

Workers Party Educational Department

Conducted by James P. Cannon, Educational Director

"Without a Revolutionary Theory a Revolutionary Party is Impossible."

Program of Communist Propaganda

Thesis Adopted by Fifth Congress of Communist International.

(Concluded from last Saturday.)

V. Program and Methods of Propaganda.

The most urgent political aim of Marxist-Leninist propaganda is to bolshevize the party by connecting party education all along the line with the existing political problems and the tactical and organizational tasks of the Communist International and of the various Communist Parties. This principle must underly the entire program and the methods of Communist propaganda work. Programs as well as methods must concern themselves with the practical side of party work. While avoiding abstract educational programs and methods as much as possible the parties, however, must endeavor to provide party officials and rank and file members with opportunities to acquire the theoretical knowledge which Marxism-Leninism offers to the working class and which as the development of the Russian and international revolutions have shown, are alone capable of serving as a guide to the final goal. Great care must be taken, however, not to contrast Marxism to Leninism, or rather the Marxism, of the life time of Marx and Engels, to Leninism. At all costs must we provide the conception arising that Marxism is the theory while Leninism is the practice of the revolutionary labor movement. Both Marxism and Leninism comprise the theory and practice of the working class struggle for emancipation. They represent the unity between revolutionary theory and revolutionary practice, in contradistinction to the decadent "Marxism" of the Second International which adhering to so-called "orthodox" Marxism separating theory from practice; it rejected revolutionary action in practice altho it recognized it in theory. "Leninism is Marxism of the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolution. To put it more concisely: Leninism is the theory and the tactics of the proletarian revolution in general, and the theory and the tactics of the proletarian dictatorship in particular" (Stalin). This is the basis for the program of Communist education, the methods of Marxist-Leninist propaganda. The educational program in the Communist propaganda instructions cannot consist of Leninism without Marxism. In the epoch of imperialist development and proletarian revolution Marxism cannot be adequately advocated except in the form of Leninism.

31. Marxist-Leninist economics are the theory of the state and must occupy a prominent place in the syllabus of party schools. Events in the epoch of imperialism must serve as the basis of the study of economic theory. The syllabus must also include the study of the strategic, tactical, and organizational problems of the proletarian revolution and the Leninist solution of these problems on the basis of the history of the Russian and international revolution. Last but not least, the syllabus must include the history of the labor movement in the most important countries and at home, as well as the history of the party of the given country, a prominent place being given to social conditions and the role of opportunism in the labor movement. In agrarian countries, special stress must be laid on the agrarian question and the relations between the working class and the peasantry as Lenin advocated it. Of special importance is—extensive and intensive propaganda of the theoretical and tactical problems of armed rising and civil war.

32. At no stage of Communist Party education must Marxist-Leninist philosophy be lost sight of. Marx, Engels, and Lenin were all militant materialists. Their doctrine and their

philosophy brought philosophical materialism to the highest stage, viz.: dialectical materialism. The inclusion of the propaganda of materialism into the syllabus of Communist education pursues also a political aim: the teaching of materialism will make our Communist Parties impervious to certain ideological tendencies which penetrate into our ranks; to the various forms of philosophic idealism, to religion, and to indifferentism on the question of religion, etc. All these tendencies in the last resort represent alien class interests within the proletarian organizations. Therefore the propaganda of Marxism-Leninism without the propaganda of militant materialism cannot be regarded as complete. Hence, the curriculum of all party schools must include this propaganda.

33. The methods to be applied in party schools, and in self-education circles must be carefully selected. Unless propaganda is methodical, it will not achieve its aim and will only result in useless expenditure of the energy of the propagandists, and the mass among whom they work. Experience has shown that wrong methods frequently lead to the disintegration of the entire propaganda system and to the dissolution of many propaganda institutions. This being so, great care must be taken in training propagandists not only in the theories of Marxism-Leninism, but also in the methods of imparting their own knowledge to the students in the party schools and to the masses. The central propaganda organs of the party must see to it that these propagandists obtain instruction in method. They must collect material on educational methods, study it, penetrate it, and apply it.

V. Organization of Marxian Research and Literary Activities.

34. Leninism is not only the revival of revolutionary Marxism, but also an extension of its theoretical and practical content. Marxist thought and Marxist theory have not yet sufficiently permeated the Communist International. Not enuf initiative and organization has been displayed in the development of Marxian research work. The attempts of the decadent Marxists of the Second International to continue the work of the orthodox pre-war Marxism of Austrian-Marxism could not but fail for the reason that it is impossible even to pretend that social democratic practice, and the theories of Kautsky, Hilferding, Bauer & Co., is really Marxist. The general decadence of scientific research after the war naturally affected Marxist research as well. The only country where Marxian research and literature have received an impetus is in Soviet Russia where the revolutionary proletariat has established its dictatorship. As far as the western Communist Parties are concerned, they cannot boast of any achievements on the field of Marxian research. The Communist International must do its utmost not only to encourage the study of Marxism-Leninism for propaganda purposes, but also to provide opportunities for scientific research and study on this field.

35. The Marx-Engels Institute, the Lenin Institute and the Communist Academy are the international centers for theoretic work and scientific research on the field of Marxism-Leninism. The task of the Communist International is to make the results of the research work carried on in these scientific institutions accessible to the international Communist movement. This can be achieved:

(a) Thru the Agitation and Propaganda Department of the Comintern, which thru its connection with these institutes can make use of the results

of their research work on an international scale.

(b) By grouping around these institutions the party workers of all Communist Parties who are interested and active in theoretical research work.

(c) By utilizing the research work of these institutions as material for a periodical publication of Marxist Leninist research, of the published classical works of Marxism, and all the scientific and critical works of Marx, Engels, and Lenin, and also a Communist encyclopedia.

36. In addition to central party schools, laboratories of Marxist-Leninist research must be established in the most important sections of the Comintern. These sections must also

be provided with Marx-Lenin libraries. The object of these laboratories is: to encourage Marxian-Leninist research work, to organize colleges for comrades interested in theoretical studies, to help in the elaboration of political and propagandist works, etc. These laboratories must also be the connecting link between the various sections of the Comintern and the Marx and Lenin Research Institutes of the U. S. S. R.

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