

STALIN – TALK WITH STUDENTS OF THE SUN YAT-SEN UNIVERSITY

(13th May, 1927)

Today discussions and debates are going on among the Communist revolutionaries on whether India is in a semi feudal stage or in a capitalist stage and whether the Indian bourgeoisie is national or comprador in its nature. We hope that the talk of Stalin will help us in understanding the problem

– **Editor**

COMRADES,

Unfortunately I can spare only two or three hours today for the talk. Perhaps we shall arrange a longer talk next time. But today I think we could confine ourselves to the examination of such questions as have been formulated by you in writing. I have received altogether ten questions. I shall answer these in today's talk. If there are additional questions—and it is said there are—I shall try to reply to them in the next talk. And now let us get down to work.

FIRST QUESTION

Why is Radek's assertion that in the Chinese countryside the struggle of the peasantry is directed not so much against the remnants of feudalism as against the bourgeoisie incorrect?

Can it be affirmed whether it is commercial capitalism or the remnants of feudalism which are predominant in China?

Why it is that the Chinese militarists, while they are owners of big industrial enterprises are at the same time representatives of feudalism?

In fact, Radek does affirm something in the nature of what is mentioned in this question. As far as I remember Radek in his speech to the active members of the Moscow Party Organisation either denied altogether the existence of the remnants of feudalism or did not recognise the serious importance of the remnants of feudalism in the Chinese countryside.

This, of course, is Radek's great mistake.

Had there been no remnants of feudalism in China, had these remnants not possessed the most serious importance for the Chinese countryside, then there would not have been any ground for the agrarian revolution now and there would be no point in speaking of the agrarian revolution as one of the main tasks of the Communist Party at the present stage of the Chinese revolution.

Does commercial capital exist in the Chinese countryside? Yes, it does exist and not merely exists but no less than any feudal lord sucks dry the life-blood of the peasant. But this commercial capital of the type of primary accumulation *combines* peculiarly in the Chinese countryside with feudal domination, with the domination of the landlord, borrowing from the latter the mediaeval methods of exploiting and oppressing the peasants. This is how the question stands, comrades.

Radek's mistake consists in that he did not understand this peculiarity, this *combination* of the domination of feudal remnants with the existence of mercantile capital in the Chinese countryside with the retention of the feudal mediaeval methods of exploiting and oppressing the peasantry.

Militarism, *jujunes*, all the governors and the entire present-day callous, predatory military and non-military bureaucracy constitute the super-structure over this peculiarity in China. Imperialism supports and strengthens this entire feudal and bureaucratic machine.

The fact that certain militarists while possessing estates are at the same time the owners of industrial enterprises does not alter the matter basically. Many Russian landlords also possessed mills and other industrial enterprises in their time which, however, did not prevent them from remaining the representatives of the feudal survivals.

If in a number of provinces 70 percent of peasant income belongs to the landlords and gentry, if the landlord in fact enjoys not only the economic, but also the administrative and judicial authority, if to this day the buying and selling of women and children continues in several provinces – then it must be admitted that the dominant force in this mediaeval set-up is the force of feudal survivals, the force of the landlords, the force of the landed bureaucracy, both military and non-military, combining peculiarly with the force of commercial capital.

These peculiar conditions are also creating the soil for the agrarian movement of the peasantry which is growing and will grow still more in China.

Without these conditions, without the feudal remnants and the feudal oppression there would have been no question in China of the agrarian revolution and of the confiscation of the landlord's land etc. Without these conditions the agrarian revolution in China would be incomprehensible.

SECOND QUESTION

Where does Radek's error lie in asserting that since Marxists do not recognise parties of several classes, the Kuomintang is a petty-bourgeois party?

It is necessary to make a few observations on this question.

Firstly, here the question has been posed incorrectly. We have not at all said and do not say that the Kuomintang is a party of several classes. This is incorrect. We have said and we say that the Kuomintang is a party of a *bloc* of several oppressed classes. That is not the one

and the same thing, comrades. If the Kuomintang were a party of several classes then it would have meant that not one of the classes that are united in the Kuomintang would have its own party outside the Kuomintang and the Kuomintang itself would have represented one common and single party for all these classes. But is this how matters stand in reality? Does not the Chinese proletariat, which is associated with the Kuomintang, possess at the same time its own party, the Communist Party, distinct from the Kuomintang and possessing its own specific programme and organisation? It is clear that the Kuomintang is not a party of several oppressed classes but a party of a *bloc* of several oppressed classes which possess their own party organisations. Consequently, here the question has been posed incorrectly. As a matter of fact in present-day China we can only speak of the Kuomintang as a party of a bloc of oppressed classes.

Secondly, it is incorrect to say that Marxism does not admit in principle of a party of bloc of oppressed revolutionary classes, that it is impermissible for Marxists on principle to join such a party. This, comrades, is absolutely incorrect. In actual fact Marxism not only recognised (and continues to recognise) the permissibility in principle of Marxists joining such a party but it also effected such an entry in practice under certain historical conditions. I could refer to the example of Marx himself in 1848 at the time of the German Revolution when Marx and his adherents entered the famous bourgeois-democratic alliance in Germany and co-operated with the representatives of the revolutionary bourgeoisie there. It is well known that apart from the Marxists the representatives of the revolutionary bourgeoisie also joined this bourgeois-democratic alliance, this bourgeois-revolutionary party. *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* which was then edited by Marx was the organ of this bourgeois-democratic alliance. It was only in the spring of 1849, when the revolution in Germany began to subside, that Marx and his adherents left this bourgeois-democratic alliance and decided to set up a completely independent organisation of the working class with an independent class policy.

As you see, Marx went even further than the Chinese Communists of our time who are joining the Kuomintang precisely as an independent proletarian party with its specific organisation.

It is possible to dispute or not to dispute the *expediency* of the entry of Marx and his adherents in the bourgeois-democratic alliance of Germany in 1848 when it was a question of the revolutionary struggle against absolutism jointly with the revolutionary bourgeoisie. That is a question of *tactics*. But that Marx recognised the permissibility in principle of such an entry—of this there can be no doubt whatsoever.

Thirdly, it would be absolutely wrong to say that the Kuomintang in Wuhan is a petty-bourgeois party and to leave it at that.

Only those who understand neither imperialism in China nor the character of the Chinese revolution can characterise the Kuomintang thus. The Kuomintang is not an 'ordinary' petty-bourgeois party. There are different kinds of petty-bourgeois parties. The Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries in Russia were also petty-bourgeois parties but they were

at the same time *imperialist* parties, since they were in a fighting alliance with the French and the British imperialists and together with them *conquered* and oppressed other countries—Turkey, Persia, Mesopotamia and Galicia.

Can it be said that the Kuomintang is an *imperialist* party? It is clear that it is impossible to say this. The Kuomintang is an *anti-imperialist* party just as the revolution in China is an anti-imperialist one. The difference here is fundamental. Not to see this difference and to confuse the *anti-imperialist* Kuomintang with the Socialist-Revolutionary and the Menshevik *imperialist* parties means to understand nothing of the national-revolutionary movement of China.

No doubt, had the Kuomintang been an *imperialist* petty-bourgeois party, the Chinese Communists would not have made a bloc with it and would have sent it to all the archangels. But the fact of the matter is that the Kuomintang is an *anti-imperialist* party, waging a revolutionary struggle against the imperialists and their agents in China. In this sense, the Kuomintang stands head and shoulders above each and every one of the *imperialist* 'socialists' of the type of Kerensky and Tsereteli.

Even Chiang Kai-shek, the right-wing Kuomintang leader Chiang Kai-shek who before the coup effected by him was weaving all kinds of machinations against the left-wing Kuomintang elements and the Communists — even Chiang Kai-shek then stood above the Kerenskys and the Tseretelis, since the Kerenskys and Tseretelis were waging a war for the enslavement of Turkey, Persia, Mesopotamia, Galicia, consolidating imperialism thereby, while Chiang Kai-shek waged a war, whether good or bad, *against* the enslavement of China, thereby *weakening* imperialism.

Radek's mistake and that of the opposition in general consists in that he turns away from the semi-colonial position of China, does not see the anti-imperialist character of the Chinese revolution, and does not see that the Kuomintang in Wuhan, the Kuomintang without the right-wing Kuomintang elements, is the centre of struggle of the Chinese toiling masses *against* imperialism.

THIRD QUESTION

Is there no contradiction between the appraisal made by you of the Kuomintang (in a speech at a meeting of the students of the Communist University of the Toilers of the East, on 18th May, 1925), as a bloc of two forces—the Communist Party and the petty bourgeoisie—and the appraisal, given in the Comintern resolution on Kuomintang, as a bloc of four classes including also the big bourgeoisie?

Is it possible for the Communist Party to enter the Kuomintang during the dictatorship of the proletariat in China?

Firstly, one must note that the definition of the actual position in the Kuomintang, given by the Comintern in December 1926 (7th Enlarged Plenum), referred to incorrectly and not quite accurately in your 'question'. You say in the 'question' "including also the *big bourgeoisie*".

But the compradors are also big bourgeoisie. Does this mean that in December 1926 the Comintern considered the comprador bourgeoisie as a member of the bloc in the Kuomintang? It is clear that this is not what is meant, since the comprador bourgeoisie was and remains a sworn enemy of the Kuomintang. The Comintern resolution speaks not of the big bourgeoisie in general but of a “*section of the capitalist bourgeoisie*”. Therefore, there cannot be in this case a question of the entire big bourgeoisie, but of the national bourgeoisie of a non-comprador type.

Secondly, I must state that I cannot see the contradiction between these two definitions of the Kuomintang. I cannot see it because here we are dealing with a definition of the Kuomintang from two different points of view, out of which not one can be called incorrect, since both of them are correct.

When I spoke in 1925 of the Kuomintang as a party of a bloc of workers and peasants, I did not at all have in mind a characterisation of the actual state of affairs in the Kuomintang—a characterisation as to which were the classes that had joined the Kuomintang *in actual fact* in 1925. When I spoke of the Kuomintang I then had in mind the Kuomintang only as a *type of organisation of a special people’s revolutionary party in the oppressed countries of the East, particularly in such countries as China and India, as a type of organisation of such a people’s revolutionary party, as must rely upon a revolutionary bloc of the workers and the petty bourgeoisie of the town and the countryside.* I had then said plainly that “in such countries the Communists *must pass* from the policy of a *united national front* to the policy of a *revolutionary bloc* of the workers and petty bourgeoisie. [Cf. Stalin: “The Political Tasks of the University of the Peoples of the East”—Problems of Leninism, p. 264.]

Therefore I had in view not the existing but the *future* people’s revolutionary parties in general, and the Kuomintang in particular. And here I also was absolutely right, since organisations of the type of the Kuomintang can have a future only if they try to rely upon a bloc of the workers and petty bourgeoisie, and, moreover, while speaking of the petty bourgeoisie, one must bear in mind mainly the *peasantry* which represents the basic force of the petty bourgeoisie in the capitalistically backward countries.

The Comintern was interested in another aspect of the matter. In its Seventh Enlarged Plenum it regarded the Kuomintang not from the point of view of its future, not from the viewpoint of what must become, but from the point of view of the *existing*, from the viewpoint of what was the *actual* situation inside the Kuomintang, *viz.*, which were the classes that had entered the Kuomintang *in actual fact* in 1926. And the Comintern was absolutely right when it said that at that moment, at the moment *when there was as yet no split in the Kuomintang*, the Kuomintang comprised *in practice* of a bloc of workers, the petty bourgeoisie (of the town and countryside) and the national bourgeoisie. Here I may add that not only in 1926 but also in 1925 the Kuomintang relied upon a bloc of precisely these classes. The Comintern resolution, in the working out of which I took a most active part, said clearly that “the proletariat is forming a bloc with the peasantry and actively coming forward to wage a fight for its interests, with the urban petty bourgeoisie, and with

a section of the capitalist bourgeoisie”, and that this combination of forces found its political expression in a corresponding group in the Kuomintang Party in the Canton Government.” (Cf. Resolution.)

But in so far as the Comintern did not confine itself to the *actual* state of affairs in 1926 and also touched upon the future of the Kuomintang, it could not but say that this bloc is only a temporary bloc, that in the near future this bloc must be replaced by a bloc of the proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie. It is just because of this that the Comintern resolution says further that “at the present moment the movement is on the threshold of the third stage, on the eve of a new regrouping of classes”, that “at this stage of development, the main force of the movement is the bloc of a still more revolutionary character—the bloc of the proletariat, peasantry and urban petty bourgeoisie *with the elimination* of a big section of the big capitalist bourgeoisie.” (Cf. Ibid.)

It is this very bloc of workers and petty bourgeoisie (peasantry) on which the Kuomintang had to rely and which is already being formed in Wuhan after the split in the Kuomintang and the departure of the national bourgeoisie and about which I spoke in my speech to the Communist University of the Toilers of the East in 1925 (cf. above).

Thus, we have therefore a characterisation of the Kuomintang from two different aspects.

- a) from the aspect of its *present*, from the aspect of the actual state of affairs in the Kuomintang in 1926;
- b) from the aspect of its *future*, from the aspect of what the Kuomintang ought to be as a type of the organisation of a people’s revolutionary party in the countries of the East.

Both these characterisations are equally correct; since they encompass the Kuomintang from two different aspects, and they give in the final analysis an exhaustive picture.

The question arises: where is the contradiction here?

For the sake of greater clarity, let us take the ‘Labour Party’ in Britain. It is well known that in Britain there exists a special party of the workers relying on the trade union organisation of workers and employees. No one entertains any doubt about calling this party a labour party. It is termed thus not only in British literature but also in all other Marxist literature.

But can it be said that this party is in actual fact a working-class party, a class party of the workers, opposed to the bourgeoisie? Can it be said that it is *in practice* a party of one class, a party of the workers and not a party, shall we say, of two classes? No, it is not possible to say this. *In practice* the Labour Party in Britain is a party of a bloc of workers and urban petty bourgeoisie. *In practice*, this party is a party of a bloc of two classes, and further if we wish to say whose influence is more powerful in this party—the influence of the workers in opposition to the bourgeoisie or the influence of the petty bourgeoisie—then it must be said that the influence of the petty bourgeoisie is dominant in this party.

This practically accounts for the fact that the labour party in Britain is *in practice* an appendage of the liberal bourgeois party. And yet it is called *labour* party in Marxist literature. How is this contradiction to be explained? It is to be explained by the fact that in defining this party as a *labour* party, what is usually held in view is not the actual state of things in this party *at the present time*, but that *type* of organisation of workers' party, by virtue of which under certain conditions it should be converted *in future* into a real class party of the workers, in opposition to the bourgeois world. This does not exclude but on the contrary pre-supposes the fact that *in practice* this party is, for the present, a party of a bloc of workers and urban petty bourgeoisie.

Here too there exists no contradiction, just as there is no contradiction in all that I have just said with regard to the Kuomintang.

Is it possible for the Chinese Communist Party to join the Kuomintang during the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat in China?

I think it is inexpedient and consequently impossible. The entry of the Communist Party is inexpedient not only during the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat but also during the formation of soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies. For what does the formation of soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies in China mean? It is the creation of a dual power. It is a struggle for power between the Kuomintang and the soviets. The formation of soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies is the preparation for a transition from a bourgeois-democratic revolution to a proletarian revolution, to a Socialist revolution. Can such preparation be conducted under the leadership of *two* parties, which have joined one common revolutionary democratic party? No, it is impossible. The history of revolution says that the preparation for the dictatorship of the proletariat and the transition to a Socialist revolution can be made only under the leadership of *one* party—the Communist Party, if, of course, we are meaning a real proletarian revolution. The history of revolution says that the dictatorship of the proletariat can be achieved and developed only under the leadership of *one* party—the Communist Party. Without this there does not and cannot exist a real and complete dictatorship of the proletariat in the conditions of imperialism.

Therefore, not only during the dictatorship of the proletariat but also before such a dictatorship, during, the formation of the soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies, the Communist Party has to leave the Kuomintang in order to conduct the preparation for the Chinese October under its own exclusive leadership.

I think that in the period of the formation of soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies in China and the preparation for the Chinese October, the Chinese Communist Party will have to replace the present bloc *within* the Kuomintang by a bloc *outside* the Kuomintang, say, like the bloc which we had with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries in the period of the transition to October.

FOURTH QUESTION

Is the Wuhan Government a democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, and if not, what are the further paths of struggle for the attainment of a democratic dictatorship? Is Martynov's assertion that the transition to the dictatorship of the proletariat is possible without a 'second' revolution correct, and, if so, where is the dividing line between the democratic dictatorship and the dictatorship of the proletariat in China?

The Wuhan Government is not yet a democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. It can become this. It can certainly become a democratic dictatorship if the agrarian revolution develops in full swing, but it is not yet the organ of such a dictatorship.

What is needed so that the Wuhan Government should be converted into an organ of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry? For this two things at least are necessary.

First, it is necessary that the Wuhan Government should become a government of the agrarian-peasant revolution in China—a government which supports this every way.

Secondly, it is necessary that the Wuhan Government should reinforce its leading top stratum with new leaders of the agrarian movement from amongst the peasants and workers, and extend its local organisations by including in them peasant unions, workers' trade-union councils and other revolutionary organisations of town and countryside.

At present the Kuomintang comprises of about 500,000 members. This is a small number, a very small number for China. It is necessary that the Kuomintang should include within its fold millions of revolutionary peasants and workers and thus transform itself into a revolutionary-democratic organisation of many million.

It is only under these conditions that the Kuomintang will obtain the opportunity of giving rise to a revolutionary government, which will be transformed into an organ of the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry.

Did Comrade Martynov really speak of a peaceful transition to the dictatorship of the proletariat? I do not know this. I have not read Comrade Martynov's article and I did not read it because it is not possible for me to cover all our daily literature. But if he has really spoken of the possibility of a peaceful transition in China from a bourgeois-democratic revolution to a proletarian revolution—then that is a mistake.

The other day Chugunov asked me: "Well, Comrade Stalin, can it not be arranged in such a way that we can pass over immediately through the Kuomintang and without any circumvention to the dictatorship of the proletariat by a peaceful path?" In my turn, I asked him: "And what do you have in China, Comrade Chugunov; have you the right-wing Kuomintang elements, the capitalist bourgeoisie, and the imperialists?" He replied in the affirmative. "Then, you cannot do without a fight"—I told him.

This was still before Chiang Kai-shek's coup. One can, of course, raise in principle the question of the possibility of the peaceful development of the revolution in China. For instance, Lenin found the peaceful development of the revolution in Russia through the

Soviets possible at one time. This was in the period from April to July 1917. But after the July defeat, Lenin recognised that a peaceful transition to a proletarian revolution must be considered as ruled out. I think that in China one ought, all the more, to consider a peaceful transition to the proletarian revolution as ruled out. Why?

Because, in the first instance, the enemies of the Chinese revolution, both domestic (Chang Tso-lin, Chiang Kai-shek, the big bourgeoisie, the gentry, the landlords, etc.) as well as the external enemies (the imperialists), are far too numerous and powerful for us to think that it would be possible to do without serious class battles and without serious splits and desertions during the further development of the revolution.

Secondly, because there is no basis to consider the Kuomintang form of state organisation as an expedient form for the transition from a bourgeois-democratic revolution to a proletarian revolution.

Finally, because if in Russia, for instance, a peaceful transition to the proletarian revolution through the Soviets, which were the classic form of the proletarian revolution, did not succeed, then what grounds are there to pre-suppose that such a transition can succeed through the Kuomintang?

I, therefore, consider that a peaceful transition to the proletarian revolution must be considered as ruled out in China.

FIFTH QUESTION

Why is the Wuhan Government not carrying out an attack against Chiang Kai-shek and why is it carrying out an attack against Chang Tso-lin?

Is not the simultaneous attack of the Wuhan Government and Chiang Kai-shek in the north a slurring over of the front of struggle against the Chinese bourgeoisie?

Now, comrades, you are asking far too much from the Wuhan Government. Of course, it would be very good to defeat simultaneously both Chang Tso-lin and Chiang Kai-shek, and Li Ti-sin and Yan-sen. But at present the position of the Wuhan Government is one which does not permit of an attack immediately on all four fronts. The Wuhan Government undertook operations against the Mukdenites for at least two reasons.

Firstly, because the Mukdenites are swarming on Wuhan and wish to liquidate it, in view of which the operations against the Mukdenites are a defence measure which cannot absolutely admit of any delay.

Secondly, because the Wuhanites want to unite with the troops of Feng Yu-hsiang and move forward and extend the base of the revolution, which again constitutes the most important military and political task for Wuhan at the present moment.

A simultaneous attack on two such important fronts as the fronts against Chiang Kai-shek and Chang Tso-lin constitutes at the present time a task which is beyond the capacity of

the Wuhan Government, not to mention the offensive in the west against Yan-sen and in the south against Li Ti-sin.

During the civil war, we, the Bolsheviks, were stronger, nevertheless we were not able to develop successful offensive operations on all fronts. What basis is there to ask for more from the Wuhan Government at the present moment?

And further what is the significance of attacking Shanghai now when the Mukdenites and the supporters of U Pei-fu are advancing on Wuhan from the north? It means to facilitate the work of the Mukdenites, to postpone indefinitely the unification with Feng's troops, without having gained anything in the east. For the time being, it is better that Chiang Kai-shek should flounder in the Shanghai region and get himself entangled with the imperialists.

For Shanghai there will be still more battles, and not like those which are now taking place for Chan-chow, etc. No, there will be more serious battles there. Imperialism will not yield Shanghai so easily, since Shanghai is a world centre of the interlocking of the most important interests of imperialist groups.

Will it not be more expedient to unite first with Feng, to build up sufficient military strength, develop fully the agrarian revolution, intensify the work of undermining Chiang Kai-shek's rear and front, and then, after that, to raise the whole question of Shanghai? I think it will be more expedient thus.

Therefore the question here is not at all one of "slurring over" the front of struggle against the Chinese bourgeoisie because in any case it cannot be slurred over if the agrarian revolution is going to develop, and it is developing and is going to develop—of this there can now be no doubt. The question, I repeat, is not one of "slurring over" but of building up suitable tactics of struggle.

Some comrades think that an offensive on all fronts now is the basic symptom of being revolutionary. No comrades, this is not true. An offensive on all fronts, at the present moment, is stupidity. It is not being revolutionary. Never mix up stupidity with being revolutionary.

SIXTH QUESTION

Is a Kemalist revolution possible in China?

I consider it improbable and hence impossible in China.

A Kemalist revolution is possible only in such countries as Turkey, Persia, Afghanistan where an industrial proletariat is completely or almost non-existent and where a powerful agrarian-peasant revolution does not exist. A Kemalist revolution is a revolution from the top, of the national mercantile bourgeoisie, a revolution which arises in the struggle against foreign imperialists and which is directed in its further development essentially against the peasants and workers, and against the very possibilities of an agrarian revolution.

A Kemalist revolution is impossible in China because:

- a) there exists in China a certain minimum of militant and active industrial proletariat, enjoying tremendous authority amongst the peasantry;
- b) there is a developing agrarian revolution, sweeping away from its path the survivals of feudalism.

The many millions of peasantry, who have already seized the land in a whole number of provinces and who are led in their struggle by the revolutionary proletariat of China — here lies the antidote against the possibilities of a so-called Kemalist revolution.

One must not place the party of the Kemalists and the party of the left-Kuomintang in Wuhan on the same plane, in the same way as we cannot place Turkey and China on the same plane. In Turkey, there are no such centres as Shanghai, Wuhan, Nanking, Tientsin, etc. Angora is as far removed from Wuhan as is the Kemalist party from the left-Kuomintang.

One must also bear in mind the difference between China and Turkey from the point of view of the international situation. With respect to Turkey, imperialism has already won a whole number of its main demands and snatched away from Turkey, Syria, Palestine, Mesopotamia and other centres important for imperialists. Turkey is now reduced to the dimensions of a small state with a population of 10-12 million. It constitutes neither a serious market nor a decisive base for imperialism. Among other things, this could happen because the old Turkey represented a conglomeration of nationalities and there was a compact Turkish population only in Anatolia.

It is not so with China. From the nationality viewpoint China constitutes a compact country with a population of several hundred million, and constitutes the most important market for their sales and for export of capital over the entire world. While in Turkey imperialism could be satisfied by tearing away a number of the most important regions in the East, by utilising the national antagonisms in the old Turkey between the Turks and the Arabs, here in China, imperialism had to beat the living body of national China, hacking it into small pieces and wresting away entire provinces in order to maintain its old positions or at least a part of them.

Hence, though in Turkey the struggle against imperialism could end with the unfinished anti-imperialist revolution of the Kemalists, in China it must adopt a profoundly popular and clearly national character, and must deepen step by step until it reaches a desperate battle with imperialism, shaking the very foundations of imperialism throughout the world.

The greatest mistake of the opposition (Zinoviev, Radek, Trotsky) lies in that it does not see this whole difference between Turkey and China, confuses the Kemalist with the agrarian revolution and lumps them all indiscriminately into one heap.

I know that amongst the Chinese nationalists there are people who nurse the idea of Kemalism. There are at present quite a few pretenders to the role of Kemal. The first amongst these is Chiang Kai-shek. I know that certain Japanese journalists are inclined to consider Chiang Kai-shek a Chinese Kemal. But all these are the dreams, the illusions of the

frightened bourgeoisie. In China, *either* Chinese Mussolinis like Chang Tso-lin and Chang Tsung-chang will win and there after be overthrown by the sweep of the agrarian movement, or Wuhan will win.

Chiang Kai-shek and his followers, in trying to find a middle road between the two camps, must inevitably collapse sharing the fate of Chang Tso-lin and Chang Tsung-chang.

SEVENTH QUESTION

Should the slogan of the immediate seizure of land by the peasantry in China be raised at once and how should the facts of the seizure of land in Hunan be evaluated?

I think the slogan should be raised immediately. In actual fact the slogan of the confiscation of land is already being carried out in certain districts. In a whole number of regions like Hunan, Hupeh, etc., the peasantry is already seizing the land from below. They are setting up their judicial-executive authority and their own self-defence. I think that in the near future the entire peasantry will pass over to the slogan of the confiscation of land. In this lies the strength of the Chinese revolution.

If Wuhan wishes to be victorious, if it wants to create a real force both against Chang Tso-lin, against Chiang Kai-shek and against the imperialists, it must support in every way the agrarian-peasant revolution for the seizure of the landlords' land.

It is stupid to think that feudalism and imperialism can be overthrown in China with military forces alone. Without the agrarian revolution and without the active support rendered to the Wuhan troops by the many millions of masses of peasants and workers it is impossible to overthrow such forces.

Chiang Kai-shek's *coup* is often evaluated by the opposition as a decline of the Chinese revolution. This is a mistake. Men who evaluate Chiang Kai-shek's *coup* as a decline of the Chinese revolution, in actual fact stand for Chiang Kai-shek, and stand in fact for bringing back Chiang Kai-shek to the Wuhan Kuomintang. They obviously think that had Chiang Kai-shek not broken off, then things would have been better for the revolution. This is stupid and non-revolutionary. Chiang Kai-shek's *coup* had in actual practice led to cleansing the Kuomintang of filth and to a shift in the core of the Kuomintang to the left. Of course, Chiang Kai-shek's *coup* could not do without a partial defeat of the workers in a number of regions. But this was only a partial and temporary defeat. In actual fact, with Chiang Kai-shek's *coup* the revolution has *as a whole* entered a higher phase of its development—the phase of the *agrarian* movement. In this lies the force and the might of the Chinese revolution.

Revolutionary movement must not be looked upon as a movement rising on an upward trend all the time. This is a bookish and unrealistic concept of revolution. Revolution always advances on a zigzag line. In some places it launches offensives and destroys the old system, while in some other places it suffers partial set-backs and has to retreat. Chiang Kai-shek's *coup* is one of these zigzags in the course of the Chinese revolution which was

necessary in order that the revolution should be cleansed of filth and move forward on the path of a powerful agrarian movement.

But in order that this agrarian movement should take a shape, it must have its general slogan. This slogan is the confiscation of the landlords' land.

EIGHTH QUESTION

Why is the slogan of the organisation of soviets incorrect at the present time?

Is not the Chinese Communist Party threatened with the danger of remaining at the tail of the movement due to the fact of soviets of workers being organised in Yen-an?

Which are the soviets under discussion, proletarian soviets or *non-proletarian* soviets, soviets of 'peasants', soviets of 'toilers' or soviets of the 'people'? In his thesis at the 2nd Congress of the Comintern, Lenin spoke of the formation of 'peasant soviets', 'soviets of toilers' in the backward countries of the East. He had in view such countries of Central Asia where "an industrial proletariat is almost or completely non-existent". He had in view such countries as Persia, Afghanistan, etc. This particularly accounts for the fact that in Lenin's thesis there is not a single word about the organisation of soviets of workers in such countries.

But from this it is obvious that Lenin's thesis did not have in mind China, about which it cannot be said that there "an industrial proletariat is almost or completely non-existent" but other more backward countries of the East.

Consequently, the question under discussion is one of the immediate creation of soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies in China. Consequently in deciding this question, one must have in mind not Lenin's thesis but Roy's thesis, adopted by the same 2nd Congress of the Comintern, which spoke of the formation of workers' and peasants' soviets in such countries as China and India. But it is said there that workers' and peasants' soviets in these countries must be created during the transition from a bourgeois-democratic revolution to a proletarian revolution.

What are soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies? Soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies are mainly organs of uprising against the existing power, organs of struggle for a new revolutionary power, organs of a new revolutionary power. Soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies are at the same time centres of the organisation of revolution.

But the soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies can be centres of the organisation of revolution only if they are organs of the overthrow of the existing power, only if they are organs of a new revolutionary power. If they are not organs of a new revolutionary power, they cannot also be centres of the organisation of a revolutionary movement. The opposition does not want to understand this, and fights against the Leninist understanding of soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies.

What does the formation at the present time of soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies signify in the region of the operations, say of the Wuhan Government? It means the creation of a dual power, the creation of organs of uprising against the Wuhan Government. Should the Chinese Communists now overthrow the Wuhan Government? It is clear that they must not do so. On the contrary they must support it, while converting it into an organ of struggle against Chang Tso-lin, against Chiang Kai-shek, against landlords and the gentry, and against imperialism.

But if the Communist Party must not now overthrow the Wuhan Government, then why must it create *now* soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies?

One of the two things:

Either soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies are formed now, in order to overthrow the Wuhan Government—which is incorrect and impermissible at the present moment.

Or, while forming soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies now, the Communists do not carry out a line of the overthrow of the Wuhan Government, soviets are not converted into organs of new revolutionary power and then they, the soviets, die out, being converted into a parody of soviets.

Lenin always cautioned precisely against this when he spoke of the formation of soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies.

In your 'question' you speak of the emergence of workers' soviets in Yen-an and that the Communist Party is running the risk of remaining at the tail of the movement, if it does not go to the masses with the slogan of the formation of soviets. This is nonsense, comrades. There are no soviets of workers' deputies at present in Yen-an. This is a canard let loose by the British press. There are 'Red Lances', 'there are peasant unions, but there is no mention yet of soviets of workers' deputies.

Of course one can form soviets of workers. This is not a very difficult matter. But the task is not of forming workers' soviets but of converting them into organs of a new revolutionary power. Without this, soviets are without meaning and a parody of soviets. To form soviets of workers prematurely and for them to fail later and be converted then into a meaningless thing, means precisely to facilitate the transformation of the Chinese Communist Party from being the leader of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into an appendage of all kinds of 'ultra-Left' experiments with soviets.

Khrustalev, the first chairman of the soviets of workers' deputies in Petrograd in 1905, also demanded the restoration, meaning the formation of soviets of workers' deputies, in the spring of 1906, thinking that soviets are by themselves capable of altering the co-relation of class forces, regardless of the situation. Lenin then came out against Khrustalev and said that soviets of workers' deputies must not be formed in the summer of 1906 since the rearguard (the peasantry) had not as yet come up to the vanguard (the proletariat), and

under such conditions to form soviets and to give at the same time the slogan of an uprising was risky and inexpedient.

But it follows from this that, firstly, one must not exaggerate the role of soviets by themselves and, secondly, that in forming soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies, one cannot do without considering the situation around.

Should soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies be formed in general in China?

Yes. They must be formed. They must be formed after the consolidation of the Wuhan revolutionary government, after the development of the agrarian revolution, and during the transition from an agrarian revolution, from a bourgeois-democratic revolution to a proletarian revolution.

To form soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies means to lay the foundation of a soviet power in China. But to lay the foundation of a soviet power means laying the foundation of a dual power and taking to the course of substituting the present Wuhan Kuomintang power by soviet power. I think the time has not yet come for this.

Your 'question' refers to the hegemony of the proletariat and of the Communist Party in China. And what is required to make it easy for the Chinese proletariat to assume the role of leader, the role of hegemony in the present bourgeois-democratic revolution.

For this it is necessary above all that the Communist Party should be a well-knit organisation of the working class, with its own programme, its own platform, its own specific organisation and its own specific line.

For this it is necessary, secondly, that the Chinese Communists should stand in the forefront of the agrarian-peasant movement; that they should teach the peasants, particularly the poor amongst the peasants, to organise themselves in revolutionary unions and committees and conduct the movement towards the confiscation of the landlord's land.

For this it is necessary, thirdly, that the Chinese Communists should consolidate their position in the army, revolutionise it, transform and convert it from being an instrument of individual adventurers into an instrument of revolution.

For this it is necessary, finally, that the Chinese Communists should participate in the local and central organisations of the Wuhan Government and the local and central organs of the Wuhan Kuomintang, and there carry out a determined policy for the further unfolding of the revolution both against the landlords as well as against imperialism.

The opposition thinks of retaining the independence of the Communist Party by isolating it from the revolutionary-democratic forces and withdrawing it from the Kuomintang and the Wuhan Government. But this would be quite a dubious kind of 'independence', like the one about which our Mensheviks in 1905. It is well known that the Mensheviks, taking a stand at that time against Lenin, said: "We need *not* the hegemony, *but* the independence of a workers' party". Lenin replied correctly at that time that this is a denial of independence,

since to counter-pose independence to hegemony is to convert the proletariat into an appendage of the liberal bourgeoisie.

I think that the opposition while speaking now of the independence of the Chinese Communist Party and, in addition to this, in demanding or hinting at the withdrawal of the Chinese Communist Party from the Kuomintang and the Wuhan Government, is sliding down the path of the Menshevik 'independence' of the 1905 period. The real independence and the real hegemony of the Communist Party can be preserved only if it becomes the leading force both inside the Kuomintang as well as outside it, among the broad masses of toilers.

It is not the withdrawal from the Kuomintang but the ensuring of the leading role of the Communist Party both inside the Kuomintang and outside it—this is what is now demanded of the Chinese Communist Party, if it wants to be really independent.

NINTH QUESTION

Can one raise at the present moment the question of the formation of a regular Red Army in China?

I think that this question must necessarily be held in view as the perspective. But if the question is raised as a practical one, then now, at the present moment, to replace the present army by a new army, the Red Army, is not possible simply because there is nothing to replace it now.

The main thing *immediately* consists in, while improving the existing army and revolutionising it with all the means accessible, to lay the foundations now of new revolutionary regiments and divisions from among the revolutionary peasants, who have passed through the school of the agrarian revolution, and from amongst the revolutionary workers, and to form a number of new and really reliable corps with reliable commanders, and to make them a bulwark of the revolutionary government in Wuhan.

This corps will also be the core of the new army, which will then develop into a Red Army.

This is necessary both for the fight at the front as well as in particular for the fight in the rear, against all kinds of counter-revolutionary upstarts.

Without this there is no guarantee against dis-organisation in the rear and at the front and against betrayals and desertions.

I think that, for the time being, this path is the only possible and expedient one.

TENTH QUESTION

Is the slogan of seizure of Chinese enterprises possible immediately at the time of struggle against the bourgeoisie?

Under what conditions is the confiscation of foreign factories in China possible and will this lead to the simultaneous seizure of Chinese enterprises?

I think that generally speaking the time has not matured for us to go over to the seizure of Chinese enterprises. But it is not ruled out that the persistent sabotage by the Chinese entrepreneurs, the closing down of a whole number of such enterprises and the artificial creation of unemployment can compel the Wuhan Government already to begin now the nationalisation of some such enterprises and set them in operation by the forces of the Wuhan Government.

It is possible that already now the Wuhan Government will be compelled to implement *in individual cases* such a measure, as a preventive measure against the specially vicious and counter-revolutionary Chinese entrepreneurs.

As regards the foreign enterprises, there the question of the nationalisation of these enterprises is a question of the future. The nationalisation of these enterprises is a declaration of open war against the imperialist. But in order to declare such a war, a different and more favourable set-up than the present one is necessary.

I think that at the present stage of the revolution when the revolution has not yet consolidated itself, such a measure is premature and therefore inexpedient.

The task now consists not in this, but in fanning the flames of an agrarian revolution, in ensuring the hegemony of the proletariat in this revolution, in consolidating Wuhan and converting it into a centre of struggle against all the enemies of the Chinese revolution.

We cannot take upon ourselves all the tasks at once or we would overstrain ourselves and all the more so since the Kuomintang and its government are not capable of solving such cardinal tasks as the task of the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, both Chinese and foreign.

For the solution of such tasks a different set-up, another phase of the revolution and other organs of revolutionary power are necessary.

[J. Stalin, Revolution in China and the *Mistakes of the Opposition*. M—L. 1927.]