Fourteenth Session.

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Chairman: Comrade Kolaroff.

Contents.

Programme of the Communist International.

Speakers: Bukharin, Thalheimer.

Bukharin: Comrades, you are all aware that we shall not adopt a final program at this Congress, owing to the fact that many of our Parties have not defined their attitude towards this question. Even the Russian Party has not had the opportunity to discuss the draft which I now present to you. Therefore, most of the delegations are of the opinion that it will be more expedient not to adopt a final program at this Congress, but to discuss the program now and bring it up for adoption at the next Congress. The fact, however, that we have placed so important and difficult a question as that of an International program on the agenda of the World Congress, is in itself the best evidence of our mighty growth. We may express our perfect confidence that the Communist International will also solve this problem, whereas in the camp of our adversaries of the Second and Two and a Half Internationals we observe complete theoretical impotence. (Chra Zetkin: Perfectly true).

Before dealing with the various questions before me I will first of all take up the fundamental questions of the theory and program of the Second International before the war. The thesis which I propose is that the theory upon which the Second International was based before the war was responsible for its collapse during the war. Generally we may distinguish three phases in the development of the Marxist theory and its ideological construction: the first was the Marxism of Marx and Engels themselves, then followed the second phase which was the Marxism of the Second International, the Marxism of its founders. At the present time we have the third phase of Marxism: the Bolshevik or Communist Marxism which is to a large extent reverting back to the original Marxism of Marx and Engels. The original Marxism of Marx and Engels was the child of the European revolution of 1848 and therefore possessed a highly revolutionary spirit.

This revolutionary character of the Marxist theory is explained by the fact that the doctrines of Marx and Engels were evolved at a time when the whole of Europe was in the throes of revolution and the proletariat as a revolutionary class was entering the arena of world history. Then followed a different period and with a different ideological tendency. This entire historic development once more demonstrates to us what we observe in the history of nearly all ideologies, namely, that an ideology which has been born under certain conditions will under different conditions assume a different expression and develop...
is an illusion. Within this system, development of the capitalist system set in. It was the epoch of the gigantic growth of capitalism. This growth was chiefly based upon the colonial policy of the bourgeoisie, and the stupendous development of capitalism was chiefly stimulated by the exploitation of the colonial peoples. This growth and prosperity of continental industry caused a variety of social re-alignments within the European nations. The position of the working class was strengthened in the economic life. At the same time capitalist development created a considerable community of interests between the bourgeoisie and the continental working class. This community of interests between the continental bourgeoisie and the continental proletariat was the basis for a great psychological and ideological tendency manifesting itself within the working class and, ergo, within the Socialist Parties.

Then came the second phase in the development of Marxism namely, the phase of Social-Democratic Marxism, the well known Marxism of the Marxists, the Kautsky, the Bernstein, etc. The struggle between the orthodox tendency and the reformist tendency, the great struggle between orthodox social democracy represented by Kautsky on the one hand against the Revisionists as represented by Eduard Bernstein on the other—ended in the triumph of orthodox Marxism. However, when we look back on the whole history of this struggle, the complete surrender of orthodox Marxism to Revisionist Marxism stands: clear before our eyes. I support the thesis that in this struggle, which took place a long time before the war, so-called orthodox Marxism, i.e., the Marxism of Karl Kautsky, surrendered to Revisionism in the most fundamental theoretical questions. This, we failed to notice. Now we see clearly and distinctly, and thoroughly comprehend the underlying reasons of this phenomena. Let us for instance consider the question of the impoverishment theory! You are all aware that Kautskian Marxism argued this question in a milder form that that in which it was stated by Marx himself. It was asserted that in the epoch of capitalist development the working class suffers a relative deterioration of condition. The inherent law of development consists in that the relation to the condition of the bourgeoisie, its deterioration, this apparent Marxist view during the attacks of Bernstein. I consider that the theoretical position of the Revisionists was based on an empirical view of the conditions of the European and the American working class. Marx, however, in his theory analysed an abstract capitalist development which leads to a deterioration of the condition of the working class. While Kautsky viewed the working class in the light of the working class he understood exclusively the continental working class. The condition of these strata of the proletariat went on improving, but Kautsky Marxian did not realize that the improvement in the condition of the continental working classes was bought at the price of the annihilation and suppression of the colonial peoples. Marx was speaking of capitalist society as a whole. Now, we wish to be somewhat more concrete than Marx we should not confuse an abstract observation of the American European proletariat with the history of the world economy as a whole. In the case we would obtain a totally different theoretical picture from the one that was drawn by Kautsky and his followers. Thus, from the theoretical standpoint Kautsky’s thesis was not correct. In an act of surrender to the Revisionists, Kautsky, now take up another question, the theory of collapse and the rising of the proletariat. This catastrophic theory of collapse was much scolded down by Kautsky in his controversy with the Revisionists. With regard to the evolution, the result of the collapse, notice even in the more revolutionary the Kautsky writings, (e.g. his “The Right to Power”) a great number of really technical passages, of preposterously exaggerated optimism. Let us take for instance, his varying opinions on the General strike in his book on “The Revolution,” where Kautsky asserts that if we are in a position to make the revolution then we need no general strike. If we take a careful reading of the book, we do not need one either. What is the answer? It means nothing: but pure revisionism, which we did not quite notice before. But which we see quite clearly now. Let us take the third theoretical question, namely, the theory of the proletariat. Here I shall have to speak of somewhat greater length. On the outbreak of the war we thought that Kautskian Marxism had suddenly betrayed itself. This was the case as though there was a betrayal by the social-democrats and the Kautskians were based on the theory which these theoreticians had already maintained before the outbreak of the war. What were their statements about the State and the conquest of political power by the proletariat? They represented the case as though there was a single object which had been in the hands of one class, and later passed into the possession of another class. This was also the way Kautsky saw it.

Let us now take the case of the First World War. I hope now consider the world as a homogeneous element which changed hands in passing from one to another, i.e., as almost a neutral thing, and then it is perfectly conceivable that we shall not strike this instrument on the outbreak of war when the proletariat has the prospect of conquering the State in this manner. During the World War the question of protecting the State was brought to the forefront. This idea was developed to its logical conclusions, and this is quite a logical consequence of this theory when Kautsky raised the question of National defence and answered that question in the affirmative.

I am still not satisfied with the present way of dealing with the discussion of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The position of the Revisionists Kautsky has never developed this question. He almost neglected the most important question and most that this question would be an important question for the whole of that controversy. He has something to say about this. The question that this question should be a way of stating the problem. The comrades, when we examine these mental excursions and attempts to discover in them the sociological equivalent, we must declare that we have here an alleged Marxian ideology that was based on the aristocratic position of the strata of the continental workers, whose position in condition was secured by the spoliation of the colonial workers. This ideology is indeed admitted by the theoreticians of the Second International. These fellows have become so arrogant that they no longer even wear a mask. In his treatise on the problem Kautsky makes this very diagnosis and sees nothing bad in the fact that

"Indeed the proletariat is not quite homogeneous. We have already seen that it is divided into two strata: in the first place those that are exceptionally favoured by economic circumstances or by legislation, who are strongly organised and are in a position to defend their interests; and these are the superstitious part of the proletariat, its "aristocracy" capable of successfully resisting the oppressive tendencies of capitalism, because to them the struggle against capitalism is not merely a struggle against poverty but a struggle for power."

This distinction between the struggle against poverty and the struggle for power is also a "Marxian" figure of speech. He goes on to say:

"By the side of these well disciplined, trained and efficient (to click the boots of generals) troops there stands the great army of those (no yard, he cannot deny this) that are placed in such unfavourable circumstances that they are not yet in a position to organise themselves and to overcome the oppressive tendencies of capitalism. These remain in poverty and sink deeper and deeper in the mire."

Kautsky further makes attempts to define his practical ideas from us, the Communist International, who do not rely upon the labour aristocracy but stand on the most oppressed strata, and this is what he has to say on the question:

"Thanks to its ignorance and inexperience, its ardent longing for improved conditions and liberty, it
easily becomes the prey of all demagogues (i.e., the communists) who, either deliberately or lightmindedly (this is his sociological analysis), with the object of converting promises into the fight against the trained and well-organised elements that are accustomed to choosing their battle ground and to take up only such tasks as they are well prepared and trained for, and so forth and so forth.

There is a novel by Jack London, "The Iron Heel," Jack London, who is not a particularly good Marxist, understood quite well the problem of the modern labour movement. He saw quite well that the bourgeois not only attempted but actually succeeded in splitting the working class into two parts by corrupting one part, namely the trained and skilled part of the proletariat, and using this labour aristocracy as a means for suppressing every upheaval of the working class. What Jack London so ably depicted from the point of view of the workers is not understood by anyone in the Second International. He exploits the tragedy of the working class—its internal division—to support bourgeois society. This constitutes the function of Social Democracy. Now, after many years of war and revolution, these fellows are shameless enough to make up this mumbo and to give it a theoretical basis. The sociological base of this Kautskian Marxism is so clear that one would think that it could not be any clearer. Yet, on considering this problem once more in the form that it had been presented in the theories of the Second International, we obtain an even clearer picture. On reading their new publications, especially the latest book of Kautsky, we do not find a single word about the all-important problem of the theory of imperialism. It is absolutely inconceivable that at a time when the tendency of capitalism stands out on the horizon of the world, everything is at the straining point, when we witness the discarding of all mask, that Kautsky should not have a word to say on the most important problem. But on reading some of their other writings, apart from the book of Kautsky, we find the key to the solution of this mystery of silence. There is a book in Germany that has been specially written for the young, a certain Herr Abraham. This book has been widely spread among the proletarians, who believe translated into another language. The gentleman in his thesis quite arrogantly and clearly states: "Marxism was saved by revisionism, for the revisionism of Bernstein has become the working class to the true core of Marxism. This is his main thesis. A gentleman goes on to analyse the working class, and attempts to say something about our communistic agitation and he advances the following Theses: (1) the case was not proved that the conditions were always improved. He ignores the colonial peoples and colonies. His second thesis is even more radical. The present situation, currency chaos, with the real impoverishment of some strata, is such that Marx could not be analysed from the standpoint of any sociological laws". Thus, we are in no position to analyse these things. If we should consider this, as a scientific statement, we would say: Give us a practical explanation, made up both of stiles and mist (laughter). The point is that these fellows seek to make the argument before the working class by the silly assertion that we are not a political party. But the question of the presentation, that the situation is so complex that we cannot understand anything: The reason why they cannot understand, because we are now in the period of the theory of collapse, is working on actual practice. The question is: Can we analyse the situation, they cannot produce an analysis which would furnish the basis for practical revolutionary decisions. They are even when they say: There is no logic in events of our time.

Let us take for instance the theory of the crises. With regard to this theory, Kautsky asserts that in our present social state, this theoretical consideration of the development of the capitalist system, we cannot be so radical that the theory should assume "more modest statements in our argument. What does it mean? It means that Kautsky asserts that it means that Kautsky acknowledges that the development of the Second International except in a diagram for bourgeois republic. Not a single attempt has been made at understanding anything, for a single idea, it is but a pure plea for the bourgeois republic. It is no use arguing with these people; they are absolutely hopeless; they only know one thing, to plead for a bourgeois republic. In this respect there is absolutely no difference between the bourgeois liberal scholars and the social democrats. On reading the writings of Kautsky, for instance, we find that some of the bourgeois professors, like Franz Oppenheimer and others, notably the Canton, and Kumplitz school, are much nearer to the Marxian position than he. Kautsky in his book claims that the State is a sort of universal welfare institution, a good father to all his children, whether of the working class or of the bourgeoisie. So the matter stands. I once said that this is only theory that was represented by the Babylonian king Hamurabi. And this is the theoretical of the level representatives and principal sages of the Second International.

But there are theoretical betrayals which are even more flagrant and ignominious. I refer to the conception of the State and in regard to the proletarian revolution and the coalition government. To write such stuff one has indeed to lose the last vestige of theoretical consciousness. Take for instance, Kautsky's theory about the revolution. Do you know what is his latest contribution to this question? (1) The bourgeois revolution has to be expected to produce violence (2) The proletarian revolution, precisely because it is a proletarian revolution, must not employ violence, or as another of these gentlemen has said, violence is always a reactionary force. We know what Engels has written about the revolution, in an Italian article entitled "Dell Autorita", his article "The Revolution is the most authoritative thing in the world; for revolution means an historic event, when one part of the population imposes its will upon the other part of the population by means of bayonets, guns and rifles". Such was the conception of revolution that Engels has to tell us: "Bayonets, guns and other means of violence are purely bourgeois means. They have not been invented by the proletariat, but by the bourgeois. The bourgeoisie is a pure bourgeois institution (laughter). In this way one could argue almost anything. Kautsky might, for
instance, say: "Before the bourgeois revolution the bourgeoisie fought with ideas; consequently this is a purely bourgeois method. It would follow then that we must discard all ideas. Perhaps Kautsky has discarded all ideas now (Laughter). It would be really ridiculous to adopt such a method of fighting."

Now we come to the question of the coalition. Here we reach the apex of all the discoveries of Kautsky. Kautsky believes himself to be the representative of orthodox Marxism. Marx maintained the spirit of his teaching consisted of the doctrine of the proletarian dictatorship. There is a passage in Marx which reads: 'The class struggle was known to many others before me, but my teaching consists of the knowledge that the development of capitalism leads inevitably to the dictatorship of the proletariat. This was the way Marx himself conceived his theory. This is the sum and substance of the Marxist doctrine. Now listen to what Kautsky writes: "In his famous article on the criticism of social-democratic programme, Marx wrote: "Between the capitalists and the communist society intervenes the revolutionary transition from one into the other. This has its corresponding period of political transition, when the State can be nothing else but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat'."

So said Marx.

And Kautsky, what has he to say? Let me quote him literally: "This sentence we should now modify on the basis of our recent experiences, and on the question of Government we should say: "Between the time of the pure bourgeois and the time of the pure proletarian democratic State, there is a period of transition from one into the other. This has its corresponding period of political transition, when the Government and a rule should take the form of a coalition government" (Laughter).

This is indeed not a form of transition from Marxism to Revisionism, but it is even worse than the purest Revisionism. Here we have to deal with a number of betrayals. Marx could see communism at the other end of the transition period.
quite frankly that the Marxian theory, and even orthodox Marxism, did not investigate the question of the State quite adequately. When some of our past leaders have tackled this question and solved it in a thoroughgoing manner, But we should ask ourselves whether there have been any revolutionary Marxists who have made a thorough study of the question. What does it mean? It means that the Marxian theory has evolved during a period strongly tinged with Manchester hues. Free competition reigned supreme. This situation had its roots in the specific conditions of the epoch. But this should not satisfy us, the role of the State is very important from all points of view, from the standpoint of the bourgeoisie as well as from the standpoint of the proletariat. On the one hand we are to destroy an organisation, and it is therefore important for us to know the situation as it existed previously so that we may create something of equivalent value. All these circumstances should urge us upon the necessity of emphasising the question of the State and giving it prominent place in our programme.

I would further urge that we include in our programme something about the monopoly of education by the ruling class. We used to ignore this question in discussing our programmes in the past, but now, when the proletariat is striving for power and for the reorganisation of society, such questions as the training of our officials and administrators, the standard of education of our leaders before and after the conquest of power, must play an important part. All these questions are of great importance, yet we have never discussed them before, because they did not appear to us to be practical questions. Now they have become absolutely practical questions, and for this reason we should give more place to this question than we have given before.

I think that in our programme we should touch upon the question of the specific symptoms of the maturing of socialism within the capitalist society. It is a classical passage in the Marxian doctrine, that the terms of the new society are generated in the womb of the old. But this theory has caused so much confusion in the minds of the Second International that we could not state the question more clearly than we did before. I cannot even state the question in its entirety, but this much we must say: We all know that the proletarian revolution imposes new demands upon us, the proletarian revolution is at times accompanied by deterioration of productive forces. This is an inherent law of proletarian revolution. It seems that we want to tell us another thing is this to the fact that capitalism is not yet ripe for socialism. This is the main theoretical thesis in which the different contradictions in the maturing of capitalism and the feudal system with the maturing of socialism within the capitalist society. But we want to emphasise the difference between the two phenomena. At all events, we should say that conditions of the maturing of socialist society. The difference between the types of maturing consists in this: capitalism has grown out of the feudal system, whereas socialism has developed within the feudal system. Socialism could even under the most favourable conditions, grow out of capitalism in such a manner. It is impossible for the working class to gain control of production with the capitalist society. It is nonsense, it is a flagrant contradiction. For this reason, the specific features of the maturing of socialism within the capitalist society are totally different in character from the maturing of capitalism within the feudal system. Indeed, how is the proletariat without economic, political, and cultural preparation, without its own engineers, etc., to run the new State, if it obtains it without previously having established the dictatorship of the proletariat? It is only when we resolve that the proletariat breaks open the doors of the higher institutions of learning. We must admit that at present the proletariat, relatively untrained, ignorant and backward, as compared with the bourgeoisie. It means that the proletariat cannot become the mature organiser of society within capitalism. The proletariat can become the leader of society as a whole, only after it has attained the real creative genius of society, only after the Dictatorship. It cannot be any other way. This is the cardinal difference between the maturing of capitalism and socialism. We have to deal with the development of socialism that we ought to emphasise. Our opponents entered into the false idea that we could mature within the bourgeois society just as capitalism grew out of feudalism. Unfortunately, this is not correct, and we should always be in mind the specific difference between the two situations.

I would further like to touch upon one more point which has not been sufficiently analysed, even in our literature. That point is the question of the programme of the Revisionists. The Revisionists have always much about this problem: we have grown into the socialist society. The revisionist line was that the capitalistic state would gradually evolve into socialism. It cannot be gainsaid that we will not accomplish our aims by means of degree alone, that it will be a lengthy process of organisation before we really establish our socialist State. But the difference between us and the Revisionists is on the point of time when this evolution begins. The revisionists, who do not want to hurry, wish to begin within the capitalist state. But we say that it begins only after the proletariat has established its dictatorship. The proletariat should first of all destroy the old bourgeois State and capture the power, and by this means change the economic relations. Here we have a long process of development when the socialist forms of production and distribution grow continuously, displacing all the remnants of capitalist economy, until the total transformation of the capitalist State into the socialist is accomplished. There is another point which has direct bearing upon the preceding question, namely the question of the national types of socialism, as a form of production, of course. Before the revolution, we discussed methods of systematisation of production, collective economy, etc., without having the concrete idea. Now, particularly after the experiences of the Russian Revolution, we see that we have before us a long process of acquiring national types of socialism. Let us, for instance, comment on American capitalism. American capitalism had its special features that distinguish it from Western capitalism. Let us compare the nature of the various French capitalisms and contrast them with the capitalist of America. Or for the history of syndicates and trusts in Germany and England. These are different ways and different consequences. We must all this, of course, become more deliberate in this time along with the development of socialist economy, so that socialism can grow exclusively, and which is already in existence. Therefore, we may assume that the various national types of socialism will in a certain sense be the continuation of the previous capitalist forms, but under a certain aspect which means that the specific features of capitalism of the different countries will find their expression in the specific forms of socialist production in those countries. Later on, of course, these differences will be obliterated by the onward march of proletarian rule. The initial stage of development in all countries, even after the conquest of political power by the proletariat, still will have its same forms of socialist production. We must assume that Russian socialism will appear Asiatic in comparison with the others. The backwardness of our industry and agriculture and our retarded economic development will surely find their expression in the special forms of our socialism. If we take all this into consideration, we may then pass to the discussion of other questions, such as the question of the new economic policy. This is the eighth question upon which I intend to say a few words here. This new economic policy may be viewed from the totally different standpoint, from the standpoint of revolutionary tactics or from the standpoint of economic rationalism. These two standpoints do not always appear to be identical. From the tactical standpoint we have already heard the views of several comrades, including Comrades Lenin and Trotsky. I would like to examine this question from the standpoint of economic rationalism.

I maintain that the proletariat of every individual country, after gaining political power, will be confronted by the important problem of economic organisation, the problem of proportioning between the forms of production, which the proletariat should organise upon a rational plan. This is the most important economic
problem with which the proletariat will be confronted. If the proletariat falls to fix this proportion aright, if it underestimates the bureaucratic forces of the state, it will eventually be forced to confront the situation in which the productive forces will not be developed, but are hampered. The proletariat is not a petty-bourgeoisie but a working class. The proletariat cannot be the great plan for the destruction of bureaucratic and individual traders. The proletariat, by arbitrarily removing these strata can only gain a material compensation. It would only mean a blocking off of the development of productive forces and the further shrinking of the productive forces, which would mean the continued dislocation of the economic life of the country.

There is yet another drawback on the proletarian undertaking. The actual problem of the socialist forces is not just the bureaucratic machine which will be more costly than profitable. We would eventually have a form of administration, where the entire economic machinery of the proletarian States does not mean the development of the productive forces, but the hampering of the development of the productive forces; in other words, the very opposite of what it ought to be. Such a bureaucratic machine would have to be stopped either through a counter-revolution of the small petty-bourgeoisie, or by the Party stepping in and reorganising the whole thing, as has been the case here in Russia. If the proletariat does not perform the necessary operation it will be done for it by other forces. This should be fully realised by all proletarians.

Secondly, there is the new economic policy of the Russian revolution. This is on the one hand a specific Russian phenomenon, yet on the other hand it is also a universal phenomenon (quite true): It is not exclusively a strategic retreat, but it is also the solution of a great problem of social organisation, namely the proportion between the various branches of production which we will call rationalisation, and the branches of production which we must call utilisation. Comrades, let us be frank. We made the attempt of utilisation everything here, even the peasants, millions of small producers. The bureaucratic machine, incurred tremendous administrative expenditures, reached a critical crisis, and finally was compelled, in order to save the cause of the whole proletariat to introduce this new economic policy. This is by no means a miracle, this is the something in the nature of a shamanism, a seer that should be concealed. It is merely a concession to the opponent who is fighting us, with all his forces, also the correct solution of a problem social organisation. Frankly stated amounts to this. When under a certain economic policy we witnessed increase of little red militia, in Moscow, disappearance of some old women selling bread etc., we were the standpoint of rational economic machine. And when this rationalisation had been transformed into something different from something else, some comrades are inclined to think that it was a sin from the standpoint of the proletariat. Marxism. It was not so. It was necessary the correct orientation of our Party of mistakes which was committed in our first proletarian revolution owing to our experience. This is our view on the question. And I say: the problem of the new economic policy is of international importance. The specific Russian aspect consists, of course, in the proportion in which we could rationalise and those that could not.

We have a great many petty producers, petty producers, etc. But if we take the developed industrial countries, say, for example in America, do you think that many of them could not bubble up even now? Indeed, it would at once. Could we, in example, proceed right away with the organisation of the American farmers on a course not! For such strata the economic movement should remain the same would be the case in Germany.

I believe that the victorious proletariat will be able to organise a communist basis for economic life in particular in Bavaria. Of course, do you know what the peasant will tell you when you will demand of him the surrender of his own domain. He will tell you that he wants to be free to sell all he sees fit. For this reason the problem of the new economic policy, the problem of bureaucratic rationalism clashes with another principle, that of equal importance to the proletariat, namely the principle of the pure political experience. Of this I have frequently quoted examples. For instance, if for the sake of economic rationalism you saw on the top of your fence, you know that you are not thereby increasing the productive forces! (Laughter). The same thing happens in a revolution. For instance, if the capitalist bourgeoisie lets all its forces against you and has something among them directly carry the orders of the big bourgeoisie, what should the proletariat do? The proletariat must at all costs destroy these petty bourgeois alliances with the big bourgeoisie. As the struggle develops, it is bound to remove also the economic basis of this petty bourgeoisie. Later we will go into the irrational, into the political experience, which is economically an expedient, but which runs the standpoint of the political struggle and the triumph in the civil war is quite a means to an end. These ends are the same, economic rationality and political experience are not at all identical, frequently they come into collision. The political consideration, however, should be political experience, if only for the reason that it is impossible to build up socialism without previously establishing the proletarian State. But we must always use the destruction and refrain from doing anything superfluous, anything that is pure destruction from the standpoint of the economic standpoint. I cannot naturally go on developing these ideas, but the problem of the new economic policy is of international importance. The specific Russian aspect consists, of course, in the proportion in which we could rationalise and those that could not.

The second tactical problem is that of National Defence. This problem was to us, communists, quite clear from the outset of the war, and our attitude was one of flat rejection of the national defence, but not of anything.pdf
State advancing us money to aid our revolutionary activity. It would have been sheer folly to expect it. The moment we obtained money from any hostile power, the existence of our bank would have been discredited. The international bourgeoisie therefore handled this problem merely to promote properly from its own standpoint when it attempted to misrepresent us as the agents of bourgeois nationalism, or Karl Liebknecht as the agent of the French bourgeois. We were always aware of this and we never countenance the idea of receiving enemy aid of any kind. But now when a proletarian State exists and in a position to contract a loan from some bourgeois state, it would be foolish to reject it on principle. I am quoting this merely as a small example of the various questions of principle that arise from the moment that a proletarian State comes into existence.

It is the same with the question of a national defence. It is quite clear what is meant by a proletarian country, i.e., a proletarian State (for in all these questions the word national is synonymous with the word State, with its numerous class characteristics). When the bourgeoisie, a class characteristic, the national defence, it means the defence of the bourgeois State, and when we speak of national defence we mean the defence of the Proletarian State. It ought therefore to be stated clearly in our programme that the proletariat State should be and must be protected not only by the proletariat of this country, but also by the proletariat of all countries. This is the new situation of the question where it differs from the situation at the outbreak of the war. The second question is: should the proletariat State, for reasons of the strategy of the proletariat as a whole, conclude any military alliances with the bourgeois States? Here there is no difference in principle between a loan and a military alliance. And I maintain that we have already grown so big that we are in a position to conclude a military alliance with a bourgeois State for the purpose of destroying some other bourgeoisie State with the help of the bourgeois ally. What would happen later on, under a certain readjustment of forces, you can easily imagine for yourselves. This is a question of purely strategical and tactical expediency. In this manner it should be stated in our programme.

Under this form of national defence, i.e., the military alliance with bourgeois States, it is the duty of the companions to defend every country in this alliance (or, if it is in its subsequent phase of development, the bourgeoisie State) under all circumstances that should be overthrown, then only when it has become necessary for them to do so. It is not our duty to outline here, but which you readily conceive.

Next we should make mention of the national question, of the right of self-determination. We want our country, our Stone, for all communist parties. This is a widespread outcry about Redmillions. We should make it plain in our programme that every proletarian State will experience Red intervention. (I am quoting Karl Liebknecht, he is the Communist Organ, and that is why you take this laugh). In the Communist Manifesto we were told that the proletariat should conquer the whole world. Now, it could not be done without our bare hands, otherwise (in laughter) this has to be done with natural censers and rifles. For this reason the system of the world, the national self-determination of the proletariat, might be an excellent basis to spread the ideas of socialism. This gives the basis to the right of self-determination under special circumstances, which make the technical realization possible.

Now I have done with the various themes, and I will now pass to a general survey of our problem, particularly the question of the defence. I can afford to be quite brief, I would say that the programme of the communist parties should consist at least of:

1. A general part, which is valid for all parties. The general principles of the programme should be printed in the constitutions of every member in the world. 2. A national part, which is valid for the specific demands of the labour movement of the respective countries. 3. A world part, which is valid for the attitude of the workers towards the government and its policy. 4. A part, which is valid for the attitude of the workers to the government and its policy.

To overcome the bourgeois and the struggle of the proletariat for power.

The programme should be divided into four parts:

1. The first part should contain the principle of a national programme, in order to show what programme the communist principle means and the difference between communists and the various transitory stages.

2. The second part should contain the principle of the bourgeois and the struggle of the proletariat for power.

3. The third part should contain the principle of the communist programme, in order to show what programme the communist principle means and the difference between communists and the various transitory stages.

4. The fourth part should be devoted to the various questions of the programme, such as the workers' government and its policy towards revolution and social democracy and the trade unions.

Because these two questions are not merely national but international, the strategic and tactical questions can be found in our programme.

With regard to the national part of the programme, it is not my task to discuss the workers' government. I agree with Varga when he said that it would be fatal to attempt to fight against it (Kadek.

...)

Nevertheless I maintain that the desire to settle these questions is a characteristic of the programme. If the question of the proletarian principle of this country to the programme, upon these problems: for a special investigation will have to be made according to the country and the programme. Conrad, at this juncture I would like to offer a few more critical remarks regarding the expression of opinions — some of them were made in writing — and articles by comrade Varga.

From the discussion on these questions we have the following documents and statements:

1. The Report of the First Discussion of the Programme Commission, received by all the parties.
2. The answer of the Italian Central Committee to this report.
3. Some articles by comrade Varga.
4. An article by comrade Rudas.
5. An article by comrade Kapp. 6. A draft by the German Party.
7. A draft by the Bulgarian Party.
8. My draft.

With regard to the first discussion by the programme commission, two standpoints were represented. The differences were about the question of whether we ought to include in our programme such tactical problems as the Workers' Government etc. or not. One of the standpoints I am representing here.

The Italian Central Committee gave its answer to the discussion of the Programme Commission in a letter in which they agreed to my view but for rather peculiar reasons. They said that these things could not be laid down in the programme; because one could not force the credo of the national parties. Thus the reason for not being able to put these things in our programme is not that they are opportunistic but because the International cannot force the national parties into a confession of faith. If that is so, we shall have to alter our programme every fortnight.

I am very grateful to the Italian comrades for agreeing to my views, but I cannot tender them the slightest thanks for their peculiar reasons for supporting me.

Now I turn to the articles by comrade Varga. Comrade Varga is a very brave fellow, and he therefore says that all those who refuse to accept his standpoint on this question are cowards. I have already said that his bravery is an opportunistic nature, and our cowardice consists of refusing to be opportunists. We were afraid of being turned into opportunists.
Varga on his part is no coward and he therefore entertains no such fear. That is the real difference between him and ourselves.

Varga further warns us to include a description of the types of the various countries during the period of the collapse of capitalism. On the whole, he would have instead of a programme, an encyclopaedia of all the social sciences with all its supplements. Besides, I would consider it dangerous to incorporate a description of the types of the countries upon our programme. The events may change very rapidly within the various countries. For instance, in the event of a victory of revolutionary Germany we would have to readjust our programme completely. This would also make our programme far too long and cumbersome for any worker to read.

With regard to the article by comrade Smeral, I can distinguish two distinct lines of direction in which he expresses his views. On the one hand he warns us to make full use of the experiences of the Russian Revolution and, on the other, he wants us to include the question of the relation between the different branches of industry and the different social strata.

Yet on the other hand, together with Varga and Radek he wants us to fix on the programme such questions as the Workers' Government, the open letter etc.

With the article of comrade Radus I am on the whole, in agreement.

With regard to the article by comrade Rappaport, I have tried in vain to find any tangible idea in it.

With regard to the programme by the German Party, I would say that in my opinion it possesses the following defects.

1. It is pedantic.

2. It is drawn in too concrete detail.

For instance, it contains a long passage about various concrete things like the Peace of Versailles etc., etc., which in my opinion do not at all belong to the programme. This descriptive and concrete histories side of the German draft accounts also for its great length. It is not a programme, but a very extensive and valuable handbook. It is true, the programme is written in brilliant style and quite good theoretically.

3. The draft is altogether too European. The German comrades admitted that the programme is not complete and that they may have added too little. I do not think this is the case in general in other countries. The fundamental part of the programme is the programme of action of the Italian Party. We shall only have to take the German programme and all the others. It is only a first draft which has to be improved and enlarged before it can be used. But this is true for all programmes; the German programme is no exception.

With regard to the Bulgarian programme, I find the following: it contains various passages which are either too concrete or drawn in too narrow a form and could not be included in the programme as such. Then the programme is composed in a very revolutionary way. But speaking of the role of the party generally, this programme, in my opinion, lacks too much stress on parliamentary activity. The proportion between the activity out of parliament and within is not quite a happy one, even if you were only to take into consideration the corresponding dimensions of the paper devoted to them. I think it will be much better if we correct somewhat this part of the programme.

One other remark in conclusion. It demands of the Party as elaborately outlined in the Bulgarian programme a role for all parties affiliated to the International, then it is too much. If they are intended only for the Balkan countries, then they lose those demands which would be proper for the International. Also in this respect I think some correction would be necessary.
English Landowners would be bought out. But he did not mean this in the sense that this could take place before the conquest of Power, but only after the proletariat had captured political power. I do not see, in the greater part of Europe, any idea that we have captured political power, that the question before us is the expropriation of the capitalists. Everyone knows that the first requisite for the reconstruction of democracy is the liquidation of the tremendous burden of debts which weighs upon industry. This method of buying out the capitalists is just as much a Utopia as Kautsky’s idea of Guild Socialism or Municipalisation.

I would like to point out another beautiful point of Kautsky’s, theories, namely, the problem of the State bureaucracy and that of State capitalism or State Socialism. According to Kautsky there are only two States in which the bureaucracy plays a great role. The first is France, the "Republic sans républicains," the second, says Kautsky, is Soviet Russia. Apparently, democracy has been introduced in Germany to the extent that the State bureaucracy has disappeared. As a result in Germany and in the other bourgeois democratic states, the Social Democrats have nothing to do with the Democratic bureaucracy. But we know that the whole question of social democratic politics is limited to introducing Social Democratic officials in place of bourgeois officials.

In his treatise on State Socialism and State Capitalism, Kautsky suddenly discovers that the State bureaucracy exists still, and that it is quite incapable of managing the capitalist enterprises. The bureaucracy is conservative, and it is rigid, only the capitalists themselves can manage these industries.

What does this mean in Germany today? It means the direct coalition, the cooperation with Stinnes and his like, who will be charged with one socialisation. Kautsky has already given his theoretical blessing to, and justification of the South West and the Second and the Half Internationals, of the U.S.P. and the S.P.D. in Germany. Should a Stinnes Government be now created in Germany with the cooperation of the social-democrats, a Stinnes Government, which will seek to place in capitalism hands those industries which are still socialist, it would have Kautsky’s blessing.

I only wish to speak of these points because if it characteristically shows the theoretical situation of the Second and Second Internationals, I would also like to add something what Comrade Linkin said on the backside decadence and its disruption.

This is what I would like to say in connection: Our conflict with the decadence in Germany and other circles of the Second International already began after the first Russian Revolution. The first conflict was over the general question; since then this conflict has widened. The main conflict was the theoretical debate on the causes of imperialism, and in connection with it the political question Disarmament. The first theoretical battle in Germany were fought around this point; and now is laid the foundation of the division into the Marxian camp (including the U.S.P.D. and now the S.P.D. on the one side and the Theory of the Left, a part of the Centre Marxists).

A few remarks to bring out clearly what Bukharin said on the theoretical capitalization especially as it appeared in the programmes of the Second and Second and a Half Internationals, of the Socialists. All that Bukharin has emphasised and argued for as if were lecturing to a class of boys, is the dismissal of the impossibility of the petty-bourgeois theory, the crisis theory etc. all this is clearly presented in the comments of the Socialists on the programme.

Kampfender, Bernstein, Stapel, has shown clearly this capitalisation.

Now with regard to debateable questions, I will deal with the following:

1) The basic section, the theoretical explanation of imperialism in connection with the theory of accumulation.

2) The question of temporary measure of partial demands before the conquest of power. Here I consider as the main question for the preparation of a general programme, as well as the programme of the individual parties.

3) A few brief remarks on economic measures after the conquest of power and cannot be contradicted. The war communism, and N. V. P.

The form and construction of the Programme:

I will speak at once on the first point, the theoretical explanation on imperialism. I do not wish to begin here a theoretical debate. All I wish to do is to present the question clearly as an introduction to the theoretical discussion which I believe necessary. It is clear that we cannot reach a decision in such question on a thorough discussion in our press and in our pamphlets. What I wish to do is to make the question clear, and bring out its importance for our theories and our programme. I have already said that the differences in theory and tactics in the Second International comes from the theoretical consideration of imperialism. There were two main questions which entered here: first, the most important: is imperialism an inevitable phase of imperialist development? The second question is a theoretical explanation of this inevitability of imperialist development. In Germany, this was the main question which separated the Left from the Centre Marxists. The main point around which the whole debate turned was that imperialism is the inevitable problem of accumulation, of capital growth or enlarged production. This enlarged production, this spread of capital into non-capitalist territory is an historical fact, which does not commence with the appearance of capitalism. From the beginning of Capitalism, began also Colonial wars, colonial conquests, trade wars, etc. When we say imperialism, we do not mean only the colonial expansion of the capitalist States, but the special form of expansion under the present imperialist conditions. Comrade Luxemburg formulated this special form of expansion under the present imperialist conditions. He formulated the special conditions of capitalist expansion in the period of imperialism as follows:

"If the Imperialist Era, we are concerned with a struggle for the rest of the non-capitalist territory, for its new division, and finally, in connection with this, with the existence of the capitalist economic and political basis of power.

These facts have been known for a long time and cannot be contradicted. The war communism, and N. V. P.

Is the Imperialist era, with its catastrophes and crises an historical accident or a necessity? Here comes the political question: Is it possible to go back from this imperialistic era, to the imperialistic era, to the period of liberal capitalism, free trade, peace, pacifism, or is there only one way out, namely the revolutionary conquest of the capitalist era, is Socialism the only way out? On the whole, this question depends also our political tactics.

If we assume that imperialism represents the interests of only one section of the bourgeoisie, that the interests of the whole of the bourgeoisie are represented by the Manchester method, what follows therefrom for our tactics? There follows the possibility that we might unite with one part of the bourgeoisie against the other. Here is laid the theoretical foundation for the coalition policy. The opposite view naturally would lead to an opposite policy.

Theoretically, the question presents itself in the following manner: Is the unlimited expansion of capital, accumulation possible within the bounds of capitalism, or does this accumulation find other limits than capitalism itself? That is, simply formulated: Can capitalism expand without limit, or are there certain necessary theoretical bounds to this growth? Some people have objected to this theory of accumulation that it is a sort of fatalism, according to which capitalism reaches a point where it breaks down, mechanically. This point at which capitalism no longer finds any field for expansion and must break down mechanically, is an abstract limit, a limit in the mathematical sense. What it actually means is something different. It means that capitalism is forced into an imperialist phase which sharpens the class antagonism, and then, is forced into the most severe political and economic catastrophes. It follows therefore that it is not this limit which will determine the end of capitalism, but the severe crises which sharpen this crisis and lead to Socialism.

She then states further:

In proportion as capital assisted by militarism extends this power abroad, does away with the same time with noncapitalistic strata and lowering the living conditions of the toiling masses at home.
in that proportion does the daily history of capitalist accumulation become the history of political economic crises, render eventually impossible all further accumulation, and bring about the stage of world history the rebellion of the international working class against the rule of capitalism as a historical necessity, this process setting in long before capitalist accumulation has reached its own natural limits. This is the significance of the question. And now, comrades, let me say for a moment the opposite position occupied by the staunchest opponents of this theory. Hilferding, dealing with the Marxian theory in his book “Financial Capital” says that capitalism has in it the possibilities of unlimited expansion. As to Bauer—not to mention the Austrian head of the school—has advanced a remarkable theory, namely, that capitalist development is conditioned and regulated by the increase of the population, namely, of the working class population. This means turning upside down the Marxian theory of population, which says exactly the opposite.

Let me now give you some illustration of the political consequences of such a conception. In this connection it should be stated, that there are many who, through denying the accumulation theory, have not reached these political conclusions from it. They do not prove their argument but merely show their lack of consistency.

In order to prove this I find it necessary to quote the remarks of Comrade Luxemburg. The following is from her work directed against the criticisms of the accumulation theory.

Accumulation is impossible in a purely capitalist milieu. This is why from the first beginnings of capitalist development, it exhibits the following tendencies: expansion of capital to non-capitalist strata and countries the ruin of artisans and peasantry, the proletarianisation of the middle class, colonial policy, capitalist penetration and the export of capital. The existence and further development of capitalism is possible only by continual expansion of capital to new domains of production and new countries. But this expansion, in the course of its world-wide development, leads necessarily to conflict between capitalism in pre-capitalist forms of society, which gives rise to violence, war, revolution, in short, to the international class war, which has been the distinguishing feature of capitalism from feudalism.

Comrade Luxemburg then goes on to inquire whether the objective limits of capitalism must necessarily be reached, and whether capitalism can actually reach that point, and her answer is as follows: “It is evident from the history of capitalism after all, only a theoretical fiction, that accumulation of capital is not merely an economic but also a political necessity, the existence of capital, as it is now, is a means of securing final end to it by the shortest and most effective way. This does not mean that the end will be reached according to dogma. The very tendency of capitalism to move in this direction expresses itself in such forms as limited existence of capitalism, catastrophe. (The accumulation of Capital, P. 67.)

First of all these are the views of Bernstein in his writings from 1912 until 1922. On April 26th, 1922, Kautsky writes in the “Neue Zeit.”

“Capitalism in armament rests upon economic causes, but not on economic necessity.”—A particularly fine piece of scholastic sophistry—and its essence by no means an economic sophistry.

There you have the theoretical basis of the position assumed by the Independent Social Democrats and by Kautsky during the war.

Bernstein spoke in a similar strain at the Party National Convention at Chemitz in 1912. It is very interesting to find that these two opposite positions were already as early as 1912. Bernstein said:

“I can say much in answer to the charge that what we demand here—disarmament, isn’t utopian and reactionary. It is not so... The world development has taken a false path...”

This reminds me of the little speech the officer who saw a dove fly up into the air and then said: “Look, that dove is flying.” And we must know for certain that all that is mean.

In peace on earth and good will to all men in this good-Will article, Kautsky and Bernstein found themselves in accord already in 1912.

And here we have a quotation from an article which Hilferding wrote in November-December, 1916 entitled “The Catastrophe Theory: Reciprocity and Domination as Methods of Commercial Policy.”

Hilferding says that the capitalists are bound to make a world war when the world will have been almost equally developed capitalistically. Capitalism presupposes the existence of many economic variants. And further: “The working class can only resist this...”

Then again:

“Free trade by its opposition to imperialistic commercial policy and, consequently, to imperialism generally is a weapon which the working class cannot afford to neglect.”

And still further:

“From this standpoint capitalism under political policy loses its importance. It is of no consequence then to whom the colonial policy will be given...”

Bernstein’s article on this subject, has been economically beneficial to all other people who have spared them the burden of acquisition and development.

What is behind all this? It is the idea that we have previously spoken, the idea that it is possible to direct imperialism backwards to free trade and to its theoretical consequences. The toiling masses must not struggle forward towards socialism, but backward, allying themselves with the corresponding sections of the bourgeoisie following the same course.

The fullest fruition of this theory was reached in an article by Hilferding, in the beginning of 1912, in which he claims that the period of imperialistic antagonisms have come to an end, and now the era of imperialistic harmonization was beginning. This is in accord with the new point advanced by Hilferding already in 1912.

“Capitalist economy has two methods of increasing profits: competition and cooperation. At every for-
Lenin said in regard to Russia:—For an elementary task of reading and writing, the proletariat must concern itself, mainly within the program proper. He assigns them to a separate room, on the door of which he affixes the inscription, "program of activity." Here, one may commit all kinds of iniquities (Bukharin, interrupting But, admission of Bukharin). Free admission is thus. Let us say no more about this. We are going to find there. (Interrupt: What do you consider admissible things?) That is the point. We had committed, and the rest is to the inclusion of the transitional demand in the conquest of power in the program. In this, some have seen, as Comrade Bukharin has, a certain danger of opportunism. We must therefore very carefully examine the question as to how far it is possible to substitute the minimum for the general principles and aims. I am of the opinion that those who see any guarantee in this division of tactics, principles and aims are in great error, and are exposing us to just those dangers that certain of these which they seek to avoid will be neglected. (Hear, hear!) One need only look at the history of the Second International and its decay to realise that it was precisely this division of the tactical clauses of the program from the ultimate aim which accelerated its deterioration into opportunism. How did this process start in With Bernstein, Kautsky debates on tactics. The final goal remained. And today when we wish to emphasise the difference between communists and socialist reformists we say: We differ in our final aims; we want socialism and communism, while they do not want it. How do we prove this statement? By political tactics, the road which these people followed and which are quite different from ours. This is the principal point. I claim therefore that specific difference between us and the reformist socialists lies not in the fact that we keep our immediate aims to a separate compartment, apart from our program, but in the fact that we bring our immediate aims and preliminary demands into the closest relationship with our principles and final aims. This relationship does not of course, itself, insure that I have found the right path when I have the right map. I do not even know how to read the map. And it seems to me that what Comrade

and N. Bukharin want to go further by rejecting the minimum program. This would be tantamount to setting up the program. This would be tantamount to setting up the program. This would be tantamount to setting contrary to the wise counsel of the wise proverb which says: "Do not boast when you go to bed, nor when you return from battle." Brandler: Hear, hear! Smirnov.

We are going into the battle, i.e., we are struggling for the conquest of the political power by means of our Party. The Party must be a dictatorship of the proletariat and the dictatorship of the whole people. If we assume this power, we are not only not afraid to go beyond the limits of the bourgeois order, but we declare, on the contrary, quite openly and precisely that we will go beyond these limits, that we will manage the transition towards socialism and that our way towards socialism is via the Soviet Republic, the nationalisation of the banks and trusts, workers' control, obligatory labour, the nationalisation of the land, confiscation of the big estates, etc., etc. It is in this sense that we formulate a program of transition measures towards socialism.

But we must not drag while going to battle, we must not eliminate the minimum program, for this would be tantamount to bragging. (Hear, hear!) We do not want "to demand anything from the bourgeoisie, but we must create everything ourselves, and our work must not be a tinkering within the limits of the bourgeois order." Such an attitude would be nothing but empty bragging, for first of all, one must conquer power, and we have not yet done that. In the first instance we must put the transition measures towards socialism into practice and we must lead our revolution to the final victory of the international socialist revolution. It is only "when the battle is won" that one can put aside the minimum program as useless.

Can we vouch for it that it is not very necessary now? Of course not, for the simple reason that we have not yet conquered power. We cannot introduce the transitional program, we have not yet even reached the beginning of the socialist world revolution. We must march towards this aim boldly and without any hesitation, but it is ridiculous to declare that we have already reached it, as everyone knows that we have not yet, done so. The elimination of
the minimum program is tantamount to a declaration, as an announcement (or rather a boast) “that we have already conquered.”

No, dear comrades, we have not yet conquered.

I shall now give you yet another quotation which will be useful for our further discussion of the program. Comrade Lenin continues:

We do not know if we will be victorious tomorrow or a little later, I personally am inclined to think that it will be tomorrow. (I am writing this in October 5, 1917.)

But that we might be too late in taking over the power. However, tomorrow is tomorrow, and not to-day. We do not know how soon after our victory the revolution will come in the West. We do not know if our victory there will come to us as the result of periods of reaction and of counter-revolutionary victories. There is nothing impossible in that. Therefore, we shall after our victory construct a triple line of trenches against such an eventuality.

As yet we do not know and we cannot know anything about this. No one can know, and therefore it is ridiculous to throw out the minimum program, which is very much needed as long as we are still living within the bourgeois order, as long as we have not destroyed this order, have not laid the foundation for the transition to socialism, have not beaten the bourgeoisie and having beaten it, have not destroyed it. All this will come and will probably come much sooner than we expect. I am myself of the opinion that it will begin tomorrow, but tomorrow is not yet with us.

Let us deal with the minimum program on the political field. It is intended for the bourgeois republic. We add that we do not confine ourselves to its limits, but that we begin at once to struggle for the higher type—the Soviet Republic. We must labor, we must march towards the real new republic with boldness and determination, and I am convinced that we will do so. However, the minimum program must not be thrown out on any account, for the Soviet Republic is not yet with us. Moreover, the possibility of “attitudes at restoration” are not confined and we must go through it and remove it. It is also possible that during the transition from the old to the new types of government the appearance is of the “Rabochi Put” a few days ago, and in fact the Soviet Republic as well as the constituent Assembly. All this must be outlived and then there will be the opportunity to throw out the minimum program. In conclusion, there is the following statement:

“...the same is the case on the economic field. We are all agreed that the first march towards socialism is tantamount to an ignominious betrayal of the interests of the proletariat. We are all agreed that the first steps in this direction must be measures such as the nationalisation of banks and trusts. Let us first of all bring into being these measures, and then we can consider further steps, for experience has broadened our outlook. Practical experience is worth a million times more than the enthusiasm of the best programs. It is quite possible and even probable that we shall not be able to do without combined types for the transition period. For instance, we cannot at once nationalise all the small industrial concerns, enrolling a few important but whether we can or not it is the reader’s interest to find out which of the large concerns may be tied hand and hand with the nationalisation of the banks and trusts, but there is no reason to throw out the minimum program, as long as there are even small relics of bourgeois conditions. As Marxists, we must not boldly go into the greatest world revolution and yet take a same view of fact, we have no right to throw out the program.

If we were to throw it out now, we should only prove that we have lost heads even before we could achieve victory. But we must not lose our heads united nor during nor after the victory, for if we lose our heads we shall lose all."

Comrades, thus wrote Lenin on October 6th 1917 at a time when he could be in the proletarian dictatorship, and his policy is a thing of tomorrow, but we are not yet there, it is still today with us.

Comrades, looking at the world scale, we are currenlty justified in saying that the victory of the world revolution is not a matter of 10-day. Perhaps it is even matter of tomorrow, at least not in the sense as was said in 1917. If we consider things on a world scale, we are obliged to say that the interval between the present state and the realisation of the proletarian dictatorship on a world scale must be measured in years, and perhaps even in decades, at least if we include in addition to the big capitalist countries the colonial and semi-colonial countries. For the economic field which lies before us we must lay out exact land marks and we must not go beyond them, as I am asking myself what kind of land marks and fundamental rules we should include in the general program. Comrade Bukharin’s chief objection consisted in the assertion that we cannot even concrete everyday demands in the general program, the only temporary and might change very month or every week. He also said that these concrete everyday demands may vary in the various countries, and that we cannot therefore bring them under one heading. My opinion is that this is as certain as the fact that the bourgeois program is tied hand and hand with the nationalisation of the banks and trusts, and that the transition period which must absolutely be put in the Communist program. And I wish to say that a general program of the Communist International, which would be a blank on these questions, would be of very little practical worth for it would amount to saying that the whole of Western Europe (German delegates: hear, hear!), is just at this juncture that great importance should be attached to the transition period. I would like to mention certain questions which arise in this connection, and which, in my opinion, must be beyond all doubt included in a Communist Program. There is the question of control of production, of State capitalisation and of a general outline of taxation and financial policy for the various countries. The Parties may be committed with these almost any day. Their concrete forms change (Bukharin: that’s it). Yes, but one must have a general outline from which to draw practical conclusions. Let us take and use these conclusions as examples. It contained the groundwork of a taxation policy which, of course, is now out of date. You will certainly not deny, Comrade Bukharin, that the financial situation in various countries, including Germany, were very different at different periods; yet such a general guiding principle is most useful and important.

Comrades, a second important matter relating to the transition period is our period of the program submitted by Comrade Bukharin an admirable critical analysis of bourgeois democracy, but do you regard the Communist International as a solid whole, so that it suffices for all its features? You will find in the program submitted by Comrade Bukharin an admirable critical analysis of bourgeois democracy, but do you regard the Communist International as a solid whole, so that it suffices for all its features? You will find in the program submitted by Comrade Bukharin an admirable critical analysis of bourgeois democracy, but do you regard the Communist International as a solid whole, so that it suffices for all its features? You will find in the program submitted by Comrade Bukharin an admirable critical analysis of bourgeois democracy, but do you regard the Communist International as a solid whole, so that it suffices for all its features? You will find in the program submitted by Comrade Bukharin an admirable critical analysis of bourgeois democracy, but do you regard the Communist International as a solid whole, so that it suffices for all its features? You will find in the program submitted by Comrade Bukharin an admirable critical analysis of bourgeois democracy, but do you regard the Communist International as a solid whole, so that it suffices for all its features? You will find in the program submitted by Comrade Bukharin an admirable critical analysis of bourgeois democracy, but do you regard the Communist International as a solid whole, so that it suffices for all its features? You will find in the program submitted by Comrade Bukharin an admirable critical analysis of bourgeois democracy, but do you regard the Communist International as a solid whole, so that it suffices for all its features?
which may be grasped at in any essential transitional phase. A program which leaves us in the lurch during such phases, or which we can apply in some cases and cannot be applied in others has but little political value. I also find that Comrade Bukharin has not been quite consistent. If he really wishes to follow up in all consistency his denial of the transitional demands, he should oppose with all vehemence the Bulgarian program as well as the German program. It is quite obvious that he must do this.

I now leave this question and turn to that of the transitional demands, war communism, and the new economic policy in their relationship to the peoples of Western Europe. Here I wish to agree with all that Comrade Bukharin has said, but would like to add a few explanations.

It has been quite rightly said here that war communism, as also the new economic policy are not the products of a definite scheme, but were produced by iron necessity. These necessities were due to causes which are not of a specifically Russian but of a general nature. The question is how shall we apply these things to Western Europe?

Comrade Trotzky has well pointed out—has also Comrade Bukharin—that the necessities of civil war are frequently in contradiction to economic necessities. War communism is mainly a produce of civil war. We in Western Europe will also have to go through a period of civil war, after the conquest of power, although it may be foretold that this period will be much shorter than in Russia, and so war communism may not play such an important role with us. We cannot, of course, foresee these things in detail. But we may be sure that, during the civil war, we shall have to subordinate economic necessity to war necessity.

Now, with regard to the NEP in the West. The needs of the small peasantry exist in the West also, even if not to such a great degree. Many say that in Russia these conditions necessitated a special economic policy; while in Germany they will also produce a different economic policy. One forgets that in the period when this question will confront us Germans, we shall not have to deal with an isolated Germany, but probably with a German-Russian economic alliance. How would this mean? It would mean that those great masses of the Russian bourgeoisie will inject their interests into the German economic field, and that there will be a strengthening of the industrial factor in Russian economic life.

As far as we can see, this policy signifies a forward step for Russia, but it is probably a step backward for the West.

Comrades, the great importance of economic policy for the Parties of the Comintern program is upon the definition in our program of a relationship to the middle sections of society, the small peasants, the small traders and craftsmen, etc. I do not mean that we should construct a fixed policy, as there is no immediate economic necessity. We should, however, include in the program the considerations of indigence which regard to these classes will have to be swept aside by the necessities of civil war.

And now a few remarks with regard to the program in the West.

In our program and in the Bulgarian program we have placed the demand for the formation of co-operative small traders and petty manufacturers after the seizure of power. I would like to point out that in industry the co-operatives will play a different role from that of the agricultural. Let us imagine a country like Germany with a developed industry. Here the time will soon come when we will wish to absorb these small private enterprises in our large scale industry. Here the co-operative methods will have to extend for a longer time and the co-operatives themselves will be of a different character from the industrial co-operatives.

I now come finally to the conclusion of the program. I would like to remark here that on the whole, one can agree with Comrade Bukharin's proposals. We have ceased analysing the capitalist system in our program. We have begun to analyse its imperialist stage. We have come to the conclusion that this analysis is necessary and must be undertaken.

I believe that it will be necessary to consider the proposition of Comrade Varlamov and to return to the question of the program.
Fifteenth Session.
November 18th. (Evening).

Chairman: Comrade Kolarov.

Contents:
Preparatory Report of the program of the Communist International (country).
Speaker: Comrade Kabatchiev.

The necessity for a Communist Program.

The Second International is bankrupt. The period of peaceful development and growing prosperity of capitalism from 1871 to the beginning of the imperialist era, that is to say the beginning of the 20th century, has created and strengthened the opportunist tendencies of the Second International and left its impression on the program of the social democratic parties. The chief characteristics of the social democratic parties are the adaptation of the working class to capitalism, its acceptance of the capitalist system, and the postponement of socialism for an indefinite time.

This is why the social democratic parties have given so much attention to a minimum program, i.e., to demands realizable within the limits and on the basis of capitalist society; they have lost sight of the final aims: the conquest of political power by the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The New Revolutionary Era.

But the birth of imperialism and the imperialist wars which, beginning at the periphery of the capitalist world, drew all the large capitalist powers into war and the Russian revolution of 1905, followed by the revolutions in Turkey, China, Persia, have brought this peaceful period of capitalism to an end and ushered in a new period of wars and revolutions. During this period the whole capitalist world is affected by a general economic and political crisis. The revolutionary movement of the proletariat has grown in strength and scope. Imperialism, war, and the crisis, have sharpened the class antagonism and given rise to class war.

The conscious and revolutionary elements of the proletariat have led the social democratic parties into the revolutionary struggle by the fight against opportunism and their refuge with bourgeois nationalism.

Thus were created the conditions for the birth of the Communist International, which was finally created in 1919 and which menace the working class is characterized by the new methods of struggle: it is a struggle for the conquest of political power by mass actions. By general strikes, by armed insurrections, a minimum program has ceased to be the centre of the proletarian struggle. The revolutionary struggle for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat is now their goal.

The Experience of the Russian Revolution.

Naturally, the Communist Parties do not make use of the old program of democratic parties. The Paris Commune, the first attempt of the proletariat to assume power, gave Marx his main hand to enounce clearly the aims and means of the proletarian revolution, or the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. The Russian Revolution, which drew the masses into the hands of the proletariat of the largest country in the world, and which exists already for five years, is of much greater historical importance; it has shown to the proletariat of the world the forms and means of the proletarian dictatorship. The Russian Revolution must therefore serve the International and its affiliated sections as the most important example by which to determine the forms and aims of the dictatorship of the Proletariat as well as the means to conquer power. We must therefore go back to the Russian Revolution for our source from which to elaborate the program of the Communist International and of its national sections.

At its first Congress the Comintern stated its principles, and Second Congress, it has set the basis of its organization. At the Third Congress it settled the general policy of the Communist International; in the present period it is therefore time to elaborate the program of the Communist International and its sections. If the Fourth Congress cannot accomplish this task it is at least they must announce the basis upon which the sections of the Comintern must work during the coming year to attain the final program at the next Congress.

The Program of the Communist Party of Bulgaria.

The draft which the Communist Party of Bulgaria presented to the Congress is constructed on the following lines: the program is divided into two parts: the first one contains a general statement of principles, the theoretical foundation for the program; the second enumerates our concrete aims and the means for which our party is fighting, i.e., the program proper. The theoretical part is sub-divided into four parts:

1) An analysis of capitalist production and the development of modern capitalist society, the formation of the working class from capitalism into the creation of conditions for the social revolution within capitalist society.

2) An analysis of capitalist production and the development of modern capitalist society, the formation of the working class from capitalism into the creation of conditions for the social revolution within capitalist society.

3) The analysis of the imperialist era of capitalism, of the imperialist war, its consequences, the sharpening of class antagonism, the civil war, the Russian Revolution as the beginning of the world proletarian revolution.

4) The influence of imperialism and the imperialist war on the development of the Balkans and Bulgaria, the new conditions for the struggle of the party, its aims in this period.

The second part of the program, the program proper begins by a statement of the final aims of the Party, and then suggests the demands for which the party will fight during the period of social revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, i.e., a transition period from the bourgeois to communist society.

We have given a considerable place in our program to the general conditions of the Balkans, to the conditions under which the Balkan Communist Parties must fight and prepare for revolution. In this way we believe that this program which may serve as a model for the other Communist Parties in the Balkans. At the same time our program states the tasks of the Balkan Communist Federation as a necessary organization to prepare for the final victory of the revolution in the Balkans.

The Maximum Program of the Communist Party.

We are faced with the question whether the Communist Party should have a maximum and minimum program for the period of transformation. The Communist Party cannot accept a minimum program before the war, because the Communist Party bases itself on the conception that capitalism has entered a severe crisis which inevitably and rapidly will cause its final disruption, its downfall, and that the duty of the proletariat today is by adaptation—for this was the sense of the old minimum program—but to accelerate
the downfall of capitalism and the victory of the revolution.

Furthermore, political demands in the minimum program cannot be realised so long as the bourgeoisie maintains its power by a class dictatorship, even in the minimum program cannot be realised other than because of the economic crisis, the high cost of living and the destruction of capitalism.

The Communist Party believes that capitalism has entered the revolutionary crisis and that we are witnessing the beginning of the proletarian world revolution. This is why the main task of the proletariat and of the Communist Party is the conquest of political power and the realisation of the maximum program.

Can the Communist Party have a Minimum Program?

This is the question before us in the period before the conquest of power—which now seems longer than in 1918 and 1919—may the Communist Party renounce all demands within the limits of capitalism? Of course not. But these demands have not the same significance nor the same importance as in the old minimum program; they are only transitory demands from which the working class will rise in the larger demands of the maximum program. To-day, these demands have revolutionary significance; they are a step in the growth and intensification of the proletarian struggle.

Among these demands some are of a more temporary nature and depend upon the momentary condition of the struggle; they must be put up as slogans (demands of the hour).

The others are more durable. They contain the more important demands for which the Communist Party will fight until the conquest of power; they have a place in the program. But being of a temporary nature and do not determine the maximum demands and the conditions of the struggle; on the other hand, since the struggle for their realisation always brings us inevitably to the question of the conquest of power, and the realisation of maximum demands, we cannot give these major minimum demands an independent place in the program. They must be added to the maximum program and come at the end of the maximum demands.

The Program of the Russian Communist Party.

To determine the maximum demands of the program we must make use of the experience of the Russian Revolution and the program of the Russian Communist Party.

The program of the Communist Party of Russia contained that which the Social Democratic Parties lacked: it was the principal defect of those previous programs; the Russian program concretely brought out the principal tasks of the revolution during the revolutionary period for the conquest of power and the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the destruction of the capitalist state and the old regime, for the construction of the new State and social-society.

The principal aim of the Communist program is to bring out these principal tasks of the revolutionary proletariat in this matter one cannot ignore the experience of the Russian Revolution which is of world historical importance.

The Communist International and its national sections must use the experience of the Russian revolution which has given the true content of the proletarian program for the world, which has shown completely what the demands and the means of struggle during the proletarian revolution should be.

Naturally, this does not mean that we must copy the Russian program; it merely means that we must use it as a guide in carefully studying the conditions of each country and determine the program of each party by taking into account its special conditions.

The Tactics and Program of the Communist Party.

The question presents itself: must the program answer all questions on tactics which may be asked of the Community Party during the present period? In its program we must give the general line of our tactics, taking into consideration the principles of the Communist Party and the conditions of the present historical epoch, but we cannot now design

Parties which, after the victory of the Soviets in Russia, ceased to participate in parliamentary struggles. The Bulgarian Communist Party has continued with ever more energy and increasing success, to take part in these campaigns. In the parliamentary elections it has succeeded in rallying to its flag more than a quart the laborers of the country, and it has captured a whole series of rural and urban administrative bodies. The Party achieved these parliamentary successes through propaganda and a struggle based upon revolutionary demands. The struggle of the Party within parliament and the municipalities is indivisibly bound up with the struggle of the great masses of the workers and peasants with the masses of the Party, and with the continual growth of the membership of the Party and of its influence over the masses.

The Party fights for the overthrow of the capitalist State and all its organs—from parliament to the police and the army—and for the establishment of the soviet republic. Thus the tactics of the Bulgarian Communist Party do not contradict those of the Communist International but are in fact, in conformity with the principles of the International, adopted by this body.

The tactics of the Communist International were adopted by the Second Congress of the Communist International, and the parliamentary tactics adopted by that body.

Our program proposals no greater importance is attributed to parliamentary action than it deserves. It would perhaps be better to place this program in chapter one, concerning the soviet republic, in which bourgeois democracy is characterised as follows: 'Under the mask of democracy, the capitalist State supports the power and privileges of a minority composing the capitalist class, at the expense of the great majority of the citizens who are exploited. To-day the bourgeoisie maintains its rule through persecution and blood-thirsty terror and even when it establishes the democratic republic it maintains its domination by means of a dictatorship exercised through the police, the army and the whole apparatus of the capitalist State.'
limentary regime are but instruments of dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

Revolutionary Methods of Struggle.

Our program has enumerated the various methods to be used in the revolutionary struggle for the conquest of political power, as follows:

"The proletariat will accomplish the social revolution by seizing political power and establishing its class dictatorship." And again: "The imperialist war has brought in the epoch of social revolution. During this period the maximum program of the Communist Party attains immediate and practical importance in the struggle of the international proletariat.

"The experience of the Russian Revolution and of the revolutionary movement in other countries, has clearly indicated, not only the demands of the proletariat, but the means of their realisation; notably the organisation of the workers, and the struggle of the working masses for their immediate ends, leading up to the political general strike and armed insurrection."

"The revolutionary classes (the workers and poor peasants) must seize the political power of the State by armed force: they will crush the opposition of the bourgeois and the counter-revolution, and in this manner they will ensure their domination and the complete victory of the revolution, etc."

Thus, the most important methods of the revolutionary struggle are indicated in our proposed program.

The Revolutionary Demands of the Communist Party.

The objection that the maximum demands in our program are formulated in too concrete and detailed a manner, is not justified. It is true that our program has not confined itself to general and vague formulas, and that it has attempted to give an exact and clear definition both of the maximum and minimum demands of the Communist Party, but the program does not go into superfluous details which might hamper our work on the morrow of our conquest of power.

We repeat the fact that the proletariat must prepare itself for the conquest of power and for the proletarian dictator-

ship. The date of the revolution cannot be decided at present, but the general economic and political crisis in the capitalist world might cause it to break out in the very near future, for example in Central Europe or in the Balkans. While this prospect has not been thought it always keep in view, the Communist Parties, the vanguard of the working class revolutionary movement, must have a clear and precise program for the accomplishment of their task the day after their rise to power. Besides this, a concrete and clear maximum program, without being too detailed, is a powerful means of communist propaganda and education, and the rallying point for the masses to the Communist Party.

In conclusion, it is true that no programs are worth anything without a real revolutionary movement of the proletariat. On the other hand, it is also true that every proletarian movement, which has no substantial theoretical basis and a clear revolutionary aim, is condemned to impotence, and to be a tool in the hands of the capitalists.

In the actual period of social revolution, through which we are living, when the importance of the Communist International and of the Communist Parties increases every day, when the social patriots, with the working masses who are under their influence, serve as the principal support for the domination of the bourgeoisie—in this moment, the Communist International and its affiliated parties should have a program founded upon our basic theory, the Marxist theory, and a program which expresses in the clearest manner the demands of the revolutionary proletariat.

Kolakhoff: Comrades, we have heard the three reports on the communist program, the next question is, what will be our procedure. Shall we open general discussion, with the object of leading to a vote by the Congress on a proposed program? Or shall we postpone the discussion of the program until the next Congress? The German delegation has unanimously decided for the postponement of the discussion and the decisive vote until the next Congress. But the Russian delegation has asked the Presidium for an opportunity to consult among themselves on this question.

Now with regard to this question as to whether we must immediately discuss and rate on the program, or whether we shall postpone this until the next Congress, the Presidium has not thought it possible to render a decision. But it believes that satisfaction should be given to the Russian delegation by permitting it the possibility to formulate its position on this question of procedure.

The Presidium also proposes that no session be held to-morrow, Sunday, nor any meetings of Commissions. (Applause).

Therefore the next session will be held on Monday at 11 o'clock in the morning precisely—emphasis on the word "precisely." We shall commence, as we did today, at the appointed time, whatever number of delegates may be present. The question of the day will be the trade-union question. (Applause). The session is now closed.

(The session closed at 8.15 p.m.).

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