

Lenin and the CP Draft Resolution

By Harry Ring

In its bid for control of the Communist Party convention to be held Feb. 9-12, the Gates tendency has capitalized on widespread sentiment among the membership for greater independence from the Kremlin and for an end to bureaucratic rule within the Party. Foster has countered by attacking the Gates proposal to transform the organization into a "political association," a proposal opposed by a substantial section of the membership as a Browderite form of liquidation.

In a renewed attack on this proposal, Foster warns against the "class peace, class collaborationist ideas" which motivate it and declares: "The CPUSA, in harmony with the deepening of the general crisis of capitalism, must have a class struggle perspective." (CP National Discussion Bulletin No. 4, Jan. 1.)

But the fact remains that Foster stands united with Gates on the basic program and perspective from which flow the Gates proposal on name and form of the party. After changing his vote on the CP National Committee's draft resolution from a "qualified yes" to "no," Foster explained that he endorsed the political line presented in the

first three sections of the resolution but voted against it on the basis of the fourth section dealing with the question of the Party. In the ensuing fight Foster has not challenged Gates on any of the programmatic points of the resolution.

A genuine class-struggle program, such as Foster says he favors, declares that the workers cannot resolve their problems under capitalism. It urges the working class to build its own political party in opposition to the capitalist parties and to struggle for workers and farmers governments. It bars support to capitalist parties or their candidates. As corollary, it proclaims the need to combat the pro-capitalist ideology of the top AFL-CIO officialdom and to work for the creation of a left wing in the unions to replace these misleaders of labor.

The draft resolution pursues the opposite course. In the first three sections (endorsed by Foster) the resolution actively supports the union officialdom in its efforts to keep the workers hogtied to the Democratic party. To accomplish this aim, the resolution is compelled to paint up and falsify the role of the Reutherite wing of the labor bureaucracy. Thus we learn that "In the labor movement there has been a growing differentiation on foreign policy on peace within the past few years . . . In contrast to Meany's anti-coexistence position, Reuther's ten point program for [foreign] aid envisages joint action through the UN by the USA and the USSR."

Aside from the fact that Reuther's sole concern with foreign aid was to line up the colonial countries against the USSR, his present support of the sabre-rattling Eisenhower doctrine makes clear that he stands united with Meany in support of the cold war. This is entirely consistent with both Meany and Reuther's principal function as "labor statesmen," which is to keep the workers in the swamp of capitalist politics where they cannot effectively combat Wall Street's reactionary foreign policy.

The draft resolution holds out the perspective of a long immersion for the CP in Democratic party politics. This is in keeping with the aim of achieving a "people's anti-monopoly coalition," which is posed as the big goal. Such a coalition government, declares the resolution, will "limit the economic concentration and power of the trusts" and "reduce their incredibly swollen share of the national income."

The perspective of a "people's anti-monopoly coalition" in turn rests on the twin promises of "enduring international coexistence" and an "ultimate transition" to socialism in the distant future. The resolution states that the CP leaders "have already discarded as obsolete Lenin's thesis that war is inevitable under capitalism" and that "we are making important modifications in the theory of the state, as evidenced in our advocacy of the peaceful, constitutional path to socialism." Foster, who talks of the need for a "class-struggle perspective," never objected to any of this.

But what was discarded as "obsolete" in Lenin was precisely a class-struggle perspective. Lenin taught that wars are an inherent feature of capitalism. He believed that imperialist war could be averted only through the working-class struggle against capitalism. Failing mobilization of the working class as an independent force opposed

to capitalism (the essence of a class-struggle policy) the outbreak of imperialist war is inevitable.

Similarly, on the question of the state, what has been discarded is the class-struggle perspective. The essence of the Marxist-Leninist theory is that the state is the executive committee of the ruling class. The purpose of the state in capitalist countries today is to uphold the exploitive rule of monopoly-finance capital. Big Business will use its control of the state to prevent any "people's coalition" from seriously curbing its power. The rule of monopoly capital can be ended only by replacing its state by a workers' state.

The issue between the draft-resolution authors and Lenin is not at all the question of violence. Lenin did not advocate violent revolution. He favored, as do all revolutionary socialists, a peaceful transformation. Violence, when it occurs at any stage of the class struggle is initiated as a rule by the capitalist class which forcibly resists the further advance of the working class to power. What is crucial to Lenin's approach is that he excluded as utopian the use of the capitalist state for a solution of any basic problem confronting the working people. He excluded as doubly utopian its use for a gradual transition to socialism such as envisaged by the draft resolution.

In his polemics against the social democratic advocates of "gradual evolution," Lenin demonstrated that their theory leads

inevitably to support of the status quo. This applies with equal force to the authors of the draft resolution and to those who shape their politics—the bureaucrats in command in the USSR.

The bureaucratic caste in the Soviet orbit is motivated by a single purpose—to preserve its vast material privileges. To secure these privileges, it smashed, under Stalin's leadership, the democracy of the Soviets and imposed its own dictatorial rule. Today it sends tanks against the revolutionary Hungarian workers who demand socialist democracy and an end to Kremlin plunder of their national resources and their labor.

Faced with rising mass opposition in East Europe and in the Soviet Union itself, the Kremlin bureaucrats want the security of the status quo. Just as the union bureaucrat seeks "harmonious relations" with the employing class to better control the ranks, so the bureaucratic caste seeks to "negotiate differences" with world capitalism. Unleashing the class struggle means putting the masses into independent action. And history has shown that where the masses are in motion against their class enemy, they inevitably begin to think and act in terms of getting the bureaucratic parasites off their backs.

For the bureaucrat, class peace is always better. The line of the draft resolution coincides with this need of the Kremlin bureaucracy and not with the needs of the American or international working class.

The Whole Picture



This photo of Lenin, cropped to exclude Trotsky waiting to speak next, is frequently used in USSR. These Bolshevik leaders inspired millions of workers throughout world and won them to their movement. Only a return to their principles can bring workers' movement out of crisis Stalinism led it into.

... Red-Hunt Stepped Up

(Continued from page 1)

from the American working people. America's capitalist rulers are intensifying the witch hunt at home. The latest attack on civil liberties is the indictment last week in Cleveland of eight more persons (two of them prominent in the labor movement) under the non-Communist affidavit provisions of the Taft-Hartley act. (See story on page 2.) Fourteen officials of the Mine Mill and Smelter Workers Union are already facing a similar indictment issued last Nov. 16.

The danger of a new witch-hunt hysteria is apparent from the sensational publicity aimed at promoting a spy-scare in connection with the arrest last week of three alleged Soviet spies in New York. A specially screened federal grand jury has been impaneled for the case, and is scheduled to stay in session for an indefinite period.

The U.S. Attorney handling the case has already appeared on television in the New York area and has indicated he was considering seeking the death penalty. It was the spy-scare hysteria around the case of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg which marked the most feverish point of the McCarthy witch-hunt. It served as a vehicle for making deep inroads into traditional civil liberties in order to silence opposition to the Korean war.

At that time, a record number of people were jailed, deported or blacklisted and deprived of livelihood solely because of their alleged political beliefs or affiliations.

It is the duty of the labor movement to defend all victims of thought-control measures and to defend the Arab national independence movement. The American working people have nothing to gain from the counter-revolutionary war plans that U.S. Big Business is drawing up for the Middle East. On the contrary, they have everything to lose.

Meaning of the Chinese CP's Manifesto Supporting Kremlin

By George Lavan

What with Hungary, Poland, the developing unrest in the Soviet Union and the crisis in the Communist Parties abroad, the heads of the Soviet government have ample reason to be grateful to the leaders of the Chinese Communist Party. The support of the Chinese CP was given to Moscow at the end of December in the form of a lengthy document and the visit of Premier Chou En-lai.

With this political and moral backing, the Kremlin has launched a counter-offensive against the growing opposition of workers to its high-handed rule. The political and moral prestige of the Chinese Communist Party should not be underestimated. It is great in the USSR and all the East European countries, for the Chinese leaders are not associated with the crimes of Stalin's rule. They have the prestige of having headed a revolution on their own—indeed, one conducted against the directives of Stalin. The Chinese Revolution and the impulse it has given to the colonial revolutions in Asia and Africa is generally credited with breaking the imperialist encirclement of the Soviet Union and East Europe.

SIDE WITH KREMLIN

While the full text of the Chinese document is not yet available, the Soviet news agency, Tass, has released a lengthy paraphrase-summary.

On each point the Chinese decide in favor of the Kremlin. But there is no blanket endorsement of all past policy. In the form of weighing the pros and cons, the Chinese criticize past Soviet "mistakes." This riddles

These must be subordinated to the united struggle against imperialism.

A basic cleavage in the working-class movement centers precisely on evaluations of the role of the Soviet bureaucracy, the nature of its conflicts with the proletariat and other segments of Soviet society and the solution of these conflicts.

CONFLICTS IN USSR

Apologists for the present rulers of the USSR deny, minimize or rationalize away the conflicts between the bureaucratic oligarchy and all the progressive forces in Soviet society. Even those who admit the contradictions, resolve the issue in the bureaucracy's favor by maintaining that their abolition other than by mutual consent would be a greater danger than their continuance.

The conflicts in the Soviet orbit differ from those between workers and capitalists in that in the case of the former the antagonists are not both classes. The Soviet bureaucracy is a caste formation not a class. That is to say, unlike the capitalists in the capitalist system, it has no organic, integral, necessary role in Soviet society. It is a parasitic formation on Soviet society and with the progress of that society toward socialism will disappear. But it will disappear not of its own choosing or action but because it will be thrown off by the workers.

Though it is a caste, its base is still material. And its grip on tremendous luxury and privilege gouged from the workers, and on political power usurped from the workers, is no less tenacious than that of a ruling class. The violence that it is

of the coming political revolution appear precisely in these cultural fields.

Revolutionary socialists must reject the Chinese apology for Stalinism and for the Kremlin bureaucracy which maintains that the distortions of Soviet society are minor and subject to correction from the top. As Trotsky declared in 1936, we are dealing with a Revolution Betrayed. Counterposed to the Chinese promise of a controlled and gradual self-reform of the bureaucracy is Trotsky's prognosis, which events are confirming: "All indications agree that the further course of development must inevitably lead to a clash between the culturally developed forces of the people and the bureaucratic oligarchy. There is no peaceful outcome for this crisis. No devil ever yet voluntarily cut off his own claws. The Soviet bureaucracy will not give up its positions without a fight. The development leads obviously to the road of revolution."

DEFENSE OF SOVIET ORBIT

Precisely such a revolution broke out in Hungary. Despite the Kremlin and Chinese assertion that imperialism directed the Hungarian people, all objective reporters agree it was a mass uprising led by the workers with the demands of national independence and socialist democracy.

Those who fear that the workers' ouster of the Kremlin bureaucracy will weaken the Soviet defense against imperialism, must ask themselves the following questions: Will the ending of a system that alienates the overwhelming mass of Soviet and East European citizens from their gov-

ernment weaken or strengthen the Soviet sector? Will the ending of a system that oppresses whole nationalities weaken or strengthen the Soviet Union and its alliance with the East European nations? Will the freeing of Soviet economy from the plunder, graft, bureaucratic incompetence by the establishment of workers' control weaken or strengthen Soviet economy?

Will the democratization of the army and the end of its use as a repressive force in the concentration camps, in Poland and Hungary, etc., improve or weaken the Red Army's morale? Will such a political revolution in the Soviet Union rescue the name of Communism from the disrepute into which it has fallen among millions of workers in the advanced capitalist countries, thus hindering the imperialists' plans for attack and hastening the day of socialism in those countries?

(A subsequent article will deal with the Chinese views on Stalinism.)

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