow. None the less it was decided to seek

[113] The letter was printed as Exhibit P 334 in the proceedings of the Meerut trial (see pp. 940–941 below), and reprinted, with some abbreviations, in *The Communist International, 1919–1943: Documents*, ed. J. Degras, ii (1960), 559–564.

[114] For the text of the resolution see *Labour Monthly*, No. 3, 1929, pp. 151–161.

[115] *Pravada*, March 22, 1929.

formal affiliation to Comintern.[116] A further party meeting in Bombay on March 17–19, 1929, remained in the dark about what was happening in Moscow, and maintained the same ambiguous attitude.[117] It was remarkable only for the *volte-face* of Usmani, who, having appeared as a pillar of Comintern at the sixth congress, now came out as a strong advocate of the WPP. A decision was taken to reorganize the party on the lines laid down by Comintern.[118] But before anything more could be done, the not very meaningful activities of the CPI were nipped in the bud for several years to come. At the end of the Bombay meeting, the police arrested 32 communists and trade union leaders, including Spratt and Bradley, and made preparations for a mammoth trial at Meerut, which was to serve as an exposure to the world of the evil designs of communist agitators.

These events attracted more attention in Moscow to the Indian situation than had been bestowed on it for a long time. *Pravda* greeted the news of the arrests, in a somewhat embarrassed leading article, as proof that "the revolutionary crisis" was ripening. It recognized that "the worker–peasant parties, in spite of the vagueness of their theoretical line, in spite of hesitations and ambiguities and occasionally fatal errors, have already won the sympathies and support of the broad awakening masses". Such parties could, of course, never join the Communist International. But they could help to form groups of workers and peasants.[119] The CPGB organized demonstrations against the arrests and the British

[116] The notes, produced in evidence at the Meerut trial, fell into the hands of the police, or may have been compiled by a police spy present at the meeting (Government of India, *Meerut Sessions Judgment* (1932), i, 234); these were doubtless the basis of the account in Government of India, *Communism in India* (1935), pp. 133–134, according to which the meeting prepared a revised constitution, and decided to send Ahmed to Moscow as delegate to IKKI. According to M. Ahmed, *Communist Party of India: Formative Years* (English translation, Calcutta, 1959), p. 36, affiliation to Comintern was not achieved till 1930.

[117] Spratt wrote to Clemens Dutt on March 14, 1929, that he had "heard practically nothing yet about British party affairs, nor even anything of value about the International" (Government of India, *Meerut Sessions Judgment* (1932), i, 242).

[118] *Ibid.* p. 246; Government of India, *Communism in India* (1935), pp. 133–135. According to M. Ahmed, *The Communist Party of India and its Formation Abroad* (English translation, Calcutta, 1962), p. 168, Usmani confessed to him on his return from Moscow that he had become "a Trotskyite"; it is doubtful whether either knew what the term meant.

[119] *Pravda*, March 22, 1929.

section of the League Against Imperialism issued an appeal.[120] An eloquent protest from IKKI declared that the "anxious imperialist robber is raising his executioner's axe to strike hitherto legally existing workers' and peasants' parties". Avoiding any mention of the CPI, it proclaimed that "only the alliance of the workers' revolution with a peasant war will deal a deadly blow at imperialism and its feudal-bourgeois allies". It pronounced its anathema not only against British imperialism and its Indian lackeys, but against "the Swarajists and other bourgeois parties, traitors to the Indian national revolution".[121] The Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat denounced "the new offensive of the British Government", and appealed for support for "the revolutionary trade union movement" in India.[122] The League Against Imperialism issued an appeal, signed by Münzenberg and its Indian secretary, Chattopadhyaya, for financial contributions for the defence of the accused;[123] and a similar appeal signed by Nehru came from the Indian section of MRP.[124] The trial at Meerut dragged on for more than three years, and resulted in long terms of imprisonment for the accused which were substantially reduced on appeal.

With the CPI and the WPPs virtually obliterated, little remained to be said in Moscow. An article in *Novyi Vostok* fitted Indian affairs firmly into the current campaign against the Right. It attributed the decolonization theory to "Right opportunists", and denounced the National Congress and the Independence for India League as bourgeois institutions.[125] Manuilsky, in his article in preparation for the tenth IKKI, which was due to assemble in July 1929, wrote ruefully, or angrily, that "there is hitherto no independent communist party" in India.[126] An article in *Pravda* on the eve of the session pushed the pronouncements of the sixth congress of Comintern on India to their extreme conclusion. It not only denounced the "especially clear counter-revolutionary forms" assumed by bourgeois nationalism, but condemned both

[120] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 28, March 27, 1929, p. 620.
[121] *Ibid.* No. 29, April 3, 1929, pp. 649–650.
[122] *Ibid.* No. 32, April 12, 1929, pp. 757–758.
[123] *Ibid.* No. 36, April 26, 1929, p. 852, where the appeal was followed by the text of the indictment drawn up against them.
[124] *Ibid.* No. 46, May 28, 1929, p. 1113.
[125] *Novyi Vostok*, xxvi–xxvii (1929), pp. xi–xlii.
[126] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 54, June 25, 1929, p. 1320; for this article see p. 247 above.

the WPPs of Bombay and Bengal and Roy's scheme for a "revolutionary people's party", harping on the need for "*an independent communist party*".[127] The proceedings of the tenth IKKI were essentially a *post-mortem*, but served as an occasion for some theoretical pronouncements which had little relevance to the situation in India. Kuusinen in his main report, while professing an optimistic view of recent developments, bitterly condemned Roy ("I do not know whether I can still call him 'comrade' ") for writing in the "Brandler renegade press" in support of "a policy of a bloc with the national bourgeoisie". He stopped just short of a direct censure on "workers' and peasants' parties", though they appeared in inverted commas in the record of his speech.[128] Lozovsky, encouraged by the progress of the trade union movement, pronounced trenchantly "that *no agreements can be tolerated, that all-out war must be declared on the Indian bourgeoisie*". He exhorted IKKI to assist the virtually non-existent CPI "to purge itself of every kind of overt or covert Menshevism". He attributed the weakness of the CPI to the fact that Roy, who "now represents an outspokenly Menshevik view", had been for so long its main link with IKKI. Mif offered the most intelligent analysis yet made of the differences between India and China. India, owing to the predominance of British capital, had witnessed no struggle between the imperialist Powers, and was isolated from the colonial movement; India was not, like China, in territorial contact with the Soviet Union; India knew nothing of the rule of warlords, and had to deal with "a firmly integrated state apparatus"; and the CPI had developed belatedly in comparison with the CCP. These facts made "the united national front", which had played its historic rôle in China, impracticable in India.[129] The only Indian representative to speak was Luhani, now permanently resident in Moscow. He renounced his errors committed at the sixth congress, rejected "decolonization" (nobody else reverted to this topic), and bitterly attacked his old patron, Roy.[130] The main resolution of the

[127] *Pravda*, July 2, 3, 1929.

[128] *Protokoll: 10. Plenum des Exekutivkomitees der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), pp. 33–36; Roy contributed to the journal *Gegen den Strom* (for which see p. 447 above), and was a particular admirer of Thalheimer (P. Haithcox, *Communism and Nationalism in India* (1971), p. 139).

[129] *Protokoll: 10. Plenum des Exekutivkomitees der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), pp. 387–390, 487–489.

[130] *Ibid.* pp. 394–395.

session contained two passages about India, which do not seem to have provoked any debate. "The open betrayal by the Indian bourgeoisie of the cause of national independence" and its "active cooperation in the bloody repressions of striking workers" proved its "counter-revolutionary character"; and the strongest hope for the future was found in the increasing prevalence of strikes and workers' protests.[131] Roy, though not immune from inconsistencies of his own, denounced those of Comintern in the German social-democratic press:

> Yesterday every Indian had the right to be a revolutionary nationalist.... Today everything is pronounced counter-revolutionary except the working class and the peasantry.[132]

He was formally expelled from Comintern in the autumn of 1929 on the ground of his association with the Brandler–Thalheimer opposition group in the KPD.[133]

How far the CPGB concurred in the new line, or had abandoned the stand taken by its delegates at the sixth congress a year earlier, remained uncertain. The decision of its politburo in November 1928 to circulate the original draft theses on the colonies submitted to the sixth congress of Comintern in July, together with the amendments proposed by the British delegation,[134] was a symptom of restiveness. But in January 1929 Clemens Dutt in a party journal denounced the Independence for India League as "a challenge to the Workers' and Peasants' Party", which was seeking to "wean the masses from bourgeois influence";[135] and the same journal, in publishing the WPP resolution of December 1928, found it prudent to add a warning note:

[131] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), pp. 880, 883. The CPI being virtually defunct, the only effect of the proceedings of the tenth IKKI can have been to stimulate a more intransigent attitude in the trade unions; at the tenth AITUC congress in December 1929 the communist-led Left obtained a majority, and the moderates broke away, thus splitting the movement (G. Overstreet and M. Windmiller, *Communism in India* (1959), pp. 372–373; J. Nehru, *An Autobiography* (1936), pp. 198–199; V. Karnik, *Indian Trade Unions* (2nd ed. 1966), p. 71).

[132] Quoted from *Das Volksrecht*, May 31, 1929, in *Novyi Vostok*, xxvi–xxvii (1929), p. xxv.

[133] *International Press-Correspondence* (English ed.) No. 69, September 1929, p. 1470.

[134] See p. 377, note 235 above.

[135] *Labour Monthly*, No. 1, 1929, p. 27.

> It would be easy to criticize some of the features of their view, which has clearly not taken into account the important discussions of the sixth congress of the Communist International on the Indian question, and the dangers inherent in a political party, like the Workers' and Peasants' Party, based on a union of different classes.[136]

A pamphlet written in June 1929 by Arnot, who had valiantly championed the British case at the sixth congress, repeated the warning, but reversed the emphasis. While a "two-class party" as a form of organization had been "expressly condemned in the colonial theses of the sixth congress", the WPP conference had none the less given "an unmistakable feeling of a real conscious mass movement for the first time in India, a real proletarian awakening".[137] When the tenth IKKI debated the shortcomings of the WPP and the CPI, the whole effective leadership of both bodies was behind bars. The CPGB had just emerged from the ordeal of a momentous general election, and was reasonably disinclined to rake over the ashes of a dead controversy. Neither of the British spokesmen at the session, Rust, who represented the Communist Youth International, and Pollitt, so much as mentioned India. The experience of India illustrated the sense of unreality which crept over the proceedings of Comintern in the later nineteen-twenties, due to the growing rift between what was said in Moscow and what happened on the spot. The firm conviction prevailed in Moscow that it was possible and necessary to set up a model of conduct to which foreign parties should be required to conform. Even where this model was not distorted by the exigencies of Soviet domestic policy, the assumption of uniformity was an example of that dogmatic Marxism which all good Bolsheviks, including Stalin, professed to reject. The dilemma in India was shown up in a glaring light by the interventions of the CPGB, whose understanding of the Indian scene, though defective in many respects, was superior to that of Comintern.

[136] *Ibid.* No. 3, 1929, p. 159; for the WPP conference see p. 938 above.
[137] R. P. Arnot, *How Britain Rules India* (1929), p. 30.

CHAPTER 87

INDONESIA

THE Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) in the summer of 1926, when it was actively preparing for an armed insurrection,[1] presented a highly confused picture, due to its illegal status, to the weakness of its organization, to the dispersal of its leaders, and to lack of prompt and regular communication with Comintern in Moscow, its recognized source of authority even though that authority was not always obeyed. None of those who had led the party in its first formative years had been able to remain in Indonesia. Malaka, the most dynamic of the early native leaders, who had figured prominently at the fourth congress of Comintern in 1922,[2] resided at Manila with a vague mandate as agent for the party and for Comintern in south-eastern Asia,[3] and a party office was maintained in Singapore, where Indonesian exiles congregated. Semaun, expelled from Java in 1923, was permanently resident in Europe; and Darsono, expelled in 1925, joined him in Moscow early in the following year. These two leaders were accepted by Comintern as spokesmen of the PKI. But, like other representatives of foreign parties in Moscow, they tended in course of time to speak with the voice of Comintern rather than of their own parties. The local leaders were men hitherto inconspicuous enough to have escaped imprisonment or deportation. Few of them had any links with the outside world, or were known even by name in Moscow. The obscurity and inexperience which protected them from reprisals made them inadequate leaders.

Uneasy relations between the PKI and the Dutch Communist Party further complicated the situation. The reorganization of the secretariat of Comintern in 1926 in geographical "secretariats"[4] merely formalized the long-standing arrangement under which colonies were dealt with by the section of the secretariat charged

[1] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol 3, p. 675.
[2] See *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917–1923*, Vol. 3, pp. 480–481.
[3] G. Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (1952), p. 80, note 52.
[4] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 909.

with the affairs of the respective metropolitan country. It was not a happy arrangement. The forms of oppression and exploitation against which communists struggled in the metropolitan countries were not the same as those afflicting colonial peoples; and a notable lack of sympathy was apt to arise between the two groups. When Semaun became in 1923 the representative of the PKI in Comintern, he set up a party office in Amsterdam, and was elected a member of the central committee of the Dutch party.[5] But the recriminations which broke out at the fifth congress of Comintern in June 1924 showed him at loggerheads with the Dutch leaders,[6] though the fact that he was elected a member of IKKI at the congress was an indication that he enjoyed favour in Comintern circles. Friction between the Dutch party and representatives of the PKI, and the airing of their respective grievances at Comintern headquarters, was an endemic feature of the next few years.

Distance saved the leaders of the PKI on the spot from the degree of subservience imposed on parties more directly accessible to Comintern discipline. Communications between Moscow and Indonesia were so slow and precarious that it is by no means certain how far these leaders were aware of the hesitations and objections aroused in Comintern by the project of an armed rising. If they were conscious of them at all, they rejected such inhibitions as symptoms of weakness and wavering, and of lack of appreciation of Indonesian realities. But doubts were not confined to Moscow. Malaka, who first learned of the project in Manila in March 1926, at once denounced it as rash and premature; and the group of Indonesian communists in Singapore decided to send two senior party representatives, Alimin and Musso, to Moscow to solicit the approval of Comintern for the venture. After their departure Malaka arrived in Singapore to renew his protests, publishing there a pamphlet *Mass Action* in which he expressed in theoretical form his argument against the project of armed insurrection.[7] Malaka was a passionate believer in mass action as the basis of revolution —a theme which later earned him a Trotskyite label — and condemned any attempt by leaders to carry out a *putsch* before mass

[5] R. McVey, *The Rise of Indonesian Communism* (1965), pp. 240, 244–245.

[6] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 671.

[7] For the evidence for these moves see R. McVey, *The Rise of Indonesian Communism* (1965), pp. 318–321; both Alimin and Musso had been members of the Indies Social-Democratic Union out of which the PKI had sprung.

consciousness and mass organization had been sufficiently developed.

Exactly when the plans of the PKI leaders in Indonesia began to arouse serious apprehension in Moscow cannot be established. No symptoms of alarm were visible at the sixth IKKI in March 1926. Malaka claimed in his autobiography to have written a letter to Comintern protesting against the decision;[8] and on June 12, 1926, Roy, whose authority in Asian affairs stood high in Comintern, wrote an anxious letter to Sneevliet, at this time president of the central committee of the Dutch party, on the Indonesian prospect:

> Most of the stalwart fighters are either in exile or in prison, while those at large are afflicted with "the infantile disease of Leftism"; nor can they develop any extensive activity, since they are all known to the police and constantly shadowed by spies. Moreover, owing to the White terror, the organizational links of the party have been considerably loosened, and the influence of the central committee on the separate branches is not sufficiently strong.

Since neither Semaun nor Darsono could suggest any safe address in Indonesia to which a warning message could be sent, Roy proposed to despatch one Miller as an emissary — in Roy's view, an unsuitable choice, but the only man available. Meanwhile he sent Sneevliet a draft programme for the PKI drawn up in Comintern (doubtless by himself), which concentrated heavily on the cause of national independence. Sneevliet replied on July 10, 1926. He shared Roy's apprehensions of the unfitness of the PKI for revolutionary action, but thought even Roy's programme too radical to form the basis of a legal movement; the Dutch authorities would not tolerate any mention of independence. He disapproved of the Miller project, and suggested that Tanaka might make a secret visit to Java, and that he himself should be recalled to Moscow to work in Comintern — a suggestion which would have outraged the Indonesian delegates.[9]

[8] *Ibid.* p. 484, note 54.

[9] For this correspondence see *ibid.* pp. 334–336; the Miller mission evidently did not materialize. "Miller" is identified by Indian intelligence sources as H. Müller, a Comintern agent born in Riga, who was attached to the Soviet consulate in Shanghai in 1927 and engaged in the organization of Indian dissidents in China (Government of India, *Communism in India, 1924–1927* (1927), pp. 229–230); he may also be the Miller who organized a revolutionary railway

About the time of Roy's letter to Sneevliet, Alimin and Musso, having made the long détour via China, at length reached Moscow; and a thorough discussion of the Indonesian question was inescapable. These awkward issues could not have been raised at a less propitious moment. The Soviet leaders were in the throes of the struggle against the newly formed united opposition. The new arrivals were kept waiting; and the statement that they received some encouragement for an Indonesian rising from Zinoviev and other opposition leaders, though it rests on the authority of Semaun many years later,[10] is not implausible. It was while a crucial session of the party central committee was in progress[11] that Alimin and Musso, together with Semaun and Darsono who were already in Moscow, were eventually received by officials of IKKI on July 22, 1926. The record of what followed may be tinged with hindsight. The Indonesians claimed a total membership of the PKI of 8000 and of Sarekat Rayat of 101,000, as well as the support of nine trade union centres representing 23,000 workers. They expressed confidence that the whole population would follow them, and that they would be able to seize power. The spokesmen of IKKI remained sceptical, and were alarmed by the absence of any political programme for the insurrection. In August Stalin received the delegates and repeated these doubts. Finally, in September 1926, IKKI adopted a resolution which is said to have provoked "a sharply negative reaction" from the Indonesian delegates. It recommended a programme based primarily on "the demand for the independence of the country", and declared that one of the chief tasks of the party was "to join together all national-revolutionary elements of the country, to create a single national front, while fully preserving the organizational and political independence of the PKI".[12]

How far the delegates pressed the project of a rising, and how far Comintern specifically resisted it, remains obscure. No open

workers' trade union in India (*Malaya Entsiklopediya po Mezhdunarodnomu Profdvizheniyu* (1927), cols. 1222–1223).

[10] R. McVey, *The Rise of Indonesian Communism* (1965), p. 337; for a far-fetched and unconfirmed story of a secret message sent by Musso from Moscow which encouraged the party to persist with its plans see *ibid.* p. 339.

[11] See Vol. 2, pp. 6–9.

[12] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional: Kratkii Istoricheskii Ocherk* (1969), p. 274; this account is based on unpublished archives, but makes only one direct quotation and, perhaps significantly, does not quote the text of the resolution.

clash occurred. The delegates accepted whatever verdict was pronounced; and all of them remained in favour after the defeat. When Alimin and Musso set out on their return journey to the east, nothing irrevocable seemed to have been decided.[13] The mood in Moscow was revealed in an article by Darsono in the Comintern journal in which he compared the tasks of the Indonesian with those of the Chinese party: communists must "support the Indonesian national movement with all their might, and after that strive to seize its leadership for themselves".[14] At the same moment an unidentified writer in the Profintern journal reproached the PKI with insufficient energy in attracting the masses into the trade unions: this had led to a "simultaneous over-estimate of the revolutionary potentialities of the liberation movement and under-estimate of the importance of an alliance of the working class with the revolutionary bourgeoisie against imperialism". Less cryptic was the conclusion that the PKI was faced with "long-term, methodical, painstaking work to establish links with the masses on the basis of representing their day-to-day economic and cultural needs".[15] The impression seems to have prevailed in Moscow that, as the result of the discussions in IKKI, the dangerous project of an uprising had been provisionally shelved.

Whatever instructions Alimin and Musso may have carried away from Moscow never reached the party; at the fateful moment the two emissaries had got no further than Shanghai. The rising began as arranged on the night of November 11–12, 1926, and proved a disastrous fiasco. In so far as so ill-planned and uncoordinated a revolt can be said to have had a programme, it does not appear to have been specifically communist, and was designed to appeal to adherents of Sarekat Rayat as much as to the PKI. Pleas were heard for freedom of the press, self-government and such subsidiary practical objectives as fiscal and educational re-

[13] According to Darsono's version given to the sixth congress of Comintern in July 1928, much was made of the difficulties experienced by Alimin and Musso on their journey to Moscow and of their belated arrival, and it was assumed that "meanwhile the insurrection was being put off" (*Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 66); it was probably believed in Moscow that this postponement would continue indefinitely.

[14] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 9 (67), 1926, pp. 46–49.

[15] *Krasnyi Internatsional Profsoyuzov*, No. 11, 1926, p. 498; the charge of over-estimating the liberation movement and under-estimating the alliance with the working class was borrowed from a remark by Stalin in May 1925 (Stalin, *Sochineniya*, vii, 151).

form.[16] The appeal to national sentiment was not strong enough; as Musso later confessed, "though we knew that the slogans must have a national character, we did not know how to compose a correct, clear programme of national demands which would have drawn the masses of the population into participation in the rising".[17] The railway strike which was to have heralded the outbreak and disrupted government communications never occurred; workers in general "reacted to the movement passively". The loyalty of the army and police, 90 per cent of them native Indonesians, was not shaken. The rising was least ineffective in the sparsely populated western region of Java, where the insurgents, mainly peasants, held out for three days. Elsewhere revolts were even more rapidly crushed. The rising in Sumatra, which should have coincided with events in Java, did not take place till January 1927, and suffered the same ignominious fate.[18] Scores of Indonesian communists were shot, and some thousands imprisoned or deported to New Guinea. The PKI did not again raise its head during the period of Dutch rule.

The Indonesian insurrection, while it may be said to have reflected revolutionary influences radiated throughout the world by the Bolshevik revolution, owed perhaps a more direct debt to the rising revolutionary movement in China. It had not been planned or inspired by Comintern, and had taken place in defiance of explicit discouragement by that organization. Once, however, the rising had broken out, Comintern had no option but to applaud "the revolutionary struggle of the people of Indonesia" and to denounce the "Dutch imperialists" for seeking to "drown the struggle for Indonesian freedom in blood". This was done in a manifesto of IKKI on November 20, 1926. China was the country which at this moment commanded all the eager attention of the Comintern leaders. The mood was still one of optimism, fed by the dramatic victories of the nationalist army; and the signals of Chiang Kai-shek's threatened change of front had not yet been read in Moscow. The prevailing optimism, in defiance of reality, spread from China to Indonesia.

[16] See Semaun's account in *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 145, November 26, 1926, pp. 2524–2525.

[17] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 196.

[18] This is the account given by Darsono to the sixth congress of Comintern in July 1928 (*Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 66–68); it can be confirmed from many other sources.

> The revolt against imperialism [declared the IKKI manifesto] is spreading from one country to another. From China it has extended to Java.[19]

Bukharin, in opening the seventh enlarged IKKI on November 22, 1926, side by side with "the great Chinese people", greeted "the workers and peasants of Indonesia ... who are likewise taking their stand in the bloody struggle against capital"; and Semaun echoed the claim that "the rising in Java has developed into a veritable civil war".[20] Both Bukharin and Manuilsky referred to the Indonesian rising as an offshoot of the Chinese revolution — the obsessive theme of the session.[21] The only discordant note was struck by the Dutch Communist Party. As was afterwards admitted, Dutch workers were moved "only to a very limited extent" by the insurrection; the party failed to publicize its "historic significance", to organize protests or to react sharply against "petty bourgeois prejudice in the colonial question".[22] Šmeral at the seventh IKKI, speaking as a mouthpiece of the Comintern secretariat, accused the Dutch party of joining with the social-democrats in a proposal for a commission of investigation, of advocating not independence for Indonesia, but "self-government" on the lines of British plans for India, and even of dismissing the insurrection as the work of *provocateurs*. De Visser, the Dutch delegate, offered a feeble defence, but claimed that the party had now rectified its errors.[23] In the main resolution of the session Indonesia was twice listed with other colonial countries in a context of revolution and civil war, but was not otherwise mentioned.[24]

The completeness of the disaster cut short discussion. Indonesian affairs did not bulk large in Moscow; and nobody was inclined to probe the deeper causes of the defeat. The first reaction, while the seventh IKKI was still in progress, was to despatch Semaun to the Netherlands to negotiate an agreement with Hatta, the president of Perhimpunan Indonesia, an organization of Indonesians resident in the Netherlands, which was predominantly

[19] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 143, November 23, 1926, pp. 2056–2057; a corresponding manifesto was issued a few days later by Profintern (*ibid.* No. 146, November 30, 1926, p. 2551).

[20] *Puti Mirovoi Revolyutsii* (1927), i, 4.

[21] *Ibid.* i, 48, 422.

[22] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 3, January 7, 1927, p. 58.

[23] *Puti Mirovoi Revolyutsii* (1927), i, 507, 566.

[24] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), pp. 627, 634.

nationalist and not communist in complexion. An agreement was signed on December 6, 1926, pledging the support of the PKI for Perhimpunan Indonesia in its campaign for national independence.[25] Hatta reciprocated by making a lengthy speech at the Brussels congress of the League against Imperialism in February 1927, and submitted a resolution which put forward three main demands: the abrogation of the policy of arrests and executions adopted after the recent insurrection; "the advance of the Indonesian population to full self-determination and national independence"; and support for the Chinese revolution "which is being conducted by the Kuomintang party".[26] The sequel was the formation in Indonesia in June 1927 of a new National Party, in which Sukarno, a young engineer, was a moving spirit,[27] and which could be thought of as an Indonesian counterpart of Kuomintang. The party enjoyed some success, and became a new focus of Indonesian discontent. But communists played no great part in it.

Meanwhile Alimin and Musso on their return journey from Moscow had been intercepted by the British authorities in Johore in December 1926,[28] and taken to Singapore. Having been detained there for some time they were released on condition that they did not remain in the colony, and departed for China, where Alimin attended the pan-Pacific trade union conference at Hankow in May 1927.[29] From China the two men returned to Moscow, where they enrolled in the Lenin school, but appear to have engaged in no other form of political activity.[30] Reactions in Moscow to the Indonesian disaster had been surprisingly mild. Semaun in the Profintern journal attributed it primarily to shortcomings in organization.[31] Darsono in a long article published in the Com-

[25] G. Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (1952), p. 89.

[26] *Das Flammenzeichen vom Palais Egmont* (1927), pp. 131–142; for this congress see pp. 297–301 above.

[27] G. Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (1952), pp. 90–91.

[28] *Ibid.* p. 83.

[29] The episode was recorded by the British police inspector who detained and interviewed the two travellers; Alimin, described as "a polished linguist and experienced traveller", gratefully sent him from China the first number of the *Pacific Worker*, published in Hankow on July 1, 1927 (R. Omraet, *Singapore: a Police Background* (n.d. (?1947)), p. 110). For the pan-Pacific conference and the *Pacific Worker* see pp. 801–803 above; Alimin's presence at the conference was also reported by Indian intelligence sources (Government of India, *Communism in India, 1924–1927* (1927), p. 265).

[30] R. McVey, *The Rise of Indonesian Communism* (1965), p. 202.

[31] *Krasnyi Internatsional Profsoyuzov*, No. 1, 1927, pp. 70–76.

intern journal under his pen-name Samin was more ambitious. He declared that the situation in Indonesia was, and remained, revolutionary, comparing the rising with "Russia's 1905". But he was also conscious of the Chinese precedent, and concluded:

> The first stage of the revolution in Indonesia, as in China, will be the overthrow of imperialism.[32]

In the autumn of 1927 he published a further article hopefully entitled "On the Eve of New Storms in Indonesia", in which he claimed that the KPI "enjoys great confidence among the broad masses and in almost all strata of the native population". But the programme which he put forward was national:

> The concentration and mobilization of proletarian and national-revolutionary forces.
> The overthrow of the rule of Dutch imperialism.[33]

By this time premonitory symptoms had begun to appear of the turn to the Left in Comintern; and, when in November 1927 IKKI issued a fresh pronouncement on Indonesia, the changed emphasis reflected the gradual change in China from support of the Left Kuomintang to the policy of an independent workers' and peasants' movement. As the result of a "very thorough examination of the lessons of the Indonesian rising", the disaster was seen as a part of "the world-wide struggle between capital and labour". The fault of the rising was not only that it lacked organizational preparation, but that it was "conducted under the general slogan of fighting Dutch imperialism, without concrete political and economic slogans which might have mobilized the broad masses". Having rebuilt itself, the party must strive "to rebuild the trade unions and fight for their legalization", in this way creating a mass workers' party. The statement attacked the Dutch social-democratic party as "the 'life-guard' of the Dutch slave-owners", and did not mention the Indonesian National Party at all.[34] Circumstantial evidence suggests that the change may have led to a return to favour of the more radical Alimin and Musso at the

[32] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 12 (86), 1927, pp. 28–35, No. 14 (88), 1927, pp. 23–33.

[33] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 37 (111), 1927, pp. 30–35.

[34] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 119, December 2, 1927, pp. 2711–2712.

expense of the more nationally inclined Semaun and Darsono. The agreement concluded by Semaun with Hatta a year earlier was rescinded.[35] An article by Musso entitled "The Reactionary Rôle of Social-Democracy in Indonesia" ended with the affirmation that there were in Indonesia "a great number of communists who work illegally, but whose influence still predominates among the workers and peasants".[36] The report of the executive bureau of Profintern to its fourth congress in March 1928 was noticeably more indulgent to the bold initiative of the PKI which had brought about the disastrous rising,[37] and Alimin, who appeared as Indonesian delegate at the congress, struck a confident note. Since 1924 the PKI had "taken into its hands the leadership of the whole revolutionary trade union movement and of some reformist organizations". Alimin claimed that "today all classes of the population are joined together in a revolutionary bloc", and that "the influence of the revolutionary movement is extending among all classes of the population".[38]

The sixth congress of Comintern in July 1928 showed greater restraint. Bukharin's only reference to Indonesia in his opening report was the vague assurance that the revolutionary movement was "gathering new forces and re-arming its warriors on the Chinese precedent".[39] Three Indonesian delegates were present with the right to vote — Musso, Alimin and Darsono, using respectively the pseudonyms Manavar, Padi and Samin; Semaun was one of three non-voting delegates.[40] In the debate on Bukharin's report Alimin pleaded in extenuation of the rising of 1926 that "we worked without any guidance of the Communist International, so that mistakes were inevitable". He commented severely that "during the uprising, which lasted two months, the Communist International remained inactive.[41] A disturbing incident occurred in the debate on the programme. One of the non-voting Indonesian delegates, appearing under the name of Alfonso,

[35] G. Kahin, *Nationalism and Communism in Indonesia* (1952), p. 89.

[36] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 1, January 3, 1928, pp. 14–15.

[37] *Die Internationale Gewerkschaftsbewegung in den Jahren 1924–1927* (n.d. [1928]), p. 64.

[38] *Protokoll über den Vierten Kongress der Roten Gewerkschaftsinternationale* (n.d.), pp. 215–217.

[39] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), i, 20.

[40] *Ibid.* v, 152; Semaun appears to have remained silent throughout the congress.

[41] *Ibid.* i, 276–278.

apparently a student associated with the youth movement, attacked the conditional approval extended in the programme to "temporary agreements with the national revolutionary bourgeoisie": this he described as an "opportunist" programme, worthy of Mensheviks like Martynov, Zinoviev and Kamenev. He wanted Soviets established "not only for the conquest of power, but in every struggle of the working class with capitalism". The other five members of the Indonesian delegation promptly dissociated themselves from these rash propositions. Bukharin in his reply curtly reproved Alfonso for labelling policies propounded by Lenin as Menshevik, and explained that there had been a period (though not the present period) when it was right to march with the national revolutionary bourgeoisie.[42]

The main occasion for discussion of Indonesian affairs at the congress occurred in the debate on colonial and semi-colonial countries, introduced by Kuusinen.[43] Darsono was one of three delegates honoured by an invitation to present co-reports on their respective countries. He opened with a long review of social and economic conditions in Indonesia and of the history of the party. He spoke of the PKI's "very weak links with Comintern and with other fraternal parties", and attributed the disaster of 1926 to failures in planning, organization and coordination. He criticized the "ultra-Left tendency" of the party decision of December 1924 to organize an insurrection, in particular the demand for "the immediate creation of a Soviet republic in Indonesia". He offered no encouragement to a policy of cooperation with the native bourgeoisie, which "either does not exist at all, or is extremely weak". Nevertheless, communists must work in existing nationalist organizations in order to maintain contact with the masses; and a legal party organization, "formally not communist", of the type of the now dissolved Sarekat Rayat must be recreated. Darsono ended rather lamely with the complaint that "we have never been strong on theory".[44] Musso insisted that, while the social-democrats had "gone over completely to the side of ruling class", "the influence

[42] *Ibid.* iii, 57–58, 120, 150; Alfonso's speech was recorded only in the form of a brief third-person report — a mark of extreme disapproval. For his probable identity see R. McVey, *The Rise of Indonesian Communism* (1965), p. 436, note 18; the identification with Malaka in G. Kahin, *Nationalism and Communism in Indonesia* (1952), p. 85, is certainly incorrect.

[43] For this debate see pp. 213–219 above.

[44] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 54–74.

of the communist party is dominant among the masses". But he failed to shake the congress out of its apathy on the Indonesian question.[45] The paragraphs devoted to Indonesia in the long resolution of the congress on colonial and semi-colonial countries depicted Dutch imperialism as now subordinate to American and British imperialism, performing the functions of "gendarme and hangman"; the government had "smashed the communist party", and exterminated or imprisoned thousands of the best fighters for the proletariat and the peasantry. The resulting disorganization called for "new methods of work". But nothing novel was proposed. Communists were to work in mass national organizations, in which they were to "form fractions and unite round themselves national revolutionary elements"; the one concession to current fashion was the demand for "a decisive struggle against the Dutch social-democrats".[46]

During the next year the one Indonesian representative working in Comintern appears to have been Musso, who sought only to conform to the wishes of his employers. In an article of April 1929, he described the growing tension in Indonesia between the National Party and the social-democrats, and even referred sympathetically to the now virtually defunct Sarekat Islam. He denounced the Brussels congress of the Second International in 1928, which had advocated only independence for Indonesia under a Dutch protectorate, and the attacks made by social-democrats on the League against Imperialism. A further article indulged in wishful thinking about a revival of communist work and of revolutionary trade unions in Indonesia.[47] At the tenth IKKI in July 1929 Musso followed the now obligatory line by denouncing the conversion of the Indonesian social-democrats to "social-Fascism". He explained that the social-democrats and the Dutch authorities, learning from the part played in China and India by the national bourgeoisie (which had, however, only "a thin layer" as its counterpart in Indonesia), were now wooing the Indonesian National Party. But he admitted that he could report no communist activity "since we have no direct communication

[45] *Ibid.* iv, 195–200.

[46] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), pp. 834, 863–864.

[47] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 37, April 30, 1929, pp. 898–899, No. 47, May 31, 1929, pp. 1131–1132.

with Indonesia".[48] Kuusinen, the only other speaker who touched on the subject, pinned more hopes on the National Party, and quoted reports that Sukarno had not only formed trade unions, but was forming a united front with independent unions. But his concluding recommendation "to do something concrete for Indonesia" seemed more than ever empty of substance.[49] It was increasingly apparent that the defeat of the 1926 rising had to all intents and purposes destroyed the KPI, and that any effective contact between Indonesia and Comintern had been broken for an indefinite period. Here, as elsewhere in Asia, the fortunes of Comintern had touched their nadir.

[48] *Protokoll: 10. Plenum des Exekutivkomitees der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), pp. 241–243.
[49] *Ibid.* pp. 836–837.

CHAPTER 88

LATIN AMERICA

No ties of interest or of ideology associated the Russian revolutionaries with Latin America, where embryonic Left movements were more notably influenced by Spanish anarchism than by Marxism. The only mention of it in Lenin's published writings appears to have been a passage in *Imperialism: the Highest Stage of Capitalism* in which he quoted a German economist as saying that "South America, and especially Argentina, is under the financial control of London", and was "almost a British commercial colony".[1] Mexico was the one Latin American country which, less than a decade earlier, had achieved a far-reaching revolution. But it was the accident of geographical proximity to the United States, rather than its revolutionary experience, which accounted for the first Mexican contacts with Moscow. The first communist (called at first "socialist") party in Latin America was founded in Mexico in 1919 by the joint efforts of Roy, the Indian nationalist, Borodin, the Russian party or Comintern envoy, both of whom found themselves in Mexico owing to passport difficulties, and a group of Left intellectuals from New York.[2] Borodin was sympathetically received by the Mexican president, Carranza, always on the look-out for potential allies against the patronage of the United States; and the nascent Mexican party enjoyed a measure of toleration as a convenient link with Moscow.[3] Roy and Philips, an American who had been concerned in the foundation of the party, and who used a variety of aliases, English

[1] Lenin, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, xxvii, 383; his note-books of 1916 contained another quotation from the same writer to the effect that United States policy in Latin America was "a combination of imperialism with the Monroe doctrine" (*ibid.* xxviii, 187).

[2] For later partly contradictory accounts see B. Goldenberg, *Kommunismus in Lateinamerika* (1971), pp. 168–169, 174–181.

[3] M. N. Roy, *Memoirs* (Bombay, 1964), pp. 20–22, which may inflate his own rôle; Roy recounts the words of a Mexican military commander: "I don't know what socialism is; but I am a Bolshevik, like all patriotic Mexicans. The Yankees do not like the Bolsheviks; they are our enemies; therefore the Bolsheviks must be our friends, and we must be their friends" (*ibid.* p. 154).

and Spanish, appeared at the second congress of Comintern in June 1920 as delegates of the Mexican party. Both in later life recalled interviews during the congress with Lenin, who expressed the view that "it would be long before revolution could succeed in the new world", but enquired whether there was "a strong opposition movement to the United States", and was interested in "the peasant base of a movement in Mexico". He was also "anxious to know whether there was an indigenous movement representing the interest of the Indians".[4] At the congress itself Fraina, one of the United States delegates, had linked the struggle of the proletariat in the United States with the aspirations for national liberation in Latin America, and envisaged "a gigantic movement embracing the whole of the Americas".[5] But these pious hopes were too remote from current realities to attract much attention.

During the next few years Soviet efforts in Latin America were confined mainly to Mexico. Carranza was quickly overthrown, and at the end of December 1920 Obregón became president. He was less favourably disposed than Carranza to the communists; and, when in 1921 Philips returned with Fraina and Katayama of the Comintern secretariat to organize the party and create "a pan-American Comintern secretariat" in Mexico, their efforts met with little success.[6] The Mexican party both in number and in revolutionary quality left everything to be desired. Wolfe, a prominent United States communist, who was sent to attend its third congress in 1923 and was elected to its central committee, reported that the effective leaders of the party were the famous *avant-garde* painters Diego Rivera and Siqueiros, and that no member of the central committee, other than himself, "appeared to understand in the slightest degree the economic and political realities of the country, or even to be interested in them".[7] Wolfe, who represented the Mexican party at the fifth congress of Comintern in June 1924, could do little to impress on a polite but unreceptive audience the need "to organize an opposition to American imperialism extending over the whole American continent". But he explained that Mexican communists were individually joining a

[4] *Ibid.* p. 346; *Survey*, liii (October 1964), 43.
[5] *Der Zweite Kongress der Kommunist. Internationale* (1921), pp. 157–160.
[6] M. N. Roy, *Memoirs* (Bombay, 1964), pp. 39–40, 179.
[7] B. Goldenberg, *Kommunismus in Lateinamerika* (1971), p. 182.

new peasant party, and forming cells in it.[8] Later in the year Obregon retired on the expiry of his four-year term as president; and the choice of a successor rested between his nominee Calles and a Right-wing general, Huerta, said to enjoy American and British support. The party wavered, and then, apparently at Wolfe's instigation, came out for Calles.[9] But this gesture did not meet the approval of Comintern, which instructed the party to "destroy the illusions of the masses" about the government of Calles; the policies of the government would make it clear to the workers and peasants that the choice lay between "the dictatorship of the proletariat under the slogan of all power to the workers and peasants, or the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie".[10]

The year 1924 was marked by another Soviet advance in Mexico. On October 15, 1923, the Mexican representative in Berlin, on instructions from Obregón, had made proposals to Krestinsky, the Soviet *polpred*, for the exchange of trade delegations between the two countries: he hinted that from this diplomatic relations might develop. The Soviet Government in its reply described the proposal as "insufficient". It did not insist on "a solemn treaty about *de jure* recognition", but a mutual declaration was required that "no obstacles exist any longer to the renewal of diplomatic relations".[11] On June 3, 1924, after prolonged hesitation, the Mexican Government expressed its readiness to renew relations with the Soviet Union and exchange ministers on the basis of mutual *de jure* recognition, though it declined to sign

[8] *Protokoll: Fünfter Kongress der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), i, 390–394, ii, 802–803; Latin America does not appear to have figured in any of the congress discussions of the "national and colonial question" (for which see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 88–90).

[9] According to Wolfe, Calles after his victory began to subsidize the Mexican party in gratitude for its support (*The Nation*, August 27, 1924, pp. 207–208).

[10] Quoted by Philips (*alias* Razinez) at the sixth congress of Comintern in 1928, when such sentiments were in fashion, and Wolfe was under a cloud (*Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 469). The quotation may not have represented the full sense of the instruction; the date "1923" in the quotation is in any case erroneous. Thirty years later an alleged directive of IKKI to the Mexican party of August 21, 1923, was produced to the United States House of Representatives Committee on Un-American Activities; one of its themes was the impending European revolution and the need to prevent the United States from sending aid to crush it (reprinted in S. Clissold, *Soviet Relations with Latin America* (1970), pp. 82–86). If genuine, it demonstrates the exaggerated view taken in Moscow of the capacities and degree of sophistication of the Mexican party.

[11] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, vi (1962), 478–480, 493.

any formal protocol — a caution which the Soviet representative attributed to "fears of pressure from the United States".[12] No further hitch occurred, however; and on November 7, 1924, Pestkovsky presented his credentials as first Soviet minister to Mexico.[13] Chicherin, elated by this diplomatic success, gave an interview to the correspondent of an Argentine newspaper saying that the Soviet Union would welcome a renewal of relations with Argentina and with any other South American country;[14] and in March 1925, in his speech at the session of TsIK, he celebrated the event with undiplomatic frankness, explaining that relations with a neighbour of the United States would provide "a very convenient political base in America for the development of further connexions".[15]

The trade union question was another source of embarrassment. A Mexican Confederation of Labour (CROM) claimed some 600,000 members (most of them, according to Lozovsky, "agricultural workers and peasants"), and was linked through a Pan-American Confederation of Labour (COPA) with the United States A.F. of L.; there were, however, some independent unions not affiliated to CROM — railway and oil workers, miners, and a few local unions.[16] Philips purported on his visit to Mexico in 1921 to have founded a General Confederation of Workers in opposition to CROM, which sought affiliation to Profintern.[17] This venture seems to have been of brief duration. Mexican party support was evidently lukewarm; Lozovsky recorded that "some comrades, from the standpoint of the struggle for unity, think it impossible to found a new centre, since a Confederation of Labour already exists".[18] But the Mexican railway workers' union was apparently

[12] *Ibid.* vii (1963), 369–370, 392–393.

[13] *Ibid.* vii, 535–537.

[14] *Ibid.* vii, 391.

[15] *SSSR: Tsentral'nyi Ispolnitel'nyi Komitet 2 Sozyva: 3 Sessiya* (1925), p. 38; Mexican indignation at this remark obliged the unfortunate Pestkovsky to explain that Chicherin must have been misreported or misunderstood (C. Beals, *Glass Houses: Ten Years of Free-Lancing* (N.Y., 1928), p. 338).

[16] *Na Novom Etape*, ed. A. Lozovsky (1928), pp. 47–48; Siqueiros at the fourth Profintern congress in March 1928 put the membership of unions affiliated to CROM at only 50,000 and claimed that some "revolutionary" unions belonged to it (*Protokoll über den Vierten Kongress der Roten Gewerkschaftsinternationale* (n.d.), pp. 263–264). CROM was represented at the first congress of Profintern in 1921 (*Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 166, December 18, 1925, p. 2491), but the link had not been maintained.

[17] *Survey*, lv (April 1965), 115; for Philips's visit see p. 958 above.

[18] *Na Novom Etape*, ed. A. Lozovsky (1928), p. 48.

in receipt of Profintern subsidies, no doubt channelled through Pestkovsky's mission. In March 1926 CROM made a formal protest to Pestkovsky against the "moral and economic support" accorded to "so-called communist radical groups, the enemies of the Mexican Confederation of Labour and of our government".[19] An article in the Comintern news-sheet reflected the dilemma of the attitude to be adopted to the Calles régime. Calles was praised as a "revolutionary nationalist", who was "against the imperialism of the United States and against the Catholic landlords"; if only he would desist from attempts to suppress the railwaymen's union and from attacks on communists, a united front would be possible.[20] The resolution of the seventh IKKI in November 1926 pronounced a firm verdict:

> The central place in the tactics of the party must be occupied by the struggle for the independence of Mexico from American imperialism. Communists should support the petty-bourgeois revolutionary movement, but at the same time, by organizing the toiling masses, by preventing the disarmament of the poorest peasantry, should actively oppose the threatened capitulation of the petty-bourgeois government to American imperialism.[21]

Conciliation continued to prevail in Soviet policy towards Mexico. Perhaps owing to his difficulties with the trade unions, Pestkovsky was withdrawn in the autumn of 1926. He was replaced by Kollontai, who presented her credentials on December 24, 1926, and a month later reported a "very friendly" interview with president Calles. She repudiated recent allegations by Kellogg, the United States Secretary of State, about Bolshevik activities in Mexico and Latin America; and Calles spoke of "many points of contact in the struggle against the imperialist tendencies

[19] *Mirovoe Khozyaistvo i Mirovaya Politika*, No. 5–6, 1926, p. 55; Calles is said to have assured Pestkovsky that the CROM protest had no influence on Mexican–Soviet relations. In 1927 the Mexican Government protested against a payment of 25,000 dollars from Soviet sources into a strike fund of the railway workers' union (*Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, x (1965), 594; C. Beals, *Glass Houses: Ten Years of Free-Lancing* (N.Y., 1938), 340).

[20] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 141, November 1926, p. 2449.

[21] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), p. 642; an opposition group in the KPD complained that by this decision "the working masses in Mexico are obliged to form a united front with the revolutionary nationalist Mexican Government", which was hostile to the workers and represented the interests of the petty bourgeoisie (*Die Internationale*, x, No. 4, February 15, 1927, p. 118).

of the capitalist states". The ticklish trade union issue was touched on with mutual promises to remove "occasions for estrangement and even for hostility on each side".[22] Throughout the nineteen-twenties Mexico was the only Latin American country with which the Soviet Union maintained diplomatic relations, so that the *polpred* stationed there had some general and undefined responsibility for Latin American affairs.[23] But negotiations for a Soviet–Mexican trade treaty dragged on intermittently and fruitlessly for several years, the difficulty of reconciling two opposed systems of trade being cited as the reason for the failure.[24]

Elsewhere in Latin America Soviet interest developed slowly. In Argentina, a socialist party with 700 members was founded in 1918, and admitted to Comintern in the autumn of 1920.[25] At the fifth congress of Comintern in June 1924 Argentina was represented by an Argentinian party leader, José Penelón, who was elected a member of IKKI[26] and instructed to establish a South American secretariat of Comintern in Buenos Aires. The effective foundation of the secretariat can be dated from the publication of the first number of its journal, *Correspondencia Sudamericana*, on April 15, 1926.[27] For a time the Argentine party pursued conciliatory tactics, which earned it short-lived legal recognition or toleration, and enjoyed some success in local elections.[28] But these

[22] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, ix (1964), 603, x (1965), 34; Kellogg accused the "Bolshevik leaders" of having "very definite views with respect to the rôle which Mexico and Latin America are to play in their programme of world revolution" (R. Farrell, *American Secretaries of State and their Diplomacy*, xi (N.Y., 1965), 33).

[23] In 1928 he was consulted about the possibility of repatriating to the Soviet Union Bessarabian peasants who had emigrated to Brazil (*Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, xi (1966), 434).

[24] *Ibid.* x (1965), 625 note 11, xii (1967), 32–33, 124–125.

[25] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 104, October 25, 1927, p. 2231; B. Goldenberg, *Kommunismus in Lateinamerika* (1971), p. 143.

[26] *Protokoll: Fünfter Kongress der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), ii, 1022.

[27] B. Goldenberg, *Kommunismus in Lateinamerika* (1971), pp. 41, 550–551, note 32; a South American bureau of KIM is said to have been founded at the same time (*Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 6, 1926, p. 96).

[28] B. Goldenberg, *Kommunismus in Lateinamerika* (1971), p. 565, note 22; according to Argentine sources quoted *ibid.* p. 565, note 24, most of the worker members of the Argentine party worked in small workshops, not in large factories, and immigrant Jewish artisans and traders were heavily represented.

tactics led to the appearance of a dissident ultra-Left group calling itself a "Communist Workers' Party", and commonly known by the name of its journal *La Chispe* (*The Spark*). On May 26, 1926, IKKI telegraphed to the party that it had decided to send a letter approving the Bolshevization of the party and denouncing the Communist Workers' Party. This letter, signed "Ercoli", was published in *Correspondencia Sudamericana* on July 15, 1926; and on November 30, 1926, the journal published a further statement from Comintern denouncing the dissident group whose professions of "friendship towards Soviet Russia and Comintern" were no more than "a mask which serves to veil their counter-revolutionary design".[29] This accorded with the tactics of the united front and with the mistrust of the ultra-Left prevailing at this time in Comintern. A Brazilian party was founded in 1922 by a handful of intellectuals and workers, all formerly active anarcho-syndicalists. They accepted the 21 conditions of admission to Comintern, and adopted a statute imitated from that of the Argentine party. But they remained an illegal organization, subject to constant police repression, and were unable to maintain any regular contact with Moscow.[30]

But the predominant Soviet interest in Argentina and Brazil was economic rather than political. Trade relations between the Soviet Union and Latin American countries, which were insignificant for several years after the revolution, were conducted from 1924 onwards by the newly founded Amtorg in New York through a representative resident in Buenos Aires.[31] Argentina steadily refused diplomatic recognition to the Soviet Government,[32] owing — it was believed in Moscow — to British pressure. But in December 1927 consent was given to the establishment in Buenos Aires of an independent Soviet trading agency in the form of a limited company under the name Yuzhamtorg, Kraevsky being

[29] Both telegram and statement were quoted in *Il Movimento Revolucionario Latino Americano* (Buenos Aires (n.d.)), pp. 376–377; for the Ercoli letter see B. Goldenberg, *Kommunismus in Lateinamerika* (1971), p. 565, note 21.

[30] R. Chilcote, *The Brazilian Communist Party* (1974), pp. 25–33; for a rare account in a Comintern publication of police persecution of the Brazilian party see *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 151, November 21, 1924, p. 2042.

[31] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, ix (1964), 396; for Amtorg see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 430.

[32] For specific declarations to this effect see *Izvestiya*, June 23, 1925; *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, viii (1964), 119.

appointed its manager.[33] Mutual recognition was achieved with Uruguay by an exchange of notes in August 1926. But more than two years later no attempt had been made to establish diplomatic or commercial relations.[34]

The situation in Peru was peculiar. At a meeting in Mexico City on May 7, 1924, Haya della Torre, a Peruvian intellectual, announced the foundation of a movement which he named the Allianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana (APRA). The programme which he put forward, though revolutionary in current Latin American terms, was predominantly national. Its main points were resistance to "Yankee imperialism"; the political unity of Latin America; nationalization of land and industry; internationalization of the Panama Canal; and solidarity with oppressed peoples and classes everywhere.[35] It purported to be a movement of all classes. But its national appeal to the native bourgeoisie placed limits on the support which it was likely to give to workers' demands. The comparison frequently made by Soviet critics with the Kuomintang of Chiang Kai-shek was not inapposite. It was designed not as a political party, but as a movement with adherents throughout Latin America. But its headquarters and its main strength were in Peru. Inspired by the success of his appeal, Haya della Torre visited Moscow at the time of the fifth congress of Comintern in June 1924, apparently in the hope of enlisting support for his enterprise, and met Chicherin, Trotsky, Frunze and Lunacharsky. But he was not impressed by their knowledge of, or interest in, Latin American problems.[36] The visit had no results. No communist party existed in Peru; but APRA developed and flourished on an anti-imperialist platform. One of its active supporters was a young man named Mariategui who, having spent four years in Italy and western Europe, had been imbued with communist ideas, and was probably the best schooled Marxist in Latin America. On his return

[33] *Izvestiya*, January 1, 1928; *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, xi (1966). According to J. Valtin, *Out of the Night* (1941), p. 209, funds for Latin American parties were dispensed through Yuzhamtorg.

[34] *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki SSSR*, ix (1964), 393–394, xii (1967), 11.

[35] H. Kantor, *The Ideology and Programme of the Peruvian Aprista Movement* (Berkeley, 1953), pp. 10–11.

[36] Haya della Torre's memoirs quoted in S. Clissold, *Soviet Relations with Latin America* (1970), p. 11; the statement that he was a delegate to the fifth congress is not confirmed by the records.

to Peru in 1923 he attempted to organize the workers, many of them Indian, who worked in primitive conditions in factories and mines. His views and activities were for the time being accommodated in the broad eclectic framework of APRA. In 1926 he founded in Lima a journal called *Amanta*, in which leading members of APRA collaborated, but which was suppressed by the authorities after a few months.[37] These developments appear to have attracted little notice in Moscow.

From 1927 onwards more consecutive interest was taken in Moscow in Latin American affairs. By this time socialist or communist parties in many Latin American countries had sought affiliation to Comintern: Mexico and Argentina in 1920; Uruguay and Chile in 1922; Brazil and Central America (Guatemala, Salvador and Nicaragua) in 1923; Colombia in 1924; Cuba and Paraquay in 1926; Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and Venezuela in 1927.[38] Most of these were small and insignificant groups, maintaining only tenuous relations with Moscow.[39] The largest were the Argentine party with 2000 members, 900 of them in Buenos Aires; the Brazilian party with 1200, of whom 98 per cent were said to be workers, 70 per cent native, 30 per cent immigrant; the Mexican party with 1000, having doubled its membership in 1927; and the Uruguayan party with 700.[40] But the prejudice excited by the encroachments of the United States in Latin America attracted a growing interest in Moscow. Early in 1926 publicity had been

[37] A useful article on Mariategui's career in *Novaya i Noveishaya Istoriya*, No. 5, 1957, pp. 68–85, plays down the extent of his involvement with Haya della Torre and seeks to depict him as a consistent Marxist; for the further course of the movement see pp. 972–973 below.

[38] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 104, October 25, 1927, pp. 2231–2232.

[39] An instruction to the Chilean party on its internal dissensions, known only in a Spanish version (*Soviet Relations with Latin America*, ed. S. Clissold (1970), pp. 119–131), if genuine, must have emanated from Penelón's South American secretariat in Buenos Aires; nobody in Moscow would have written "Nicholas (or Nikolai) Lenin".

[40] *Die Komintern vor dem 6. Weltkongress* (1928), pp. 397, 410, 425, 428; the figures appear to be for January 1, 1928. Figures in most cases slightly higher appear a year later in A. Tivel and M. Kheimo, *Desyat' Let Kominterna v Tsifrakh* (1929), pp. 347–360: Argentina 2400, Brazil 850, Colombia about 1000, Mexico 1500, Uruguay 800. An article in the Comintern journal in December 1927 put the membership of the Mexican party at no more than 600, but said that the circulation of its journal had increased in the past six months from 3000 to 9000 (*Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 50 (124), 1927, p. 30).

given by Comintern to the manifesto of an All-America Anti-Imperialist League, signed by several Latin American communist and radical leaders.[41] The sixth IKKI of February 1926, in its resolution on the United States party, drew its attention to "the importance which the workers' movement (and the independence movement) in the states of South America now commands", and instructed it to designate "a serious group of party cadres to participate, in agreement with the presidium of IKKI, in regular work in South America".[42] But the resolution had no sequel; and the experiment of placing work in Latin America under the supervision of the United States party was not pursued. At the seventh IKKI in November 1926 Codovilla, an Argentinian of Italian origin who worked at this time in Comintern, spoke of the rise of American imperialism, which was "more flexible, more cunning, more intelligent" than its British counterpart;[43] but he failed to attract the attention of a complacent audience absorbed in other questions.

A few weeks later, the shock of United States intervention in Nicaragua broke through this crust of indifference, and fanned the righteous anger of critics of imperialism. At the end of January 1927 IKKI protested loudly against the occupation of Nicaragua by United States forces, which the Secretary of State had described, "amid the derision of the whole world", as necessary to save civilization from Bolshevism and the Third International.[44] The anti-imperialist congress in Brussels in February 1927 had been inspired primarily by events in Asia.[45] But, thanks in part to its coincidence in time with the Nicaraguan *coup*, it played a substantial rôle in the Latin American movement. Unexpectedly Calles, the Mexican president, contributed generously to its finances.[46] Vasconcellos, a former Mexican minister, spoke on behalf of a large group of Latin American delegates; and two declarations

[41] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 35. March 3, 1926, p. 483–485.

[42] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), p. 619; for this resolution see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 521–522.

[43] *Puti Mirovoi Revolyutsii* (1927), i, 249.

[44] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 13, February 1, 1927, p. 255.

[45] For this congress see pp. 296–307 above.

[46] B. Gross, *Willi Münzenberg* (1967), pp. 203–206; the intermediary is said to have been Goldschmidt (see p. 301 above), then a visiting professor in Mexico, seconded by the Mexican Ambassador in Berlin. For Calles's previous subsidies to the Mexican party see p. 960, note 9 above.

were adopted protesting against the imperialist policies of the United States.[47] Among those present at the congress, though he did not speak, was the Peruvian Haya della Torre, the founder of APRA.[48] He had recently spent some time in Europe,[49] and seems to have had some contact with Lozovsky, perhaps dating from a meeting in Moscow in 1924; Lozovsky, being informed about this time that he was advocating a policy of alliance with Japan to curb United States imperialism, wrote to him that such manoeuvres had nothing in common with revolutionary tactics, and would be fatal to those who resorted to them. But, when Lozovsky went on to argue that only a common front with the workers of North America could halt the menace of imperialism, Haya della Torre rejoined, in a letter of May 1927, that in the United States the workers were imbued with imperialist prejudices, and that the only people who could help in the struggle against imperialism were bourgeois liberals like Borah — a view which Lozovsky treated with ridicule.[50]

The British rupture of relations with the Soviet Union in May 1927 led to an attempt to substitute Great Britain for the United States as principal target of the anti-imperialist campaign. The South American secretariat in Buenos Aires issued a manifesto calling for "a general strike against the counter-revolutionary war"; and its journal *Correspondencia Sudamericana* published on June 15, 1927, an article ending with the slogan: "Neither wheat nor meat for the imperialist bandits!"[51] These demonstrations, presumably stimulated from Moscow, produced a split in the Argentine party, being opposed by Penelón and by a section of worker members of the party, whose livelihood depended directly

[47] See pp. 299–300 above.

[48] His name is in the list of delegates in *Das Flammenzeichen vom Palais Egmont* (1927), p. 238, and he appears in a group photograph taken at the congress (*ibid.* facing p. 270); according to a later statement by the Latin secretariat of Comintern (see p. 973 below), "APRA signed with reservations the anti-imperialist resolution of the Brussels congress".

[49] *Labour Monthly*, No. 12, 1926, pp. 756–769, published an article by him, *What is the APRA?*, dated Paris, October 1926.

[50] The only authority for this correspondence is a speech delivered by Lozovsky on April 7, 1928 (see p. 973, note 69 below), quoted at length in R. Martinez de la Torre, *Apuntes para una Interpretacion Marxista de la Historia Social del Peru* (Lima, 1928), ii, 279–281 — a work designed, as was Lozovsky's speech, to discredit APRA from a communist standpoint. Lozovsky's letter must have been written early in 1927, before his departure for China.

[51] B. Goldenberg, *Kommunismus in Lateinamerika* (1971), pp. 46–47.

or indirectly on trade with Great Britain. By this time unconditional enthusiasm for the united front had abated in Moscow, and calls were beginning to be heard for more direct revolutionary action. Penelón's cautious tactics of support for day-to-day economic demands of the workers seemed compromising and pusillanimous, and he was denounced as a reformist by an "ultra-Left" group in the party. He secured the expulsion of the group. But at this point the balance of forces turned against him. He was removed from the secretariat and eventually expelled from the party. *Correspondencia Sudamericana* ceased publication on September 15, 1927.[52] Codovilla was appointed to replace Penelon as head of the South American secretariat. But the whole organization had been badly shaken up; and *Correspondencia Sudamericana* did not resume publication till August 1, 1928, when it condemned the former "one-man organization" of Penelón, and announced the reorganization of the South American secretariat under "collective leadership".

The first serious attempt in Moscow to create a comprehensive organization to deal with Latin America was made towards the end of 1927 by Profintern. Here Lozovsky, fresh from his disappointing experiences in China, was the driving force; he was later to claim that he "discovered Latin America about the time of the tenth anniversary of the October revolution".[53] The prospect was promising, and in some respects unfamiliar. Throughout Latin America artisans working independently or in small workshops predominated over industrial workers, who were scarcely to be found outside Argentina, Mexico and Chile, and there only in small numbers. Trade unions existed in name in most countries, but were local, isolated and diverse in character. The ratio of organized to unorganized workers varied, on optimistic estimates, from one-third to one-tenth; and communists were to be found mainly in small unions not more than 100 strong. The number of adherents to Profintern in Latin America was said to have in-

[52] For Penelón's misdemeanours see *Il Movimento Revolucionario Latino Americano* (Buenos Aires (n.d.)), pp. 377–378; the charge against him was that he "had no faith in the masses".

[53] *Protokoll: 10. Plenum des Exekutivkomitees der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), p. 738.

creased by 56 per cent between 1925 and 1927;[54] but the absolute numbers must have been small. Intermittent attempts to establish contact with Latin American unions were made by the United States organizations, the A.F. of L., which sponsored the Pan-American Confederation of Labour (COPA), and the IWW. Some important Argentinian trade unions were, by way of exception, affiliated to IFTU.[55]

The visit to Moscow, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the revolution, of numerous Latin American delegates provided an opportunity for action. On November 15, 1927, the executive bureau of Profintern initiated discussions with the Latin American delegates; and on December 11, 1927, a resolution was signed and published in the name of delegates of the "class unions" of Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Mexico, Uruguay, Chile and Ecuador, proclaiming the need for "a coming together of all trade union class organizations for the struggle against the imperialism of the United States, against the imperialist Pan-American Confederation of Labour, against the offensive of the national bourgeoisie". It decided to convene a Latin American trade union congress in Montevideo towards the end of 1928 for the purpose of creating a Latin American trade union secretariat.[56] The representative quality of some of the delegates was dubious; and it may have been difficult to maintain in Latin America the enthusiasm generated in Moscow. Meanwhile a much advertised pan-American conference, attended by delegates of 21 countries, met at Havana from January 16 to February 20, 1928. Honoured by a visit from President Coolidge himself, travelling on a United States warship, it marked a further stage in the expansive economic policies of the United States;[57] and in these policies COPA was a willing participant. From this time Latin America claimed an increasing show of attention from Comintern and from the Soviet Government. It was, as the Brazilian delegate observed at the sixth Com-

[54] *Protokoll über den Vierten Kongress der Roten Gewerkschaftsinternationale* (n.d.), p. 306.

[55] *Ibid.* p. 141.

[56] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 125, December 23, 1927, pp. 2906–2907; a note appended to the resolution indicated that some of those whose names were attached to the document had in fact left Moscow before the signing, but had participated in the discussions and approved the creation of the proposed trade union secretariat.

[57] For a full summary of the proceedings from United States sources see A. J. Toynbee, *Survey of International Affairs, 1927* (1929), pp. 426–441.

intern congress in July 1928, "the hinterland of the most powerful imperialism, the most powerful bourgeoisie, in the world".[58]

The fourth congress of Profintern in March 1928 provided a further opportunity of pressing home the Soviet initiative. Lozovsky in his main report hailed the workers' movement in Latin America as "a force which can carry on a real struggle against American imperialism", and claimed that Profintern had "drawn into its ranks the workers' movement in Chile and Colombia, and individual organizations in other countries". He intended at the end of the congress to call a special conference to set up a temporary organization to unite Latin American workers.[59] Martinez, representing the Latin American contingent as a whole, attacked COPA as the tool of the imperialists, and thought that the Nicaraguan affair had shown up the "agents of American imperialism in the trade union movement". Philips, *alias* Gomez, also claiming to speak on behalf of the 20 Latin American delegates, called Latin America "an extraordinarily favourable ground for the development and propaganda of the principles and tactics of Profintern", since it was oppressed and exploited both by its own national bourgeoisie and by North American imperialism. What was needed was better organization; and he welcomed the prospect of the new secretariat.[60] Delegates of Cuba, Mexico and Chile added their contributions to the debate, and to the denunciation of United States imperialism;[61] and the group of Latin American delegates demonstrated its unimpeachable loyalty by joining in a refutation of Nin's attack on the Soviet trade unions.[62] Never before had Latin American representatives figured so conspicuously at a congress in Moscow. The main resolution of the congress denounced COPA as a tool of United States imperialism, and called for a federation affiliated to Profintern to unite the Latin American trade union movement. The fifth session of the central council of Profintern which followed the congress instructed its

[58] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), i, 228.

[59] *Protokoll über den Vierten Kongress der Roten Gewerkschaftsinternationale* (n.d.), pp. 83–84.

[60] *Ibid.* pp. 106, 139–142; Martinez was apparently a Venezuelan worker in Comintern (B. Goldenberg, *Kommunismus in Lateinamerika* (1971), p. 63).

[61] *Protokoll über den Vierten Kongress der Roten Gewerkschaftsinternationale* (n.d.), pp. 126–132, 263–264, 385–387; the Cuban delegate said that COPA "represents the Monroe doctrine in the ranks of the working class" (*ibid.* p. 128).

[62] *Ibid.* pp. 338–339; for this attack see pp. 179–180 above.

executive bureau to set up a commission to organize a Latin American trade union federation, and to arrange for participation of representatives of Great Britain, the United States and Far Eastern countries in the projected Latin American trade union conference.[63] The "special conference" announced by Lozovsky met on April 7, 1928, and was addressed by Lozovsky and by several Latin American delegates on the trade unions and on the struggle of workers and peasants against imperialism.[64] It set up a committee which launched a new journal *The Latin American Worker*, promoted the organization of revolutionary trade unions in several countries, and started a joint campaign of protest against the frontier war in progress between Brazil and Paraguay.[65] It also recommended the Latin American trade unions to adhere to the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat.[66]

An episode which occurred after the Profintern congress illustrated the spread of revolutionary activities in Latin America, and the increasing involvement of Comintern and Profintern in them. By the end of 1927, friction in APRA between Haya della Torre and the followers of Mariategui had come to a head. Mariategui formed a group within APRA which believed that the struggle against imperialism could not be divorced from the struggle for socialism, and aimed at the formation of a broad socialist party of workers, peasants and intellectuals as the prelude to an eventual revolutionary class party.[67] The Peruvian delegate to the fourth

[63] *Desyat' Let Profinterna v Rezolyutsiyakh* (1930), pp. 184–185, 234.

[64] *Pravda*, April 7, 1928; the only part of Lozovsky's speech which has been traced is a passage denouncing Haya della Torre's policies (see p. 973 note 69 below).

[65] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 48, June 4, 1929, pp. 1163–1164; these proceedings were said to have provoked keen opposition from "the bourgeoisie, the reformists and the anarchists".

[66] For the resolution of the Pacific trade unions welcoming this decision see p. 1041–1042 below.

[67] B. Goldenberg, *Kommunismus in Lateinamerika* (1971), p. 64. Mariategui's views were developed in a collection of essays entitled *Sieste Ensayos de Interpretacion de la Realidad Peruana* and a pamphlet *Defensa del Marxismo*, published in 1928 and 1929 respectively (*Novaya i Noveishaya Istoriya*, No. 5, 1957, p. 75); Haya della Torre's principal theoretical work *El Antiimperialismo y el Apra* is said to have been written in 1928, though published only later (H. Kantor, *The Ideology and Progress of the Peruvian Aprista Movement* (Berkeley, 1953), p. 146). Much detailed study would be required to elucidate the ideological relation of the two men to each other; Haya della Torre was influenced by Marx, but, perhaps out of political prudence, never seems to have called himself a Marxist, or even a socialist.

congress of Profintern in March 1928, calling himself Raymondo, whose real name was Portocarrero, belonged to this group. He did not intervene in the debates, but seized the occasion to address to the secretariat of Comintern an enquiry on the desirability of forming a Peruvian communist party and on the relations of such a party to APRA. The Latin secretariat replied at length. "The revolutionary struggle of the worker and peasant masses against Yankee imperialism" could not, it explained, be treated in isolation:

> The struggle of the Latin American workers is equally a part of the vast revolutionary front of colonial and semi-colonial peoples against the imperialism of capitalist metropolises, a part of the struggle of the working class and the poor peasants of the whole world against their exploiters and against the capitalist system.

APRA was "a sort of Latin American Kuomintang", in which "the people are exhorted to organize without distinction of class". Haya della Torre was also accused of pursuing a "narrow nationalistic policy" in regard to the "inferior races" in Latin America. His letter of May 1927 was cited as evidence that APRA preferred contacts with "the allegedly anti-imperialist bourgeoisie" to alliance with "the revolutionary workers and peasants of the whole world". The conclusion was clear:

> The workers of Peru should create their own communist party, and organize a national labour organization which they should get to adhere to the Latin American Labour Secretariat and to Profintern.

In this task the Comintern secretariat was ready to assist.[68] On April 7, 1928, about the time when this reply was despatched, Lozovsky, who certainly had a hand in its drafting, recounted to the Latin American special conference convened after the Profintern congress his past dealings with Haya della Torre, and reiterated his strong disapproval of the policies of APRA.[69]

[68] Quoted from a Spanish source in S. Clissold, *Soviet Relations with Latin America* (1970), pp. 135–139, where it is dated "probably 1927"; no Russian text has been found.

[69] *Ibid.* pp. 139–140, where the speech is erroneously said to have been delivered to the fourth congress of Profintern; for Haya della Torre's letter of May 1927 see p. 968 above.

Preparations were now afoot for the sixth congress of Comintern to meet in July 1928; a discussion of Latin American affairs would necessarily take place at the congress. By this time Comintern, like Profintern, was ready to intervene more actively in the affairs of the Latin American Left. In December 1927 the journal of Comintern published an article by a Swiss member of the secretariat, Woog *alias* Stirner, severely criticizing the Mexican Communist Party on a diversity of grounds. The party had "sailed in the wake of the anarcho-syndicalists". It had under-estimated the rôle of the petty bourgeoisie in the struggle against survivals of feudalism in Mexico and against the predominance of foreign capital. It had failed to work in the reformist trade unions. It had "turned the tactics of the united front into a caricature". The article contained a warning against "foreign comrades" who had "exaggerated recent events in Mexico", and "involuntarily transferred to them the tempo and proportions of the Chinese revolution".[70] But by the spring of 1928 the cult of a united front with the petty bourgeoisie was becoming suspect in Comintern circles. During the absence in France of Humbert-Droz, the head of the Latin secretariat, Minieff (*alias* Stepanov) and Vasiliev, his subordinates in the secretariat, with the help of other members of the Comintern secretariat, drafted some more radical proposals, which apparently found favour with Latin American representatives already in Moscow. Humbert-Droz, on his return, found these unacceptable, and substituted draft theses of his own, which were eventually submitted for discussion to the Latin American commission of the congress.[71] A hint of current frictions was conveyed in a letter from Humbert-Droz to Togliatti of May 2, 1928, referring to "Argentine and Mexican resolutions" (otherwise unreported) as examples of the confusion due to Bukharin's absence; Pyatnitsky had held up the Mexican resolution for six months because he did not dare to decide between two opposing points of view.[72]

The Humbert-Droz theses depicted the situation in Latin American countries. Industrialization was the product of foreign capitalism. In Brazil, Argentina and Chile a numerically weak native industrial bourgeoisie had begun to appear; elsewhere it

[70] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 50 (124), 1927, pp. 26–30.

[71] J. Humbert-Droz, *De Lénine à Staline* (Neuchatel, 1971), pp. 310–312.

[72] J. Humbert-Droz, *Il Contrasto tra l'Internazionale e il PCI* (1969), p. 253 (Humbert-Droz archives, 0084).

was non-existent. The proletariat was weak, unorganized and not yet class-conscious. The trade unions included petty-bourgeois handworkers and peasants. The revolutionary movement must be "assimilated to the type of the bourgeois-democratic movement as it presents itself in semi-colonial countries, where the agrarian problem and the problem of anti-imperialism form the central focus". But "the weakness and the non-revolutionary character of the bourgeoisie" meant that the bourgeois-democratic revolution could be completed only "under the leadership of the proletariat"; and the conclusion was the need to form "really communist parties".[73] A two-part "discussion article" by Humbert-Droz in the Comintern journal was an extended commentary on the theses. It curtly dismissed "the opinion of comrade Travin (i.e. Gusev)" and of certain Mexican and Ecuadorian communists that the governments established in those countries by revolutionary movements were socialist governments, and that the movements themselves had been "nothing other than a proletarian revolution".[74]

The theses with their emphasis on the bourgeois-democratic character of the revolution and on the agrarian problem clearly reflected Chinese precedents. But they were too cautious for the more radical elements which were beginning to gather weight in Comintern. It was a sign of the times when, during the congress, the Comintern journal published in its "discussion section", in the same issue which carried the second part of Humbert-Droz's article, counter-theses from the pen of Gusev, using the name Travin. Gusev argued that throughout Latin America, with Mexico as a partial exception, the national bourgeoisie was very weak and entirely dependent on foreign capital. Hardly any peasant bourgeoisie (*kulaks*) existed; peasants had a "semi-serf, *batrak*" status. There was little factory proletariat, but other ele-

[73] The theses are known only in the form in which they were published in *Correspondencia Sudamericana* in May 1929 in preparation for the Latin American conference in Buenos Aires (quoted and summarized in B. Goldenberg, *Kommunismus in Lateinamerika* (1971), pp. 69–71); according to this account they were worked up by the Latin American commission of the sixth congress. They were not discussed in any plenary session of the congress, but were subject to modification in the commission (see p. 980, note 88 below), so that their original form is a matter of conjecture.

[74] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 27–28 (153–154), 1928, pp. 104–112, No. 29–30 (155–156), 1928, pp. 102–112; neither issue is dated, but they probably appeared in July and August 1928.

ments of an urban proletariat were numerous. The conception of a "bourgeois-democratic revolution" was inapplicable; such a revolution could not shake off the yoke of foreign imperialism. In Mexico, "proletariat and peasantry are beginning to understand the need for an alliance in the revolutionary struggle". This set the pattern for the future:

> The absence of a national bourgeoisie facilitates the formation of a worker–peasant bloc in Latin American countries.

These movements had traits "which are completely alien to bourgeois-democratic revolutions, and bring them near to revolutions of a socialist type".[75]

The leading Latin American countries were all represented — most of them for the first time — at the congress. Bukharin, in opening the proceedings, noted that "South America is for the first time entering the sphere of influence of the Communist International".[76] In the initial debate on Bukharin's report Latin American delegates were more eager to register their presence than to propound any line of their own, and Bukharin in his reply declined to enter into "contentious questions".[77] When the congress turned to the second item on its agenda, the danger of war, it adopted by acclamation a manifesto proposed jointly by the United States and Latin American delegations, carrying greetings to the workers and peasants of Nicaragua in their struggle for national independence, and ending:

> Down with the bandit imperialism of the United States! Hands off Nicaragua!

Philips, *alias* Raminez, explained in the course of the debate that all Latin American governments, whether semi-feudal, bourgeois-democratic or (like those of Mexico and Puerto Rico) "petty-bourgeois and progressive", were subject to the yoke of American imperialism.[78] It was the one point on which the Latin American

[75] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 29–30 (155–156), 1928, pp. 97–101.

[76] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), i, 2; the admission of the Cuban party to Comintern had taken place in 1926 (*Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 57, June 3, 1926, p. 1226), and the parties of Paraguay, Ecuador and Colombia were admitted during the congress (*Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), v, 136–138).

[77] For the three speeches of Latin American delegates see *ibid.* i, 228–236, for Bukharin's remarks *ibid.* i, 607–608.

[78] *Ibid.* ii, 35, 141–143.

parties could be relied on to agree with one another and with the Comintern leaders in Moscow.

The main discussion of Latin American affairs was reserved for the debate, introduced by Kuusinen, on colonial and semi-colonial countries, when Humbert-Droz presented a "co-report". Having begun by announcing "a rapid increase in the forces of the Communist International" in Latin America, he embarked on a review which provided little support for this bold assertion. Anglo-American rivalry permitted Argentina, Uruguay and Chile to maintain the semblance of independence. But this constituted no real exception to "*the semi-colonial status of the countries of Latin America*". Moreover, the claim that American, as distinct from British, imperialism "supports a liberal movement against the dictatorship of the big landlords" was "false from the beginning to end". The national bourgeoisie, where it existed at all, was entirely bound up with foreign capital, as was "the class of large landed proprietors", and could not play a revolutionary rôle. Nevertheless, the coming revolution would be a bourgeois-democratic revolution, though "in Latin America the preconditions exist for a rapid transition from the bourgeois-democratic revolution to the proletarian revolution". At this point Humbert-Droz embarked on a polemic against Gusev, who in discussions behind the scenes was said to have slightly modified his original view of the Latin American revolutionary movement, but still held that "its socialist features throw into the shade its bourgeois-democratic features". For Humbert-Droz "the fundamental question" facing Latin America communist parties was the need "to realize the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolutionary struggle". He opposed the idea of worker–peasant parties, but called for the formation of Soviets of workers', peasants' and soldiers' deputies, and for "a federal union of workers' and peasants' republics of Latin America".[79]

Humbert-Droz found himself at the sixth congress in the same twilight situation as his patron, Bukharin. Out-and-out attacks on him were barred. But his utterances were no longer sacrosanct. Pestkovsky, speaking under the name Banderas as a representative of the communist fraction in Krestintern, set the fashion by taking exception to the "Latin-Americanism" of Humbert-Droz's proposal for a "federation of republics". This meant giving a national

[79] *Ibid.* iv, 106–124.

colour to the struggle against American imperialism, and was perhaps too reminiscent of the pan-Americanism which was one of the weapons used by the United States to establish control over the American continents.[80] Gusev in a polemical speech reaffirmed his position against Humbert-Droz's criticism. He deprecated comparisons with countries like China and India, which had a national bourgeoisie. In Latin America, the foreign capitalists — the only important capitalists — were regarded by the masses not only as "national enemies", but as "direct class enemies". This was a class struggle in the course of which "the proletariat is drawn into the stream of the peasant revolution", and is "revolutionized by the peasant revolution". Gusev ended by sharply attacking Humbert-Droz and curtly dismissing his "new slogan of 'Latin-Americanism' " as a petty bourgeois equivalent of "Latin America for Latins".[81] Vasiliev, Humbert-Droz's subordinate in the Comintern secretariat, did not refer to him by name, but expressed doubt of the validity of worker–peasant parties, and accused the leaders of the Brazilian party of having "decided to organize their own Kuomintang".[82]

The rest of the debate was uneventful. The best-informed speaker was Wolfe, who now stood on the Right of the United States party (from which he was expelled in the following year), and was nearer to Humbert-Droz than to Gusev in this debate. He upheld the view of the Latin American revolution as bourgeois-democratic, being "a fusion of a revolutionary movement primarily of an agrarian character with the struggle against American imperialism". Wolfe particularly objected to "attempts to cover the liberation movement with a communist flag"; he denounced Haya della Torre as "an unprincipled type of careerist". The proletariat in Latin America was "extremely weak", and "closely bound up with the peasantry"; this link, far from being a source of strength, "feeds the proletariat with peasant ideology, and makes popular some kind of *narodnichestvo*". He advocated the formation of communist, not worker–peasant, parties but thought that the aim

[80] *Ibid.* iv, 140; for the identification of Pestkovsky with Banderas see S. Clissold, *Soviet Relations with Latin America* (1970), p. 61.

[81] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 232–241.

[82] *Ibid.* iv, 259; the Brazilian party created a "workers' bloc", later renamed "workers' and peasants' bloc", which for a time enjoyed legal status and even participated in elections (R. Chilcote, *The Brazilian Communist Party* (1974), pp. 30–31).

should be "a worker–peasant bloc".[83] Philips, speaking for a second time at the congress, confined himself to Mexico. He dismissed as an absurdity attempts to describe Calles's government as "socialist". But the Mexican "bourgeois-democratic agrarian revolution" was to be distinguished from other Latin American revolutions, "which in many cases had the character simply of military revolts". It was not yet completed, but in 18 years it had to its credit "a significant number of achievements which cannot be called socialist, but cannot be divested of a proletarian character". Calles would not be "the last Kerensky in the Mexican revolution", as "the masses of workers and peasants become more and more class conscious".[84] The numerous Latin American delegates who spoke showed no eagerness to involve themselves in a controversy which few of them even pretended to understand. A Columbian delegate began ironically:

> I cannot make any large theoretical contribution to the discussion about the theses on the revolutionary movement in colonies and semi-colonies. But I can tell you a little about the situation in the Latin American countries, which the comrades from Comintern perhaps do not sufficiently understand.[85]

But almost all of them, as if responding to some concerted directive, attacked Humbert-Droz's "federation of republics", which one of them dubbed "pan-Latinism". An Argentine delegate called for "a fierce struggle against APRA, which represents a sort of Kuomintang in Latin America".[86] The Mexican delegate, alone of the Latin American contingent, pleaded the cause of 25 millions of Indians, "exploited" and "slaves", who under a democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants would receive "the right of self-determination, the right to develop their own culture".[87]

Humbert-Droz, unlike the other two co-*rapporteurs*, did not reply to the debate. A Latin American commission was apparently constituted, but failed to report to the congress; nor was the Latin American question further discussed. The resolution of the con-

[83] *Ibid.* iv, 341–352; for Wolfe's expulsion see p. 613 above.
[84] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 470–471.
[85] *Ibid.* iv, 436.
[86] *Ibid.* iv, 454.
[87] *Ibid.* iv, 305; Wolfe also mentioned the necessity, and the linguistic difficulties, of work among "the numerous Indian tribes", each speaking its own dialect, in the interior of the continent (*ibid.* iv, 348).

gress on colonial and semi-colonial countries contained two passages on Latin America, which gave a sharper edge to Humbert-Droz's theses. The national bourgeoisie, "a very thin layer", was said to be so closely associated with the feudal landowners on the one hand and the imperialists on the other that it found itself in the counter-revolutionary camp. Large plantations and latifundia, foreign enterprises as well as large enterprises of the native bourgeoisie, should be confiscated. Communist parties must "strive for hegemony at a time of revolutionary movement", and not "subordinate themselves politically to temporary allies". They should include in their programmes the current economic aims of the workers, but should also demand "the arming of workers and peasants and the transformation of the army into a worker–peasant militia". The goal to be proclaimed was a "*worker–peasant government*".[88] The reorganization of the Latin secretariat in March 1924, which separated France and Italy from Spain and Latin America,[89] never seems to have been effective; Humbert-Droz remained in charge of all these countries. In the Latin American discussion at the sixth congress, the Mexican delegate suggested the need for a separate department of Comintern to deal with the Latin American countries.[90] But no formal change appears to have been made, and during the latter part of 1928 little attention was paid to Latin American affairs.

In the spring of 1929 arrangements were completed for the proposed trade union congress which was to be held in Montevideo in May 1929, and followed by a conference of Latin American communist parties in Buenos Aires. Humbert-Droz travelled to South America to attend these events as Comintern delegate;[91]

[88] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), pp. 835, 866–867. Many years later Humbert-Droz explained that his theses had been submitted to the presidium and accepted as a basis for the resolution, but had been objected to by the Russian delegation because they emphasized "the parasitical character of the cities" (letter of February 8, 1969, cited in B. Goldenberg, *Kommunismus in Lateinamerika* (1971), p. 554, note 79). The facts may be correct, but the reason given is probably wrong; Humbert-Droz first used the argument about the parasitical character of the cities in his report at the Buenos Aires conference in June 1929 (see p. 983 below).

[89] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 909.

[90] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 307.

[91] According to J. Humbert-Droz, *De Lénine à Staline* (Neuchatel, 1971), p. 355, he had been designated for this mission before the incident in the

and by way of preparation *Correspondencia Sudamericana* published in a special number of May 1929 the text of the Humbert-Droz theses on Latin America.[92] The Montevideo congress of trade union delegates of 16 Latin American countries took place from May 18 to 26, 1929; Argentina was the only important country which, owing to uncomposed differences in the trade union movement, was not represented. Who represented Profintern (unless Humbert-Droz received a special mandate to do so) is not recorded. According to initial reports received in Moscow, the congress conducted a campaign of protest "against imperialism, against war, against the imperialist agents of COPA and of the Amsterdam International".[93] But the paucity of information about the conference suggests that no outstanding results were achieved. When Lozovsky spoke at the tenth IKKI in Moscow six weeks later, he devoted no more than two or three sentences to it, recording only that it had set up a "continental trade union centre", which he bracketed with the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat created in 1927. As evidence of its importance he quoted the interest shown in it by an American news agency, and the indignant comment of Matthew Woll, the A.F. of L. leader, who had called for a united front with IFTU against communism.[94] At the same session Philips, *alias* Ramirez, probably the only person present who had actually attended the congress, was rather more communicative. He claimed that the congress had stimulated the creation of Red trade union federations in several countries, and had created a central organization to counteract the influence of IFTU and of COPA. The congress had also touched on the thorny issue of race. In addition to the large existing Negro populations, plantation-owners in many Latin American countries imported Negro workers from Jamaica or Haiti; and "the imperialists create conflicts between the two races, and play them off against one another in order to cut down the price of labour". Other countries encouraged immigrants from Italy, Poland, Spain, Portugal and elsewhere in Europe, who worked in slave conditions. It does not

German commission of IKKI in December 1928 (see pp. 452–453 above); his appointment was then cancelled, but subsequently renewed.

[92] See p. 975, note 73 above.

[93] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 48, June 4, 1929, pp. 1164–1165.

[94] *Protokoll: 10. Plenum des Exekutivkomitees der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), p. 738.

appear that any conclusion was reached on these problems. Philips rebutted a charge by Lozovsky that Mexican communists had compromised with CROM and sabotaged the work of Profintern, and quoted a passage from the Humbert-Droz theses condemning "flight from the reformist unions or the artificial creation of new revolutionary unions".[95] Lozovsky's policy of seeking to create Red unions affiliated to Profintern, even at the cost of a total break with the reformist unions, had gained ground in Moscow during 1928.[96] But at the Montevideo congress, in the presence of its obstinate opponent Humbert-Droz, it seems to have made little headway.

The conference of Latin American parties which met in Buenos Aires from June 1–12, 1929, was a more ambitious affair, and was the only attempt ever made by Comintern to organize and direct a communist movement in Latin America as a whole. It was attended by delegates of 14 Latin American parties, of the French and United States parties, of the South American secretariat and of KIM and Profintern, as well as by Humbert-Droz, who as the plenipotentiary of Comintern was the highest authority at the conference.[97] The conference had the standard agenda of communist party congresses of the period — the danger of war, the struggle against imperialism, the tasks of the parties, the trade union, peasant and youth questions, the question of race in Latin America, and questions of organization. Codovilla, head of the South American secretariat, made the report on the international situation, and fell into some confusion between the period of capitalist stabilization and the "third period" of its impending disintegration. Complaints heard in the debate that Latin American parties were at a low ideological level, and that some of their leaders understood the problems of European countries better than

[95] *Ibid.* pp. 810–813; for Lozovsky's charge see *ibid.* p. 720 (slogan no. 67). For the central trade union organization set up at the Montevideo congress (Confederación Sindical Latina Americana) see the rather doubtful sources quoted in B. Goldenberg, *Kommunismus in Lateinamerika* (1971), pp. 52–53); it did not survive for long.

[96] See pp. 171–175, 240–241 above.

[97] A full stenographic record of the conference was published in Buenos Aires under the title *Il Movimento Revolucionario Latino Americano* (Buenos Aires, n.d.) (the avoidance of the word communist is significant), the resolutions in a special issue of *Correspondencia Sudamericana*, No. 15, August 1929, which has not been available; none of this material appears to have been published in Moscow.

those of their own, did not lack plausibility.[98] Humbert-Droz, speaking under the name of Luis, intervened in the debate with a disquisition on the peculiar structure of Latin American society, due to "the rise of an entirely parasitical national bourgeoisie, which lives on the imperialist exploitation of the Latin American countries". Hence the "great parasitical cities", of which Buenos Aires was the type — cities of traders, officials and bankers, whose function it was to "extract the riches of the countries and their labour power". The working class of the cities was composed of workers and employees in service industries who enjoyed "a better economic and social position than agricultural workers, mine workers and workers in large imperialist concerns". It was the lowest, worst paid strata of workers, not the privileged workers in the parasitical cities, who could provide "the reserve army for the revolutionary struggle against anarchist and reformist ideas".[99] Nobody contested this diagnosis; and Codovilla, in the speech winding up the debate, observed that only "social traitors" could talk of "the 'progressive' rôle of imperialist penetration in Latin America".[100]

After this preliminary debate, Humbert-Droz delivered his main report on "The Struggle against Imperialism and Problems of the Tactics of the Communist Parties of Latin America". He now attempted a more detailed analysis of the social situation. The majority of the so-called peasants were more properly classified as agricultural workers or proletarians. The petty bourgeoisie was not a class but "an amalgam of different classes"; only a minority, consisting of intellectuals and students, was inclined to revolution. The "real revolutionary classes" were the agricultural workers and impoverished peasants. But "the proletariat of large-scale imperialist industry, of the mines, the oil refineries, and the slaughter-houses" was also "one of the most active elements in the revolutionary movement". From this composite picture he drew the conclusion that the function of a bourgeois-democratic revolution in Latin America was "to break the domination of feudalism, imperialism, the church and the large landowners"; to nationalize land, transport and the imperialist

[98] *Il Movimento Revolucionario Latino Americano* (Buenos Aires, n.d.), pp. 8–33, 36.
[99] *Ibid.* pp. 43–46.
[100] *Ibid.* p. 67.

undertakings; and to create a workers' and peasants' government "on the basis of workers', peasants' and soldiers' Soviets". The review of the revolutionary movement in individual countries, and of revolutionary parties already in being, with which the report ended seemed to have little relation to the theoretical analysis. The main practical injunction was to form independent communist parties free from any taint of bourgeois or social-democratic affiliations.[101]

The ensuing debate, in which none of the speakers displayed any interest in Humbert-Droz's theoretical exposition, showed how little the ideas prevailing in Comintern had penetrated the embryonic Latin American revolutionary parties. The angriest exchanges related to Colombia, where a strike in the previous year on the banana plantations of the United Fruit Company had been crushed with the loss of many lives and mass arrests, without any effective intervention by the local party, by the South American secretariat or by Comintern. In February 1929 Comintern addressed a letter to the Colombian Socialist Revolutionary Party, which was affiliated to Comintern, attributing the failure to the fact that "there do not yet exist in Colombia a strongly organized and disciplined communist party and mass labour unions".[102] When, however, Humbert-Droz repeated this criticism in his report, Prieto, the chief Colombian delegate, retorted that the fault lay with Comintern, which had neglected the party and offered no aid or advice. This was countered by the French delegate Rabaté, *alias* Austine, who had been sent to Colombia as representative of Profintern, and now launched a vigorous assault on the Colombian party, which included 50 per cent of peasants, 20 per cent of intellectuals and only 10 per cent of workers, and followed the theory and practice of one-man leadership.[103] Prieto sharply returned to the attack:

> Comrade Luis has said that the Communist International recently discovered Latin America; I must add that it does not yet know Latin America, since its critique of the Latin

[101] *Ibid.* pp. 79–108.

[102] S. Clissold, *Soviet Relations with Latin America* (1970), p. 131; according to the Colombian delegate at the conference, the letter did not reach the Colombian party, but was simply published in *Correspondencia Sudamericana* in May 1929 (*Il Movimento Revolucionario Latino Americano* (Buenos Aires, n.d.), p. 108).

[103] *Ibid.* pp. 108, 127–133.

> American movement manifests a wealth of dialectic which we all admire, but is marked by a lack of understanding for the real psychology of the masses which form the revolutionary movement.

Another Colombian delegate added still more frankly:

> We cannot talk of theories, of dialectic, for all that is pure metaphysics which we do not understand.... We come to the peasants with words and resolutions,... they will drive us off with sticks, for these comrades know no arguments other than weapons, than force.[104]

And a Venezuelan delegate observed that all problems had been "solved with dialectical versatility, with theory", but that no attempt had been made to "reckon with the psychology and the actual environment in which this political line was to be carried out".[105]

Several delegates propounded conceptions of revolutionary policy far removed from anything normally heard in Moscow. On October 7, 1928, Mariategui had succeeded in founding in Lima a Peruvian Socialist Party, composed mainly of students, with a Marxist platform, which definitely dissociated itself from APRA.[106] The Peruvian delegates to the conference, Zamora and Saco,[107] belonged to this party. Zamora read a statement by Mariategui casting doubt on the identity of interest between "imperialist capitalism" in Latin America and the "feudal and semi-feudal" landowners. The distribution of land to small petty-bourgeois proprietors, and the replacement of the landowning aristocracy by a native bourgeoisie dependent on foreign capital, were in no way opposed to the interests of imperialism. For the petty bourgeoisie, "the Yankee enterprise offers higher pay, possibilities of a rise in social status, an alternative to state employment". Comparisons

[104] *Ibid.* pp. 177, 179.

[105] *Ibid.* p. 174.

[106] For Mariategui's group see pp. 965–966 above; Mariategui took steps to transform the party into a communist party, and affiliate it to Comintern, shortly before his death in April 1930 (*Novaya i Noveishaya Istoriya*, No. 5, 1957, pp. 74–75); for a Comintern directive on the subject see S. Clissold, *Soviet Relations with Latin America* (1970), pp. 141–151.

[107] According to B. Goldenberg, *Kommunismus in Lateinamerika* (1971), p. 72, their real names were Pesce and Portocarrero; "Alfredo Saco" appears frequently in the nineteen-thirties as a leader of the Peruvian Communist Party and a writer on the subject (H. Kantor, *The Ideology and Progress of the Peruvian Aprista Movement* (1953), pp. 10, 79, 105).

with the European middle class, which had grown up in a period of free competition and capitalist development, were irrelevant.[108] The analysis was plausible. But in Comintern ears, recognition of imperialism as in any sense a progressive phenomenon, and refusal to identify the struggle against imperialism with the struggle against feudal landowners — anything indeed which smacked of Haya della Torre's theory of the "exclusiveness" or national peculiarity of Latin America — sounded the most dangerous of heresies. Siqueiros, who was the chief Mexican delegate, combined revolutionary impatience with a bland contempt for theory:

> The revolution is on the agenda in many countries of Latin America, and, if we do not make the revolution, the bourgeois opposition parties will make it.... We must be bold and launch our slogans quickly; for we cannot wait any longer, comrades, to carry out the proletarian revolution in our country.

And one of his colleagues repeated the message:

> We have reached the limit of our patience. To postpone the rising any further would be to condemn us to complete failure.[109]

Humbert-Droz in winding up the debate found himself mainly on the defensive. He reproached Siqueiros with a "tradition of leadership" which was too impatient to organize the masses, wanted immediate revolutionary action irrespective of the objective situation, and even favoured individual assassination. He taunted the Colombian delegates with supplying contradictory information and propounding contradictory views, but conceded that the Colombian Socialist Revolutionary Party might, by recruiting workers, transform itself into a communist party. He praised the Peruvian delegate for a sincere desire to assimilate the views of Comintern, but pointed out the unsatisfactory character of the Peruvian Socialist Party as a party of three classes — workers, peasants and petty bourgeois.[110] A resolution on the peasantry distinguished the peasant properly so-called, who was a small proprietor or a renter of land, from the argricultural labourer.[111]

Humbert-Droz's other major intervention was in a debate on

[108] *Il Movimento Revolucionario Latino Americano* (Buenos Aires, n.d.), pp. 149–152.

[109] *Ibid.* pp. 181, 184.

[110] *Ibid.* pp. 195–201.

[111] Quoted in *Novaya i Noveishaya Istoriya,* No. 5, 1957, pp. 82–83.

the problems of race in Latin America, introduced in a long and learned report by a Peruvian delegate, studded with quotations from Marx, Lenin and Pareto. Humbert-Droz explained that Comintern was opposed both to "Negro-Zionism" in Latin America and to an autonomous Indian state, and that only a revolutionary class movement would bring self-determination to the native masses. The slogan "Latin America for the Indians", said to have been put out by APRA, was frequently denounced in the debate as unrealistic. Peters, the delegate of KIM, added to the confusion by insisting on a distinction between "race" and "nation", and also by advocating "*the formation of groups of natives in the trade unions and in other mass organizations*".[112] Humbert-Droz's speech at the end of the debate was a model of caution. The question of race had not been raised at the sixth congress of Comintern (or, he might have added, in his own theses). But this was because the Latin American delegates had maintained that racial problems or prejudices, such as existed in the United States and South Africa, were completely absent in these countries. The Montevideo congress had shown up the extreme complexities arising from "the coexistence of three races and of a considerable number of mestizos and creoles", especially as "the perfidious policy of imperialism" had "fomented rivalries between the races in order the better to exploit them". He again rejected the conception of an Indian state. Self-determination for the oppressed nations of Latin America was no solution for the problems of race; the first need was for the Indians to recover the land of which they had been dispossessed. Attempts in Mexico and elsewhere to limit the immigration of Negroes, Chinese etc. were contrary to the views of Comintern. Humbert-Droz ended by recommending that no definitive resolution should be adopted on the question, that it should be discussed in the columns of *Correspondencia Sudamericana*, and that the conference of delegates of all Latin American countries, with a representative of Comintern, should eventually be held to consider it.[113]

Towards the end of the congress Simons, a United States dele-

[112] *Il Movimento Revolucionario Latino Americano* (Buenos Aires, n.d.), pp. 263–291, 297–300; according to a letter from Humbert-Droz to his wife, Peters was "a Stalinist in mentality", but was "behaving well" (Humbert-Droz, *De Lénine à Staline* (Neuchatel, 1971), p. 390).

[113] *Il Movimento Revolucionario Latino Americano* (Buenos Aires, n.d.), pp. 310–313.

gate, introduced a curiously ambiguous debate on the League against Imperialism; national leagues existed in nine Latin American countries. It was arguable that the league had proved a more effective instrument than Comintern in promoting the revolutionary cause in Latin America.[114] But Simons maintained that the league could be effective only if it were supported by masses of workers and peasants and were closely linked with the trade unions, and quoted a statement of Melnichansky to that effect. In many countries the league could not function as a united front organization, since it had no mass support and could not increase the influence of the party among the masses; in some places the league and the party were rivals.[115] The Argentine delegate revealed that the national League against Imperialism in Argentina had been founded in 1926 by expelled members of the party. The party had then formed a "League against Imperialism (Left Group)", and had apparently succeeded in capturing the whole organization.[116] The Peruvian delegate, without mentioning APRA, revealed the fundamental issue which lay behind the debate. He denied the charge that he regarded imperialism in general as a progressive phenomenon, but continued to claim that it was progressive in so far as it broke up feudal exploitation of the latifundia —an assertion promptly challenged by Codovilla in the name of Comintern.[117] The Argentine delegate, winding up the debate, once more proclaimed the need for "an anti-imperialist programme based on a class line"; it was an error to look in Latin America for a national bourgeois movement against imperialism, like Kuomintang in China. Propaganda must be directed "against imperialism, and not against a specific imperialism", as was desired by "APRA and other petty bourgeois organizations".[118] The debate brought to light the fundamental embarrassments of the communist movement in Latin America. Its most effective appeal was its protest against foreign imperialism; and growing mistrust of

[114] Münzenberg complained at the sixth congress of Comintern in July 1928 of the neglect by IKKI of the successful activities of the league in Mexico (*Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), i, 105); for a resolution of the league on Latin America see *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 7, January 22, 1929, pp. 123–124.

[115] *Il Movimento Revolucionario Latino Americano* (Buenos Aires, n.d.), pp. 321–324.

[116] *Ibid.* p. 330.

[117] *Ibid.* pp. 332–335.

[118] *Ibid.* pp. 337–338.

the United States in particular was in the nineteen-twenties its principal driving force. But the economic interests of the national bourgeoisie as a whole were too closely involved with those of foreign investors and *entrepreneurs* to make it a reliable source of protest; and the numerous peasants and few workers, who were rarely articulate, were more conscious of exploitation by their own nationals than by foreign imperialists. Failure to arouse the interest of the masses was a constant reproach. The movement lacked a solid base.

What the congress also illustrated was the lack of mutual understanding between the Latin American movement and Moscow. Discreet formulas could no doubt be found to veil intractable differences. But it could scarcely be denied that the conference was a set-back to hopes nourished in Moscow that a common and uniform policy, framed in the light of current Comintern orthodoxy, could be applied to the revolutionary movement in Latin America. Comintern multiplied its efforts to guide and control. Humbert-Droz announced a decision to set up a sub-secretariat of the South American secretariat in Mexico.[119] The only party to which the conference devoted a special discussion and resolution was the Argentine party. Ghitor, who appeared as delegate of the South American section of KIM, delivered a long report on the history and current crisis of the party. On the motion of the Brazilian delegate, the conference adopted a resolution congratulating it on the "consolidation" which it had achieved, denouncing the "expelled elements" for attempting to spread confusion in other Latin American parties, and inviting "sincere workers" who had repented of their errors to return to it.[120]

Once the conference was over, the interest of Comintern in this remote and baffling outpost of communism quickly evaporated. The Mexican party became involved in a struggle for power between military leaders, split, and was eventually suppressed. When the tenth IKKI met in Moscow in July 1929, an unidentified Latin American delegate made one casual and conventional reference to the "continental communist conference".[121] Lozovsky and Philips spoke only of the Montevideo congress.[122] Pestkovsky, re-

[119] *Ibid.* pp. 366–367.

[120] *Ibid.* pp. 371–381.

[121] *Protokoll: 10. Plenum des Exekutivkomitees der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), p. 517.

[122] See pp. 981–982 above.

appearing on the scene as a representative of Krestintern, admitted that petty-bourgeois ideology encouraged the formation in Latin America of "broad parties containing extremely varied elements", and rejected the view that "the peasantry is the fundamental driving and directing force of the social revolution".[123] But he too ignored the Buenos Aires conference. The resolutions of the tenth IKKI made no mention of Latin American affairs. Humbert-Droz on his return to Moscow found no further active employment; and Guralsky, who had survived his past association with Zinoviev, but was no longer rated high in Comintern, was despatched to Buenos Aires to take charge of that Latin American secretariat.[124]

[123] *Protokoll: 10. Plenum des Exekutivkomitees der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), pp. 551–552.

[124] B. Goldenberg, *Kommunismus in Lateinamerika* (1971), p. 43.

CHAPTER 89

THE NEGRO PROBLEM

THE rights of Negroes appeared late and inconspicuously on the agenda of Comintern, mainly against the background of their position in the United States of America and in the Union of South Africa. Lenin in an essay published in 1917, though written earlier, had compared the Negroes of the American South to former Russian serfs.[1] In an unfinished and unpublished manuscript, written during the winter of 1916–1917 when he was much preoccupied with the national problem, he had remarked that "in the United States only 11 per cent of the population consists of Negroes (and also mulattos and Indians) who must be considered an oppressed nation", adding, however, that "nowhere do vast national differences shrink so fast and so radically as here into one 'American nation' ".[2] When Lenin drafted his theses on the national and colonial questions for submission to the second congress of Comintern in June 1920, he appeared to recognize the American Negroes unconditionally as a "nation":

> Communist parties must give direct support to revolutionary movements among nations which are dependent or without equal rights (e.g. in Ireland, among the American Negroes, etc.) and in the colonies.[3]

But the American delegate, John Reed, speaking on the Negro question in the debate, described it as one "of a strong racial and social movement, of a proletarian labour movement advancing very fast in class consciousness". The Negroes on Reed's showing made no demand for national independence: "they regard themselves

[1] Lenin, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, xxvii, 144.

[2] *Ibid.* xxx, 354; this manuscript was first published in *Bol'shevik*, No. 2, January 31, 1935, pp. 46–49, and was not available in the debates of the late nineteen-twenties.

[3] *Ibid.* xli, 165; the text adopted by the congress was unchanged on this point (*Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), p. 128). The word used by Lenin in the above quotations was the specific *natsiya*, not the more general *narod* (*Volk*, people).

first and foremost as Americans at home in the United States".[4] Everyone, including Lenin, appears to have acquiesced in Reed's view; but Lenin's theses, unchanged on this point, were adopted by the congress.[5] The word "self-determination" was not pronounced. Lenin, had he been challenged, would doubtless have said, as he had said in other contexts, that self-determination meant the right to secede, but that, when the oppressed national group did not desire to exercise that right, the individual members could claim equal rights as citizens of the larger unit.[6] The Negro problem in the United States conformed to this pattern.

The third congress of Comintern in 1921 was notoriously neglectful of the national and colonial question.[7] According to the official record, South Africa was represented for the first time by two delegates of the International Socialist League, founded in 1916 and the forerunner of the Communist Party of South Africa, which came into being only in 1921.[8] Neither addressed the congress. But the delegation submitted a proposal to instruct IKKI "to give consideration also to the Negro question and the proletarian movement among the Negroes as an important part of the eastern problem".[9] The proposal was accepted without discussion, and shelved. The fillip imparted to nationalism by the first world war and by the Versailles peace settlement had, however, extended to the cause of Negro nationalism. A remarkable American Negro named Garvey, whose apocalyptic eloquence earned him the nickname of the "black Messiah", established in the United States in 1916 a Universal Negro Improvement Association, with a racial and nationalist programme of "Back to Africa" and "Africa for the Africans". This attracted some notice in Moscow; and an article in the journal of the People's Commissariat of Nationalities

[4] *Der Zweite Kongress der Kommunist. Internationale* (1921), pp. 152–157.

[5] See *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917–1923*, Vol. 3, pp. 252–257; Roy's supplementary theses, which were also adopted, did not mention the Negroes.

[6] See *ibid.* Vol. 1, pp. 418–423.

[7] See *ibid*, Vol. 3, pp. 387–389.

[8] *Protokoll des III. Kongresses der Kommunistischen Internationale* (1921), p. 1068. One of the delegates was certainly David Ivon Jones, a founder member of the league, who was engaged for some years in the uphill struggle to organize Negro workers in South Africa; he lived in Soviet Russia from 1920 till his death in 1924, and contributed extensively to Comintern publications on the Negro problem in Africa (E. Roux, *S. P. Bunting: a Political Biography* (Cape Town, 1944), pp. 48–49).

[9] *Protokoll des III. Kongresses der Kommunistischen Internationale* (1921), p. 1036.

in the autumn of 1921 observed that the awakening of Negro Africa was "closely linked to the revolutionary movement which has embraced the east under the influence of the Russian revolution".[10]

But it was not till the fourth congress of Comintern assembled in November 1922 that a further discussion of the Negro question took place in Moscow. By this time the legal Workers' Party of America had superseded the underground communist party.[11] In its initial programme it had demanded economic, political and social equality for the American Negroes, and sought their integration into "a solid union of revolutionary forces for the overthrow of the common enemy".[12] The party delegation to the fourth congress included a Negro, Huiswoud by name; and the congress set up a commission to deal with the Negro question.[13] The minute and predominantly white South African Communist Party, founded in Cape Town in 1921, was represented by an English settler named Bunting, who, on receipt of news from South Africa that four workers had been shot during a miners' strike, proposed a resolution of protest, expressing the conviction that the South African workers would renew their efforts "to draw the Negro workers into the struggle against South African capital". This was carried by acclamation.[14] But Bunting seems to have taken no other part in the proceedings;[15] and no discussion of South African affairs took place.[16]

Later in the proceedings, draft theses proposed by the Negro commission were submitted to the congress by Huiswoud in a lengthy speech. Huiswoud noted that of 150 million Negroes in

[10] *Zhizn' Natsional'nostei*, No. 20, October 3, 1921.

[11] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, p. 237, note 5.

[12] T. Draper, *American Communism and Soviet Russia* (1960), p. 322.

[13] *Protokoll des Vierten Kongresses der Kommunistischen Internationale* (1923), p. 26.

[14] *Ibid.* p. 635.

[15] E. Roux, *S. P. Bunting: a Political Biography* (Cape Town, 1944), pp. 58–59, records Bunting's enthusiasm for all that he saw in Moscow, and for the major speeches delivered at the congress, but mentions no South African question; the date here given for his departure from Moscow, November 20, 1922, cannot be correct.

[16] The situation in South Africa was complicated by the existence of a powerful Afrikaner nationalist movement of protest against British imperialist rule; on the other hand, Negro and Coloured workers looked to British imperialism for protection against still harsher exploitation by Afrikaner capitalism. Afrikaner nationalism never had any contacts with radical movements, and was ignored in Moscow, or denounced as an ally of British imperialism.

the world, 25 millions lived in the New World, and 12 millions in the United States. While "the Negro problem is chiefly an economic problem", he admitted that "the race question, though it springs from the class prejudices of particular groups in society, none the less plays an important rôle". The aim was "to awaken the consciousness of the Negro masses, and put us in a position to incorporate them into the proletarian revolution". He had friendly words both for Garvey's "ultra-nationalist" Universal Negro Improvement Association, which helped to "implant race consciousness ... far into the interior of Africa", and thus served to stimulate the campaign against imperialism, and for a more specifically radical organization known as the African Blood Brotherhood, whose programme was "built up on the annihilation of capitalism". Such organizations, mused Huiswoud, could be "utilized by communists, if means of propaganda are carefully, deliberately and intensively employed to link up these movements". The commission had made "a proposal to begin work immediately among the Negroes of the whole world"; and he called for the creation of a "Negro bureau" in IKKI. At the end of his speech, Huiswoud read the draft theses. They opened with the assertion that "the basis of the accumulation process, which before the war made possible the development of capitalism, has been completely disrupted as the result of the world war", and that "penetration into the regions inhabited by the black races, and their intensive colonization, is the last great problem on which capitalist accumulation depends". Apart from the exploitation of 12 million Negroes in the United States by "American finance magnates", the specific problem of the American Negro was not mentioned. The Negro problem as a whole was described as "both subjectively and objectively ... an important question of the world revolution"; and the theses ended with four briefly formulated demands. The congress was to support all forms of the Negro movement which sought to "undermine and weaken capitalism and imperialism"; Negro workers everywhere were to be organized; work among Negroes was to be undertaken principally by Negroes; and a general Negro conference or congress should be convened in Moscow.[17]

[17] *Protokoll des Vierten Kongresses der Kommunistischen Internationale* (1923), pp. 692–697; *Communist Review*, No. 6, April 1922, pp. 449–454, published a programme of the African Blood Brotherhood which described

Huiswoud was followed by McKay, an American Negro poet, who spoke, not as a member of the American delegation, but as a distinguished guest. He dwelt extensively on the incorporation of Negro units in the armies of the capitalist Powers (this was a moment when the presence of Negro troops in the French army of occupation in Germany was exciting widespread resentment), and ended with an eloquent peroration:

> I hope that the international bourgeoisie will not succeed in using the Negroes in the final struggle against the world revolution. I hope that ... very soon we shall see some black soldiers in the ranks of the best, most heroic, finest armed force in the world, the Red Army and Red Fleet of Russia, where they will fight not only for their own emancipation, but also for the liberation of the whole working class of the world.[18]

At this point Kolarov, who was in the chair, while noting that this was the first occasion on which a congress of Comintern had dealt with the important Negro question, unexpectedly announced that the draft resolution was "somewhat theoretical and not altogether comprehensible for the working class as a whole or for the lower strata of the black race"; and it was referred back to the commission for reconsideration.[19]

A few days later revised theses were submitted by another member of the American delegation, whose brief speech made it clear that the main defect of the first draft had been its neglect of the problem of the American Negro worker:

> Our chief task is the admission of the Negroes employed in industry to the trade unions, where they can, on an equal footing with the white workers, carry on the struggle for equal freedom.[20]

The much expanded theses, which were adopted unanimously without further discussion, omitted the introductory disquisition on capital accumulation, but contained a long paragraph on "the history of the Negro in America", which qualified him "to play an important rôle in the struggle for the liberation of the whole

plans for "organizing secretly a great pan-African army in the same way as Sinn Fein built up the Irish army under the very nose of England".

[18] *Protokoll des Vierten Kongresses der Kommunistischen Internationale* (1923), pp. 697–701.

[19] *Ibid.* p. 701.

[20] *Ibid.* pp. 828–829.

African race", and to occupy "a place in the leadership of the struggle against oppression in Africa". This point having been sufficiently emphasized, the remainder of the theses dealt faithfully with the wrongs of the Negro in Africa, in the Caribbean and throughout the world. The first three points of the conclusion had undergone slight modifications, but these did not extend to the one concrete proposal that Comintern should convene a Negro conference or congress in Moscow.[21] This project was, however, not carried out; the other injunctions seem to have had equally little effect on current practice.

What had been achieved at the fourth congress was to put the Negro question on the agenda of Comintern, and preserve it from formal neglect at future sessions. The third IKKI in June 1923 could do no better than repeat the proposal for a Negro conference to be held simultaneously with the fifth congress of Comintern in the following year.[22] The prospects were not encouraging; and a month later Amter, a member of the dominant Pepper–Ruthenberg group in the American Workers' Party, reported to the executive bureau of Profintern that only the American and South African parties had shown any interest in the proposed conference, that it would be poorly attended, and that it might be more prudent to transfer it from Moscow to London or New York.[23] In December 1923 the third congress of the American party took a parochial view of the Negro problem:

> The Workers' Party will oppose all movements among the Negroes which point to a surrender of the Negroes' rights in this country, such as the "Back to Africa" movement, which is only an evasion of the real struggle, and an excuse to surrender the Negroes' rights in their native land, America. The United States is the home of the American Negro, and the Workers' Party champions his full, free and equal partnership in the future society.[24]

When the fifth congress of Comintern met in June 1924, Manuil-

[21] *Ibid.* pp. 825–829; *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), pp. 365–367.

[22] *Rasshirennyi Plenum Ispolkoma Kommunisticheskogo Internatsionala* (1923), p. 268.

[23] *Die Rote Gewerkschaftsinternationale*, No. 8, 1923, p. 763.

[24] *The Second Year of the Workers' Party of America* (1924), pp. 125–127; for quotations from the Comintern press of this period on the subject see T. Draper, *American Communism and Soviet Russia* (1960), p. 328.

sky in his long report on the national and colonial question reproached the PCF with its passivity towards the "colonial slaves" of the French empire, and cited the "250,000 black soldiers" in the French army, but made no attempt to discuss the Negro problem.[25] In the ensuing debate, an American Negro delegate, Fort-Whiteman, *alias* Jackson, explained that the influx of Negroes into northern industrial centres had led to many clashes between black and white workers; the animosity against the Negroes was based not on class but on race. But, while he concluded that "the Negro race in America is destined by its historical situation to be the revolutionary group in American society", he suggested no course of action. The view that the Negro problem was primarily a racial, and only secondarily a social, problem confronted the view which identified the grievances and claims of the Negro worker with those of the white worker. The opposing tendencies could not be reconciled; and it was equally impossible to decide between them. Pepper vehemently denied that self-determination had any relevance to the Negroes of the United States, and referred contemptuously to "a Negro-Zionist movement in America, which wants to go to Africa". What was wanted was equality of rights, social as well as political.[26]

The first attempt to raise the problem of the African Negro was made by the French delegate Sellier, who, in defending the PCF against Manuilsky's strictures, suggested that agreement should be reached "to undertake similar propaganda in Africa and Oceania, with a similarly good apparatus and with similar resources to those which Comintern has adopted for its propaganda in the east".[27] Amter, the American delegate, offered the only review of the Negro question as a whole, linking its two aspects by the claim that "the American Negroes play the leading rôle in the whole world Negro movement, since the whole intellectual leadership of the Negro movement is concentrated in New York and its environs". But he admitted that the movement was very

[25] *Protokoll: Fünfter Kongress der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), ii, 630–631; for this report and the debate on it see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 88–90. The American party had apparently thought of inviting Garvey to attend the congress, but the idea was dropped (T. Draper, *American Communism and Soviet Russia* (1960), p. 330, note 50).

[26] *Protokoll: Fünfter Kongress der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), ii, 666–669, 699–700.

[27] *Ibid.* ii, 676.

weak in Africa, and that "it will be a long time before we shall be able to do effective work there". He reverted in his peroration to the black troops under white officers, and called for "an intensive anti-militarist campaign, ... since the Negroes are at present the shock troops which the bourgeoisie in future wars will utilize in the front rank as cannon-fodder".[28] Mann spoke of conditions in South Africa, where he had recently addressed a congress of Negro workers.[29] Nobody had any concrete recommendations to offer; and Negro Africa as a whole attracted no further attention. The section of the national and colonial commission dealing with the Negro question failed to produce a resolution. This task was left to the presidium of IKKI, which decided to set up a standing commission to "organize propaganda among the Negroes"[30] — a decision which once more remained a dead letter.[31]

The third congress of Profintern, which followed the fifth of Comintern, had a more realistic discussion of the problem of Negroes in trade unions. Lozovsky in his opening report denounced white unions in the United States and in South Africa which refused to admit Negroes, thought that it was hopeless to "wait till reformists cease to be reformists", and advocated the formation of Negro unions. Buck, the Canadian delegate, said that the trouble lay not merely with the leaders, but with the white workers; to create separate Negro unions would fan racial animosities. Two American delegates, Kutscher and Dunne, one of the few prominent American communist trade unionists, also fiercely attacked Lozovsky's proposal.[32] Kiselev, the spokesman of the Soviet trade unions, produced the traditional compromise, linking Negroes with other "colonial" victims. The aim was "the admission of the workers of the east (Negroes, Chinese, Indians and other sectors of the colonial proletariat) into the general unions"; but, where this failed, "racial trade unions, Negro trade unions" were the only alternative. Lozovsky, in replying to the debate, ac-

[28] *Ibid.* ii, 704–708; Amter wrote a pamphlet published in Moscow in 1925 under the title *Mirovoe Osvoboditel'noe Dvizhenie Negrov.*

[29] *Ibid.* ii, 679–682.

[30] See *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 89–90.

[31] A delegate at the sixth congress of Comintern four years later remarked that "nobody knows what became of this bureau", and "the archives contain much dust-covered material on this question, which has been read by nobody" (*Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 300).

[32] *Protokoll über den Dritten Kongress der Roten Gewerkschaftsinternationale* (n.d.), pp. 49, 61, 94–95, 99–100.

cepted this solution, with the proviso that the Negroes must be organized separately if the white unions still rejected them.[33] The main resolution of the congress reflected Lozovsky's impatience with American obstructiveness:

> When trade union bureaucrats, as for example in the United States, categorically refuse to admit black workers to the unions, the adherents of Profintern must proceed to form Negro unions, while making the corner-stone of their programme the struggle to unify unions in the same branch of production.

The resolution on the trade unions in colonial and semi-colonial countries more cautiously recognized that the complexity of the Negro question demanded special study, and prescribed the appointment of a commission to make recommendations to the next congress. Meanwhile adherents of Profintern in the United States, South Africa and other countries with Negro workers, should work actively among them and, where separate white and Negro unions existed, seek to fuse them.[34]

After these inconclusive debates in Moscow, the Negro question once more languished. These were days when the doctrine of the "united front" was preached and liberally applied. The American Workers' Party carried on a mild flirtation with the Universal Negro Improvement Association, whose leader, Garvey, with many popular trappings, continued to preach a racial and nationalist programme of "Back to Africa" and "Africa for the Africans at home and abroad".[35] On October 25, 1925, at the prompting of the American party, or perhaps of Comintern, a Negro Labor Congress assembled at Chicago. Its main organizer was Fort-Whiteman; of the 50 delegates probably a majority was non-communist. This was typical united front enterprise of the period, not ostensibly communist, but designed to extend communist influence over the Negro workers' movement. It sat for a week and passed several resolutions. It called on Negro workers to organize and to march side by side with white workers in the common

[33] *Ibid.* pp. 72, 112–113; at the fifth IKKI in March 1925 Lozovsky repeated the demand for "unions of Negroes where the white unions do not admit them to membership" (*Rasshirennyi Plenum Ispolkoma Kommunisticheskogo Internatsionala* (1925), p. 260).

[34] *Desyat' Let Profinterna v Resolyutsiyakh* (1930), pp. 137, 142.

[35] T. Draper, *American Communism and Soviet Russia* (1960), pp. 318–319, 330.

struggle against capitalism. It devoted much attention to the trade union question, denouncing the reactionary leaders of the A.F. of L. for their refusal to admit Negro workers to the unions, but also setting up a standing committee to organize Negro workers in separate unions. It hailed "the landless, oppressed and persecuted Negro cultivator" as "a source of immense potential strength for the liberation movement of the American Negroes".[36] The congress planned to become a permanent institution, and continued to exist for some years, but never spread beyond Chicago or enjoyed any substantial success.[37]

The problem of the American Negro continued to provoke diverse reactions in Moscow. Lozovsky, at the fourth session of the central council of Profintern in March 1926, indignantly complained that in the United States eleven important trade unions did not admit Negroes, and that those unions which admitted them treated them as "tenth-rate members", sometimes organizing separate conferences for white and black workers; and he reiterated the demand, in South Africa and the United States, for Negro unions.[38] Meanwhile Krestintern developed an unexpected interest in the American Negro,[39] and in August 1925 addressed an open letter to Garvey, then in a New York prison:

> Besides the peasants of Europe, the peasants of China and of other Asian countries have recently joined Krestintern. We are conducting a struggle on a united front for the emancipation of the oppressed throughout the world. We shall struggle all the more to set free millions of Negroes — a sector of mankind which is most of all enslaved by capitalism.[40]

These initiatives were evidently inspired in part by the hope of using the American Negro as a spear-head for Negro movements

[36] *Krasnyi Internatsional Profsoyuzov*, No. 12, 1925, pp. 80–82.

[37] T. Draper, *American Communism and Soviet Russia* (1960), pp. 331–332; when opinion in Comintern turned against united front policies in 1928, the congress was condemned as "petty-bourgeois" (see p. 1006, note 62 below).

[38] *IV Sessiya Tsentral'nogo Soveta Krasnogo Internatsionala Profsoyuzov* (1926), pp. 22–23.

[39] During 1925 its journal *Krest'yanskii Internatsional* published several articles on the Negro question; it sent greetings to the Negro Labor Congress of October 1925 (*Krasnyi Internatsional Profsoyuzov*, No. 12, 1925, p. 81), and in the last issue of its journal published a translation of an article on the congress in the American party journal *Workers' Monthly* (*Krest'yanskii Internatsional*, No. 3–5, March–May 1926, pp. 166–168).

[40] *Pravda*, August 13, 1925.

of revolt in Africa and elsewhere. But they also suggested that some people in Moscow were thinking of the Negro question in the United States in terms of the peasant south rather than of the industrial north; and this approach made it more plausible to treat it as a national question rather than a problem of social and economic integration. Towards the end of 1925 five Negroes were enrolled in the Communist University of Toilers of the East in Moscow, four from the United States and one from Africa. Stalin, the patron of the university now commonly called by his name, invited them to an interview at which Radek served as interpreter, and in the course of which Stalin criticized the attitude of the American party, and described the American Negroes as "a national minority with some of the characteristics of a nation". Two American students at the Lenin school in the next two years recalled discussions of the Negro question in terms of national self-determination, and were apparently led to believe that Stalin was the promoter of this theory.[41] Stalin's personal involvement is dubious; he never made any public pronouncement on the subject. But such ideas were certainly canvassed in party circles in Moscow, and were stimulated by the campaign against imperialism, which gathered force during 1927 and 1928. Haywood, a Negro member of the American party, who had entered the Communist University of Toilers of the East in 1926 and the Lenin school in 1927, had discussions in 1927 or 1928 with a KIM or Komsomol leader Nasonov, as a result of which he drew up a scheme of self-determination for the Negro population in the Black Belt of the southern United States.[42]

The Brussels congress of the League against Imperialism in February 1927[43] had its repercussions on the Negro problem.

[41] These accounts were given many years later by Otto Hall, one of the American Negroes, and by two other Americans concerned (T. Draper, *American Communism and Soviet Russia* (1960), pp. 332–334, 343); Hall, a brother of Haywood (see below), was a former member of Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association.

[42] *Ibid.* pp. 343–345. The coincidence of name (and of the initial N.) make it probable that Haywood's interlocutor was identical with the Nasonov who was one of the three signatories of the "letter from Shanghai" of March 1927 (see p. 762, note 231 above); if so, it is interesting to note that he had not been penalized for his dissent.

[43] See pp. 297–301 above.

Senghor, an articulate Negro from French West Africa, who, after serving with the French Senegalese troops in the war, remained in Paris and became a member of the PCF, denounced French rule which exploited the natives at home, and transported them to fight in French armies all over the world. He concluded that only when world imperialism had been destroyed, and replaced by "the union of free peoples", would there be "no more slavery".[44] After Negroes from the Antilles, Haiti and South Africa had addressed the congress,[45] Moore, one of the leaders of the American Negro Labor Congress, who also carried credentials as a delegate of Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association, presented a resolution on behalf of the "Negro delegation", which was unanimously adopted. This demanded "complete political and economic independence" for the countries of the Caribbean and the withdrawal of imperialist troops, and "the liberation of the Negro race throughout the world". It invoked the fact that "in Latin America Negroes have no racial prejudices to complain of" as proof that such prejudices have "no natural origin". For the 12 million Negroes in the United States it demanded the effective equality of rights which purported to be guaranteed by the constitution.[46] A German delegate described race as a "social category", explaining that, "when imperialists speak of the black or yellow race with contempt, they mean the men who have to work for them".[47] It probably had no particular significance that a resolution on the struggle of the oppressed peoples for liberation should have referred casually to "the oppressed nations designated as so-called 'national minorities' (e.g. the Negroes in the United States)".[48] The business of the congress was to flay imperialism, not to promote theories of nationalism.

It was only in South Africa that the incursions of the Brussels congress into the Negro question had an embarrassing sequel. Three South African delegates attended the congress — Colraine, a representative of a "minority movement" in the white trade

[44] *Das Flammenzeichen vom Palais Egmont* (1927), pp. 113–117; according to a statement at the sixth congress of Comintern Senghor was arrested by the French authorities on his return from the Brussels congress and died in the following year (*Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 158).

[45] *Das Flammenzeichen vom Palais Egmont* (1927), pp. 117–126.

[46] *Ibid.* pp. 126–130; for Moore's credentials see *ibid.* p. 252.

[47] *Ibid.* p. 172.

[48] *Ibid.* p. 200.

unions; Gumeda, the president of a long-established, but somewhat ineffective, Negro African National Congress, which had hitherto avoided any involvement in socialist or communist activities; and a Coloured member of the communist party, La Guma by name, who did not proclaim his party allegiance or speak at the congress.[49] Both Colraine and Gumeda called for the overthrow of imperialism, and spoke of "the economic slavery which at present makes our life wretched" and of "the liberation of the workers and the establishment of a socialist commonwealth". Gumeda declared that "we are slaves in our own fatherland", and that only two Powers now existed — "imperialism and the workers' republic in Russia". Neither hinted at national independence or self-determination for the Negro. No discussion is recorded. But, when the congress accepted a resolution signed by all three South African delegates, it proclaimed as its first demand "the right of self-determination through the complete downfall of capitalist and imperialist rule".[50] After the congress the communist La Guma went on to Moscow. There he had a conversation with Bukharin, who agreed that "the Bantus, like the Indians and Chinese and other colonial peoples, were suffering national oppression" at the hands of British imperialism and "its South African ally", Afrikaner imperialism. The conclusion seemed to be "to set up a democratic independent native republic ... as a stage towards the final overthrow of capitalism in South Africa".[51] Impressions were evidently favourable; for La Guma and Gumeda both attended the Moscow celebrations of the tenth anniversary of the revolution in November 1927, and Gumeda is said to have "returned to

[49] For their listing as delegates see *ibid.* pp. 251, 253. La Guma had been the secretary-general of the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union of Africa, a loose trade union organization of non-European workers founded in 1919, but had been expelled from it as the result of a vote of December 1926, declaring membership of the union incompatible with membership of the communist party (E. Roux, *Time Longer than Rope* (1948), pp. 171–172).

[50] *Das Flammenzeichen vom Palais Egmont* (1927), pp. 89–95; the record in *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz* (see p. 299, note 17, above) shows that the speeches on South Africa were delivered two days after the general debate on the Negro question, in which Gumeda had already spoken (see p. 1002, note 45 above).

[51] E. Roux, *S. P. Bunting: a Political Biography* (Cape Town, 1944), pp. 75–76, 88–89; H. and R. Simons, *Class and Colour in South Africa* (1969), pp. 389–390, citing unpublished sources; there may be some confusion between what happened on this occasion and on La Guma's second visit to Moscow, with Gumeda, later in 1927.

South Africa a convinced and enthusiastic supporter of the communists".[52] It was on this occasion that La Guma submitted to the Comintern authorities a statement which presumably served as the basis of an IKKI "draft resolution" on the South African situation. This document, which seemed a total reversal of any line previously laid down by Comintern, postulated as the immediate aim of the party the creation of "an independent native republic, as a stage towards a workers' and peasants' government". When this new directive reached Cape Town early in 1928, it threw the still predominantly white South African party into a state of disarray. Bunting drew up a long memorandum attacking the "native republic" solution; and only one white member of the party central committee was apparently ready to accept it. La Guma, back from Moscow, embarked on an active campaign in its favour; and the split paralysed the party.[53] Nor did it appear that the implications of this change of front had been seriously weighed by the leaders in Moscow, or that any firm decision to support it had been taken. As the sequel showed, the debate had not been closed.

The determined attempt in 1928 to bring about a turn to the Left in Comintern and to canvass fresh opportunities for revolutionary action had no more fervent supporter than Lozovsky, who seems to have been responsible for reopening the Negro question. The American section of the trade union resolution of the ninth IKKI in February 1928, which showed in general little regard for the susceptibilities of the American party, contained an injunction both to form Negro unions and to insist on the admission of Negroes to existing unions.[54] At the fourth congress of Profintern a month later Lozovsky again raised "the problem of the mutual relations of white and coloured labour", and accused the American party of "writing resolutions and doing nothing". What was required was to organize Negro workers; and, since they were excluded from most A.F. of L. unions, this implicitly meant creating

[52] E. Roux, *Time Longer than Rope* (1948), p. 219.

[53] *Ibid.* pp. 394–399; E. Roux, *S. P. Bunting: a Political Biography* (Cape Town, 1944), pp. 88–90.

[54] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), p. 755; for reactions in the American party see pp. 598–599 above.

separate unions.[55] An attempt by Gitlow to defend the attitude of the American party was angrily brushed aside by Lozovsky in his reply to the debate.[56] An American Negro delegate proposed that, since resolutions about Negroes had hitherto remained "merely resolutions", the executive bureau should summon a special meeting of Negro delegates to work out measures for the organization of Negroes in the United States and South Africa.[57] The main resolution of the congress, in a section on "White and Coloured Labour", alleged that American adherents of Profintern "react too slowly" to the exclusion of Negroes from white unions. The Negroes were "an immense potential revolutionary force"; and it was necessary both to press for their admission to existing unions and to form new Negro unions.[58] The resolution on "The Tasks of Adherents of Profintern in the United States" stipulated that, "since most white unions do not accept Negroes as members, the TUEL must take the initiative for the immediate organization of special Negro unions".[59] The proposal for a conference of Negro delegates was approved,[60] though this resolution also appears to have had no outcome. Several months later Lozovsky reminded the eighth Soviet trade union congress that the Profintern congress had decided to set up an "international committee of Negro workers", but that "many racial prejudices" existed among white workers, and even among communists, and that the proposed committee had had "a very hostile reception" from the bourgeois capitalist press.[61]

The approach of the sixth congress of Comintern prompted further efforts to tackle the problem of the American Negro. The Anglo-American secretariat set up a small informal commission consisting of a few Comintern officials and American Negro communists in Moscow, which brought into the open the latent clash of opinions. One group held that the Negroes in the United States had the characteristics of a national minority, and that the claim

[55] *Protokoll über den Vierten Kongress der Roten Gewerkschaftsinternationale* (n.d.), pp. 83–84.

[56] *Ibid.* pp. 202–203, 275.

[57] *Ibid.* p. 479.

[58] *Desyat' Let Profinterna v Rezolyutsiyakh* (1930), p. 184.

[59] For this resolution see p. 600 above; for the TUEL see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 237–238.

[60] *Protokoll über den Vierten Kongress der Roten Gewerkschaftsinternationale* (n.d.), pp. 618–619.

[61] *Vos'moi S"ezd Professional'nykh Soyuzov SSSR* (1929), p. 215.

for self-determination was appropriate. What was apparently the larger group maintained the old view that the Negroes were a racial, not a national, minority, and added that the rising Negro bourgeoisie had more common interests with the American bourgeoisie as a whole than with the oppressed Negro worker. The discussion was evidently inconclusive.[62] Meanwhile Pepper had arrived in New York in March 1928 to resume his rôle as adviser to the American party.[63] A committee consisting of Pepper, Lovestone and Bittelman set out to revise the party's Negro policy; and on May 30, 1928, the party central committee accepted a resolution drafted by Pepper which, in a section devoted to "Our Negro Work", described the Negro question as "a race question" and the Negroes as "an oppressed race". This document, though it called on the party to become "the organizer of the working-class elements of the Negro race", and said nothing of nationality or self-determination, represented a substantial shift from previous insistence on treating the Negro question simply as a social and class question. It seems to have been accepted by most party members without enthusiasm, though without open resistance. Minor, hitherto the party expert on the Negro question, abstained from the vote in the committee.[64]

When therefore the sixth congress of Comintern met in July 1928, little had been done to elucidate the issue, and no Comintern line had been laid down. Bukharin in his main report did not mention the Negro problem, and nothing relating to it appeared in the draft theses which he submitted to the congress. Two Negro members of the American party, Ford and Hall (using the *alias* Jones), spoke in the debate on the report. Neither showed any sympathy for the attempt to treat the Negroes as a national minority. Ford ironically referred to "the famous document" of the party central committee of May 30, 1928, as "yet another example of self-advertisement". He deplored the fact that out of 12 million

[62] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 300–301. An invitation to Moore, the leader of the Negro Labor Congress (see pp. 999–1000 above), to join the commission was withdrawn at the instance of the American party on the ground of his alleged Right tendencies, though both Ford and Hall protested against his exclusion (*Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), i, 119, 196); the congress and its organ, the *Negro Champion*, were condemned as petty-bourgeois (*ibid.* i, 157).

[63] See p. 600 above.

[64] T. Draper, *American Communism and Soviet Russia* (1960), pp. 341–342, 510, note 74; for the resolution see p. 601 above.

Negroes in the United States only 50 were members of the party, and that not one Negro trade union had been organized; and he roundly accused the party of neglect of the Negroes and of "white chauvinism". Hall, while toning down the severity of some of Ford's strictures, admitted that "in the American Communist Party there is more chauvinism than in any other section of Comintern"; the Negro question had become "a sort of football" in the struggle between contending party factions.[65] Katayama, by way of redressing the balance, recalled that Lenin in 1920 had "looked on the American Negroes as an enslaved nation, putting them in the same category as the Irish"[66] — a view which was evidently gaining ground in the secretariat. But this did not imply any pandering to Garvey's "Back to Africa" nationalism. The Universal Negro Improvement Association, tolerated in the palmy days of the united front, was now under the ban; and the only pronouncement on it by the congress seems to have been a fierce denunciation of "Garveyism" in the new programme of Comintern:

> *Garveyism*, formerly the ideology of Negro petty proprietors and workers in America, which even now has a certain influence over the Negro masses, has at the present time become an obstacle on the road to revolutionizing these masses. Having come out at first for complete social equality of rights for Negroes, it has been converted into a peculiar Negro "Zionism", which instead of struggling against American imperialism advanced the slogan "Back to Africa". This dangerous ideology ... must be firmly opposed, since it does not assist, but on the contrary impedes, the mass struggle against American imperialism for the liberation of the Negroes.[67]

The South African problem was an unwelcome interloper in the debate. Though the Negro and Coloured membership of the South African party was growing, the party central committee was still firmly under white control, and sent three white delegates to the congress — Bunting, his wife and a young supporter of his named Roux, recently a research student in Cambridge.[68] In the debate on Bukharin's report Bunting complained of the neglect

[65] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), i, 118–122, 193–197.

[66] *Ibid.* i, 304; for Lenin's pronouncement see p. 991 above.

[67] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), pp. 40–41.

[68] E. Roux, *S. P. Bunting: a Political Biography* (Cape Town, 1944), p. 90; H. and R. Simons, *Class and Colour in South Africa* (1969), p. 406.

of Africa by Comintern. In six years the South African party had received nothing from Comintern except circulars. The draft programme of Comintern contrasted the metropolitan "proletariat" with the colonial "masses"; yet one day the colonial proletariat would be the leading class throughout the world. It was pointless to talk of a Negro national movement; the only national movement in South Africa was that of the Afrikaners. "We can achieve more by developing the workers' movement", he concluded. It was not a very clear or constructive contribution to the debate, and was labelled by the American delegate Dunne as "a social-democratic speech".[69] Petrovsky reminded Bunting that Comintern in the previous year had sent to the South African party a resolution of which he and a majority of the party central committee had disapproved.[70] Bukharin, winding up the debate, spoke defensively of the neglect of the Negro question, of the prevalence of racial prejudice and "white chauvinism" in some parties, and of an "incorrect tone". But he did not touch the real issue.[71]

This was plainly not enough. The initiative once more came from Lozovsky. On the eve of the congress, Profintern had launched on July 15, 1928, the first issue of a broad-sheet, the *Negro Worker*, which continued to appear for some years in English and French. On July 31, 1928, while the debate on Bukharin's report was in progress, the executive bureau of Profintern summoned a meeting which was attended by Lozovsky and Heller, by several members, white and Negro, of the American party, by Bunting and Roux, and by some French representatives. After "a lively exchange of opinions", it adopted a resolution deploring the continued prevalence of "racial chauvinism" among white workers, and the failure of the TUEL and similar organizations to take in hand the creation of Negro trade unions; and it was decided to form an international trade union committee of Negro workers, with representatives from the United States, from South Africa and from other American and African countries possessing substantial Negro populations, and to convene an international conference of Negro workers towards the end of 1929.[72] A few days

[69] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), i, 148–153, 157.
[70] *Ibid.* i, 511; for this resolution see p. 1004 above.
[71] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), i, 608.
[72] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 84, August 14, 1928, pp. 1532–1533.

later, on August 6, 1928, the Comintern congress, having completed its debate on Bukharin's report, appointed a large Negro commission presided over by Kuusinen, with Petrovsky as his deputy. It included five Negro members, and three white members, of the American party, Bunting for South Africa, one member each from most of the other principal parties, and several members of the secretariat.[73]

The proceedings of the commission resulted in no formal report to the congress, and were not published. But pressure seems to have been strong in favour of a national view of the Negro problem in the United States. One document, plausibly attributed to Pepper (who was not, however, a member of the commission), came down in favour of a Negro Soviet republic. Another, the joint work of the American Negro Haywood and the KIM leader Nasonov, criticized both the American Negro Labor Congress and the resolution of the central committee of the American party of May 30, 1928, on the ground of their concentration on the northern Negroes, and concluded cautiously that "in the south especially there are some prerequisites which may lead to the future development of a national (racial) revolutionary movement among the Negroes".[74] The proceedings were reflected in a series of articles on the Negro question which appeared in the Comintern journal before and during the congress. The first two, by American Negroes, maintained the hitherto predominant view that the goal was "full political and social equality".[75] On the other hand, a two-part article by Pepper treated the population of the Black Belt as a "Negro nation" and "virtually a colony within the body of the United States of America", and asserted that in the north and east the "Negro national movement" was growing. Pepper concluded that "Negro communists should emphasize in their propaganda the establishment of a Negro Soviet republic".[76] The last article, by Haywood, more moderately claimed that the Negroes constituted a "national minority", and placed its em-

[73] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), ii, 200.

[74] For these documents and for such information as is available on the work of the commission see T. Draper, *American Communism and Soviet Russia* (1960), pp. 345–346, 511, note 83.

[75] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 27–28 (153–154), 1928, pp. 39–45, No. 31–32 (157–158), pp. 87–97.

[76] *Ibid.* No. 31–32 (157–158), 1928, pp. 77–86, No. 33–34 (159–160), 1928, pp. 75–80.

phasis on "the agrarian question in the south". The struggle for full political and social equality should be combined with a "national-revolutionary movement" for "national self-determination" and "an independent Negro state".[77]

Hitherto discussion of Negro affairs at the sixth congress, and in the Comintern press, had been restricted to the status of the Negro in the United States and South Africa. Yaroslavsky drew attention to the prospective employment of coloured troops in the armies of the imperialist Powers in the event of war against the Soviet Union, and a reference to this threat was inserted in the theses on the danger of imperialist war.[78] The debate on the colonial question, which opened on August 14, 1928, invited attention to the broader issue of the liberation of the African Negro from imperialist rule. The response was meagre. Kuusinen, absorbed by other forms of imperialism, found time in his report only for one passing mention of the Negro:

> In the same degree [as other movements in the colonies] the Negro movement is our affair, and the weaker it is the more we are obliged to help its development.[79]

Heller, the Profintern spokesman on colonial questions, opined that western imperialism, under pressure in Asia, "is building for itself a second line of trenches in Africa". He noted American penetration into Abyssinia, the Sudan and Liberia, and the increasing number of workers in the Belgian Congo. But the conclusion of this short digression that "the growing significance of Africa, and the signficance of the Negro workers' movement, are not sufficiently taken into account in the draft theses" lacked any sense of urgency.[80] Hall paused briefly, before reverting to the American Negro, to remark that "we should not ignore the world significance of the Negro question", and that in Africa "there could be a stronger revolutionary movement if we paid more attention to the different revolutionary movements taking place in that part of the world", especially in Portuguese East Africa.[81]

[77] *Ibid.* No. 33–34 (59–60), 1928, pp. 74–88.

[78] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), ii, 194, 196; *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), p. 821. For the theses see pp. 211–213 above.

[79] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 29.

[80] *Ibid.* iv, 128–129; the Belgian delegate also spoke of Belgian efforts to develop the Congo (*ibid.* iv, 167–168).

[81] *Ibid.* iv, 300.

It was, however, primarily the Negro in the United States, and secondarily in South Africa, who continued to preoccupy the congress. Katayama recalled once more the parallel drawn by Lenin at the second congress of Comintern in 1920 between the Negroes and the Irish as "an *oppressed nation*", and insisted that the American party "should put out the propaganda slogan of self-determination and complete independence of the American Negroes, pointing to the shining example of the solution of the national question in the Soviet Union".[82] Both the American Negroes Ford and Hall showed themselves less than lukewarm to the proposed slogan. Ford called the Negroes in the United States "an economically backward national minority not possessing its own territory", but observed that "the constantly growing antagonism between proletariat and bourgeoisie splits the unity of the national front". Hall was still more discouraging:

> The question of social equality has become the stumbling-block for us; it is for this reason that we have failed to organize the Negro masses, and not because we did not adopt the slogans of self-determination for the Negroes. Before attempting to put forward a slogan of self-determination for the American Negroes we should study this question more deeply.[83]

Bunting, more openly but no less vainly, tried to stem the tide. The call for a native South African republic was unacceptable to a majority of the party central committee; the struggle for national independence could not be given precedence over the class struggle. Having always fought against "white chauvinism", Bunting found himself in the "unwelcome" position of defending the white minority against "the dictatorship of the black races".[84] Kuusinen in his reply to the debate curtly agreed that "much that is new and important" had been said by speakers on the Negro question, that gaps in the draft theses must be filled, and that the South African question should be examined separately in a commision.[85] In response to this invitation, a small group of those interested met under the chairmanship of Petrovsky. The American representatives were now apparently too deeply involved in

[82] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 156–157.
[83] *Ibid.* iv, 209–212, 299–302; Ford once again pointed out that in the coming war the imperialist Powers would rely heavily on black troops.
[84] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iv, 413–422.
[85] *Ibid.* iv, 528.

their factional struggles to be much concerned in the Negro problem. The indomitable and long-winded Bunting was pressed by a slow process of attrition into half-hearted acquiescence.[86] The text eventually incorporated in the revised theses of the congress was doubtless the work of Petrovsky.

The theses contained the most systematic pronouncement of Comintern on the Negro question. In the United States, a majority of the 12 million Negroes were share-croppers, "living in semi-feudal, semi-serf conditions"; the industrialization of the south and Negro migration to the north were, however, producing a Negro proletariat. "One of the most important tasks of the party" was to strive for the Negro's "full *de facto* equality of rights", notably for the admission of Negroes to white trade unions, though this "does not preclude, in case of necessity, their organization in separate trade unions". This, however, was not all:

> In those regions of the south where compact Negro masses live it is indispensable to put forward the slogan of the right of self-determination for Negroes.

Yet "only a victorious proletarian revolution would completely and lastingly resolve the agrarian and national questions in the south of the United States". In South Africa, the communist party should "decisively and consistently put forward the slogan of the creation of an independent native republic with a simultaneous guarantee of the rights of the white minority, and struggle *actively* to realize this". Finally, the Negro movement elsewhere in Africa was briefly recalled. In Central Africa, where slave-owning, feudal and capitalist methods of exploitation were combined, the communist parties of metropolitan countries were instructed "to end the indifference displayed by them in regard to the mass movement in the colonies", and to give their support to this movement, and especially to the "rising proletarian elements most ruthlessly exploited by colonial imperialism".[87]

[86] Bunting's impressions of the congress and his dislike of Petrovsky are recorded in E. Roux, *S. P. Bunting: a Political Biography* (Cape Town, 1944), pp. 90–99 — the only source for this meeting; Ford refused to speak to the South African delegates whom he regarded as "white chauvinists". For a more balanced impression see H. and R. Simons, *Class and Conflict in South Africa* (1969), pp. 406–409.

[87] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), pp. 865–866.

The theses of the sixth congress marked the high point of Comintern policy-making in the Negro question. Unfortunately the decision was uncongenial to a majority of those who were required to give effect to it. The Negro commission set up during the congress met again after its close and produced a long and discursive resolution, almost exclusively devoted to the American Negroes, which was confirmed by the presidium of IKKI on September 24, 1928, and was eventually issued bearing the date October 26, 1928. This repeated in substance the pronouncement of the congress with some variations of emphasis, but without dispelling its hesitations and ambiguities. The Negroes were referred to as "an oppressed race", but nowhere specifically as a "nation". "Full social and political equality for the Negroes" was said to "remain the central slogan of our party for work among the masses". At the same time, "the party must come out openly and unreservedly for the right of Negroes to national self-determination in the southern states, where the Negroes form a majority of the population". The TUEL, like the party, was severely censured for its neglect of the question; and emphasis was laid on the struggle for the admission of Negroes to white trade unions and for the formation of separate Negro unions. The last two paragraphs of the resolution, which ended with an obsequious reference to Stalin's *Foundations of Leninism*, returned more incisively than before to the demand for national independence:

> Leninism has broadened the conception of self-determination, and interprets it as the right of the oppressed peoples in dependent countries and colonies to complete separation, as the right of nations to independent existence as states.

While any mention of Negro Soviets or a Negro republic was studiously avoided, this clearly implied a right of secession of Negro regions from the union.[88] But hardly anyone in the American party, white or Negro, took the prospect seriously. In the campaign for the presidential election in November 1928, and in the fierce factional struggles which disrupted the party in the first half of 1929,[89] the Negro issue played no part.

[88] The English text (it never seems to have been published in Russian) appeared in a pamphlet *The Communist Position on the Negro Question* (N.Y., n.d. [?1932]), pp. 56–64; for a brief summary with the date of its adoption by the presidium of IKKI see *Izvestiya*, October 30, 1928.

[89] See pp. 607–613 above.

In Moscow the question was not allowed to rest. Early in 1929 the pertinacious Nasonov published in the journal of the Communist University of Toilers of the East an article on the Negro problem in the United States in which, after much detailed analysis, he reached the conclusion that the Negroes of the Black Belt "have, perhaps, all the characteristics of a nation". He even expressed a guarded sympathy with Garvey's organization, and rejected "the view which affirms that any movement for the self-determination of Negroes is reactionary". The same journal in its next issue published a rejoinder by a party writer rebutting Nasonov's attempt to identify the "nationalism" of American Negroes with the nationalism of oppressed colonial and other subject nations. The Negroes of the American south presented not a national problem, but "an economic problem, an agrarian problem". National movements like that of Garvey "can have nothing in common with a revolutionary movement".[90] Ford wrote an article on "The Negro Workers and May 1" for the Comintern press, in which he denounced the exploitation of Negroes by capitalism and imperialism throughout the world without making any reference to self-determination or national independence.[91]

Meanwhile the political secretariat of Comintern had wrestled once more with the South African question, and produced a further resolution on October 19, 1928. This denounced "the demoralization of white workers through the theory of the superiority of the white race". It was not enough to proclaim the slogan of equality between black and white. "The communist party must become the leader of a national agrarian-revolutionary movement of the native masses." Unfortunately "a majority of the party" did not accept this slogan. But it was the duty of the white proletariat to recognize that it represented a minority of the population, and to struggle with the native masses against the British bourgeoisie and against white imperialism. Finally, a South African trade union centre should be created which would include both white and black workers.[92] If the resolution did not actually repeat the demand of the sixth congress for "an indepen-

[90] *Revolyutsionnyi Vostok*, vi (1929), 59–76, vii (1929), 138–167; both articles were published as discussion articles.

[91] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 36, April 26, 1929, pp. 862–863.

[92] A long summary with quotations appeared in *Izvestiya*, October 30, 1928; summary and quotations are not always clearly distinguishable, so that the precise text remains uncertain.

dent native republic", this did not imply any retreat from the decisions of the congress, and was not interpreted by the harassed South African party as such. The congress resolution, with its call for a native republic, was obediently endorsed by a party conference under the leadership of Bunting in January 1929, though the central committee of nine elected by the conference still contained six white members. But the decision led to an exodus from the party of several former white leaders, and produced a spate of recriminations[93] — a not infrequent sequel of Comintern intervention in this period. An attempt in 1929 to establish a League of African Rights on united front lines with Gumeda as president was quashed on orders from Moscow, and the league dissolved.[94]

Even in Comintern circles interest in the intractable Negro problem had now abated. The first sign of life of the international trade union committee of Negro workers set up by Profintern in the summer of 1928[95] was the publication in May 1929 of a long and detailed "programme of action". This constantly referred to the Negroes as a "race", but also dwelt on the class factor in their exploitation. Much of it was occupied by day-to-day demands; and only one paragraph (the sixteenth out of 18) touched on the contentious topic of Negro trade unions:

> In South Africa, in the West Indies and in the southern states of the USA, the Negro trade unions must form themselves into a central organization, and convert the economic struggles of the Negro workers into political struggles, into both economic and political struggles for power and for the right of self-determination.[96]

At the tenth IKKI in July 1929 Lozovsky seized the occasion for another fierce attack on the "white chauvinism" prevailing in the American party, but raised no issue of policy.[97] The second con-

[93] H. and R. Simons, *Class and Colour in South Africa* (1969), pp. 410–411; E. Roux, *S. P. Bunting: a Political Biography* (Cape Town, 1944), pp. 101–105. The membership of the party at the beginning of 1928 was put at 1800 (A. Tivel and M. Kheimo, *10 Let Kominterna v Tsifrakh* (1929), p. 364); at the conference of January 1929, 20 black and 10 white delegates were said to have represented "nearly 3000 members" (E. Roux, *Time Longer than Rope* (1948), p. 225).

[94] E. Roux, *Time Longer than Rope* (1948), pp. 234–235.

[95] See p. 1008 above.

[96] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 38, May 3, 1929, pp. 913–915.

[97] *Protokoll: 10. Plenum des Exekutivkomitees der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), pp. 703–704.

gress of the League against Imperialism held in the same month in Frankfurt was silent about the African Negro, whose cause had figured conspicuously at the founding congress of the league two years earlier.[98] Opposition to the slogan of self-determination was still rife in the American party in the autumn of 1929;[99] and it was not till the following year that Comintern made a more determined, and for a short period more successful, effort to impose its policy on the party, though without thereby contributing to a solution of the problem.[100]

[98] For the Frankfurt congress see pp. 305–306 above.

[99] At the sixth session of the central council of Profintern in December 1929 Heckert reproached Ballam, one of the American delegates, for having come out openly in a recent speech against the slogan of self-determination (*Protokoll der VI Session des Zentralrats der Roten Gewerkschaftsinternationale* (1930), p. 325).

[100] For these later, and also abortive, developments see T. Draper, *American Communism and Soviet Russia* (1960), pp. 351–356.

CHAPTER 90

CONCLUSION

By the end of the nineteen-twenties the mould in which the Bolshevik revolution was cast at its inception had been shattered. The makers of the revolution firmly believed that it would be the signal for revolution in the major European countries, and especially in Germany, that the numerically weak Russian proletariat would march side by side in comradeship with the European proletariat to the socialist goal, and that no incompatibility could arise between the national and international aims of the revolution. Harsh realities soon intruded on this picture. When Lenin reluctantly, and a majority of the party still more reluctantly, voted for the Brest-Litovsk treaty of March 1918, they tacitly accepted the view that, momentarily and as a matter of emergency, the survival of the Soviet republic took precedence over any other purpose. With the exposure of the isolated republic to civil war and foreign invasion, and the continued delay in revolution in the west, this priority seeped, insensibly but deeply, into the outlook of Soviet policy-makers. In 1921 Lenin called a halt to the régime of "war communism", which, though hailed by its champions as a striking advance on the road to socialism, was now seen rather as a forced response to the exigencies of the civil war,[1] and in its place inaugurated the partial and temporary "retreat" of NEP into bourgeois conditions of trade. In the same year the Anglo-Soviet trade agreement, and in the following year the Genoa conference, marked a working compromise between the principles of revolutionary internationalism and the urgent need to break the western boycott, and to establish commercial relations with the capitalist world.

While Lenin lived, these policies could still be regarded as temporary devices to meet an emergency, to break a deadlock, to tide over an awkward interval. Lenin never lost his revolutionary faith, or showed any inclination to exalt these devices as guiding prin-

[1] For the ambiguities of war communism see *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917–1923*, Vol. 2, pp. 270–275.

ciples. But when he died in January 1924, the prospect of revolution in the west was already bleak and remote, and policies based on it empty and unrealistic. The isolation of the revolutionary régime had from an early stage provoked actions apparently at variance with the aims and principles of the revolution. Its unexpected and indefinite prolongation now seemed to call for a revision of ideology. "Socialism in One Country" was a response to this need. The attitudes which crystallized into the new doctrine were not solely of Stalin's making. But it was appropriate that the doctrine should have been formulated, systematized and made binding on the party, by the one leading Bolshevik who had from the first expressed disbelief in the prospect of revolution in the west. When Stalin, at the meeting of the party central committee on January 11/24, 1918, observed that "there is no revolutionary movement in the west, there are no facts, only a possibility, and we cannot count on a possibility", Lenin took issue with him:

> There is, of course, a mass movement in the west, but the revolution there has not yet begun. If, however, on the strength of this we were to alter our tactics, we should be traitors to international socialism.[2]

It was paradoxical only that the new doctrine should have been propounded by Stalin under the rubric *Foundations of Leninism.*

Socialism in one country, however cogent the forces that made for its adoption, brought with it a revised view of the character of the revolution. Socialism installed by revolution in one economically retarded country, where the proletariat itself was both economically backward and numerically weak, was not, and could not be, the socialism envisaged by Marx and Lenin as the outcome of a revolution of the united proletariat of economically advanced countries. Stalin lacked the faith in the masses which was a major postulate of Marx's and Lenin's beliefs. The industrial and agrarian revolutions of the late nineteen-twenties and nineteen-thirties in the Soviet Union were in some important senses socialist. But these revolutions had entirely shed the character of proletarian revolutions "from below"; they were revolutions "from above", and were carried out by a tightly organized party machine

[2] Lenin, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, xxxv, 257; for Stalin's remarks, which are not in the collected edition of his works, see *ibid.* xxxv, 479, note 104.

claiming to act as the vanguard of a proletariat too weak to act on its own behalf.

This hybrid and ambiguous conception of socialism quickly infected the pattern of international revolution and the policies of Comintern. In the international revolution conceived by Marx and Lenin as a mass movement of the united European proletariat, no Marxist would have claimed a predominant rôle for the weak Russian contingent. It might indeed be argued that the failure of the Russian revolution to kindle revolutions in western countries was a token of the bankruptcy of western Marxism, which at the critical moment could produce no theory or practice of revolution applicable to an advanced capitalist society, and that it was this failure, superficially explained in Moscow by the treachery of western social-democratic leaders, which made the rift between east and west inevitable. No common language could be found. International revolution as conceived in Moscow from 1924 onwards was a movement directed "from above" by a machine claiming to act in the name of the only proletariat which had made a victorious revolution in its own country; and the corollary of this re-orientation was the assumption, not only that the Russian leaders possessed a monopoly of knowledge and experience about the way in which a revolution could be made, but that the first and over-riding interest of international revolution was the defence of the one country where revolution had been effectively achieved. Both these assumptions, and the policies and procedures dictated by them, proved unacceptable to the working classes of western Europe, which believed themselves far more advanced, economically, culturally and politically, than their backward Russian counterpart. Persistence in these policies merely brought discredit, in the eyes of western workers, on the authorities in Moscow, on the national communist parties subservient to them, and eventually on the revolution itself. In the last resort, it helped to justify — at any rate, for the current period — Stalin's dictum of 1918 that there was "no revolutionary movement in the west".

Relations with the backward non-capitalist countries turned out quite differently. Here the Soviet Union was seen as having achieved, through the process of revolution and industrialization, a spectacular accretion of economic independence and political power — an achievement worthy of envy and emulation. The defence of the Soviet Union, far from seeming an embarrassing

excrescence on the programme of revolution, meant the defence of the most powerful ally of the backward countries in their struggle against the advanced imperialist countries. Nor did the methods which aroused revulsion in countries where the bourgeois revolution was a matter of history, and where strong workers' movements had grown up within the elastic framework of liberal democracy, prove seriously repugnant in countries where the bourgeois revolution was still on the agenda, and where no sizable proletariat yet existed. Where hungry and illiterate masses had not reached the stage of revolutionary consciousness, revolution from above was better than no revolution at all. Only in China, where the tradition of a national civilization was long-lived and tenacious, did the revolutionary movement come to resent the guiding hand imposed by Moscow — and this mainly at a later date.

Thus the defective and contradictory character of the revolution reflected in the phrases "socialism in one country" and "revolution from above", which marked and marred the domestic achievements of the revolution,[3] was equally apparent in its international relations. It may indeed be disputed whether the crisis of capitalism which set in at that time — the end of international capitalism as it was understood before 1914 — owed more to the consequences of the war of 1914–1918 or to the Russian revolution of 1917; the revolution itself, like the war, may be thought of both as consequence and as cause of the decay of the international capitalist order. While, however, in the advanced capitalist world the ferment generated by the Russian revolution remained primarily destructive, and was unable to furnish any constructive model for revolutionary action, in the backward non-capitalist countries it proved more pervasive and more positive. The prestige of a revolutionary régime which, largely through its own unaided efforts, had raised itself to the status of a major industrial Power made it the natural leader of the backward countries in their struggle against the world-wide domination of western capitalism, which before 1914 had been virtually uncontested; and in this context the blots which tarnished its credentials in western eyes seemed of little account. Through the revolt of the backward non-capitalist world, the revolution presented a renewed challenge to the capitalist Powers, the potency of which is not yet exhausted. The Russian revolution of 1917 fell far short of the aims which it

[3] See Vol. 2, pp. 446–451.

set for itself, and of the hopes which it generated. Its record was flawed and ambiguous. But it has been the source of more profound and more lasting repercussions throughout the world than any other historical event of modern times.

NOTE E

FEUDALISM IN CHINA

CHINA in the early nineteen-twenties presented to Bolshevik observers the picture of a still predominantly mediaeval ("feudal") society into which the western world ("capitalism") had made powerful, but still geographically limited, inroads. Lenin, in an article of July 1912, called China "a backward, agricultural, semi-feudal country", and continued:

> Feudalism is based on the predominance of agricultural life and of a natural economy; the source of feudal exploitation of the peasantry was its enserfment to the land in one form or another; the political agents of this exploitation were the feudal landlords.

"Bourgeois-democratic programmes for the land" were dictated in China by "the necessity of the destruction of feudalism in all its forms and manifestations".[1] This position was not affected by the chaos which descended on China in the next few years. The main representatives and beneficiaries of feudalism were, economically, the landlords and, politically, the warlords who divided China into rival fiefs. The main exploited class was the peasantry. The first task of the Chinese revolution was to destroy what were called "the survivals of feudalism"; this was essentially a task of the bourgeois revolution.[2] What made it easier to relegate to a secondary place the intrusions of modern industrial capitalism, which increasingly distorted this picture, was that its creators and main, though not sole, beneficiaries were foreigners ("imperialists"). It was the imperialists who subsidized the warlords and, though themselves earning capitalist profits, were interested to maintain the predominantly feudal structure of Chinese society. The bourgeois revolution against feudalism was thus intertwined with the struggle for national liberation from foreign imperialism, which derived a dramatic impetus from the anti-imperialist feelings generated by the "May 4 movement" of 1919. The link between these two aspects of the Chinese revolution was constantly stressed in Soviet pronouncements.[3] The events of May 30, 1925, in Shanghai, which constituted the first major revolt of a Chinese pro-

[1] Lenin, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, xxi, 403–406.

[2] The founding fathers of the CCP readily adopted the Comintern practice of describing Chinese society as feudal, though the use of such terms as "militarist" or "bureaucratic" feudalism suggested consciousness of a wide discrepancy from the European model (see texts collected by Wittfogel in *China Quarterly*, xii (1962), 160–161).

[3] For examples see *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. 3, pp. 689–691.

letariat against industrial capitalism, at first sight made the bourgeois and anti-feudal view of the revolution more difficult to sustain, and may indeed be regarded as the starting-point of the rift between CCP and Kuomintang. But the difficulty was met by the analogy drawn from Bolshevik theory of the leadership of the proletariat in completing the Russian bourgeois revolution.

The hypothesis of Chinese feudalism did not appeal to all Russian experts on China; a writer in the journal *Novyi Vostok* in 1926 crisply rejected "the very widespread but completely erroneous opinion that feudalism exists, or has recently existed, in China", and added that "there is in China no feudal heritage".[4] But it was apparently Radek's lively mind, stimulated by his contacts at the Sun Yat-sen university, which first brought the challenge into the open. When *Pravda*, on the first anniversary of Sun Yat-sen's death on March 12, 1926, reprinted Lenin's article of 1912 in which he had written of Chinese feudalism, Radek was bold enough to remark, in an accompanying article which rejected the feudal hypothesis, that "Lenin, not knowing Chinese conditions in detail, makes several mistakes in his article". It could plausibly be argued that, though industrial capitalism had been a fairly recent importation, commercial capital had long ago sapped the foundations of a feudal order and dominated the Chinese economy.[5] This thesis implied, however, that the Chinese revolution was no longer in its bourgeois-democratic stage, and the justification for partnership with Kuomintang disappeared. For the moment, Radek's indiscretion excited little notice. But, when the successes of the northern expedition raised awkward practical problems of social policy in the national revolution, and when Radek, in approaches to the Politburo, in private letters to Trotsky,[6] and no doubt elsewhere, vented his misgivings about

[4] *Novyi Vostok*, xv (1926), 82; Roy had similarly written in 1923 that feudalism in India had been destroyed, "not by way of a violent revolution as in Europe, but in a process of comparatively peaceful and gradual development", and that "the last remnants of feudal power" disappeared in 1857, since when the whole country had been subjected to "capitalist exploitation" (quoted in *Diskussiya ob Aziatskom Sposobe Proizvodstva* (1931), p. 88).

[5] The controversy carried echoes of a similar dispute about the nature of society in Muscovite Russia. Plekhanov and Lenin described it sometimes as "feudal", sometimes as "Asiatic" or "semi-Asiatic"; Pokrovsky, on the other hand, regarded it as characterized by the rise of commercial capitalism on a western model (for a discussion of this dispute see *Soviet Studies*, xxvi, No. 3 (July 1974), pp. 380–395). That Lenin did not feel himself deeply committed on these issues is suggested by his enthusiastic praise of Pokrovsky's history; on one occasion he quoted from Martynov, then a Menshevik, a reference to "state feudalism", and added that "economic evolution ... has filled this feudal wrapping with *capitalist* content" (Lenin, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, xvi, 310).

[6] See p. 754 above.

the party line, the outlines of an intricate controversy began to emerge.

Nobody at first was eager to grasp the nettle of the nature of Chinese society or the character of the revolution. Bukharin, at the fifteenth party conference in Moscow in November 1926, referred to "a growth and evident development in recent times of capitalist relations [in China] ... though this development has not gone very far from the point of view of the general position of the country", and quoted statistics pointing to the continued prevalence of large estates.[7] In his written report to the seventh IKKI a few weeks later, he produced the same statistics to demonstrate the existence of "large landownership as a survival of earlier feudal landownership and bureaucracy", adding, however, that "the feudal régime in China is doomed to perish".[8] T'an P'ing-shan on the same occasion spoke of "the semi-feudal system of the war-lords",[9] and Stalin of the struggle "against imperialism and against feudal-mediaeval survivals in China".[10] The theses on China, which laid particular emphasis on the need for agrarian revolution, contained the first serious attempt by Comintern at a detailed analysis of Chinese society. Among the complexities of the situation it noted "the presence of numerous survivals of a feudal order, which are being destroyed by the advance of the revolutionary armies". It recognized Chinese militarism as "the social-political force which at the present time reigns over the greater part of Chinese territory", though "at the same time, being a military organization, it represents one of the fundamental channels of capitalist accumulation in China". The "feudal-military cliques" not only represented "the forces of reaction", but were "agents of imperialism" — the highest stage of capitalism.[11]

The argument was at this stage still conducted on an academic plane. Early in 1927 Radek published an article entitled "Fundamental Questions of Chinese History", which was intended as an introduction to a forthcoming publication of his lectures in the Sun Yat-sen university. Here he sought to prove that commercial capitalism had developed in China long before the invasion of foreign capital. Private property in land dated from an early period. Large as well as small holdings existed; the process of differentiation had set in. Market relations had penetrated to the countryside, and replaced primitive natural economy. Handicrafts, manufactures and trade flourished in the towns, and ex-

[7] *XV Konferentsiya Vsesoyuznoi Kommunisticheskoi Partii(B)* (1927), pp. 24–25.

[8] *Puti Mirovoi Revolyutsii* (1927), i, 86, 89.

[9] *Ibid.* i, 399.

[10] Stalin, *Sochineniya*, viii, 359.

[11] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), pp. 670–673; for the theses see pp. 731–734 above.

tended their influence. In this analysis, "China enters history as a *feudal state* not essentially different from European feudal states"; but this condition had long ago been replaced by a monetary economy with "a bureaucratic estate of gentry and traders", which had taken over the direct exploitation of the peasantry. Chinese feudalism was a historical phenomenon of a comparitively remote past.[12] That a split had, however, already declared itself in the Sun Yat-sen university was shown in an article by Mif, Radek's deputy, in the party journal, which proclaimed that the dual task of the Chinese revolution was "to overthrow imperialist domination, and to liberate the country from the monstrous *survivals of a semi-feudal past*".[13] It was at the same moment, by a significant coincidence, that Mao in his Hunan report referred to the struggle of the peasants against "the feudal landlord class".[14] He was apparently using the word for the first time — a tribute to his growing familiarity with Marxist and Bolshevik writings.

In March 1927, with tension mounting in China and within the party in Moscow, the disputants entered the political arena. Radek, in his article in *Izvestiya* on the second anniversary of the death of Sun Yat-sen, wrote in terms more provocative than he had hitherto used:

> The source of the peasant revolution in China is a struggle against the consequences of the penetration of capitalism into the Chinese countryside ... directed not against a feudalism which no longer exists in China, but against a section of the contemporary Chinese bourgeoisie.[15]

When Trotsky addressed his indictment of Chinese policy to the Politburo on March 31, 1927,[16] it was Radek who, having placed himself in the forefront of the attack, sustained the brunt of the ideological counter-offensive, being attacked by both Bukharin and Stalin in their speeches of April 4 and 5, 1927; Bukharin, while prepared to admit that Chinese feudalism was "not quite ordinary feudalism", specifically argued that Radek's denial of the existence of feudalism in China implied that the only opposition which workers and peasants had to face was from the bourgeoisie — a conclusion incompatible with the bourgeois-democratic character of the revolution.[17] Martynov devoted a large part of a much-quoted article in *Pravda* of April 10, 1927, to a critique of Radek's position, substituting the term "pre-capitalist" for

[12] *Novyi Vostok*, xvi–xvii (1927), 1–50; the projected volume of lectures was never published.

[13] *Bol'shevik*, No. 1, January 15, 1927, p. 12.

[14] For the Hunan report see pp. 782–784 above.

[15] *Izvestiya*, March 11, 1927; for this article see p. 756 above.

[16] See pp. 757–758 above.

[17] For these speeches see pp. 758–759 above.

"feudal"[18] — a substitution which Radek in turn denounced as an attempt to evade the issue. Stalin, at his meeting with students of the Sun Yat-sen university in the following month, once more rejected Radek's critique of feudalism: Radek "either denied altogether the presence of survivals of feudalism, or did not recognize the significance of survivals of feudalism, in the Chinese countryside", and failed to understand "the *combination* of the dominance of feudal survivals with the existence of commercial capital in the Chinese countryside, where feudal–mediaeval methods of exploitation and oppression of the peasantry are maintained".[19] A week later, at the eighth IKKI, he maintained that "survivals of feudalism" were "the predominant factor of oppression in China at the present moment", and that foreign imperialism "encourages, cultivates and conserves feudal survivals";[20] and a tortuous passage in the resolution of the session which analysed the character of the Chinese revolution still looked forward to a future "completion of the bourgeois-democratic revolution against feudalism".[21] An article in the journal of the Communist University of Toilers of the East concluded, in refutation of Radek's thesis, that, while China had "in the last few decades taken notable steps on the path of capitalist development", there remained "numerous and extremely strong 'survivals' of feudalism and serfdom", and that the imperialist Powers "rely on the system of these relations" in order to maintain their own positions.[22]

Chiang Kai-shek's *volte-face* in April 1927 revealed the significance of this apparently academic controversy in terms of current policy. The question whether the Chinese revolution in its present stage was directed, with the support of a part of the bourgeoisie, against "feudal survivals", or whether it was directed against the bourgeoisie, was the determining criterion of the relation of the CCP to Kuomintang. As Radek incisively put it, "all Bukharinite theories [of feudalism] served only one purpose — to demonstrate the indispensability of maintaining at all costs a united front with the bourgeoisie".[23] Trotsky showed no

[18] For this article see p. 760 above.

[19] Stalin, *Sochineniya*, ix, 240; Stalin repeated the same words in an article two months later (*ibid.* ix, 336).

[20] *Ibid.* ix, 285–286.

[21] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), p. 719; for this resolution see pp. 772–773 above.

[22] *Revolyutsionnyi Vostok*, ii (1927), 47–48; Tom Mann, visiting China in the spring of 1927, picked up the current orthodoxy: "The feudal system still dominates China" (*Labour Monthly*, No. 8, 1927, p. 485).

[23] K. Radek, *Izmena Kitaiskoi Krupnoi Burzhuazii Natsional'nomu Dvizheniyu* (see p. 818, note 148 above), p. 47; Bukharin appeared to concede the point when at the fifteenth congress of the Russian party in December 1927, replying to Lominadze's speech (see pp. 847–848 below), he observed that "the denial of the existence of feudalism ... implies denial of the existence of a

eagerness to plunge into this theoretical issue. But in an unpublished memorandum of June 25, 1927, he observed that China could no longer be regarded as "a patriarchal country" since the imperialists had introduced industry.[24] In a letter of July 12, 1927, he argued that it was "impossible to speak of Chinese feudalism" in the ordinary sense of the term, and that "only thanks to the unconditionally dominant role of capitalist relations in the whole Chinese economy can one speak of the prospect of proletarian leadership in the national revolution"; and in an unpublished article of September 1927 he explained the lack of bourgeois support for the Chinese revolution by the absence of "feudalism" in China.[25] In his letter to Preobrazhensky of March 29, 1928, citing the authority of Radek, he asserted that "China has no landed nobility", and that "the agrarian revolution in China is directed against the urban and rural bourgeoisie".[26] More emphatically, in his critique of the draft Comintern programme in July 1928, he maintained that there was "no caste of feudal landlords in China in opposition to the bourgeoisie", and that "the most widespread, common and hated exploiter in the village is the *kulak*–usurer, the agent of finance capital in the cities". He concluded that "it is capitalist relations that predominate and not 'feudal' (more correctly, serf, and generally pre-capitalist) relations".[27] In China, Ch'en Tu-hsiu's break with the CCP in 1929 gave him courage to express opinions which he had long held in private. In his "third letter" to the party central committee in the autumn of 1929 he declared that "Chinese feudalism has for a long time past been closely bound up with commercial capital" and that "no radical opposition of economic interests exists between the feudal landlords and the bourgeoisie";[28] and in the letter of December 10, 1929, written after his expulsion, he argued that to recognize feudal elements as dominant in China meant to recognize the bourgeoisie as a revolutionary force, and that this had led to neglect of the reactionary character of the Chinese bourgeoisie.[29]

So long as it was officially maintained that the Chinese revolution

landlord class, and this leads to other conclusions" (*Pyatnadtsatyi S"ezd VKP(B)*, i (1961), 839–840).

[24] Trotsky archives, T 3073.

[25] *Ibid.* T 979, 1031.

[26] For this letter see p. 855 above.

[27] L. Trotsky, *The Third International After Lenin* (N.Y., 1936), pp. 182–183, 209; Radek recanted in 1930 (*Problemy Kitaya*, iii (1930), 11).

[28] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 49–50 (227–228), 1929, p. 64; for this letter see pp. 903–904 above.

[29] For Ch'en's letter of December 10, 1929, see p. 906, note 434 above; later he was quoted as maintaining that "Chinese feudalism was overthrown long ago by commercial capital", and that there were "no economic conflicts between the bourgeoisie and feudalism" (*Problemy Kitaya*, ii (1930), 5).

was still in its bourgeois-democratic stage, it was also necessary to insist on the predominance of "feudal survivals" in the Chinese economy and in Chinese society. The resolution of the ninth IKKI of February 1928 opened with the firm assertion that the bourgeois-democratic revolution — meaning, economically, "the agrarian revolution and the abolition of feudal relations" — had not yet been completed;[30] and the programme of Comintern adopted at its sixth congress six months later included China among "countries where feudal-mediaeval relations predominate".[31] Early in 1929, Dubrovsky, deputy president of the International Agrarian Institute, read reports to the Society of Orientalists and to the Communist Academy on agrarian relations in Asia. He strongly affirmed the existence of feudalism in China, and argued that failure to recognize the revolutionary rôle of the peasantry was a consequence of the denial of feudalism by the opposition.[32] About the same time Varga, in a review article in *Pravda*, recognized the presence in China of "feudal elements" and a similarity to "conditions of mediaeval life in Europe".[33] The persistence of feudal elements in Chinese society was now an unchallengeable item of party doctrine. It became a matter of orthodoxy to assimilate Chiang Kai-shek's position to that of other warlords, and to deny any claim that, as a result of the national revolution, the bourgeoisie had wrested power from the feudal landowning class;[34] and Radek, in his recantation of 1930, described the nationalist government at Nanking as an alliance between landlords and capitalists based on "unliquidated survivals of feudalism".[35] In the sequel neither the upholders of the thesis that China, beset by survivals of feudalism, was still in the stage of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, nor their critics who proclaimed that the only revolution now on the agenda in China was the proletarian revolution, foresaw the direction which the revolutionary movement was about to take.

A by-product of the argument about Chinese feudalism was a still more scholastic controversy, which also developed political overtones, about "the Asiatic mode of production". From the sixteenth century onward, western European thought, stimulated primarily by the rise

[30] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), p. 763.

[31] *Ibid.* p. 30.

[32] S. Dubrovsky, *K Voprosu o Sushchnosti "Aziatskogo Sposoba Proizvodstva", Feodalizma, Krepostnichestva, i Torgovogo Kapitala* (1929), p. 166; it was intended to publish the discussion on the reports, but this was not done.

[33] *Pravda*, January 6, 1929; the work reviewed was L. Mad'yar, *Ekonomika Sel'skogo Khozyaistva v Kitae* (see p. 1037, note 68 below).

[34] *Protokoll: 10. Plenum des Exekutivkomitees der Kommunistischen Internationale* (n.d.), pp. 284, 485.

[35] *Problemy Kitaya*, iii (1930), 10–11.

of the Ottoman empire, had been increasingly impressed by the picture of an Oriental world beyond the pale of European civilization and fundamentally alien to it. The French *philosophes* of the eighteenth century, taking their cue from Montesquieu, contrasted "Oriental despotism" with the forms of absolute monarchy current in the west. The dichotomy of east and west strongly influenced the formulation of Hegel's Europocentric conception of history. History, whether in the sense of what happened or of the record of what happened, represented for Hegel "the progress of the consciousness of freedom". This process he identified with European civilization; "the consciousness of freedom first arose among the Greeks".[36] History also presupposed the existence of the state, which was "the external manifestation of the human will and its freedom"; it is to the state that "change in the aspect of history indissolubly attaches itself". The period before a people constitutes a state is an "ante-historical period", which "lies outside our plan".[37] It was to this period that the Oriental world belonged. Both China and India were "*entirely* wanting in the essential consciousness of the idea of freedom".[38] In China "every change is excluded, and the fixedness of a character which recurs perpetually takes the place of what we should call the truly historical"; and "China and India remain stationary, and perpetuate a vegetative existence even to the present time".[39] The political life of the east was "the childhood of history"; the east was "the dawn land of history".[40] Hegel recognized "the diffusion of the nations from Asia as a centre". But "that apparently so extensive range of events lies beyond the pale of history; in fact, preceded it".[41] The further one went east, the more decisive the verdict. "The extensive tract of eastern Asia is severed from the process of historical development"; and "China and India lie, as it were, still outside the world's history".[42] Hegel embraced and systematized the conventional view that classical Greece was the cradle of history, and that everything that preceded it was pre-history or myth.

Marx and Engels, in the *German Ideology* of 1845–1846, unpublished during their life-time, had already embarked on some discursive speculations about primitive society. The "first form of ownership" was "tribal ownership", which "corresponds to the undeveloped stage of production, at which a people lives by hunting and fishing, by the

[36] Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, transl. J. Sibree (1861), pp. 19–20.
[37] *Ibid.* pp. 49, 62.
[38] *Ibid.* p. 74.
[39] *Ibid.* pp. 121, 180.
[40] *Ibid.* pp. 111, 260.
[41] *Ibid.* p. 63.
[42] *Ibid.* pp. 91, 121. Hegel, like Voltaire, was ambivalent about China, whose long recorded history impressed him (*ibid.* p. 64); but this did not affect his conclusion.

rearing of animals and, in the highest stage, by agriculture". This preceded the "second form", marked by the concentration of tribes into cities, by the institution of slavery, by the division of labour and the growth of private property, and by a development of "the class relation between citizens and slaves". No geographical location was named for either form, though the second was clearly a picture of Greco-Roman society.[43] But this did not imply any derogation from the essentially Europocentric view which Marx had inherited from Hegel. In an early essay on *Wage-Labour and Capital* he defined "ancient society, feudal society, bourgeois society" as "the sum-totals of relations of production, each of which marks a specific stage of development in the history of mankind",[44] the implication being that "the history of mankind" began with ancient (i.e. Greek and Roman) society. In the *Communist Manifesto* "ancient Rome" and "the Middle Ages" represent "the earlier epochs of history"; and the *Manifesto* opposes "the barbarian and semi-barbarian countries" of "the East" to the "civilized" countries of "the West". One new element, however, appeared. The pre-historic period, distinguished for Hegel by the absence of change and the absence of the state, was also distinguished for Marx and Engels by the absence of the class struggle. The famous aphorism in the *Communist Manifesto* that "the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles" is a definition of history rather than a factual statement about class relations.

The authors of the *Communist Manifesto*, inspired by the lessons of the Chinese opium war, had noticed in passing a phenomenon unforeseen by Hegel — the penetration of the oriental world by western capitalism:

> The cheap prices of its commodities are the heavy artillery with which it [the bourgeoisie] batters down all Chinese walls, with which it forces the barbarians' intensely obstinate hatred of the foreigners to capitulate. It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilization into their midst, i.e. to become bourgeois themselves.

Marx in an article in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* of January 31, 1850, noted "the charming fact that the oldest and most unshakeable empire in the world should have been brought in eight years by the bales of cotton of the English bourgeoisie to the verge of a social revolution", and jocularly wondered:

[43] Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Werke*, iii (1962), 22–23.

[44] *Ibid.* vi (1961), 408; the essay was first published in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* in 1849, but was based on lectures delivered in Brussels in 1847 (*ibid.* xxi (1962), 174).

> When the European reactionaries in their impending flight across Asia arrive at the wall of China, who knows whether on the gates leading to the centre of primeval reaction and primeval conservatism they may not read the inscription: "Chinese Republic — Liberty, Equality, Fraternity"?[45]

It was, however, only in the eighteen-fifties, after their migration to England, that Marx and Engels began to take a specific interest in the character of Indian and Chinese society. Marx, who had been reading the work of the early eighteenth-century French explorer and geographer Bernier, remarked in a letter to Engels of June 2, 1853, that in the Mogul empire "the king is the sole and unique owner of all land in the kingdom", and added that "in Turkey, Persia and Hindustan *no private property in land* exists".[46] Engels rejoined, four days later, that "the absence of property in land is in reality the key to the whole Orient", and speculated on the reasons why even feudal concepts of property had never developed there. He argued that "from the Sahara through Arabia, Persia, India and Tartary as far as the highest Asiatic table-land ... artificial irrigation is the first condition of agriculture", and that this made "public works" an essential function of government.[47] In a reply of June 14, 1853, Marx, who had just written an article for the *New York Daily Tribune* on India, embroidered the same theme, with special reference to India. He attributed "the stationary character of this part of Asia" to two factors — first, "this public works business of the central government", secondly, "the break-up of the whole empire into *villages*". The self-contained villages formed what he ironically called "idyllic republics"; and Marx trenchantly concluded:

> I believe that no more solid basis could be found for Asiatic despotism and stagnation.[48]

When Marx in his note-books of 1857–1858, first published more than fifty years after his death, returned for the first time since the *German Ideology* ten years earlier to the analysis of primitive societies,

[45] Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Werke*, vii (1960), 222; in June 1853 Marx wrote an article for the *New York Daily Tribune* on the prospects of revolution in China (*ibid.* ix (1960), 95–102).

[46] *Ibid.* xviii (1963), 252–254. Adam Smith also cited Bernier, and observed that "in China, and several other governments of Asia, the executive power charges itself with the reparation of the high roads, and with the maintenance of navigable canals" (*The Wealth of Nations*, Book V, Ch. I, Part III); in 1851 Marx had re-read Adam Smith in English, and in May–June 1853 read Bernier (*Karl Marx: Chronik Seines Lebens* (Moscow, 1933), pp. 103, 139).

[47] Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Werke*, xxviii (1963), 259.

[48] On one occasion Marx wrote that "the British East India Company propped up Asiatic despotism" (*ibid.* ix (1960), 128).

he was alive to the existence of local variations, and named Slavonic and Rumanian communities, as well as Mexico, Peru, the ancient Celts, and "some tribes of India". But he showed a growing inclination to treat the Asiatic form as the prototype of primitive society. Here "unity is realized through the despot as the father of all the numerous lesser communities"; and "oriental despotism" was equivalent in a legal sense to "the non-existence of property".[49] It was in virtue of "the fundamental principle on which it is based, that is, that the individual does not become independent in face of the community" that "the Asiatic form necessarily survives most stubbornly and longest".[50] None of this rested on original study or research; it was a *pot-pourri* of conceptions of Asiatic society current among European scholars over the past century and a half.

Finally, in the famous preface to *An Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy* in 1859 Marx postulated four successive types of society, each with its characteristic mode of production:

> What are regarded in general terms as Asiatic, ancient, feudal and modern bourgeois forms of production may be regarded as progressive epochs in the history of economic formations of society.

And in the first volume of *Das Kapital*, in the chapter on the fetishistic character of commodities, he observed that "in the old Asiatic, ancient etc. modes of production the transformation of product into commodities ... played a subordinate part".[51] But he did not again revert to the four-fold classification; and he was clearly less interested in this borrowed enumeration than in the principle of the identification of a society by its mode of production, which he described a few years later in a letter to Engels as "our theory of the determination of the *organization* of labour *by the means of production*".[52] Marx never departed from his basic periodization of human history ten years earlier as ancient, feudal and bourgeois, or abandoned the Hegelian view that Asiatic society belonged not to history, but to pre-history. He noted

[49] Karl Marx, *Grundrisse der Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie* (Berlin, 1953), pp. 376–377; the section is headed "Forms which precede capitalist production".

[50] *Ibid.* p. 386; in the same passage Marx took the German mediaeval community as the prototype of the development of feudalism (*ibid.* pp. 382–384). But these geographical particularizations had little place in his published works; in 1868, after reading Maurer's work on primitive German communities, he wrote to Engels that "the Asiatic or Indian forms of property constitute the original ones everywhere in Europe", and the Russians were "still stuck in the forms which their neighbours have long since cast off" (Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Werke*, xxxii (1963), 42).

[51] *Ibid.* xiii (1964), 9, xxiii (1962), 93.

[52] *Ibid.* xxxi (1965), 234.

that "the oriental empires continue to present us with permanent changelessness in the social substructure and restless change among the persons and tribes that seize the political superstructure",[53] and wrote in the first volume of *Das Kapital* of "the unchangeableness of Asiatic societies".[54] Marx's investigations into the nature of primitive societies, before the class struggle — and therefore history — had begun, were as peripheral to his main concern as were his enquiries into the nature of the future society when the class struggle — and therefore history — should have been overcome.[55]

Engels followed in Marx's footsteps. In the discussion of the origins of society in his *Anti-Dühring* he also adopted the four-fold classification. The initial primitive period of human society was one in which man was "still half animal, brutish ... and consequently as poor as the animals", but in which nevertheless certain necessary communal services were performed and forms of despotism were established by those who performed them. "Oriental despotism, from India to Russia," was named as "the cruellest form of state"; but nothing was said to indicate that these conditions were specifically Asiatic. The next period was represented by Greek and Roman civilization, the characteristic economic institution of which was slavery; this was "a great step forward" from the previous period. Then came the third and fourth periods of mediaeval or feudal and modern or bourgeois society.[56] But the primitive, "half animal" period remained an awkward excrescence, lying outside the grand historical design of exploitation and class struggle; and the anomaly of using a geographical name to designate an economic system was inconvenient. Engels, in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, dropped the Asiatic or Oriental category while retaining the basic three:

> Slavery is the first form of exploitation, the specific form for the ancient world. It is succeeded by serfdom in the Middle Ages, and wage labour in more recent times. These are the three great forms of servitude, characteristic of the three great epochs of civilization.[57]

[53] *Ibid.* xv (1961), 514.

[54] *Ibid.* xxiii (1962), 379.

[55] Wittfogel, the most persistent exponent of Marx's belief in the Asiatic mode of production (see his *Oriental Despotism* (1957) and numerous articles), carried over from his communist days the conviction that every line written by Marx was deeply pondered and profoundly significant, and failed to recognize that Marx's *obiter dicta*, like those of lesser men, are often a straightforward reproduction of the *clichés* of contemporary thought; this applies to much of what Marx wrote on the Asiatic mode of production.

[56] Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Werke*, xx (1962), 166–169.

[57] *Ibid.* xxi (1962), 170; Engels in this work, published in 1884, the year after Marx's death, was heavily indebted to L. Morgan, *Ancient Society* (1877),

The three-fold classification continued to provide the skeleton outline of the Marxist conception of the historical process.

Lenin, like Hegel and Marx, began by accepting the assumption of the unchangeableness of Asiatic society. Writing on Tolstoy in January 1912, he quoted Tolstoy's argument, in a pamphlet of 1862, that the idea of "a general law of the forward movement of mankind" was refuted by the existence of the "immovable" eastern peoples; and he identified Tolstoy with "the ideology of the Oriental social order, of the Asiatic social order". But he went on to claim that the Russian revolution of 1905 had inspired movements "in a number of states of the east ' whose immobility Tolstoy had invoked, and that "1905 was the beginning of the end of oriental immobility".[58] In his early writings he twice repeated without comment Marx's four-fold classification of human societies.[59] In a report on the debate on the agrarian question at the fourth party congress in 1906, he observed in passing that, "in so far as nationalization of land existed in Muscovite Russia (if it did exist), its economic foundation was *the Asiatic mode of production*", but that since the middle of the nineteenth century "*the capitalist mode of production*" had indubitably prevailed.[60] Lenin, following the example of Marx and Engels, habitually referred to Russian society under the Tsars as "semi-Asiatic",[61] and on at least two occasions — in 1902 and 1911 — questioned the application of the European term "feudal" to more primitive Russian conditions.[62] But, since in 1912 and thereafter he freely used the word in relation to China,[63] it is reasonable to infer that the Chinese revolution of the previous year predisposed him to find analogies in Chinese society to the historical development of the west rather than to stress its "Asiatic" (with the connotation of "un-

which was concerned to establish a parallel between the primitive classless and stateless society of the past and the utopian classless society of the future.

[58] Lenin, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, xx, 102–103.

[59] *Ibid.* i, 136, xxvi, 57.

[60] Lenin, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, xiii, 14. Lenin was attacking Plekhanov who had "confused nationalization based on the Asiatic mode of production with nationalization based on the capitalist mode of production"; Plekhanov's argument implied "a restoration of Muscovite Russia (i.e. of the so-called Asiatic mode of production)".

[61] In his article of July 1912 on China Lenin wrote that Russia "in very many and very substantial respects undoubtedly represents one of the Asiatic states, and even one of the most uncivilized mediaeval, shamefully backward Asiatic states" (*Ibid.* xxi, 401; for this article see p. 1023 above); his insistence on the Asiatic character of Russian society was influenced by his revulsion against the old Russian and Slavophil undertones of *narodnik* socialism.

[62] Lenin, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, vi, 222, xx, 188; in the latter passage he described the term "feudal", applied to Rusian landowners, as "this not entirely exact, general European term".

[63] See p. 1023 above.

changeable") character. It was in his lecture of 1919 "On the State" that Lenin, without specific reference to Asia, offered a systematic analysis of the problem. "The original patriarchal society, primitive society" knew nothing of aristocrats or of the state, which "arose only where and when the division of society into classes made its appearance". This began with the society of classical Greece and Rome, "the society founded on slavery, the society of slave-owners", since "slave-owners and slaves are the first great division into classes". The analysis of the state rested on the three-fold classification — "the great periods of human history, slave-owning, serf-owning and capitalist".[64] Primitive society, of which the Asiatic mode of production was one manifestation, existed, in Hegelian terms, "before" or "outside" history. Lenin, like Marx, was content to accept conventional current thinking on a topic which was peripheral to his main concerns.

After Lenin's death interest in the question faded. A revival of interest in Asia prompted the publication in 1925 of a collection of Marx's articles on India and China. But Ryazanov's introduction to the volume raised no controversial issues.[65] It seems to have been an accident that the Asiatic mode of production was injected into the bitter debate stirred up in the spring of 1927 by Radek's denial of the existence of feudalism in China.[66] It was no part of Radek's argument to maintain that Chinese society was, or had been in the past, distinguished by a specifically Asiatic mode of production; nor was this theory ever mentioned by Stalin in his attacks on Radek or in his repeated assertions of the presence of feudal survivals in China. When, however, the obsequious Pepper added his weight to the attack on Radek, he boldly claimed that in China feudalism had never existed in the past, and that capitalism in the proper sense was not predominant in the present:

> The foundation of the Chinese economy is still, in the terminology of Marx, *the Asiatic mode of production*.... The classic characteristic of feudalism — large landownership and legal serfdom — is absent in China.... Commercial capital must not be confused with the predominance of a capitalist mode of production.[67]

From this time the Asiatic theory began to make sporadic appearances

[64] Lenin, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, xxxix, 70–72; the lecture was first published in *Pravda*, January 18, 1929. Lenin's "patriarchal society" came from Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, transl. J. Sibree (1861), p. 43, where "the patriarchal condition" is described as a "family relation", but "one of transition" to statehood.

[65] The introduction appeared in *Unter dem Banner des Marxismus*, ii (1926), 370–378.

[66] See pp. 1025–1027 above.

[67] *Pravda*, May 1, 1927.

in unexpected places. Mad'yar, who had returned in the summer of 1927 from a tour of duty in the Soviet consulate in Shanghai, became its enthusiastic champion.[68] It was significantly accepted in the draft agrarian programme prepared by the central committee of the CCP at its meeting of November 9–10, 1927, the obvious motive being to refute the claim that feudal survivals persisted in China, and that the revolution was therefore still confined within a bourgeois-democratic framework.[69] At the fifteenth Russian party congress in Moscow in the following month, Lominadze, who must have been directly or indirectly responsible for this article in the programme, referred to "survivals of that peculiar Chinese feudalism which it would be better to call, as Marx called it, the Asiatic mode of production"; and this provoked a sharp exchange between Lominadze and Mif, who asserted that "Marx did not oppose feudalism to the Asiatic mode of production", and that Marx "understood by the Asiatic mode of production one of the varieties of feudalism".[70] Bukharin brushed the dispute aside by reminding Lominadze that the point at issue was not whether feudalism in China was "special" or "European", but whether it existed at all.[71] Nor was it, indeed, associated with either of the current deviations. While Lominadze invoked the Asiatic mode of production to support his view that there was no bourgeoisie, and could be no bourgeois revolution, in China, other champions of the Asiatic mode like Pepper were adherents of the party Right. Varga in an article in the party journal in April 1928, significantly qualified by the editor as a "discussion article", continued to defend the Asiatic mode, and argued that the term "feudalism" was appropriate to China only if it were a mere synonym for pre-capitalism.[72] But deeper reasons made this view in the long run unacceptable. The notion of Asiatic "exceptionalism" was as obnoxious as American "exceptionalism".[73] The desire for a grand synthesis embracing the course of history, past, present and future, which ran counter to the impulse to stress the peculiar characteristics of Asiatic society, was obsessively present in Comintern, whose claim to instruct and direct the communist movement throughout the world rested on the hypothesis that its basic problems and tasks were everywhere the same. To invalidate this hypothesis was to de-

[68] For Mad'yar see p. 226 above, and V. Nikiforov, *Sovetskie Istoriki o Problemakh Kitaya* (1970), pp. 141–144; his book, *Ekonomika Sel'skogo Khozyaistva v Kitae* (1928), contained a chapter on the Asiatic mode, which was omitted, after his recantation, from a second edition of the work in 1931.

[69] For the draft programme see pp. 836–837 above.

[70] *Pyatnadtsatyi S"ezd VKP (B)*, i (1961), 733, 805.

[71] *Ibid.* i, 839–841.

[72] *Bol'shevik*, No. 8, April 30, 1928, pp. 18–22.

[73] For the latter see pp. 610–611 above.

throne Comintern and to destroy the predominant authority of Moscow in the communist world.

When therefore the Chinese delegates arrived in Moscow in June 1928 for the sixth party congress, they learned that the formula of the "Asiatic mode" was now heretical; and the draft agrarian programme sponsored by Lominadze in November 1927 was quickly abandoned.[74] Li Li-san in his report to the congress on the agrarian question categorically rejected the application to China of the Asiatic mode of production, which implied state ownership of the land.[75] The resolution of the congress included a long and emphatic explanation that the characteristic features of the Asiatic mode, i.e. the absence of private property in land, large public works (especially irrigation) undertaken by the ruler, and a communal social system, were entirely lacking in China, that "to define the present social order in China as a transitional order from the Asiatic mode of production to capitalism is erroneous", and that agrarian relations in China "can and should be defined only as semi-feudal relations".[76]

The sixth congress of Comintern, meeting immediately after the sixth congress of the CPI, did not discuss either Chinese feudalism or the Asiatic mode of production, though Bukharin remarked in passing that in China the bourgeois-democratic revolution was engaged in a struggle both against the bourgeoisie and against "the feudal state".[77] But a surprising oversight occurred. The programme of Comintern, drafted by Bukharin well in advance of the congress and before this issue became acute, contained a passage referring to "*colonial and semi-colonial countries* (China, India etc.) and *dependent countries* (Argentina, Brazil etc.)" where "feudal–mediaeval relations or relations of 'the Asiatic mode of production' " still predominated; and, though parts of the draft programme were extensively debated and revised at the congress, this passage appears to have escaped attention, and was left intact in the text finally adopted.[78] This blunder, however, though occasionally embarrassing to proponents of the official line, was not allowed to affect the course of events. From this time the position was clear. To assert that feudalism, though it had once existed, no longer existed in China was a heresy of the Trotskyite opposition, now totally banned. To describe traditional Chinese society as characterized not

[74] *Diskussiya ob Aziatskom Sposobe Proizvodstva* (1931), p. 6.

[75] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI so S"ezda KPK* (1930), iv, 40; for this report see pp. 864–865 above.

[76] *Programmnye Dokumenty Kommunisticheskikh Partii Vostoka* (1934), p. 39; for the resolution see pp. 869–870 above.

[77] *Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), iii , 149.

[78] *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh* (1933), p. 30; for the draft programme and the debates at the congress see pp. 224–234 above.

by feudalism, but by the Asiatic mode of production, was now a Right deviation, denounced, but not yet treated as incompatible with membership of the party.

The rumblings of controversy about the Asiatic mode of production continued for some time. Dubrovsky, in the report in which he had defended the continued existence of feudalism in China, asserted with equal vehemence that "Marx nowhere distinguishes a special 'Asiatic mode of production' ".[79] The issue was canvassed in a series of debates in learned institutions. Discussions in the Society of Orientalists and the Communist Academy early in 1929 on Dubrovsky's report were followed later in the same year by a discussion in a gathering of Leningrad historians; and Mad'yar and Dubrovsky presented their opposing views in the eastern section of the All-Union Conference of Agrarian Marxists in January 1930. The debates were conducted on the academic plane, and no major political figure took part. But the conclusion to which they pointed was that Marx had regarded the Asiatic mode of production as a variety of feudalism, and had not intended to create a special category excluding Asia from the main line of development.[80] Finally a large-scale discussion was organized in Leningrad in February 1931, in which the arguments for and against the Asiatic mode of production were once more ventilated at length. While some of the former protagonists did not appear (Dubrovsky, Varga and Mad'yar were all conspicuous by their absence), the political overtones were now more clearly marked. No conclusion was registered; but adherence to the Asiatic mode was clearly seen as the mark of a dissident minority. The proceedings were published in full, with an editorial note expressing the hope that the publication would "assist readers to orientate themselves in a question which has not only theoretical, but topical political, importance".[81] The debate was closed. As in other questions, the confines of permissible dissent were now being narrowed or obliterated. To reject the Asiatic mode was a requisite of party orthodoxy; those who had upheld it in the past recanted, or relapsed into silence.

[79] S. Dubrovsky, *K Voprosu o Sushchnosti "Aziatskogo Sposoba Proizvodstva", Feodalizma, Krepostnicheskogo i Torgovogo Kapitala* (1929), p. 22; for this report see p. 1029 above.

[80] For a summary of these discussions see V. Nikiforov, *Sovetskie Istoriki o Problemakh Kitaya* (1970), pp. 216–221; Mad'yar, in a particularly savage review of Dubrovsky's published report in *Na Agrarnom Fronte*, No. 11–12, 1929, pp. 219–229, described the rejection of the Asiatic mode of production as "a revision of Marxism". Iolk, the Soviet expert on Chinese agrarian affairs, maintained that Marx did not regard the Asiatic mode as a specific mode of production, but as "a historical variant of the feudal mode of production" (*Problemy Kitaya*, ii (1930), 87–89), and attacked Mad'yar for vulgarizing Marx by defining a mode of production geographically (*ibid.* iv–v (1930), 199–209).

[81] *Diskussiya ob Aziatskom Sposobe Proizvodstva* (1931).

NOTE F

THE PAN-PACIFIC TRADE UNION SECRETARIAT

THE Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat set up by the congress in Wuhan in May 1927[1] secured two early successes. A Philippine trade union congress announced its adhesion of June 30, 1927; and on August 18, 1927, Profintern received the notification of a similar decision by the executive committee of the Australian trade union council.[2] Lozovsky at the fifteenth party congress in Moscow in December 1927 boasted that the secretariat provided a means of establishing contacts "with a whole number of new countries", including the Philippines with 70,000, and Australia with 500,000, organized workers.[3] Browder, described as the delegate of the American TUEL, functioned for the next two years as its secretary and factotum.[4] Its main activity was to issue appeals such as that to the congress of the British TUC in September 1927 against British imperialist policies in China.[5] In September 1927 Hardy, a member of the CPGB and secretary of the National Minority Movement, arrived in Wuhan to join the secretariat and take charge of the publication of the *Pacific Worker*. But conditions in Wuhan soon proved impossible. A proposal to publish the journal in Australia fell through; and in December 1927 the activities of the secretariat and the journal were transferred to Shanghai,[6] where they continued, more or less surreptitiously, for the next two years.[7]

[1] See p. 803 above.

[2] *Krasnyi Internatsional Profsoyuzov*, No. 8–9, 1927, pp. 144, 147. At the next Australian trade union congress in Melbourne on July 16–21, 1928, the decision was endorsed, after "embittered opposition", by 92 votes to 36; one of the objectors referred to the secretariat as "a mixed mob of Asiatics with unpronounceable names" (*Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 113, October 5, 1928, pp. 2192–2193).

[3] *Pyatnadtsatyi S"ezd VPK(B)*, i (1961), 695–696.

[4] *Political Science Quarterly*, lxxix, No. 2, July 1964, p. 311.

[5] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 89, September 6, 1927, p. 1946.

[6] G. Hardy, *Those Stormy Years* (1956), pp. 194–201. According to a delegate at the sixth congress of Comintern the Australian Government prohibited the entry of the journal into Australia, and for a time a separate edition of the *Pacific Worker* was produced there (*Stenograficheskii Otchet VI Kongressa Kominterna* (1929), i, 328); Browder at the eighth trade union congress in Moscow in December claimed that the secretariat issued two monthly journals, one in China and one in Australia (*Vos'moi S"ezd Professional'nykh Soyuzov SSSR* (1929), p. 238).

[7] In April 1928 the title of the journal was changed to *Far Eastern Monthly*,

On February 3–5, 1928, the secretariat held a session in Shanghai, at which all trade union organizations affiliated to it, except those of Indonesia and Korea, but including Australia and the Philippines, were represented. It drew up a report covering such familiar topics as the danger of war in the Pacific, the treachery of Kuomintang, and the unity of the trade union movement, and reviewing the situation in particular countries. It expressed satisfaction at the decision taken by the delegates of eight Latin American countries in Moscow on December 11, 1927, to create a Latin American Trade Union Secretariat, and invited this secretariat to send representatives to the next congress of Pacific trade unions. It decided to maintain a permanent bureau of three, of whom one would be the editor of the *Pacific Worker*, as well as "secretary–correspondents" in Japan, the Philippines and Australia, and to attempt to establish relations with India, Indonesia, Formosa and Annam. It proposed to convene the next Pacific congress in Australia in March 1929. It issued a manifesto addressed to the workers of the Pacific countries, expounding the aims of the secretariat, denouncing the white terror in China, and appealing for help and support for the Chinese unions.[8]

That no undue importance was attached in Moscow to the Pan-Pacific Secretariat was suggested by the proceedings of the fourth congress of Profintern in March 1928. The secretariat sent a message of greeting to the congress signed by the Australian, Chinese, Japanese and American representatives. This referred to the creation of the secretariat at the Wuhan conference in 1927 and to "our decisions taken in February", and expressed regret at its failure to establish contact with the Indian trade unions. But Lozovsky in his major report and Heller in his detailed review of the Far East gave it no more than casual mentions;[9] and participants in its work who spoke at the congress — Browder, Hardy and Ryan — were equally reticent. Only the Chinese delegate called the attention of the congress to its work as "extraordinary important".[10] After the congress, what was called a conference of the Pacific trade unions "welcomed the decision of the Latin American trade union delegation to recommend the workers' organizations of Latin America to adhere to the Pan-Pacific Trade

and in April 1929 to *Pacific Monthly*; from 1929 onwards it was published in San Francisco.

[8] For the report and the resolutions see *Krasnyi Internatsional Profsoyuzov*, No. 3, 1928, Prilozhenie, pp. 3–12; for the manifesto see *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 31, March 13, 1928, pp. 589–590. The eight signatories of the manifesto included Ryan for the Australian trade union council, Hardy for the British NMM, and Browder for the TUEL of the United States.

[9] *Protokoll über den Vierten Kongress der Roten Gewerkschaftsinternationale* (n.d.), pp. 26, 86, 399.

[10] *Ibid.* p. 144.

Union Secretariat".[11] The plan to hold a congress in Australia again came to grief. On October 28, 1928, the secretariat despatched a long letter to the member unions, explaining that the Australian Prime Minister had vetoed the holding of the next congress in Australia, and that, after abortive attempts to arrange it in Manila or Honolulu, it had been decided to accept the invitation of the Soviet central trade union council to hold it in Vladivostok, where the congress was to assemble on August 1, 1929, with an agenda comprising the danger of war and the struggle against imperialism, the struggle for colonial independence, and the unity of the international trade union movement.[12]

By this time, however, it was scarcely possible to disguise the bankruptcy of the enterprise. An article by Lozovsky admitted that the secretariat since its foundation had had to work "in extremely unfavourable conditions", and that it had been found impossible to hold the congress legally in any capitalist country. He added only the assurance that "we shall build the united front of revolutionary workers of the whole world".[13] On the appointed date 25 voting delegates and 17 observers met in Vladivostok; the arrival of other Asian delegates had been blocked by the "imperialist Powers". In these depressing circumstances, the meeting assumed the status no longer of a congress, but of a conference; and several items were taken off the agenda. Some resolutions seem to have been adopted. But the main result of the conference was to show up the weakness of the communist movement in Australia and in most Asian countries.[14] The prospects of communism in Asia were relegated to an apparently remote future.

[11] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 38, April 17, 1928, p. 688; for the meeting of the Latin American delegates see p. 972 above.

[12] *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, No. 142, December 21, 1928, p. 2846; the invitation was signed by Browder, by an official of the Soviet trade union central council and by two Chinese, two Japanese and two Philippine delegates.

[13] *Ibid.* No. 50, June 11, 1929, pp. 1212–1214.

[14] The only record of the conference that has been traced is a brief and uncharacteristically pessimistic account by Lozovsky in *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, No. 38–39 (216–217), 1929, pp. 16–20; G. Hardy, *Those Stormy Years* (1956), p. 209, states that the second part of the conference was transferred to Shanghai — the seat of the shadowy secretariat.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

(Supplementary to the lists in Vol. 1, pp. 985–991, and Vol. 2, p. 495.)

ADGB	=Allgemeiner Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (General German Trade Union Federation)
A.F. of L.	=American Federation of Labour
AITUC	=All-Indian Trade Union Congress
APRA	=Allianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana (People's Revolutionary American Alliance)
BSP	=British Socialist Party
CCP	=Chinese Communist Party
CER	=Chinese Eastern Railway
CGL	=Confederazione Generale del Lavoro (General Labour Federation)
CGT	=Confédération Générale du Travail
CGTU	=Confédération Générale du Travail Unitaire
COPA	=Confederación Obrera Pan-Americana (Pan-American Federation of Labour)
CPGB	=Communist Party of Great Britain
CPI	=Communist Party of India
CPSU	=Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CROM	=Confederación Revolucionaria Obrera Mexicana (Mexican Revolutionary Federation of Labour)
IFTU	=International Federation of Trade Unions ("Amsterdam International")
ILO	=International Labour Organization
ILP	=Independent Labour Party
IPC	=International Propaganda Committee
IWW	=Industrial Workers of the World
KAPD	=Kommunistische Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands (German Communist Workers' Party)
KPD	=Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands (German Communist Party)
KPO	=Komunistische Partei — Opposition (Communist Party — Opposition)
KPP	=Komunistyczna Partja Polski (Polish Communist Party)
KPZB	=Komunistyczna Partja Zachodniej Bialorusi (Western White Russian Communist Party)
KPZU	=Komunisticheska Partiya Zachidnei Ukraini (Western Ukrainian Communist Party)
Krestintern	=Krest'yanskii Internatsional (Peasant International)
MOPR	=Mezhdunarodnaya Organizatsiya Pomoshchi Bor'tsam Revolyutsii (International Association for Aid to Revolutionary Fighters)

MOS	=Mezhnatsional'nyi Obshcheprofessional'nyi Soyuz (Multinational General Trade Union Federation)
MRP	=Mezhdunarodnaya Rabochaya Pomoshch' (International Workers' Aid)
NLWM	=National Left-Wing Workers' Movement
NMM	=National Minority Movement
NUWCM	=National Unemployed Workers' Committee Movement
PCF	=Parti Communiste Français
PCI	=Partito Comunista Italiano (Italian Communist Party)
PKI	=Pergerakan Kebangsaan Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party)
PPS	=Polska Partja Socjalistyczna (Polish Socialist Party)
Profintern	=Krasnyi Internatsional Profsoyuzov (Red International of Trade Unions)
SFIO	=Section Francaise Internationale Ouvrière (French Socialist Party)
SLP	=Socialist Labour Party
SPD	=Sozial-Demokratische Partei Deutschlands (German Social-Democratic Party)
TUC	=Trades Union Congress
TUEL	=Trade Union Educational League
UMW	=United Mine Workers
USPD	=Unabhängige Sozial-Demokratische Partei Deutschlands (German Independent Social-Democratic Party)
WPP	=Workers' and Peasants' Party

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