

# **The Conference of the Workers' and Peasants' Party of India.**

By P. Sch.

The whole of the conditions of the approaching upsurge of the revolutionary wave found clear expression at the recently held **Conference of the Workers' and Peasants' Parties of India**. If we compare the general tone of this Conference with the attitude which the workers' and peasants' parties adopted not only two to three years ago, but even within the last twelve months, then we can unhesitatingly record a swing to the **Left** which is characteristic of the general mood of the masses in the country.

The following essential reservations must be made however. In the first place the provincial conferences of these parties were superior to the central conference in that they revealed a great contact with the masses and raised in a more concrete form the questions of the struggle which is now proceeding; this contact with the masses found particular expression in the attendance of numerous peasant fraternal delegates. Secondly, the decisions of the Central Conference in a number of questions, in particular the question of power, lagged far behind the sentiments of the broad masses. This fact found striking expression in that, while the Conference in its resolutions speaks only of a "democratic organisation of the country", of a "democratic regime", the demonstrations of the workers which welcomed the Conference delegates, had inscribed on their flags the slogan: "Long live the independent Soviet Republic of India!"

That the workers of **Calcutta** had not proclaimed this slogan "by chance" is to be seen from the fact that all three demonstrations of the workers which took place in the last two months (the demonstration which forced its way into the session of the **National Congress**, the demonstration which welcomed the **Workers and Peasants Conference**, and finally the demonstration, attended by 20,000 workers, which took place at the end of January against the **Simon Commission**), had on their flags the slogan of the Soviets. The whittling down of the slogans by the Conference was shown in other questions, despite the fact that among the participants in the Conference there were comrades who possess the confidence of the proletarian advance-guard.

What is the reason for this? It lies before all in the **character** of the workers and peasants parties themselves, in their composition of two classes, which is bound to result in rendering vague the proletarian line.

Owing to the lack of material it is impossible for the time being to give a more or less detailed evaluation of the work of the Central Conference and to compare it with the provincial conferences. We therefore confine ourselves to a number of decisions, which serve to illustrate both the positive and the weak sides of the work of the Conference.

Among the positive sides of the conference there must before all be included the plain and clear estimate of the treacherous role of bourgeois nationalism and the emphatic criticism of the hypocrisy and the empty words of the leaders of the petty-bourgeois intellectuals. The political resolution of the Conference, in characterising bourgeois nationalism and the double game played by its Left wing, proceeds from a class analysis of the forces in the camp of the national liberation movement.

In the question of the relation to the **Independence League**, this recently arisen organisation of the petty-bourgeois intellectuals, the Conference, after an exhaustive discussion, decided not to join the League, but at the same time not to renounce the application of united front tactics in those cases in which it really conducts a fight for independence. The resolution points out that the radical points which have been inserted into the programme of the League, do not constitute demands for the realisation of which the masses must fight, but merely promises which the bourgeoisie gives in order to deceive the masses. The Conference, therefore, demands from the petty-bourgeois intellectuals not words but deeds, not promises but proofs. In this respect the resolution declares:

"The unreal and hypocritical character of the programme is perhaps most definitely revealed by the fact that

throughout there is not a word mentioned of the method by which the aims are to be achieved."

Such a method of putting the question proves that the lessons of the severe defeats and the treacherous actions beginning from the year 1921 have not been lost on the workers of India, and that these experiences are beginning to find expression, in this or that form, in the decisions of their mass organisations.

The concrete attitude of the Conference in regard to the relations to the petty-bourgeois intellectuals and their groupings would not deserve any special emphasis, had there not at the same time been put forward in the press opinions which seek to revive in the workers and peasants' parties the old illusions, to cause them to exaggerate the importance of the leading organisations of the intellectuals and to induce them to come to an understanding with them.

How powerful, and at the same time how very dangerous, these illusions are, can be seen from two articles by Comrade Roy, one of which appeared in the bourgeois-nationalist "Forward" before the December Conferences, and contained "Advice" to the workers and peasants Party, while the other appeared in the "Inprecorr." (No. 6, February 1st, 1929) already after the Conference of the workers' and peasants Party and contains a very decided criticism of this Conference.

In the first article "Appeal to the Independence movement" (Forward Annual 1928, pages 57/58) Comrade Roy writes:

"In view of this historic significance of the Calcutta Congress (this refers to the National Congress P. Sch.) all fighters for the freedom of India must heartily greet the rise of the Independence League. The Nationalist Movement has reached a parting of the ways. This can no longer be denied. Otherwise, the formation of the Independence League would be premature. The rude reality of the situation is that one section of the movement has decided to compromise with imperialist domination, while the other has declared its determination to overthrow foreign rule. In Calcutta the Congress must commit itself clearly to the one or the other point of view. In order to have the Congress remain faithful to the Madras Resolution, the Independence League must move the rejection of the Nehru Report by the Calcutta Congress. Failing to do this the League will lose the right to a separate existence..."

Comrade Roy, in proposing to the Independence League that it bring forward at the National Congress at Calcutta a resolution on the "Convocation of a Constituent Assembly on the basis of general election" writes further:

"...In course of this agitation (for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly P. Sch.) the National Revolutionary Party (into which the Independence League should develop) will rally under its banner the majority of the nation..."

Let us leave on one side Comrade Roy's main slogan, which aims at the convocation by the National Congress of a Constituent Assembly, and thereby fosters the extremely harmful illusions, which have been instilled into the masses by Motilal Nehru, that it is possible by a "fight" of the Congress to achieve the emancipation of India.

Still more characteristic of the present attitude of Comrade Roy is the heroic future he promises the Independence League at its cradle. Beneath its flag there will gather the majority of the nation. The mere fact of its existence will mean a turning point in the national revolutionary movement. Finally, should this mountain labour and produce a mouse, if it succeeds in obtaining from the Congress of Calcutta... what? fidelity to the resolution of Madras, i. e. to the resolution which proclaimed as its aim complete independence, but which, in accordance with the chief principle of the National Congress, must be achieved by "peaceable and lawful means". As is known, by this resolution, in the course of a year, not only have the walls of British imperialism not collapsed, but not even a single hair of the head of Simon has been injured. Why Comrade Roy expects a miracle from the repetition of this resolution remains a mystery.

(To be continued.)