

The Growing World Offensive Against Capitalism

By WM. Z. FOSTER

THE Tenth Plenum of the Comintern very correctly characterized the then existing world situation as "a period of the increasing growth of the general crisis of capitalism and of the accelerated accentuation of the fundamental external and internal contradictions of imperialism leading inevitably to imperialist wars, to great class conflicts, to an era of development of a new upward swing of the revolutionary movement in the principal capitalist countries, to great anti-imperialist revolution in colonial countries."

This analysis has been completely borne out by the course of events. So much is this so that the stage of world struggle is now raised to a higher stage. Quantity becomes quality. The tempo of development has been extremely rapid. The American crisis has deeply shaken and further undermined capitalist world economy, vastly intensifying the imperialist rivalries and the war danger, and laying the basis for still greater class struggles and revolutionary movements in the various industrial and colonial countries. Because of and together with this weakening of capitalism, there is growing a general surge forward internationally and a vast development and sharpening of the struggle of the workers and colonial masses against world capitalism.

It is the latter phase of the approaching struggle of the working masses that gives the main characteristic to the present world situation. The Tenth Plenum resolution correctly stated that "a new feature in the situation since the Sixth Congress is the sharply marked radicalization of the working class and the rising of the new tide of the revolutionary labor movement." Now this "new feature" becomes of decisive importance. It has been intensified and extended to such an extent that it now must be characterized essentially as a world offensive against capitalism.

This world offensive is of course not yet in full swing. But that the big movements of the workers internationally is an offensive is indisputable. It is the characteristic of the present world situation, and it is decidedly in the ascendant. The main phases of this growing world revolutionary offensive are: (1) The rapid growth of the Socialist economy of the U. S. S. R.; (2) the forward development of the revolutionary movement in the principal

capitalist countries; (3) the development of the revolutionary struggle in China.

(a) The major phase of the present growing world revolutionary offensive of the workers is the tremendous success of the first year of the Five-Year Plan. The amazing growth of the Socialist economy in the U.S.S.R. not only smashes the capitalist elements in the Soviet Union, hastening the end of the N. E. P. period, and raising the Russian Revolution to a higher stage, but also, what is vitally important, it constitutes a powerful offensive against world capitalism. The Soviet Union assails world capitalism not only because of its very existence as the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the direct clash of its Socialist economic forms against those of capitalism, but now especially it assumes an offensive form against world capitalism, because of the tremendous ideological influence the success of the Five-Year Plan will exert in inspiring the workers of the world to attack capitalism. With the development of the struggle this leadership of the U. S. S. R. in the world offensive against capitalism will be intensified and take on varied forms.

(b) The growing counter-offensive of the workers in the principal industrial countries and the increasing political character of their struggle. This has already been sufficiently noted in the large and sharply revolutionary strikes and other struggles in Germany, Poland, France, Italy, England, the United States, etc.

(c) The forward surge of the Indian revolutionary movement, marked by the recent great strikes and by the growth of the mass movement for complete independence from Great Britain. This is a great offensive against British imperialism, which the bourgeois leaders of the Indian National Congress attempt to head in order to reduce it to impotence.

(d) The rapid re-awakening of the Chinese revolutionary movement. This now develops by expanding strikes of the workers and wide forward movements of the peasantry, in the face of the increasingly demoralized forces of the Chinese bourgeoisie and the rival imperialisms.

These advance movements of such basic sections of the great masses of toilers can only be understood as constituting a developing world offensive. This offensive will be greatly accelerated by the present intensification of the world capitalist crisis, with its sharpening of all the inner and outer contradictions. With the shattering of the precarious stability, and the constant greater pressure on the workers in every direction, the latter's offensive will rapidly sharpen and deepen. The character of the growing world offensive of the workers at present varies from the gradually developing counter-

offensive of the Western proletariat to the victorious advance of the Russian workers. The tendency is towards the latter, higher, more positive form of the offensive. The immediate perspective of the offensive varies in the different countries, ranging from a general broadening and deepening of strikes in some countries to movements for revolutionary seizure of power in others.

It is vitally essential that the tactic of the Comintern and the Communist Parties of the various countries be based upon leading and accelerating the developing offensive. Only in this way will a disastrous tailism be avoided in the various countries. Our line must be one of attack. There is too much of the defensive in the position of our Parties in the capitalist countries. Once these Parties definitely go over on to the offensive their power and influence will be multiplied. The greatest danger we now confront is trailing along behind the masses. The tactic of the offensive will overcome this. Our main task now is twofold: to carefully analyze the forms under which the world offensive develops, and to work and aggressively apply the appropriate policies to stimulate this offensive. This, of course, does not mean the development of putchist tactics.

The new situation confronts us with many urgent tasks, all of which must be carried out in the sense of developing the working class offensives. In this short article only a few of these may be barely indicated.

One vital phase in furthering the offensive must be an intensified attack against the social-fascists. These will become even more than ever the tools of imperialism. The attack against them will be facilitated by the growing international and national crises of capitalism (on which system they pin all their hopes) and by the great victories of Socialism in the U. S. S. R. In this situation, with the masses being rapidly radicalized, the "Left" social-democrats become especially dangerous. They will take on more militancy and more definite organizational forms in their efforts to hold the masses from developing real struggle against the capitalists.

The principle of the offensive must also be injected systematically into the strike struggles of the workers. This requires more trade union work by the Parties. The development of independent leadership of the strikes is of the essence of the offensive. Here aggressive work among the unorganized and unemployed will play a big role. Above all, to further generally the offensive, we must aim to politicalize the struggle. The political mass strike is a major slogan of the offensive.

There must be a closer working together of the Parties in the imperialist countries with the struggling masses in the colonies. This

coordination is especially necessary now for uniting against imperialism the developing movements in the colonial and imperialist countries.

Intensification of struggle in defense of the U. S. S. R. and against imperialist war generally now becomes fundamentally important. The world bourgeoisie, seeing its own system dropping deeper and deeper into crisis, while at the same time the Socialist economy in the U. S. S. R. brilliantly succeeds and the world revolutionary movement of the workers expands and goes more and more on to the offensive, will increasingly turn to war in the hope of thereby finding a solution for its difficulties.

A key task in developing the workers' offensive is a militant propaganda of the success of the Five-Year Plan. The victorious progress of Socialist construction in the Soviet Union will be an enormous force for stirring the revolutionary enthusiasm of the working masses everywhere and intensifying their struggle against capitalism and its agency—Social-Democracy.

The systematic building of our Parties is a vital task in furthering the revolutionary offensive. With the struggle everywhere becoming keener and the mass movements of the workers and colonial masses taking on a broader and more revolutionary character, the influence of our Parties will widely extend. The question of the struggle for the majority of the working class becomes an actual one. We are now entering a period of the development of mass Communist Parties, despite all fascist attempts to smash and illegitimize them. Already the German Party, by its recent growth, has given the signal of the new tendency towards the building of mass Communist Parties.

The development of the tactic of the revolutionary offensive must carry with it an intensified struggle against the Right-Wingers and conciliators in the Communist Parties. The Right danger now becomes the greater because of the sharpening of the struggle, and also because, with the influx of large masses of new members into our Parties, there will be a tendency of sections of the renegade Communists, in order to avoid isolation, to try to follow the masses into the Parties. This does not necessarily mean that the Brandlers and Lovestones will personally try for reinstatement. They will keep going to where they belong, into the ranks of the Social-Democracy. Already the Right-Wing in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has given the signal for the change in tactical line. Its "surrender" will not be without repercussions among the Right elements internationally.

What is essential in the present situation is for our Parties to definitely go over to a clearly offensive tactic. This implies first

of all a clear analysis of the developing world offensive of the working masses, which develops out of the sharpening world crisis of capitalism. With this analysis will come a sharpening of our policies so that the progress of the offensive may be accelerated on every avenue of its advance. Thus our Parties and our movement internationally will be enabled more effectively than ever to perform their leading role in the ever-swifter march forward of the proletariat to the World Revolution.

