

## VI. THE STRATEGY AND TACTICS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL IN THE STRUGGLE FOR THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

### 2. THE FUNDAMENTAL TASKS OF COMMUNIST STRATEGY AND TACTICS

The successful struggle of the Communist International for the dictatorship of the proletariat presupposes the existence in every country of a compact Communist Party, hardened in the struggle, disciplined, centralized, and linked up with the masses.

*The Party* is the vanguard of the working class and consists of the best, most class-conscious, most active, and most courageous members of that class. It incorporates the whole body of experience of the proletarian struggle. Basing itself upon the revolutionary theory of Marxism and representing the general and lasting interests of the whole of the working class, the Party personifies the unity of proletarian principles, of proletarian will and of proletarian revolutionary action. It is a revolutionary organization, bound by iron discipline and strict revolutionary rules of democratic centralism, which can be carried out thanks to the class-consciousness of the proletarian vanguard, to its loyalty to the revolution, its ability to maintain inseparable ties with the proletarian masses and to its correct political leadership, which is constantly verified and clarified by the experiences of the masses themselves.

In order that it may fulfill its historic mission of achieving the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Communist Party must first of all set itself and accomplish the following fundamental *strategic* aims:

Extend its influence over the *majority of members of its own class*, including working women and the working youth. To achieve this, the Communist Party must secure predominant influence in the broad mass proletarian organizations (Soviets, trade unions, factory committees, cooperative societies, sport organizations, cultural organizations, etc.). It is particularly

important for the purpose of winning over the majority of the proletariat, to capture the *trade unions*, which are genuine mass working-class organizations closely bound up with the everyday struggles of the working class. To work in reactionary trade unions and skillfully capture them, to win the confidence of the broad masses of the industrially organized workers, to change and “remove from their posts” the reformist leaders, represent important tasks in the preparatory period.

The achievement of the dictatorship of the proletariat presupposes also that the proletariat acquires hegemony over *wide sections of the toiling masses*. To accomplish this, the Communist Party must extend its influence over the masses of the urban and rural poor, over the lower strata of the intelligentsia and over the so-called “small man,” i.e. the petty bourgeois strata generally. It is particularly important that work be carried on for the purpose of extending the Party’s influence over the *peasantry*. The Communist Party must secure for itself the whole-hearted support of that stratum of the rural population that stands closest to the proletariat, i.e. the agricultural laborers and the rural poor. To this end, the agricultural laborers must be organized in separate organizations; all possible support must be given them in their struggles against the rural bourgeoisie, and strenuous work must be carried on among the small allotment farmers and small peasants. In regard to the middle strata of the peasantry in developed capitalist countries, the Communist Parties must conduct a policy to secure their neutrality. The fulfillment of all these tasks by the proletariat—the champion of the interests of the whole people and the leaders of the broad masses in their struggle against the oppression of finance capital—is an essential condition precedent for the victorious Communist revolution.

The tasks of the Communist International connected with the revolutionary struggle in *colonies, semi-colonies and dependencies* are extremely important strategic tasks in the world proletarian struggle. The colonial struggle presupposes that the broad masses of the working class and of the peasantry in the colonies be rallied around the banner of the revolution; but this

cannot be achieved unless the closest cooperation is maintained between the proletariat in the oppressing countries and the toiling masses in the oppressed countries.

While organizing, under the banner of the proletarian dictatorship, the revolution against imperialism in the so-called civilized States, the Communist International supports every movement against imperialist violence in the colonies, semi-colonies and dependencies themselves (for example Latin-America); it carries on propaganda against all forms of chauvinism and against the imperialist maltreatment of enslaved peoples and races, big and small (treatment of Negroes, "yellow labor," anti-Semitism, etc.), and supports their struggles against the bourgeoisie of the oppressing nations. The Communist International especially combats the chauvinism that is preached in the Empire-owning countries by the imperialist bourgeoisie as well as by its social-democratic agency, the Second International, and constantly holds up in contrast to the practices of the imperialist bourgeoisie the practice of the Soviet Union, which has established relations of fraternity and equality among the nationalities inhabiting it.

The Communist Parties in the *imperialist countries* must render systemic aid to the colonial revolutionary liberation movement and to the movement of oppressed nationalities generally. The duty of rendering active support to these movements rests primarily upon the workers in the countries upon which the oppressed nations are economically, financially or politically dependent. The Communist Parties must openly recognize the right of the colonies to separation and their right to carry on propaganda for this separation, i.e. propaganda in favor of the independence of the colonies from the imperialist State; they must recognize their right of armed defense against imperialism (i.e. the right of rebellion and revolutionary war) and advocate and give active support to this defense by all means in their power. The Communist Parties must adopt this line of policy in regard to all oppressed nations.

The Communist Parties in the *colonial and semi-colonial countries* must carry on a bold and consistent struggle against foreign imperialism and unfailingly conduct propaganda in favor of friendship and unity with the proletariat in the imperialist countries. They must openly advance, conduct propaganda for and carry out the slogan of agrarian revolution, rouse the broad masses of the peasantry for the overthrow of the landlords and combat the reactionary and medieval influence of the clergy, of the missionaries and other similar elements.

In these countries, the principal task is to organize the workers and the peasantry *independently* (to establish class Communist Parties of the proletariat, trade unions, peasant leagues and committees and, in a revolutionary situation, Soviets, etc.) and to free them from the influence of the national bourgeoisie, with whom temporary agreements may be made only on the condition that they, the bourgeoisie, do not hamper the revolutionary organization of the workers and peasants, and that they carry on a genuine struggle against imperialism.

In determining its line of *tactics*, each Communist Party must take into account the concrete internal and external situation, the correlation of class forces, the degree of stability and strength of the bourgeoisie, the degree of preparedness of the proletariat, the position taken up by the various intermediary strata in its country, etc. The Party determines its slogans and methods of struggle in accordance with these circumstances, with the view to organizing and mobilizing the masses on the broadest possible scale and on the highest possible level of this struggle.

When a revolutionary situation is developing, the Party advances certain transitional slogans and partial demands corresponding to the concrete situation; but these demands and slogans must be bent to the revolutionary aim of capturing power and of overthrowing bourgeois capitalist society. The Party must neither stand aloof from the daily needs and struggles of the working class nor confine its activities exclusively to them. The task of the Party is to utilize these minor every-day needs as a

*starting point* from which to lead the working class to the *revolutionary struggle for power*.

When the revolutionary tide is rising, when the ruling classes are disorganized, the masses are in a state of revolutionary ferment, the intermediary strata are inclining toward the proletariat and the masses are ready for action and for sacrifice, the Party of the proletariat is confronted with the task of leading the masses to a direct attack upon the bourgeois State. This it does by carrying on propaganda in favor of increasingly radical transitional slogans (for Soviets, workers' control of industry, for peasant committees for the seizure of the big landed properties, for disarming the bourgeoisie and arming the proletariat, etc.), and by organizing *mass action*, upon which all branches of the Party agitation and propaganda, including parliamentary activity, must be concentrated. This mass action includes: a combination of strikes and demonstrations; a combination of strikes and armed demonstrations and finally, the general strike conjointly with armed insurrection against the State power of the bourgeoisie. The latter form of struggle, which is the supreme form, must be conducted according to the rules of war; it presupposes a plan of campaign, offensive fighting operations and unbounded devotion and heroism on the part of the proletariat. An absolutely essential condition precedent for this form of action is the organization of the broad masses into militant units, which, by their very form, embrace and set into action the largest possible numbers of toilers (Councils of Workers' Deputies, Soldiers' Councils, etc.), and intensified revolutionary work in the army and navy.

In passing over to new and more radical slogans, the Parties must be guided by the fundamental role of the political tactics of Leninism, which call for ability to lead the masses to revolutionary positions in such a manner that the masses may, by their own experience, convince themselves of the correctness of the Party line. Failure to observe this rule must inevitably lead to isolation from the masses, to putschism, to the ideological degeneration of Communism into "Leftist" dogmatism and to petty bourgeois "revolutionary" adventurism. Failure to take advantage of the

culminating point in the development of the revolutionary situation, when the Party of the proletariat is called upon to conduct a bold and determined attack upon the enemy, is not less dangerous. To allow that opportunity to slip by and fail to start rebellion at that point means to allow the initiative to pass to the enemy and to doom the revolution to defeat.

When the *revolutionary tide is not rising*, the Communist Parties must advance *partial* slogans and demands that correspond to the every-day needs of the toilers, and combine them with the fundamental tasks of the Communist International. The Communist Parties must not, however, at such a time, advance *transitional* slogans that are applicable only to revolutionary situations (for example workers' control of industry, etc.). To advance such slogans when there is no revolutionary situation means to transform them into slogans that favor merging with the capitalist system of organization. Partial demands and slogans generally form an essential part of correct tactics; but certain transitional slogans go inseparably with a revolutionary situation. Repudiation of partial demands and transitional slogans "on principle," however, is incompatible with the tactical principle of Communism, for in effect, such repudiation condemns the Party to inaction and isolates it from the masses. *United front tactics* also occupy an important place in the tactics of the Communist Parties throughout *the whole revolutionary period* as a means toward achieving success in the struggle against capital, toward the class mobilization of the masses and the exposure and isolation of the reformist leaders.

The correct application of united front tactics and the fulfillment of the general task of winning over the masses presupposes in their turn systematic and persistent work in the *trade unions* and other mass proletarian organizations. It is the bounden duty of every Communist to belong to a trade union, even a most reactionary one, provided it is a mass organization. Only by constant and persistent work in the trade unions and in the factories for the steadfast and energetic defense of the interests of the workers, together with ruthless struggle against the reformist

bureaucracy, will it be possible to win the leadership in the workers' struggle and to win the industrially organized workers over to the side of the Party.

Unlike the reformists, whose policy is to split the trade unions, the Communists defend *trade union unity* nationally and internationally on the basis of the class struggle, and render every support to and strengthen the work of the *Red International of Labor Unions*.

In universally championing the current every-day needs of the masses of the workers and of the toilers generally, in utilizing the bourgeois parliament as a platform for revolutionary agitation and propaganda, and subordinating the partial tasks to the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Parties of the Communist International advance partial demands and slogans in the following main spheres:

In the sphere of *labor*, in the narrow meaning of the term, i.e. questions concerned with the *industrial struggle* (the fight against the trustified capitalist offensive, wage questions, the working day, compulsory arbitration, unemployment), which *grow* into questions of the general political struggle (big industrial conflicts, fight for the right to organize, right to strike, etc.); in the sphere of *politics* proper (taxation, high cost of living, Fascism, persecution of revolutionary parties, white terror and current politics generally); and finally the sphere of *world politics*; viz., attitude towards the U.S.S.R. and colonial revolutions, struggle for the unity of the international trade union movement, struggle against imperialism and the war danger, and the systematic preparation for the fight against *imperialist war*.

In the sphere of the *peasant* problems, the partial demands are those appertaining to taxation, peasant mortgage indebtedness, struggle against usurer's capital, the land hunger of the peasant small holders, rent, the metayer (crop-sharing) system. Starting out from these partial needs, the Communist Party must sharpen the respective slogans and broaden them out into the slogans: confiscation of large estates, and workers' and peasants' government (the synonym for proletarian dictatorship in developed

capitalist countries and for democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry in backward countries and in certain colonies).

Systematic work must also be carried on among the proletarian and peasant *youth* (mainly through the Young Communist International and its sections) and also among *working women and peasant women*. This work must concern itself with the special conditions of life and struggle of the working and peasant women, and their demands must be linked up with the general demands and fighting slogans of the proletariat.

In the struggle against *colonial oppression*, the Communist Parties *in the colonies* must advance partial demands that correspond to the special circumstances prevailing in each country such as: complete equality for all nations and races; abolition of all privileges for foreigners; the right of association for workers and peasants; reduction of the working day; prohibition of child labor; prohibition of usury and of all transactions entailing bondage; reduction and abolition of rent; reduction of taxation; refusal to pay taxes, etc. All these partial slogans must be subordinate to the fundamental demands of the Communist Parties such as: complete political national independence and the expulsion of the imperialists, workers' and peasants' government, the land to the whole people, eight-hour day, etc. The Communist Parties in *imperialist countries*, while supporting the struggle proceeding in the colonies, must carry on a campaign in their own respective countries for the withdrawal of imperialist troops, conduct propaganda in the army and navy in defense of the oppressed countries fighting for their liberation, mobilize the masses to refuse to transport troops and munitions and, in connection with this, to organize strikes and other forms of mass power, etc.

The Communist International must devote itself especially to systematic preparation for the struggle against the *danger of imperialist wars*. Ruthless exposure of social chauvinism, of social imperialism and of pacifist phrasemongering intended to camouflage the imperialist plans of the bourgeoisie; propaganda in favor of the principal slogans of the Communist International;

every-day organizational work in connection with this, in the course of which work legal methods must unfailingly be combined with illegal methods; organized work in the army and navy—such must be the activity of the Communist Parties in this connection. The fundamental slogans of the Communist International in this connection must be the following: Convert imperialist war into civil war; defeat the “home” imperialist government; defend the U.S.S.R. and the colonies by every possible means in the event of imperialist war against them. It is the bounden duty of all Sections of the Communist International, and of every one of its members, to carry on propaganda for these slogans, to expose the “Socialistic” sophisms and the “Socialistic” camouflage of the League of Nations and constantly to keep to the front the experiences of the war of 1914-1918.

In order that revolutionary work and revolutionary action may be coordinated and in order that these activities may be guided most successfully, the international proletariat must be bound by *international class discipline*, for which, first of all, it is most important to have the strictest international discipline in the Communist ranks.

The international Communist discipline must find expression in the subordination of the partial and local interests of the movement to its general and lasting interests and in the strict fulfillment, by all members, of the decisions passed by the leading bodies of the Communist International.

Unlike the Social-Democratic, Second International, each section of which submits to “its own,” national bourgeoisie and of its own “fatherland,” the sections of the Communist International submit to only one discipline, viz., international proletarian discipline, which guarantees victory in the struggle of the world’s workers for world proletarian dictatorship. Unlike the Second International, which splits the trade unions, fights against colonial peoples, and practices unity with the bourgeoisie, the Communist International is an organization that guards proletarian unity in all countries and the unity of the toilers of all races and all peoples in their struggle against the yoke of imperialism.

Despite the bloody terror of the bourgeoisie, the Communists fight with courage and devotion on all sectors of the international class front, in the firm conviction that the victory of the proletariat is inevitable and cannot be averted.

*“The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their aims can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling class tremble at a Communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.*

*“Workers of all countries, unite!”*