

# Problems of the Chinese Revolution

*[Thesis for Propagandists Approved by the CC of the CPSU*

## I

### PERSPECTIVES OF THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

THE MAJOR FACTS which determine the character of the Chinese Revolution are:

- a. China's semi-colonial status and the economic and financial domination of imperialism;
- b. The deadweight of feudal survivals, aggravated by the oppression of militarism and the bureaucracy;
- c. The growing revolutionary struggle of the working-class and peasant millions against feudal-bureaucratic oppression, militarism and imperialism;
- d. The political weakness of the national bourgeoisie, its dependence on imperialism, its fear of the sweep of the revolutionary movement;
- e. The growing revolutionary activity of the proletariat, its growing prestige among the toiling millions;



- f. The existence of a proletarian dictatorship as a neighbour of China.

Hence the two paths of development of events in China.

Either the national bourgeoisie crushes the proletariat, enters into a compact with imperialism and with it launches campaign against the revolution, in order to end it with the establishment of the rule of capitalism;

Or the proletariat pushes aside the national bourgeoisie, consolidates its hegemony and wins the following of the toiling millions of town and country in order to overcome the resistance of the national bourgeoisie, secure the complete victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, and then gradually switch it to the path of Socialist revolution, with all the consequences that follow there from.

One of these two paths.

The crisis of world capitalism and the existence of the proletarian dictatorship in the USSR whose experience may be effectively utilised by the Chinese proletariat, substantially enhances the possibility of the Chinese Revolution being carried out by the second way.

On the other hand, the fact that imperialism is attacking the Chinese Revolution in the main unitedly, that amongst the imperialists there exist at present no splits or wars as there existed for example in the camp of imperialism before the October Revolution and which weakened imperialism — this fact means that the Chinese Revolution is meeting with much greater difficulties in the path of victory than the revolution in Russia and that the desertions and treacheries in the course of this Revolution will be incomparably more than in the period of the civil war in the USSR.

Therefore, the struggle between these two paths of revolution is the characteristic feature of the Chinese Revolution.

It is just because of this that the fundamental task of the Communists consists in the struggle for the victory of the second path of the Chinese Revolution.

## II

### FIRST STAGE OF THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

In the first period of the Chinese Revolution, in the period of the first expedition to the North, when the Nationalist Army approached the Yangtze river and attained victory after victory and a mighty movement of workers and peasants had not yet been developed, the national bourgeoisie (non-comprador) marched with the revolution.<sup>[1]</sup> This was revolution of the *general united national front*.

This does not mean that there were no contradictions between the revolution and the national bourgeoisie. This only means that the national bourgeoisie, while supporting the revolution, attempted to utilise it for its own aims, limiting its scope by directing it in the main along the line of territorial conquests. The struggle between the Rights and the Lefts in the Kuomintang in this period was an expression of these contradictions. The attempt of Chiang Kai-shek to expel the Communists from the Kuomintang in March, 1926, was the first serious attempt of the national bourgeoisie to curb the revolution. It is well known that the CC of the CPSU(B) already then considered it "necessary to carry out a line of keeping the Communist Party within the Kuomintang," and that it considered it necessary "that matters must be so arranged as to secure the resignation or expulsion of Rights from the Kuomintang" (April, 1926).

This was a line of the further development of the revolution, of close cooperation of the Lefts and the Communists within the Kuomintang and within the national Government, of the consolidation of the unity of the Kuomintang and simultaneously an exposure and isolation of the Right-wing Kuomintang elements, of subjugating the Rights to the discipline of the Kuomintang, the utilisation of the Rights, their connections and their experience in so far as they are subject to the discipline of the Kuomintang or the expulsion of the Rights from the Kuomintang in so far as they break this discipline and betray the interests of the revolution. The subsequent events fully confirmed the correctness of this line. The powerful development of the peasant movement and the organisation of peasant unions and peasant committees in the countryside, the powerful strike-wave in the towns and the formation of Councils of Trade Unions, the victorious advance of the national troops on Shanghai, which was besieged by the navy and troops of the imperialists—all these and similar such facts testify to the fact that the line adopted was the only correct line.

Only this circumstance can explain the fact that the attempts of the Rights in February, 1927, to split the Kuomintang and create a new centre in Nanchang suffered defeat in face of the united rebuff of the revolutionary Kuomintang in Wuhan.

But this attempt was an indication of the fact that a regrouping of class forces was taking place in the country, that the Rights and the national bourgeoisie were not keeping quiet and that they would intensify their work against the revolution.

The CC of the CPSU(B) was, therefore, right when in March, 1927, it said that:

- “(a)At the present moment, with the regrouping of class forces and the concentration of imperialist armies, the Chinese Revolution is living through a critical period and that its further victories are possible only if a definite line towards development of the mass movement is adopted;
- (b) It is necessary to take to the course of arming the workers and peasants, and converting the peasant committees in the localities into actual organs of power with armed self-defence;
- (c) The Communist Party must not screen the treacherous and reactionary policy of the Right-wing Kuomintang elements and must mobilise the masses round the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party for an exposure of the Rights.” (March 3, 1927)

It can, therefore, be easily understood that in the future the powerful sweep of the revolution on the one hand, and the onslaught of the imperialists in Shanghai on the other, cannot but throw the Chinese national bourgeoisie into the camp of counter-revolution, while the seizure of Shanghai by the national troops and the strikes of the Shanghai workers cannot but unite the imperialists for stifling the revolution.

This was just what happened. The Nanking shootings served in this respect as a signal for a new demarcation of fighting forces in China. By the shooting in Nanking and by presenting ultimatums, the imperialists wanted to say that they were seeking the support of the national bourgeoisie for a common struggle against the Chinese Revolution.

By opening fire at workers' meetings and organising a *coup*, Chiang Kai-shek as though said in reply to the appeal of the imperialists that he was prepared to enter into a compromise with imperialists along with the national bourgeoisie against the workers and peasants of China.

### III

#### THE SECOND STAGE OF THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

The *coup* of Chiang Kai-shek marks the departure of the national bourgeoisie from the revolution, the birth of a centre of national counter-revolution and a deal by the Right-wing Kuomintang elements with imperialism against the Chinese Revolution.

Chiang Kai-shek's *coup* signifies that in South China there will be henceforth two camps, two governments, two armies, two centres – the centre of revolution in Wuhan and the centre of counter-revolution in Nanking.

Chiang Kai-shek's *coup* signifies that the revolution has entered the second stage of its development, that the *turn* has commenced from a revolution of a *general and united national* front to a revolution of the many millions of *workers and peasants*, to an *agrarian* revolution, which is intensifying and extending the struggle against imperialism, against the gentry and the feudal landlords, against the militarists and the counter-revolutionary group of Chiang Kai-shek.

This means that the struggle between the two- paths of revolution, between the adherents of its further development and the adherents of its liquidation, will become sharper from day to day, and cover the entire present period of revolution.

This means that the revolutionary Kuomintang in Wuhan, by waging a resolute struggle against militarism and imperialism, will be converted in practice into an organ of the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry and the counter-revolutionary group of Chiang Kai-shek in Nanking, by breaking away from the workers and peasants and making a rapprochement with imperialism will share finally the fate of the militarists.

But from this it follows at the policy of preserving the unity of the Kuomintang, the policy of isolating the Right-wing elements within the Kuomintang and utilising them for the aims of the revolution has already ceased to correspond to the new tasks of the revolution. This policy must be substituted by a policy of a resolute expulsion of the Right-wing elements from the Kuomintang, a policy of a determined struggle against them down to their complete political elimination, a policy of concentrating the entire power in the country in the hands of the *revolutionary* Kuomintang, the Kuomintang without its Right-wing elements and the Kuomintang as a bloc of the Left-wing Kuomintang elements and the Communists.

From this it follows further that the policy of close co-operation of the Left-wing elements and the Communists within the Kuomintang assumes a special force and a special importance at the present stage, that this co-operation reflects the alliance of the workers and peasants formed outside the Kuomintang, and that without such a co-operation, the victory of the revolution is impossible. From this it follows further that the main source of the force of the revolutionary Kuomintang is the further unfolding of the revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants and the consolidation of their mass organisations—the revolutionary peasant committees, trade unions of workers and other mass revolutionary organisations as preparatory elements of the Soviets in the future, that the main guarantee of the victory of the revolution is the growth of the revolutionary activity of the millions of toiling masses and the main antidote against counter-revolution—the arming of workers and peasants.

Finally, from this follows that while fighting shoulder to shoulder with the revolutionary Kuomintang elements, the Communist Party must more than ever before retain its independence, as a condition necessary for ensuring the hegemony of the proletariat in the bourgeois-democratic revolution.

## IV

### THE MISTAKES OF THE OPPOSITION

The fundamental mistake of the Opposition and Co.) consists in not understanding the character of the revolution in China, in not understanding which is the stage that the revolution is passing through at the present time, and in not understanding its present international set up.

The Opposition demands that the Chinese Revolution should develop at approximately the same speed as the October Revolution did. The Opposition is dissatisfied that the Shanghai workers did not take up a resolute fight against the imperialists and their myrmidons.

But it does not understand that the revolution in China cannot develop with a rapid speed because among other things, the international situation at present is less favourable than in 1917 (there is no war between the imperialists).

It does not understand that one must not wage a decisive battle under unfavourable conditions, when the reserves are still not drawn in, just as the Bolsheviks, for instance, did not take up decisive battles either in April or in July 1917.

The Opposition does not understand that not to avoid a decisive battle under unfavourable conditions (when it can be avoided) means facilitating the cause of the enemies of the revolution. The Opposition demands the immediate formation of Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies in China.

The opposition demands the immediate formation of Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies in China. But what does the formation of Soviets *now* signify? In the first place, Soviets cannot be formed at any moment; they are formed only in the period of a special upsurge of the revolutionary wave.

Secondly, Soviets are not formed for babble, they are primarily formed as organs of struggle against the existing power, as organs of struggle for power. It was so in 1905. It was also so in 1917.

But what does the formation of Soviets *at the present moment* in the region of the activities, for example of the Wuhan Government, mean? It means giving the slogan of struggle against the existing power in this region. It means giving a slogan for the creation of new organs of power, giving a slogan of struggle against the power of the revolutionary Kuomintang, which the Communists who have formed a bloc with the Kuomintang Lefts have joined and since there is no other power now in this region apart from the power of the revolutionary Kuomintang.

This means further to confuse the task of forming and strengthening the mass organisations of workers and peasants in the form of strike committees, peasant unions and committees, trade union councils, factory and mill committees, etc. on which the revolutionary Kuomintang is now already relying, with the task of the creation of a Soviet system as a new type of State power substituting the power of the revolutionary Kuomintang.

This means, finally, not to understand which is the stage of the revolution that is taking place in China at the present moment. This means giving the enemies of the Chinese people a new weapon for struggle against the revolution, for creating new legends that it is not a national revolution which is taking place in China but an artificial implantation of "Moscow Sovietisation".

Thus the Opposition by advancing the slogan of the formation of Soviets *at the present moment* is playing into the hands of the enemies of the Chinese Revolution.

The Opposition considers it inexpedient for the Communists to participate in the Kuomintang. Opposition therefore considers it expedient for the Communist Party to leave the Kuomintang. But what does withdrawal by the Communist Party from the Kuomintang signify now when the whole pack of imperialists with all their hangers-on are demanding the expulsion of the Communists from the Kuomintang? This means to abandon the field of battle and to throw our allies in the Kuomintang at the mercy of the enemies of the revolution. This means weakening the Communist Party, undermining the revolutionary Kuomintang, facilitating the task of the Shanghai Cavaignacs and giving away the banner of the Kuomintang, the most popular amongst all the banners in China, into the hands of the Right-wing Kuomintang elements.

This is just what the imperialists, the militarists and the Right-wing Kuomintang elements are demanding at the present time.

Thus it turns out that by speaking in favour of the withdrawal of the Communist Party from the Kuomintang *at the present moment* the Opposition is playing into the hands of the enemies of the Chinese Revolution.

The recent Plenum of the CC of our Party was, therefore, absolutely right in rejecting resolutely the platform of the Opposition.

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