27

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS TO AMERICAN TRADE UNIONISTS.

Stalin's INTERVIEW WITH THE FIRST AMERICAN TRADE UNION DELEGATION TO SOVIET RUSSIA

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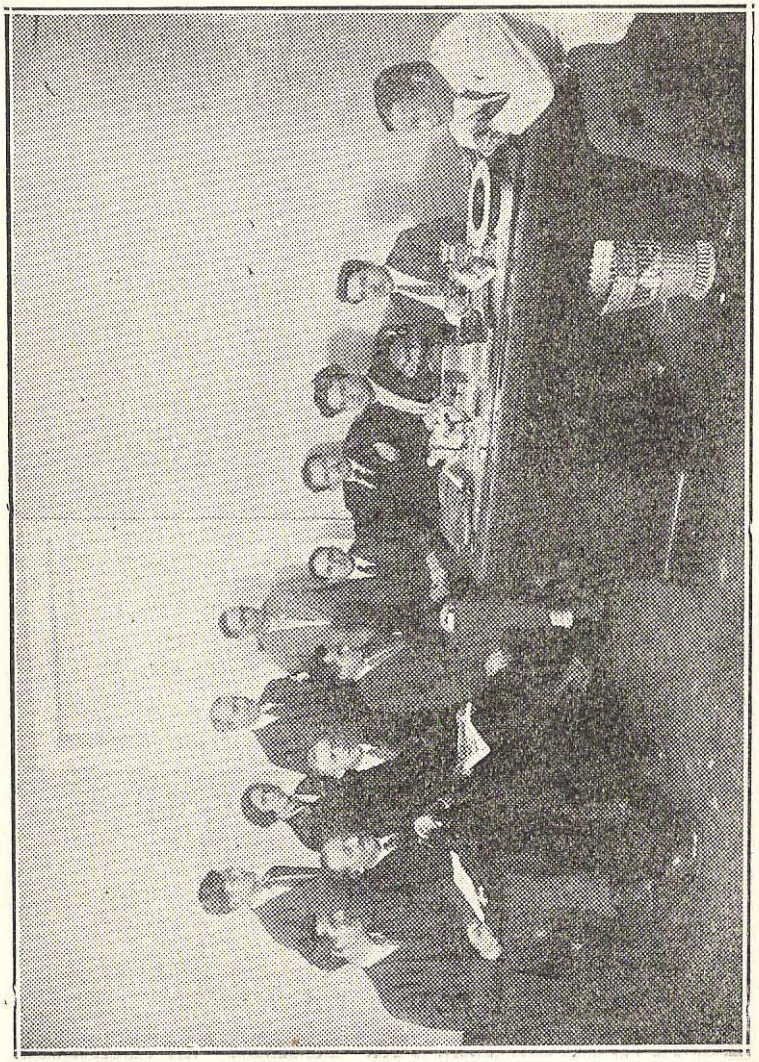
Stalin's Interview with the First American Trade Union Delegation to Soviet Russia



Some members of the American Trade Union Delegation in Russia interviewing Secretary Dogadov of the C. C. T. U.—Standing (left to right): Robt. W. Dunn, Miss Ginsberg (Interpreter), Jas. W. Fitzpatrick, Frank L. Palmer. Seated: Paul H. Douglas, Jas. H. Maurer, John Brophy, Albert F. Coyle, Belenky (Chairman Wage Dept., Central Council Trade Unions U. S. S. R.), Lees (Foreign Relations Dept., C. C. T. U.), Yaglom (Post and Telegraph Workers, U. S. S. R.), Dogadov, Secretary C. C. T. U.; Lesh, Interpreter.

FIRST AMERICAN TRADE UNION DELEGATION TO SOVIET RUSSIA

Honorary Chairman: L. E. Sheppard, President Order of Railway Conductors; Member first Federal Industrial Commission; Chairman U. S. Government Commission on Labor Conditions in the Hawaiian Islands.

Chairman: James H. Maurer, President Pennsylvania State Federation of Labor; President of Workers' Education Bureau; Chairman Brookwood Labor College Committee; Chairman Pennsylvania Old Age Assistance Commission.

John Brophy, President District 2, United Mine Workers of America (1917-27); member executive committee, Workers' Education Bureau; member Labor Committee, Brookwood Labor College; Vice-President Public Ownership League of America.

Frank L. Palmer, Editor Colorado *Labor Advocate;* member International Typographical Union; University of Denver and Denver Labor college.

James William Fitzpatrick, President Actors' and Artists of America, Holy Cross College and Catholic University of America.

Secretary: Albert F. Coyle, Executive Secretary All American Cooperative Commission; Editor *B. of L. E. Journal* (1921-27); Chairman Progressive Party of Cuyahoga County, O.; Editor, *Cooperative News Service;* graduate of Stanford and Yale Universities.

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS TO AMERICAN TRADE UNIONISTS

Stalin's Interview With The First American Trade Union Delegation to Soviet Russia

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21

INTRODUCTION

ONE of the most important events in the recent history of the American labor movement is the visit of the First American Labor Delegation to the Soviet Union.

To the superficial observer it is difficult to understand why and how it is that the Soviet Union plays such an important role in the development of the American labor movement. In America, we have the most powerful capitalist system. In Soviet Russia, we have a growing socialist economic system. In America the capitalist class rules unchallenged effectively. In Soviet Russia the proletariat rules unchallenged and unchallengeable. But this sharp difference in class relations and in the economic structure of the countries does not itself serve to create a gulf between these two labor movements.

The American labor movement has some very worthwhile traditions. Yet, when compared with the older labor movements in some of the European countries, the traditions of our working class are few. Particularly in a country where the labor movement is young, and the traditions are not many, does the existence of a Soviet Republic in another country play an important role as a source of inspiration and a source of experience. At this particular moment great masses of American workers are not consciously, sufficiently interested in the development within the Soviet Republic. Still there is already an appreciable section of the American working class, virile in character and growing in number, which is keenly interested in the progress and development of the First Workers and Farmers' Soviet Republic in the world.

The establishment of the 7-hour day in the Soviet Union, the steady progress towards building up socialism in the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, the increasing importance of Soviet Russia in the international arena, the marvelous growth and strength of the Russian trade union movement in contrast with the difficult position and collapse of the labor movement in the capitalist countries, all of these will serve to increase the interest of the great masses of American workers in the progress of the Soviet Republic.

Precisely because of the potentially powerful influences the progress of the Soviet Union will have on the United States as a whole and the American labor movement in particular, have the reactionary trade union bureaucrats mobilized prejudice, ignorance, slander and the vilest misrepresentation against the Soviet Union. Herein lies the reason for the trade union bureaucracy's present policy towards the Soviet Union. Our labor lieutenants of imperialism are well aware of the fact that once the great mass of workers would see through their lies about the Soviet Union, once this weapon of prejudice ended, then one of the

most powerful bulwarks of capitalist reaction in the United States—the trade union bureaucracy—would be dealt a mortal blow. This is the specific cause why the official leadership of the American Federation of Labor fights so bitterly against Soviet recognition and why it struggles so desperately against any attempt to bring to the American workers the facts about the situation in the Soviet Republic.

Under these conditions the visit of an American labor delegation composed of bona fide conservative trade unionists, assumes paramount importance. Soviet Russia, as seen thru the eyes of American trade unionists, is portrayed in the Report of the First American Labor Delegation. "Questions and Answers to American Trade Unionists" completes the study very thoroughly and gives the inside into the problems of the working class of the United States as well as Soviet Russia. This is true despite the fact that the labor delegation did not represent in a narrow form all the prejudices and misconceptions of most of the trade union bureaucracy now dominating the labor movement.

The gap between the developments of class consciousness among the American workers and the class consciousness of the workers in the Soviet Union, is clearly evidenced in the questions and answers herewith given. Equipped with a tremendous capacity for Leninist analysis, Comrade Stalin shows a remarkable understanding not only of the tasks and problems confronting the Russian proletariat, but also of the difficulties and tasks the American working class is facing. In his concise and lucid manner, Comrade Stalin explains very effectively the positive contributions of Leninism to Marxism, the development of the science of proletarian revolution, the role of the Communist Party, the proletarian dictatorship, the forms and methods of building up socialism and the effects of imperialism on the working class.

The discussion between Comrade Stalin and the American trade unionists also focuses attention on certain basic tasks and problems that our working class must meet and meet soon. Why are the American workers so poorly organized? Why is so small a proportion of American workers in the trade unions while so large a proportion of the Russian workers is—over 90 per cent—in the trade unions? What are the relations between the skilled and the unskilled workers in the United States. What lessons can we draw from these relations? How does it come about that the reactionary labor bureaucracy is often far more black in its conservative attitude than even some of the leaders of the bourgeoisie? Social insurance, the labor party, recognition of the Soviet Union, the Communist society, the role of the peasantry, incentive under Socialist production, the structure of the Soviet system and the development of genuine working class democracy in the Soviet Union, are among the many questions briefly but thoroughly analysed and explained in this third volume of the Workers Library series.

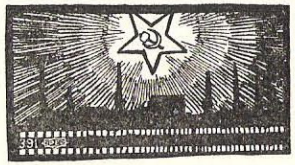
And why is it that the American Federation of Labor Executive Council has not uttered one word of protest against the recognition of the Fascist Government of Italy and Poland by the United States but has worked overtime to prevent the recognition of the Workers' and Farmers' Soviet Republic of Russia by the United States?

It is seldom that American workers, particularly leaders of the American working class, engage in so thorough an examination of such basic questions as the ones raised in the interview of the First American Labor Delegation with Comrade Stalin. The American workers may consider themselves fortunate to have had some of their leaders secure an explanation of such fundamental problems from so authoritative and able a leader of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union as Comrade Stalin.

Labor delegations from the United States to the Soviet Union are no longer a novelty. Since the ice has been broken by the delegation headed by James P. Maurer, President of the Pennsylvania State Federation of Labor, there has already gone to the Soviet Union another American Labor Delegation. This second trade union delegation is more representative of American labor in certain respects in that it has less of the officialdom and more of the rank and file in the basic industries of the country. Consequently the growing interest on the part of increasing sections of the American working class in the problems and progress of our Russian brothers should be further stimulated by the contents of this volume.

"Questions and Answers to American Trade Unionists," by Comrade Stalin, should go a good deal of the way towards helping lift the fog that has impeded the vision of the American working class. The Workers' Library, Publishers, can be thankful to the founders of this series, particularly Comrades Bertha and Samuel Rubin, Comrade J. Barry, Dr. B., A. T., and others who have rendered valuable service through their contributions to make possible the publication of such timely literature.

November 24, 1927. JAY LOVESTONE.



NOTE: In view of the fact that the English stenographic report of this interview was not available to the publishers, the report was translated from the Russian, which appeared in "Pravda" of September 15th. Consequently, while the speeches of the American delegates as given in this report are correct in substance, they are not presented as a verbatim report.

JOSEPH STALIN'S INTERVIEW WITH THE FIRST AMERICAN LABOR DELEGATION IN RUSSIA

(September 9, 1927)

I

QUESTIONS PUT BY THE DELEGATION AND STALIN'S REPLIES

QUESTION I: *What are the new principles that Lenin and Communist Party practice in Russia have added to Marxism? Would it be correct to say that Lenin believed in "creative revolutions" whereas Marx was more inclined to wait for the culmination of economic forces?*

REPLY: I think that Lenin "added" no "new principles" to Marxism nor did Lenin abolish any of the "old" principles of Marxism. Lenin always was and remained a loyal and consistent pupil of Marx and Engels, and wholly and entirely based himself on the principles of Marxism. But Lenin did not merely carry out the doctrines of Marx and Engels. He developed these doctrines further. What does that mean? It means that he developed the doctrines of Marx and Engels in accordance with the new conditions of development, with the new phase of capitalism and with imperialism. This means that in developing further the doctrines of Marx in the new conditions of the class struggle Lenin contributed to Marxism something new as compared with what was created by Marx and Engels and with what they could create in the pre-imperialistic period of capitalism. Moreover, the contribution made by Lenin to Marxism is based wholly and entirely on the principles laid down by Marx and Engels. In that sense we speak of Leninism as Marxism of the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolutions. Here, for example, are a number of questions in the sphere of which Lenin contributed something new in developing further the doctrines of Marx:

First, the question of monopolistic capitalism,—of impe-

rialism as the new phase of capitalism. Marx and Engels lived in the pre-monopolistic period of capitalism, in the period of the smooth evolution of capitalism and its "peaceful" expansion throughout the whole world. This old phase of capitalism came to a close towards the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries, when Marx and Engels had already passed away. Clearly Marx and Engels could only guess at the new conditions of the development of capitalism which arose out of the new phase of capitalism which succeeded the older phase. In the imperialistic monopolistic phase of development the smooth evolution of capitalism gave way to sporadic catastrophic development; the unevenness of development and the contradictions of capitalism emerged with particular force; the struggle for markets and spheres for the investment of capital conducted amidst conditions of extreme unevenness of development made periodical imperialist wars for a periodical redistribution of the world and of spheres of influence inevitable. The service Lenin rendered, and, consequently, his new contribution, consisted in that he made a fundamental Marxian analysis of imperialism as the final phase of capitalism, he exposed its ulcers and the conditions of its inevitable doom. On the basis of this analysis arose Lenin's well-known postulate that the conditions of imperialism made possible the victory of Socialism in separate capitalist countries.

Second: the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The fundamental idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat as the political domination of the proletariat and as a method of overthrowing the reign of capital by violence was created by Marx and Engels. Lenin's new contribution in this field consists in that (*a*) utilizing the experience of the Paris Commune and the Russian Revolution he discovered the Soviet form of government as the State form of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat; (*b*) he deciphered the formula of Dictatorship of the Proletariat from the point of view of the problem of the proletariat and its allies and defined the Dictatorship of the Proletariat as a special form of class alliance between the proletariat, who is the leader, and the exploited

masses of the non-proletarian classes (the peasantry, etc.) who are led; (*c*) he stressed with particular emphasis the fact that the Dictatorship of the Proletariat is a higher type of democracy in class society, the form of proletarian democracy, expressing the interests of the majority (the exploited) as against capitalist democracy which expresses the interests of the minority (the exploiters).

Third: the question of the forms and methods of the successful building up of Socialism in the period of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, in the period of transition from capitalism to Socialism in a country encircled by capitalist States. Marx and Engels regarded the period of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat as a more or less prolonged period replete with revolutionary conflicts and civil war in the course of which the proletariat in power would take the economic, political, cultural and organizational measures necessary for the purpose of establishing a new Socialist society, a society without classes and without a State, in place of the old capitalist society. Lenin wholly and entirely based himself on these fundamental postulates of Marx and Engels. Lenin's new contribution in this field was (*a*) he established the possibility of constructing a complete Socialist Society in a land of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat encircled by imperialist States provided the country is not crushed by the military intervention of the surrounding capitalist States; (*b*) he outlined the concrete path of economic policy ("the New Economic Policy") by which the proletariat, being in command of the economic key positions (industry, land, transport, the banks, etc.), links up Socialized industry with agriculture ("linking up industry with peasant argiculture") and thus leads the whole of national economy towards Socialism; (*c*) he outlined the concrete channels by which the bulk of the peasantry is gradually brought into the line of Socialist construction through the medium of the cooperative societies, which, in the hands of the Proletarian Dictatorship, represent a powerful instrument for the transformation of petty-peasant economy and for the re-education of the masses of the peasantry in the spirit of Socialism.

Fourth: the question of the hegemony of the proletariat in revolution, in all popular revolutions—in the revolution against czarism as well as in the revolution against capitalism. Marx and Engels presented the main outlines of the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat. Lenin's new contribution in this field consists in that he further developed and expanded these outlines into a complete system of the hegemony of the proletariat, into a symmetrical system of proletarian leadership of the masses of the toilers in town and country not only in the fight for the overthrow of czarism and capitalism, but also in the work of building up Socialism under the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. It is well known that, thanks to Lenin and his Party, the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat was skilfully applied in Russia. This, in passing, explains the fact that the Revolution in Russia brought the proletariat to power. In previous revolutions it usually happened that the workers did all the fighting at the barricades, shed their blood and overthrew the old order, but power passed into the hands of the bourgeoisie, which later oppressed and exploited the workers. That was the case in England and in France. That was the case in Germany; in Russia, however, things took a different turn. In Russia, the workers did not merely represent the shock troops of the Revolution. While serving as the shock troops of the Revolution, the Russian proletariat at the same time strove for the hegemony, for the political leadership of all the exploited masses of town and country, rallying them around itself, detaching them from the bourgeoisie and politically isolating the bourgeoisie. Being the leader of the exploited masses, the Russian proletariat all the time waged a fight to seize power in its own hands and utilize it in its own interests against the bourgeoisie and against capitalism. This explains why every powerful outbreak of the Revolution in Russia, as in October, 1905, and in February, 1917, gave rise to Councils of Workers' Deputies as the embryo of the new apparatus of power,—the function of which would be to crush the bourgeoisie—as against the bourgeois parliament, the old apparatus of power —the function of which was to crush the proletariat. On

two occasions the bourgeoisie in Russia tried to restore the bourgeois parliament and put an end to the Soviets: in August, 1917, at the time of the "Preliminary Parliament" prior to the capture of power by the Bolsheviks, and in January, 1918, at the time of the "Constituent Assembly" after power had been seized by the Proletariat. On both occasions these efforts failed. Why? Because the bourgeoisie was already politically isolated. The vast masses of the toilers regarded the proletariat as the sole leader of the revolution and the Soviets had been already tried and tested by the masses as their own workers' government. For the proletariat to have substituted these Soviets by a bourgeois parliament would be tantamount to committing suicide. It is not surprising, therefore, that bourgeois parliamentarism did not take root in Russia. That is why the Revolution in Russia led to the establishment of the rule of the proletariat. These were the results of the application of the Leninist system of the hegemony of the proletariat in Revolution.

Fifth: the national and colonial question. In analyzing the events in Ireland, India, China and the Central European countries like Poland and Hungary, in their time, Marx and Engels developed the basic, initial ideas of the national and colonial question. In his works Lenin based himself on these ideas. Lenin's new contribution in this field consists in (*a*) that he gathered these ideas into one symmetrical system of views on national and colonial revolutions in the epoch of imperialism; (*b*) that he connected the national and colonial question with the question of overthrowing imperialism, and (*c*) that he declared the national and colonial question to be a component part of the general question of international proletarian revolution.

Finally: the question of the Party of the proletariat. Marx and Engels gave the main outlines of the idea of the Party as being the vanguard of the proletariat without which (the Party) the proletariat could not achieve its emancipation, i. e., could not capture power or reconstruct capitalist society. Lenin's new contribution to this theory consists in that he developed these outlines further and applied them to the new

conditions of the struggle of the proletariat in the period of imperialism and showed (*a*) that the Party is a higher form of a class organization of the proletariat as compared with the other forms of proletarian organization (labor unions, co-operative societies, State organization) and, moreover, its function was to generalize and direct the work of these organizations; (*b*) that the Dictatorship of the Proletariat may be realized only through the Party as its directing force; (*c*) that the Dictatorship of the Proletariat can be complete only if it is led by a single Party, the Communist Party, which does not and must not share leadership with any other parties; and (*d*) that without iron discipline in the Party the tasks of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat to crush the exploiters and to transform class society into Socialist society cannot be fulfilled.

This, in the main, is the new contribution which Lenin made in his works; he developed and made more concrete the doctrines of Marx in a manner applicable to the new conditions of the struggle of the proletariat in the period of imperialism.

That is why we say that Leninism is Marxism of the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolutions.

From this it is clear that Leninism cannot be separated from Marxism, still less can it be contrasted to Marxism.

The question submitted by the delegation goes on to ask: "Would it be correct to say that Lenin believed in 'constructive revolution' whereas Marx was more inclined to await the culmination of the development of economic forces?"

I think it would be absolutely incorrect to say that. I think that every popular revolution, if it is really a popular revolution, is a constructive revolution; for it breaks up the old system and creates a new. Of course, there is nothing constructive in such revolutions (if we can call them that) as take place, let us say, in Albania in the form of toy "rebellions" of one tribe against another. But Marxists never regarded such toy "rebellions" as revolutions. Apparently, it is not such "rebellions" that we are discussing, but mass,

popular revolutions, the rising of oppressed classes against oppressing classes. Such a revolution cannot but be constructive. Marx and Lenin stood for such a revolution and only for such a revolution. It must be added, of course, that such a revolution cannot arise under all conditions, but can unfold itself only under certain favorable economic and political conditions.

QUESTION II. *Is it accurate to say that the Communist Party controls the Russian Government?*

REPLY: It all depends upon what is meant by control. In capitalist countries they have a rather curious conception of control. I know that a number of capitalist governments are controlled by big banks, notwithstanding the existence of "democratic" parliaments. The parliaments assert that they alone control the government. As a matter of fact, the composition of the governments is predetermined, and their actions are controlled by great financial consortiums. Who does not know that there is not a single capitalist "Power" in which the Cabinet can be formed in opposition to the will of the big financial magnates? It is sufficient to exert financial pressure to cause Cabinet Ministers to fall from their posts as if they were stunned. This is real control exercised by banks over governments in spite of the alleged control of parliament. If such control is meant, then I must declare that control of the government by money-bags is inconceivable and absolutely excluded in the U. S. S. R., if only for the reason that the banks have been long ago nationalized and the money-bags have been ousted. Perhaps the delegation did not mean control, but the guidance exercised by the Party in relation to the Government. If that is what the delegation meant by its question, then my reply is: Yes, our Party does guide the Government. And the Party is able to guide the Government because it enjoys the confidence of the majority of the workers and the toilers generally and it has the right to guide the organs of the Government in the name of this majority.

In what is the guidance of the Government by the workers' Party of the U. S. S. R., by the Communist Party of the U. S. S. R., expressed?

First of all it is expressed in that the Communist Party strives, through the Soviets and their Congresses, to secure the election to the principal posts in the Government of its own candidates, its best workers, who are loyal to the cause of the proletariat and prepared truly and faithfully to serve the proletariat. This it succeeds in doing in the overwhelming majority of cases because the workers and peasants have confidence in the Party. It is not an accident that the chiefs of Government departments in our country are Communists and that these chiefs enjoy enormous respect and authority.

Secondly, the Party supervises the work of the administration, the work of the organs of power; it rectifies their errors and defects, which are unavoidable; it helps them to carry out the decisions of the Government and strives to secure for them the support of the masses. It should be added that not a single important decision is taken by them without the direction of the Party.

Thirdly, when the plan of work is being drawn up by the various Government organs, in industry or agriculture, in trade or in cultural work, the Party gives general leading instructions defining the character and direction of the work of these organs in the course of carrying out these plans.

The bourgeois press usually expresses "astonishment" at this "interference" by the Party in the affairs of the Government. But this "astonishment" is absolutely hypocritical. It is well-known that the bourgeois parties in capitalist countries "interfere" in the affairs of the government and guide the government and moreover that in these countries this guidance is concentrated in the hands of a narrow circle of individuals connected in one way or another with the large banks and because of that they strive to conceal the part they play in this from the people. Who does not know that every bourgeois party in England, or in other capitalist countries, his its secret Cabinet consisting of a close circle of persons who concentrate the guidance in their hands?

Recall, for example, Lloyd George's celebrated reference to the "shadow Cabinet" in the Liberal Party. The differences between the land of the Soviets and the capitalist countries in this respect are (*a*) in capitalist countries the bourgeois parties guide the government in the interest of the bourgeoisie and against the proletariat, whereas in the U. S. S. R. the Communist Party guides the Government in the interests of the proletariat and against the bourgeoisie; (*b*) the bourgeois parties conceal from the people the role they play in guiding the State, and resort to suspicious, secret cabinets, whereas the Communist Party in the U. S. S. R. does not stand in need of such secret cabinets. It condemns the policy and practice of secret cabinets and openly declares to the whole country that it takes upon itself the responsibility for the guidance of the State.

ONE OF THE DELEGATES: On the same principles the Party guides the trade unions?

STALIN: In the main, yes. Formally, the Party cannot give instructions to the trade unions, but the Party gives instructions to the Communists who work in the trade unions. It is known that in the trade unions there are Communist fractions as there are also in the Soviets, cooperative societies, etc. It is the duty of these Communist fractions to secure by argument the adoption of decisions in the trade unions, in the Soviets, cooperative societies, etc., which correspond to the Party's instructions. This they are able to achieve in the overwhelming majority of cases because the Party exercises enormous influence among the masses and enjoys their great confidence. By these means is secured unity of action of the most varied proletarian organizations. If this were not done there would be confusion and clashing in the work of these working class organizations.

QUESTION III. *Since there is legality for one political party only in Russia how do you know that the masses favor Communism?*

REPLY: It is true that in the U. S. S. R. there are no

legal bourgeois parties, that only one party, the Party of the workers, the Communist Party, enjoys legality. Have we the ways and means, however, of convincing ourselves that the majority of the workers, the majority of the masses of the toilers sympathize with the Communists? We speak of course of the masses of the workers and peasants and not of the new bourgeoisie or of the remnants of the old exploiting classes which have been already crushed by the proletariat. Yes, it is possible. We have the ways and means of knowing whether the masses of the workers and peasants sympathize with the Communists or not. Take the most important moments in the life of our country and see whether there are any grounds for the assertion that the masses really sympathize with the Communists.

Take, first of all, so important a moment as the period of the October Revolution in 1917, when the Communist Party, precisely as a Party, openly called upon the workers and peasants to overthrow the rule of the bourgeoisie and when this Party obtained the support of the overwhelming majority of the workers, soldiers and peasants. What was the situation at the time? The Socialist Revolutionaries (SRs) and the Social Democrats (Mensheviks) allied with the bourgeoisie were in power then. The governmental apparatus, both in the center and locally, as well as the command of the 12-million army, was in the hands of these parties, in the hands of the government. The Communist Party was in a state of semi-legality. The bourgeoisie of all countries prophesied the inevitable collapse of the Bolshevik Party. The Entente wholly and entirely supported the Kerensky Government. Nevertheless, the Communist Party, the Bolshevik Party never ceased to call upon the proletariat to overthrow this government and to establish the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. What happened? The overwhelming majority of the masses of the toilers in the rear as well as at the front most emphatically supported the Bolshevik Party—the Kerensky Government was overthrown and the rule of the Proletariat was established. How is it that the Bolsheviks were able to emerge victorious at that time in spite of the malicious forecasts of the bourgeoisie of all countries of the doom of the Bolshevik Party? Does it not prove that the broad masses of the toilers sympathized with the Bolshevik Party? I think it does. This is the first test of the authority and influence of the Communist Party among the broad masses of the population.

Take the second period, the period of intervention and civil war, when the British capitalists occupied the North of Russia, the districts of Archangel and Murmansk, when the American, British, Japanese and French capitalists occupied Siberia and pushed Kolchak to the forefront, when the French and British capitalists took steps to occupy "South Russia" and raised on their shields Denikin and Wrangel. This was a war conducted by the Entente and the counter-revolutionary generals in Russia against the Communist Government in Moscow, against the achievements of the October Revolution. In this period the strength and stability of the Communist Party among the broad masses of the workers and peasants were put to the greatest test. And what happened? It is generally known that as a result of the Civil War the occupationary troops were driven from Russia and the counter-revolutionary generals were defeated by the Red Army.

Here it was proved that the outcome of war is decided in the last analysis not by technique, with which Kolchak and Denikin were plentifully furnished by the enemies of the U. S. S. R., but by proper policy, the sympathy and support of the millions of the masses of the population. Was it an accident that the Bolshevik Party proved victorious then? Of course not. Does not this fact prove that the Communist Party in Russia enjoys the sympathy of the wide masses of the toilers? I think it does. This is the second test of the strength and stability of the Communist Party in the U. S. S. R.

We will now take up the present period, the post-war period, when questions of peaceful construction are the order of the day. The period of economic ruin has given way to the period of the restoration of industry and later to the period of the reconstruction of the whole of our national economy on a new technical basis. Have we now ways and means of testing the strength and stability of the Communist Party,

of determining the degree of sympathy enjoyed by the Party among the broad masses of the toilers? I think we have.

Take first of all the trade unions which combine nearly 10 million proletarians. Let us examine the composition of the leading organs of these trade unions. Is it an accident that Communists are at the head of these organs? Of course not. It would be absurd to think that the workers in the U. S. S. R. are indifferent to the composition of the leading organs of their trade unions.

The workers in the U. S. S. R. grew up and received their training in the storms of three revolutions. They learned, as no other workers learned, to try their leaders and to expel them if they do not satisfy the interests of the proletariat. At one time the most popular man in our Party was Plekhanov. However, the workers did not hesitate to isolate him completely when they became convinced that he had abandoned the proletarian position. And if these workers express their complete confidence in the Communists, elect them to responsible posts in the trade unions, it is direct evidence that the strength and stability of the Communist Party among the workers in the U. S. S. R. is enormous. This is one test of the undoubted sympathy of the broad masses of the workers for the Communist Party.

Take the last Soviet elections. In the U. S. S. R. the whole of the adult population from the age of 18, irrespective of sex and nationality,—except the bourgeois elements who exploit the labor of others and those who have been deprived of their rights by the courts—enjoys the right to vote. The people enjoying the right to vote number 60 millions. The overwhelming majority of these, of course, are peasants. Of these 60 million voters, about 51 per cent, i. e., over 30 millions, exercise their right. Now examine the composition of the leading organs of our Soviets both in the center and locally. Is it an accident that the overwhelming majority of the elected leading elements are Communists? Clearly, it is not an accident. Does not this fact prove that the Communist Party enjoys the confidence of millions of the masses of the

peasantry? I think it does. This is another test of the strength and stability of the Communist Party.

Take the Comsomol (Communist Youth League) which combines nearly 2 million young workers and peasants. Is it an accident that the overwhelming majority of the elected leading elements in the Communist Youth League are Communists? I think that it cannot be said to be an accident. Thus you have another test of the strength and authority of the Communist Party.

Finally, take the innumerable conferences, consultations, delegate meetings, etc., which embrace millions of the masses of the toilers, both workingmen and working women, peasants and peasant women, among all the nationalities forming the U. S. S. R. In Western countries, people wax ironical over these conferences and consultations and assert that the Russians like to talk very much. For us, however, these conferences and consultations are of enormous significance in that they serve as a test of the mood of the masses and also as a means of exposing our mistakes and indicating the methods by which these mistakes may be rectified; for we make not a few mistakes and we do not conceal them, because we think that to expose these errors and honestly to rectify them is one of the best means of improving the management of the country. Take the speeches delivered at these conferences and consultations. Note the business-like and ingenuous remarks uttered by these "simple people," these workers and peasants; note the decisions taken and you will see how enormous is the influence and authority of the Communist Party, an influence and authority that any party in the world might envy. Thus you have still another test of the stability of the Communist Party.

These are the ways and means enabling us to test the strength and influence of the Communist Party among the masses of the people.

That is how I know that the broad masses of the workers and peasants in the U. S. S. R. sympathize with the Communist Party.

QUESTION IV. *If a non-party group should organize a fraction and nominate candidates for office on a platform which supported the Soviet Government, but at the same time demanded the abolition of the foreign trade monopoly, could they have a party treasury and conduct an active political campaign?*

REPLY: I think there is an irreconcilable contradiction in this question. We cannot conceive of a group basing itself on a platform supporting the Soviet Government and at the same time demanding the abolition of the monopoly of foreign trade. Why? Because the monopoly of foreign trade is one of the irremovable foundations of the "platform" of the Soviet Government; because a group demanding the abolition of the foreign trade monopoly could not support the Soviet Government; because such a group would be profoundly hostile to the whole Soviet system.

There are, of course, elements in the U. S. S. R. who demand the abolition of the monopoly of foreign trade. These are the Nepmen, the Kulaks, and the remnants of the already defeated exploiting classes, etc. But these elements represent an insignificant minority of the population. I do not think that the delegation has these elements in mind. If, however, the delegation refers to workers and peasant toilers, then I must say that the demand for the abolition of the monopoly of foreign trade would merely call forth ridicule and hostility among them.

Indeed, what would the abolition of monopoly of foreign trade mean for the workers? For them it would mean abandonment of the industrialization of the country, cessation of the construction of new works and factories and of the expansion of the old works and factories. To them it would mean that the U. S. S. R. would be flooded with goods from capitalist countries, the destruction of our industry, because of its relative weakness; increase in unemployment, deterioration of the material conditions of the working class, and the weakening of their economic and political conditions. In the last analysis it would mean the strengthening of the Nepmen and

the new bourgeoisie generally. Can the proletariat of the U. S. S. R. agree to committing suicide like this? Clearly it cannot.

And what would the abolition of the monopoly of foreign trade mean for the toiling masses of the peasantry? It would mean the transformation of our country from an independent country into a semi-colonial country and the impoverishment of the masses of the peasantry. It would mean a return to the system of "free trade" which prevailed under Kolchak and Denikin when the combined forces of the counter-revolutionary generals and the "Allies" freely plundered the many millions of the peasantry. In the last analysis it would mean the strengthening of the Kulaks and other exploiting elements in the rural districts. The peasants have sufficiently experienced the charms of this system in the Ukraine, in the North Caucasus, on the Volga, and in Siberia. What grounds are there for believing that they desire to put their heads into this noose again? Is it not clear that the toiling masses of the peasantry cannot support a demand for the abolition of the monopoly of foreign trade?

A DELEGATE: The delegation put forward the point concerning the monopoly of foreign trade and of its abolition as a point around which a whole group of the population might organize if there was not the monopoly of a single party, the monopoly of legality in the U. S. S. R.

STALIN: The delegation consequently is returning to the question of the monopoly of the Communist Party, as the sole legal Party in the U. S. S. R. I replied briefly to this question when I spoke about the ways and means of testing the sympathy of the millions of the masses of the workers and peasants towards the Communist Party. As for the other strata of the population, the Kulaks, the Nepmen, the remnants of the old, defeated, exploiting classes, they are deprived of the right to have their political organizations just as they are deprived of the right to vote. The proletariat deprived the bourgeoisie not only of the factories, workshops, banks, railroads, lands, and mines, but they also deprived them of the right to have their political organizations, because the prole-

tariat does not desire the restoration of the rule of the bourgeoisie. The delegation apparently does not object to the proletariat of the U. S. S. R. depriving the bourgeoisie and the landlords of their factories and workshops, of their land and railroads, banks and mines (laughter), but it seems to me that the delegation is somewhat surprised that the proletariat did not limit itself to this, but went further and deprived the bourgeoisie of political rights. This, to my mind, is not altogether logical, or to speak more correctly, is quite illogical. Why should the proletariat be called upon to show magnanimity towards the bourgeoisie? Does the bourgeoisie in Western countries, where they are in power, show the slightest magnanimity towards the working class? Do they not drive genuine revolutionary parties of the working class underground?

Why should the proletariat of the U. S. S. R. be called upon to show magnanimity towards their class enemy? You must be logical. Those who think that political rights can be restored to the bourgeoisie must, if they are to be logical, go further and raise the question of restoring to the bourgeoisie the factories and workshops, railroads and banks.

A DELEGATE: It is the task of the delegation to investigate how the opinion of the working class and the peasantry, as distinct from the opinion of the Communist Party, can find legal expression. It would be incorrect to believe that the delegation is interested in the question of granting political rights to the bourgeoisie, or in the manner in which the bourgeoisie may find legal expression of their opinions. The question is, in what manner can the opinions of the working class and of the peasantry, as distinct from the opinion of the Communist Party, find legal expression?

ANOTHER DELEGATE: These distinctive opinions could find expression in the mass organizations of the working class, in the trade unions, etc.

STALIN: All right. Consequently, the question is not one of the restoration of the political rights of the bourgeoisie, but of the conflict of opinion within the working class and among the peasantry. Is there any conflict of opinion among

the workers and the toiling masses of the peasantry at the present time? Undoubtedly there is. It is impossible for millions of workers and peasants to think all alike. This never happens. First of all, there is a great difference between the workers and peasants relative to their economic position and in their views concerning various questions. Secondly, there is some difference in outlook among various sections of the working class, difference in training, different ages, temperament, a difference between the old standing industrial workers and those who have migrated from the rural districts, etc. All this leads to a conflict of opinion among the workers and the toiling masses of the peasantry which finds legal expression at meetings, in trade unions, in cooperative societies, during elections to the Soviets, etc.

But there is a radical difference between the conflict of opinion now, under the proletarian dictatorship and conflict of opinion in the past, prior to the October Revolution. In the past, the conflict of opinion among the workers and the toiling peasantry was concentrated mainly on questions concerning the overthrow of the landlords, of czarism, of the bourgeoisie and of the break up of the whole capitalist system. Now, however, under the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, conflict of opinion does not revolve around questions concerning the overthrow of the Soviet Government, of the break-up of the Soviet system, but around questions concerning the improvement of the organs of the Soviet Government and improvement of their work. This makes a radical difference. There is nothing surprising in the fact that the conflict of opinion in the past around questions concerning the revolutionary destruction of a prevailing system gave grounds for the appearance of several rival parties in the working class and toiling masses of the peasantry. These parties were: the Bolshevik Party, the Menshevik Party, the Socialist Revolutionary Party. On the other hand it is not difficult to understand that conflict of opinion under the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, which has for its aim not the break-up of the existing Soviet system, but its improvement and consolidation, provides no nourishment for the existence of several parties

among the workers and the toiling masses in the rural districts. That is why the legality of a single Party, the Communist Party, the monopoly enjoyed by that Party, not only raises no objection among the workers and toiling peasants, but on the contrary, is accepted by them as something necessary and desirable.

The position of our Party as the only legal Party in the country (the monopoly of the Communist Party) is not something artificial and deliberately invented. Such a position cannot be created artificially by administrative machinations, etc. The monopoly of our Party grew up out of life, it developed historically as a result of the fact that the Socialist Revolutionary Party and Menshevik Party became absolutely bankrupt and departed from the stage of our social life. What were the Socialist Revolutionary Party and Menshevik Party in the past? They were channels for conducting bourgeois influence into the ranks of the proletariat. By what were these parties cultivated and sustained prior to October, 1917? By the existence of the bourgeois class and ultimately by the existence of bourgeois rule. Clearly, when the bourgeoisie was overthrown the basis for the existence of these parties disappeared. What did these parties become after October, 1917? They became parties for the restoration of capitalism and for the overthrow of the rule of the proletariat. Clearly these parties had to lose all support and all influence among the workers and the toiling strata of the peasantry.

The fight between the Communist Party and the Socialist Revolutionary Party and Menshevik Party for influence among the workers did not commence only yesterday. It commenced when the first symptoms of a mass revolutionary movement manifested themselves in Russia, even before 1905.

The period between 1903 and October, 1917, is the period of severe conflicts of opinion within the working class of our country, a period of struggle between the Bolsheviks, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries for influence in the working class. During this period the working class of the U. S. S. R. passed through three revolutions. In the fires of these revolutions it tried and tested the proletarian revolu-

tionary character of these parties and their fitness for the cause of the proletarian revolution.

In October, 1917, after history had summed up the whole of the past revolutionary struggle, and had weighed in the balance the various parties fighting within the working class —the working class of the U. S. S. R. made its final selection and accepted the Communist Party as the only proletarian party. How is the fact that the working class selected the Communist Party to be explained? In April, 1917, for example, the Bolsheviks in the Petrograd Soviet represented an inconsiderable minority. The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks at that time had an overwhelming majority. In the October days the whole apparatus of the Government and all means of coercion were in the hands of the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik Parties who had allied themselves with the bourgeoisie. It is explained by the fact that the Communist Party stood for the termination of the war, for an immediate democratic peace, while the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties insisted upon "War to Complete Victory," the continuation of the imperialist war. It is explained by the fact that the Communist Party stood for the overthrow of the Kerensky Government, for the overthrow of the rule of the bourgeoisie, for the nationalization of the factories and workshops, of the banks and railroads, whereas the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary parties fought in defence of the Kerensky Government and defended the right of the bourgeoisie to the factories and the workshops, the banks and the railroads. It is to be explained by the fact that the Communist Party stood for the immediate confiscation of the estates of the landowners for the benefit of the peasantry, whereas the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties postponed this question until the Constituent Assembly should be convened, which in its turn was postponed for an indefinite time. What is surprising, therefore, in the fact that the workers and the poor peasants made their final selection in favor of the Communist Party? What is there surprising in the fact that the Socialist-Revolutionary

and Menshevik parties went to the bottom so quickly? That is why the Communist Party came to power.

The subsequent period, the period following October, 1917, the period of civil war, was the period in which the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries finally met their doom; it was the period of the final triumph of the Bolshevik Party. In that period the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries themselves facilitated the triumph of the Communist Party. Broken up and sent to the bottom during the October Revolution, remnants of the Menshevik Party and Socialist-Revolutionary Party began to link themselves up with counter-revolutionary Kulak rebellions, allied themselves with Kolchak and Denikin, went into the service of the Entente and finally and utterly discredited themselves in the eyes of the workers and peasants. The situation then created was that the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, having changed from bourgeois revolutionaries into bourgeois counter-revolutionaries, helped the Entente to strangle the new Soviet Russia, whereas the Bolshevik Party, rallying around itself all that was vital and revolutionary, roused fresh ranks of workers and peasants in increasing numbers for the fight in defence of the Socialist fatherland, and against the Entente. It was quite natural that the victory of the Communists in that period should and in fact did lead to the utter defeat of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. What is there surprising, therefore, in the fact that after all this the Communist Party became the sole Party of the working class and the poor peasantry?

That is how the monopoly of the Communist Party as the only legal Party in the country arose.

You speak of a conflict of opinion among the workers and peasants at the present time, under the proletarian dictatorship. I have said already that conflict of opinion exists and will exist in the future, that no progress is possible without this, but conflict of opinion among the workers under present conditions centers not around the question of principle of the overthrow of the Soviet system, but around practical questions like the improvement of the Soviets, the rectification of

errors committed by the Soviet organs and, consequently, of consolidating the Soviet rule. Such a conflict of opinion can only serve to strengthen and perfect the Communist Party. Such conflict of opinion can only serve to strengthen the monopoly of the Communist Party. Such a conflict of opinion cannot provide nourishment for other parties within the working class and among the toiling peasantry.

QUESTION V. *Will you summarize briefly the outstanding differences between yourself and Trotsky?*

REPLY: I must say first of all that the differences with Trotsky are not personal differences. If these differences bore a personal character, the Party would not concern itself with them for a single hour, for it does not like personalities to make themselves prominent. Apparently, you mean the differences in the Party. That is how I understand the question. Yes, such differences do exist in the Party.

The character of these differences was described rather in detail by Comrade Rykov in a speech he delivered recently in Moscow and by Comrade Bukharin in Leningrad. These speeches have been published. I have nothing to add to what is stated in them concerning these differences. If you have not obtained these documents I can get them for you. (The delegation states that it is in possession of the documents.)

A DELEGATE: On our return we shall be questioned concerning these differences, but we have not all the documents. For example, we have not the platform of the "83."

STALIN: I did not sign that platform. I have no right to dispose of other peoples' documents. (Laughter.)

QUESTION VI. *In capitalist countries the chief incentive to production is furnished by the hope of private profit. This incentive is of course relatively absent in the U. S. S. R. What alternative displaces it and in*

your opinion, how effective is it? Can it be maintained indefinitely?

REPLY: It is true that the principal motive power of capitalist economy is profit. It is true also that obtaining profit is neither the aim nor the motive power of our Socialist industry. What then is the motive power of our industry?

First of all, the fact that the factories and workshops in the U. S. S. R. belong to the whole people and not to capitalists, that the factories and workshops are managed not by the appointees of capitalists, but by representatives of the working class; the consciousness that the workers work, not for the capitalist, but for their own State, for their own class, represents an enormous driving force in the development and perfection of our industry. It must be observed that the overwhelming majority of the factory and works managers in Russia are workingmen, appointed by the Supreme Economic Council in agreement with the trade unions and that not a single factory manager can remain at his post contrary to the will of the workers or the particular trade union.

It must be observed also that in every factory and workshop there is a factory council, elected by the workers, which controls the activities of the management of the particular enterprise. Finally, it must be observed that in every industrial enterprise regular production conferences of workers are held in which all the workers employed in the given enterprise take part and at which the work of the manager of the enterprise is discussed and criticized; the plan of work in the factory administration is discussed, errors and defects are noted and rectified through the trade unions, through the Party and through the organs of the Soviet administration. It is not difficult to understand, therefore, that all these circumstances radically alter the position of the workers as well as the state of affairs in the various enterprises. While, under capitalism the workers regard their factory as a prison, under the Soviet system the workers no longer regard the factory as a prison, but as something near and dear to them and in the development and improvement of which they are vitally

interested. It is hardly necessary to prove that this new attitude of the workers towards the enterprise in which they are employed, this understanding of the close ties that link the workers with the enterprise, represents a powerful driving force for the whole of our industry. This circumstance explains the fact that the number of worker-inventors in the field of technique of production, and worker-organizers of industry increases from day to day.

Secondly, the revenues from industry in Russia are employed not for the enrichment of individuals, but for the further expansion of industry, for the improvement of the material and cultural conditions of the working class, for reducing the price of industrial commodities necessary both for the workers and for the peasants, which again is the improvement of the material conditions of the toiling masses. A capitalist cannot employ his revenues for improving the welfare of the working class. He lives for profit; otherwise he would not be a capitalist. He obtains profit in order to invest it as surplus capital in less developed countries suffering from a shortage of capital in order again to obtain fresh and increased profit. That is how capital flows from the United States to China, to Indonesia, to South America and Europe and from France to the French colonies and from England to the British colonies.

In the U. S. S. R. things are altogether different; for we neither conduct nor recognize colonial policy. In Russia, the revenues from industry remain in the country and are employed for the further expansion of industry, for improving the conditions of the workers, for enlarging the capacity of the home market, including also the peasant market, by reducing the price of industrial commodities. Ten per cent of the profits from industry in our country goes to a fund for improving the social conditions of the workers. A sum equal to 13 per cent of the wages paid is contributed to a sick insurance fund for the insurance of workers. (This represents 800 million roubles per annum.) A certain part of the revenues (I cannot just now say exactly how much) is employed for cultural requirements, vocational training and vacations for

the workers. A fairly considerable part of these revenues (again I cannot now say exactly how much) is employed for the annual increase in the money wages of the workers. The rest of the revenues from industry are employed for the further expansion of industry, for the repair of old workshops, for the construction of new workshops and finally for the reduction of prices of industrial commodities. The enormous significance of these circumstances for our industry consists in (*a*) that they facilitate the linking up of agriculture with industry and the smoothing out of the antagonism between town and country; (*b*) that they facilitate the increase of the capacity of the home market—urban and rural—and by that create a constantly expanding base for the further development of industry.

Finally, the nationalization of industry facilitates the conduct of industry as a whole according to plan.

Will these stimuli and motive forces of our industry be permanent factors? Can they be permanently operative factors? Yes, undoubtedly they are permanently operative stimuli and motive forces, and the more our industry develops, the more the strength and significance of these factors will grow.

QUESTION VII. *How far can Soviet Russia cooperate with the capitalist industry of other countries? Is there a definite limit to such cooperation or is it simply an experiment to discover in which field such cooperation is possible and in which it is not?*

REPLY: Apparently this is a reference to temporary agreements with capitalist states in the field of industry, in the field of commerce and perhaps of diplomatic relations. I think that the existence of two opposite systems, the capitalist system and the Socialist system, does not exclude the possibility of such agreement. I think that such agreements are possible and expedient in conditions of peaceful development. Exports and imports are the most suitable ground for such agreements. We require equipment, raw material (raw cotton for example), semi-manufactures, (metals, etc.) while the capitalists require a market for their goods. This provides a basis for agreement. The capitalists require oil, timber, grain products and we require a market for these goods. Here is another basis for agreement. We require credits, the capitalists require good interest for their credits. Here is still another basis for agreements in the field of credit. It is well known that the Soviet organs are most punctual in their payments.

The same thing may be said in regard to the diplomatic field. We are pursuing a policy of peace and we are prepared to sign a pact of non-aggression with bourgeois States. We are pursuing a policy of peace and we are prepared to come to an agreement concerning disarmament right up to the complete abolition of standing armies, which we declared to the whole world as far back as the time of the Genoa Conference. Here is a basis for agreement on the diplomatic field.

The limits to these agreements? The limits are set by the opposite characters of the two systems between which there is rivalry and conflict. Within the limits permitted by these two systems, but only within these limits agreement is quite possible. This is proved by the experience of the agreements concluded with Germany, Italy, Japan, etc.

Are these agreements merely experiments? Or can they be of a more or less prolonged character? That does not altogether depend upon us. It depends also upon the other parties. It depends upon the general situation. A war may upset any and every agreement. Finally, it depends upon the terms of the agreement. We can never accept conditions of bondage. We have an agreement with Harriman who is exploiting the Manganese mines in Georgia. That agreement extends for twenty years. As you see, not a brief period. We have also an agreement with the Lena Goldfields Company, which is extracting gold in Siberia. That agreement has been signed for thirty years,—a still longer period. Finally, we have an agreement with Japan concerning the exploitation of the oil and coal fields in Saghalin. We would like these agreements to have a more or less solid character. But that depends of course not only upon us, but upon the other parties.

QUESTION VIII. *What are the chief ways in which Russia differs from capitalist states in her treatment of national minorities?*

REPLY: Apparently, this refers to the nationalities in the U. S. S. R. who were formerly oppressed by Czarism and the Russian exploiting classes and who did not enjoy state sovereignty. The principal distinction is that while in capitalist states national oppression and national enslavement prevails, in the U. S. S. R. both the one and the other have been radically abolished. In capitalist states, side by side with nations of the first rank, privileged nations, "sovereign" nations, we have second rank nations, "non-sovereign" nations, nations which do not enjoy equality, which are deprived of various rights, principally of sovereign rights. In the U. S. S. R., however, all the attributes of national inequality and national oppression have been abolished. In the U. S. S. R., all nations are equal and sovereign, for the national and State privileges which previously were enjoyed by the Great Russian people have been abolished. We do not of course speak of declarations of national equality. All bourgeois and Social-Democratic parties have made not a few declarations concerning national equality. What is the value of such declarations if they are not carried out? The thing to do is to abolish those classes which are the bearers, the creators and the conduits of national oppression. In Russia these classes were the landlords and capitalists. We overthrew these classes and by that abolished the possibility of national oppression. And precisely for the reason that we abolished these classes real national equality became possible in the U. S. S. R. This is what we call the application of the idea of self-determination of nations including even the right of complete separation. Precisely for the reason that we carried out the self-determination of nations, we managed to eliminate mutual suspicion between the toiling masses of the various nationalities in the U. S. S. R. and to unite these nationalities on a voluntary basis into one Federal State. The present Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, is the result of our national policy and expression of

the voluntary federation of the nationalities in the U. S. S. R. into one federal state.

It is hardly necessary to prove that such a policy in the national question is inconceivable in capitalist countries, for there, the capitalists who are the creators and conduits of national oppression are still in power. For example, we cannot fail to observe that the supreme organ of the U. S. S. R., the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets, is headed not necessarily by one Russian chairman, but by six chairmen, representing each of the federal republics forming the U. S. S. R., of whom one is a Russian (Kalinin), the second a Ukrainian (Petrovsky), the third a White Russian (Cheriakov), the fourth and Azerbaidjanian (Musabekov), the fifth a Turkoman (Aitakov), and the sixth an Uzbek (Faizulla Hodjaev). This fact is a striking expression of our national policy. It need hardly be said that not a single bourgeois republic, however democratic it may be, would do this. And yet, with us it is taken as a matter of course, as following directly from our policy of national equality.

QUESTION IX. *American labor leaders justify their struggle against the Communists on two grounds:* (1) *The Communists are disrupting and destroying the labor movement by their factional fights inside the unions and their attacks on all union officials who are not radicals, and* (2) *American Communists take their orders from Moscow and hence cannot be good trade unionists since their loyalty to an outside foreign body is placed above their loyalty to the union. How can this difficulty to adjusted so that American communists can work jointly with other sections of the American labor movement?*

REPLY: I think that the attempts of the American labor leaders to justify their struggle against the Communists do not stand examination. No one has yet proved nor can it be proved that the Communists disrupt the labor movement. But it can be taken as fully proved that the Communists are the most loyal and boldest champions of the labor movement all

QUESTION X. *Is any money now being sent to America to aid either the American Communist Party or the Communist paper, The "Daily Worker"? If not how much do American Communists remit to the Third International in annual membership dues?*

REPLY: If this has reference to the relations between the Communist Party of America and the Third International, I must say that the Communist Party of America, as part of the Communist International most likely pays affiliation fee to the Comintern. On the other hand, the Comintern, being the central body of the International Communist movement, we assume, renders assistance to the Communist Party of America whenever it thinks it necessary. I do not think there is anything surprising or exceptional in this. If however, the question refers to the relations between the Communist Party of America and the Communist Party of the U. S. S. R., I must say that I do not know of a single occasion on which the representatives of the American Communist Party appealed for aid to the Communist Party of the U. S. S. R. You may think this strange but it is a fact, which indicates that the American Communists are rather independent. What would happen if the Communist Party of America did appeal for aid to the Communist Party of the U. S. S. R.? I think the Communist Party of the U. S. S. R. would render it whatever assistance it could. Indeed, what would be the worth of the Communist Party, a Party which is in power, if it refused to do what it could to aid the Communist Party of another country laboring under the yoke of capitalism. I would say that such a Communist Party would not be worth a cent. Let us assume that the American working class had come into power after overthrowing its bourgeoisie. Let us assume that the working class of another country appealed to the working class of America, which had emerged victorious in a great struggle against capitalism, for material aid; would the American working class refuse it? I think it would disgrace itself if it hesitated to give the assistance asked for.

QUESTION XI. *We understand that some good Communists are not in entire sympathy with the Communist Party's demand that all new members be atheists, now that the reactionary clergy are suppressed. Could the Communist Party in the future take a neutral attitude towards a religious faith which supported all the teachings of science and did not oppose Communism? Could you in the future permit some Party members to hold religious opinions if they did not conflict with Party loyalty?*

REPLY: In this question there are several inexactitudes. In the first place, I do not know of any such "good Communists" that the delegates talk about. It is hardly likely that such Communists exist at all. Secondly, I must declare that speaking formally, we have no conditions of Party membership which demand that a candidate for Party membership shall be an Atheist.

The conditions of membership of our Party are: acceptance of the program and rules of the Party; absolute subordination to the decisions of the Party and its organs; payment of membership dues; and membership in one of the Party locals.

A DELEGATE: I often read of expulsions from the Party because of belief in God.

STALIN: I can only repeat the conditions of membership in our Party that I have just mentioned. We have no other condition.

Does that mean the Party is neutral towards religion? No, it does not. We carry on and will continue to carry on propaganda against religious prejudices. Our legislation guaranteed to citizens the right to adhere to any religion. This is a matter for the conscience of each individual. That is precisely why we carried out the separation of the Church from the State. But in separating the Church from the State and proclaiming religious liberty we at the same time

guaranteed the right of every citizen to combat by argument, by propaganda and agitation any and all religion. The Party cannot be neutral towards religion and does conduct anti-religious propaganda against all and every religious prejudice because it stands for science, while religious prejudices run counter to science, because all religion is something opposite to science. Cases such as recently occurred in America in which Darwinists were prosecuted in court, cannot occur here because the Party carries out a policy of the general defense of science. The Party cannot be neutral towards religious prejudices and it will continue to carry on propaganda against these prejudices because this is one of the best means of undermining the influence of the reactionary clergy who support the exploiting classes and who preach submission to these classes. The Party cannot be neutral towards the bearers of religious prejudices, towards the reactionary clergy who poison the minds of the toiling masses. Have we suppressed the reactionary clergy? Yes, we have. The unfortunate thing is that it has not been completely liquidated. Anti-religious propaganda is a means by which the complete liquidation of the reactionary clergy must be brought about. Cases occur when certain members of the Party hamper the complete development of anti-religious propaganda. If such members are expelled it is a good thing because there is no room for such "Communists" in the ranks of our Party.

QUESTION XII. *Can you outline briefly the characteristics of the Society of the future which Communism is trying to create?*

REPLY: The general characteristics of Communist society are given in the works of Marx, Engels and Lenin. Briefly, the anatomy of Communist society may be described as follows: It is a society in which (*a*) there will be no private ownership of the means of production but social, collective ownership; (*b*) there will be no classes or State, but workers in industry and agriculture managing their economic affairs as a free association of toilers; (*c*) national economy will be

organized according to plan, will be based on the highest technique in both industry and agriculture; (*d*) there will be no antagonism between town and country, between industry and agriculture; (*e*) the products will be distributed according to the principle of the old French Communists: "from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs"; (*f*) science and art will enjoy conditions conducive to their highest development; (*g*) the individual, freed from bread and butter cares, and of necessity of cringing to the "powerful of the earth," will become really free, etc., etc. Clearly, we are still remote from such a society.

With regard to the international conditions necessary for the complete triumph of Communist society, these will develop and grow in proportion as revolutionary crises and revolutionary outbreaks of the working class in capitalist countries grow.

It must not be imagined that the working class in one country or in several countries will march towards Socialism and still more to Communism while the Capitalists of other countries sit still with folded arms and look on with indifference. Nor must it be imagined that the working class in capitalist countries will agree to be mere spectators of the victorious development of Socialism in one or another country. As a matter of fact, the capitalists will do all in their power to crush such countries. As a matter of fact, every important step taken towards Socialism, and still more towards Communism, in any country will be inevitably accompanied by the unrestrained efforts of the working class in capitalist countries directed towards achieving the dictatorship and Socialism in those countries. Thus, in the further progress of development of the international revolution, two world centers will be formed: the Socialist center, attracting to itself all the countries gravitating towards Socialism, and the Capitalist center, attracting to itself all the countries gravitating towards capitalism. The fight between these two centers for the conquest of world economy will decide the fate of Capitalism and Communism throughout the whole world, for the final defeat of world capitalism means the victory of Socialism in the arena of world economy.

STALIN'S QUESTIONS TO THE DELEGATION AND ITS REPLIES

STALIN: If the delegation is not too tired, I would ask it to permit me to put several questions. (Delegation agrees).

QUESTION I. *How do you account for the small percentage of American workers organized in trade unions? I think there are about 17 million industrial workers in America (the delegates explain that there are from 18 to 19 million industrial workers). I think that about 3 millions are organized. (Delegates explain that the American Federation of Labor has a membership approximately of 3 million and that besides these about a half million workers are organized in other unions, so that taken together 3½ million workers are organized.) Personally I think that the proportion of American workers organized in trade unions is very small. In the U. S. S. R. 90% of all the proletarians in the country are organized in trade unions.*

I would like to ask the delegation whether it regards this small percentage of organized workers as a good thing. Does not the delegation think that this small percentage is an indication of the weakness of the American proletariat and of the weakness of its weapon in the struggle against the capitalists in the economic field?

BROPHY: The small membership of trade unions is to be explained not by the bad tactics applied in the labor organizations but by the general economic conditions prevailing in the country, which do not stimulate the whole mass of the workers to organize. These favorable economic conditions restrict the necessity of the working class to fight against the capitalists. Of course, these conditions will change. And simultaneously with the change in these conditions, the trade unions will grow and the whole of the trade union movement will proceed along a different path.

DOUGLAS: I agree with the explanation given by the previous speaker. To that I add however, that first of all, it is necessary to bear in mind that wages in the United States

have been recently increased considerably by the capitalists themselves. This process of rising wages was observed in 1917, 1919 and later. If we compare the real wages prevailing at the present time with the wages prevailing in 1911, we will find that they are considerably higher. In the process of its development the trade union movement at first based itself and still bases itself on the craft principle, according to trade, and the trade unions were formed mainly for skilled workers. At the head of these unions, there were definite leaders who represented a close organization and strove to obtain good conditions for their members. They had no stimuli to widen the labor organizations or to organize the unskilled workers. Moreover, the American trade unions come up against well-organized capitalism which has at its disposal all means to prevent the organization of all the workers in trade unions. If for example, a trust encounters the too strong resistance of the trade unions in one of its enterprises, it will close down that enterprise and transfer its work to another. In this way the resistance of the trade unions is broken. The American capitalists voluntarily raise the wages of the workers but give them no economic power or the possibility of fighting for the economic improvement of their conditions of life. Another very important fact in America is that the capitalists sow dissension among the workers of various nationalities. In the majority of cases the unskilled workers are immigrants from Europe or as become the case recently, Negroes. Dissension is also sown between skilled workers and unskilled workers.

The capitalists systematically sow antagonism among the workers of various nationalities irrespective of their degree of skill. During the last ten years American capitalism has been conducting a more enlightened policy in that they are forming their own trade unions, the so-called company unions. They strive to develop the workers' interest in the enterprise and in the increase of profits. American capitalism shows a tendency to substitute horizontal division by vertical division, i. e., to split up the working class and to give it an interest in capitalism.

COYLE: I approach the question not from the theoretical point of view but from the practical point of view. It is true that it is easier to organize the workers in good times but the statistics of the membership of the American Federation of Labor show that the A. F. of L. is gradually losing the unskilled workers and is increasing its membership of skilled workers. Thus the American Federation of Labor desires to become and is gradually becoming an organization principally of the skilled workers. The trade union movement in America barely touches the unskilled workers. The big branches of industry are hardly touched by the trade unions. Of these big branches of industry only the mining and railroad industries are organized to any extent, and even in the coal industry 65 per cent of the workers are unorganized. The workers in such industries as steel, rubber, and automobiles are hardly organized at all. It may be said that the trade unions do not touch the unskilled workers. There are a number of trade unions outside the American Federation of Labor which strive to organize the unskilled and semi-skilled workers. As for the position taken up by the leaders of the American Federation of Labor, for example, the President of the Machinists Union quite frankly stated that he does not wish to attract the unskilled workers to his union. The position in regard to the trade union leaders is this: that a leader caste has grown up consisting of a few score of individuals who receive enormous salaries up to $10,000 per annum and even more, into which it is extremely difficult to penetrate.

DUNN: The question put by Stalin is not fair because if in this country 90 per cent of the workers are organized, it must be borne in mind that here power is in the hands of the working class, whereas in capitalist countries the workers are an oppressed class and the bourgeoisie does everything to prevent the workers from organizing. Moreover, there are reactionary trade unions led by reactionary leaders in those countries. In the conditions prevailing in America it is very difficult to get into the heads of the workers the very idea of

trade unionism. This explains why trade unionism in America is not so widespread.

STALIN: Does the speaker agree with the previous speaker that certain leaders of the labor movement in America strive to restrict the trade union movement?

DUNN: I agree.

STALIN: I did not wish to offend anybody. I merely wanted to clear up for myself the difference in the situation that exists in America as compared with the U. S. S. R. If I have offended anybody I hope you will forgive me. (Laughter.)

STALIN: Is there a system of State insurance of workers in America?

A DELEGATE: There is no system of State insurance of workers in America.

COYLE: In the majority of states compensation is paid for accidents during employment and the maximum of 30 per cent of the loss of earning capacity is paid. This is in the majority of states. The compensation is paid by the private firms in whose enterprises the accident occurred. But the law demands that compensation shall be paid.

STALIN: Is there State insurance against unemployment in America?

A DELEGATE: No. The funds for insurance against unemployment might satisfy from 80 to 100,000 unemployed in all states.

COYLE: There is insurance (not government insurance) against accidents during employment but there is no insurance against sickness or old age. The insurance fund is made up

of contributions from the workers. As a matter of fact the fund is provided by the workers themselves, because if the workers did not organize these funds they would receive higher wages and as these funds are established in agreement with the employers the workers receive a smaller wage. As a matter of fact, the employers contribute only a very small proportion of the fund, about 10 per cent. Almost the whole of it is made up by the workers.

STALIN: I think the comrades will be interested to learn that in the U. S. S. R. more than 800 million roubles per annum are appropriated for workers' insurance. It will not be superfluous to add also that our workers in all branches of industry, in addition to their ordinary money wages, receive a supplementary grant of about one-third of the wages paid for insurance, social improvements, cultural requirements.

QUESTION II. *How do you explain the absence of a special mass workers' party in the United States? The bourgeoisie in America have two parties, the Republican Party and the Democratic Party. But the American workers have no mass party of their own. Do not the comrades think that the absence of such a mass workers' party even if it were like the British Labor Party weakens the working class in its political fight against the capitalists? Then again, why do the leaders of the Labor movement in America, Green and the others, so strongly oppose the establishment of a Labor Party in America?*

BROPHY: Yes, the leaders did decide that there was no necessity for forming such a Party. However, there is a minority which considers that such a Party is necessary.

Conditions in America at the present time are such, as has been pointed out already, that the trade union movement is extremely weak. The weakness of the trade union movement is to be explained in its turn by the fact that the working class at present does not have to fight against the capitalists

because the capitalists themselves increase wages and guarantee to them satisfactory material conditions.

STALIN: But it is the skilled workers mainly whose material conditions are guaranteed. There is a contradiction here. On the one hand it would appear that there is no necessity for organization because the workers are provided for. On the other hand it is said that the more secure workers, the skilled workers, are organized in the trade unions. Thirdly, it would appear that the unorganized workers are those least provided for, namely, the unskilled workers who most of all stand in need of organization. I cannot understand this at all.

BROPHY: Yes. There is a contradiction. But so are American political and economic conditions contradictory.

BREBNER: Although the unskilled workers are not organized, they have the political right to vote, so that if there is any discontent the unskilled workers can express this discontent by exercising their political right to vote. On the other hand the organized workers who belong to trade unions, when particularly bad times come, do not turn to their union but exercise their vote. Thus the political right to vote compensates for the lack of trade union organization.

ISRAELS: One of the principal difficulties is the very system of election in the United States. Is is not the man for whom the majority of the votes of the whole country is cast, or even the majority of the votes of any particular class is cast, that is elected as President. In every state there is an electoral college; every state has a certain number of electors who participate in the election of the President. To be elected, the candidate must obtain 51 per cent of the votes. If there were 3 or 4 parties no one candidate would be elected and the election of the President would have to be transferred to the Congress. This is an argument against forming a third Party.

The opponents of the third party argue in this way: Don't

put forward a third candidate because you will split the liberal vote and you will prevent the liberal candidate from being elected.

STALIN: But Senator LaFollette in his time was creating a third bourgeois party. It follows then that the third party will not split votes if it is a bourgeois party, but it may split votes if it is a labor party.

DAVIS: I do not regard the fact mentioned by the previous speaker as a fundamental one. I think the most important point is the following. I will quote the example of the city in which I live. During the election campaign the representative of a certain party gives the trade union leader an important job in connection with the campaign and places certain funds at his disposal, which he uses for his own purpose. In this way he obtains a high prestige connected with his job. It turns out, therefore, that the leaders of the trade union support one or the other of the bourgeois parties. Naturally, when there is any talk of forming a third party, a labor party, these labor leaders refuse to do anything in the matter. They argue that if a third party were formed there would be a split in the trade union movement.

DOUGLAS: The fact that only skilled workers are organized in trade unions is due principally to the fact that in order to be able to form a union a man must have money and be will off, because the entrance fees are high and the unskilled worker cannot afford to pay. Moreover, the unskilled workers is under the constant danger of being thrown out of work if he attempts to organize. The unskilled workers can be organized only with the active aid of the skilled workers.

In the majority of cases this aid is not forthcoming and this is one of the principal obstacles to the organization of the unskilled workers. The principal means by which the workers can defend their rights are political means. This in my opinion is the principal reason why the unskilled work-

ers are unorganized. I consider the economic condition the principal factor in the unorganized state of the unskilled workers in the political and industrial fields. I must point to a special feature of the American electoral system. The direct primary election, in which any man may get to the election booth, declare himself a democrat or a republican and cast his vote. I am convinced that Gompers could not keep the workers on a non-partisan political program if he did not have the argument of the direct primary. He always told the workers that if they wished to act politically, they could join either of the existing two political parties, get the responsible positions in them and command influence. With this argument Gompers managed to keep the workers away from the idea of organizing the working class and of forming a Labor Party.

QUESTION III. *How do you explain that on the question of recognizing the U. S. S. R. the leaders of the American Federation of Labor are more reactionary than many bourgeois? How do you explain that bourgeois like Mr. Borah and others are in favor of recognizing the U. S. S. R., while American labor leaders like Gompers and Green have conducted and still conduct reactionary propaganda against the recognition of the first workers' Republic, against the recognition of the U. S. S. R.? How do you explain that even a reactionary like the late President of the United States Woodrow Wilson was able to "greet" Soviet Russia, while Green and other leaders of the American Federation of Labor wish to be more reactionary than the capitalists? Here is the text of the "greeting" Woodrow Wilson sent to the Soviet Congress in Russia in March, 1918, at the time that the troops of the German Kaiser were marching against Soviet Leningrad:*

May I not take advantage of the meeting of the Congress of the Soviets to express the sincere sympathy which the people of the United States feel for the Russian people at this moment when Germany moves its military forces into your country to interrupt and turn back the whole struggle for freedom and substitute the wishes of Germany for the purpose of the people of Russia?

Although the Government of the United States is, unhappily, not now in a position to render the direct and effective aid it would wish to render, I beg to assure the people of Russia through the Congress that the Government of the United States will avail itself of every opportunity to secure for Russia once more complete sovereignty and independence in her own affairs and full restoration to her great role in the life of Europe and the modern world.

The whole heart of the people of the United States is with the people of Russia in the attempt to free themselves forever from outocratic government and become the masters of their own life. [*Pravda*, No. 50, March 16, 1918.]

Can we regard it as normal when the leaders of the American Federation of Labor desire to be more reactionary than reactionary Wilson?

BROPHY: I cannot precisely explain the reason but I think that the leaders of the American Federation of Labor are opposed to the recognition of Soviet Russia for the very same reason that the American Federation of Labor is not affiliated to the Amsterdam International. I think it is due to the peculiar philosophy of the American workers and to the difference in the economic conditions of the American workers as compared with the European workers.

STALIN: But as far as I know the American Federation of Labor does not object to the recognition of Italy or Poland where Fascism reigns.

BROPHY: By quoting the example of Poland and Italy where there are Fascist governments you explain the reason for the non-recognition of the U. S. S. R. by America. The hostile attitude towards the U. S. S. R. is explained by the unpleasantness which the Communists at home cause the American labor leaders.

DUNN: The argument used by the last speaker—that the labor leaders cannot recognize the U. S. S. R. because they

cannot get on with the Communists at home is not convincing because they preached the non-recognition of the U. S. S. R. before the American Communist Party was organized. The principal reason is that the leaders of the American Federation of Labor are opposed to everything in the nature of Socialism. In this they are encouraged by the capitalists who have their own organization, called the National Civic Federation, which does its utmost to rouse American society against Socialism in any form. This organization opposed the position taken by Ivy Lee who advocates the development of commercial relations between American and the U. S. S. R. The leaders of this organization say: "How can we maintain order among our own working class when liberals begin to talk like this?" The National Civic Federation is an organization of a group of capitalists who have invested a large sum of money in it and who control it. It should be mentioned that the vice-president of this reactionary organization is Matthew Woll, the vice-president of the American Federation of Labor.

BROPHY: The explanations regarding the reactionary character of the labor leaders that have been made here are inadequate. We must look deeper. The presence of the American delegation in the U. S. S. R. is the best reply, and is evidence of the sympathy of a section of the American workers to the workers of the Soviet Union. I think that the opinion of the leaders of the American Federation of Labor in regard to the U. S. S. R. does not differ from the opinion of the majority of the working class in America. The position of the majority of the working class in regard to the U. S. S. R. is to be explained by the remoteness from the U. S. S. R. The working class of America is not interested in international affairs and the influence of the bourgeoisie on the working class of America makes itself felt very strongly in regard to its attitude towards the U. S. S. R.

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